



Kindergarten & Playgroup

EDUCATING *the* WHOLE CHILD

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## *Performance Report 2009*

### *Introduction*

In response to the Federal Government's requirement that all schools are to report on performance in a number of areas, we are pleased to have this opportunity to present this report. This report is available in hard copy at the school, via the office, and as a .pdf file on our website at [www.ballaratsteinerschool.com.au](http://www.ballaratsteinerschool.com.au)

Ballarat Steiner School holds regular information sessions throughout the year. These occasions are an opportunity for enquiring parents to discuss the school ethos and teaching practices.

### *Staffing*

At Ballarat Steiner School we provide a stable and secure environment for the child. We have four full-time Teachers who teach prep and composite classes of 1/2, 3/4 and 5/6. We have Specialist Teachers in Music, Eurythmy, German and Craft. We also have our Senior Teacher in the role of Education Facilitator which is outside a class room.

Our staff attendance rate for 2009 was 95.5%. The staff retention rate for 2009 was 100%.

We also have Specialist Teachers who give one-to-one guidance to students with addition need, in literacy and numeracy.

Our Business Manager and valuable administrative staff provide support and general assistance to our teachers.

### *Teacher Qualifications*

At Ballarat Steiner School, on our full time staff, there are three with primary qualifications and one teacher with secondary qualifications. Our specialist teachers are qualified and experienced in their respective fields. All teachers are VIT registered.

Together they hold the following qualifications:

Bachelor of Arts Victoria College of the Arts 1983

Graduate Diploma of Education University of Melbourne 1994

Bachelor of Arts Sheffield Hallam University 1990

Bachelor of Education Australian Catholic University 2002

Diploma of Teaching. Ballarat College of Advanced Education (UB)  
1981

Bachelor of Education. Ballarat College of Advanced Education (UB)  
1981

Graduate Diploma in Education. Australian Catholic University 1994

Bachelor of Music University of Melbourne 2001

Bachelor of Teaching University of Melbourne 2001

Bachelor of Education – Postgraduate ACU 2001

Bachelor of Commerce, The University of Melbourne 1999

Bachelor of Arts, Victoria University of Wellington 1987

Professional development opportunities build upon the foundation established by basic teacher qualifications. At Ballarat Steiner School provision has been made for funding support and replacement teachers to enable staff to attend PD workshops and courses.

Each week the staff participates in weekly professional development and artistic sessions at the school. Besides these formal PD structures, teachers also constantly network with each other informally and share experience and skills.

### *Learning and Literacy and Numeracy*

The Steiner curriculum unfolds to meet the child's developmental stages with teaching matching the optimum time when the child is developmentally ready, in both intellect and inner life, to take the next step in learning. This approach is truly holistic.

Our curriculum is carefully structured in the way it introduces and develops Literacy and Numeracy. In the early years experiences are grounded in reality, rich language experiences and visual imagery. Abstract concepts are avoided in these early stages.

Some form of formal evaluation of learning is necessary. At Ballarat Steiner School this is multi-faceted:

- Minimum Standards for each Class Level – we create student profiles from Class 1 through to Class 6. There are benchmarks for each class level :

### *Numeracy:*

Our Number System (whole numbers)

Spatial Relationships

Measurement

Fractions – common/decimal

Basic Operations

Problem Solving

Equations

Mental Arithmetic

Working Mathematically

### *Literacy:*

Writing – including Spelling and Grammar

Reading – including Comprehension Skills

Documents and Data

Spoken Language

Listening Skills

Research Skills

Becoming Literate – personal development

The checklists for each level details the developmental sequence within each domain so that achievement can be monitored via Class Assessment Tasks.

These records belong to the School and are updated by the Class Teacher each term, using a standard code that reflects the stages of:

1. Understanding
  2. Consolidation
  3. Independent mastery
- Observational notes written by teachers about each child.

- Ballarat Steiner School's standardised assessments for children in Classes 3 and 5 are in Literacy and Numeracy. These are given to children gradually from June to November in discreet and informal ways during our Practice Lesson times and appear to the children to be simply another revision exercise.

Ballarat Steiner School has, over the years, offered the AIM and now the NAPLAN tests, although parents, who in choosing this education do not want to place their children into formal testing situations in these early years.

Parents have a scheduled conversation time twice during each year, when teachers are available to share and comment on their child's work. Parents can also make appointments to discuss their child's development and progress at other times. Ballarat encourages this close and effective liaison between parent and teacher.

Our end-of-year reports are meaningful and broad, providing a multi-layered profile of the child's achievements throughout the year.

## *School Well-Being*

Ballarat Steiner School is a non-denominational school that reflects the values of Steiner Education. We endeavour to educate the children holistically via a balanced curriculum which recognises the totality of the child's threefold nature of thinking, feeling and willing, so that as adults they will be able to contribute to society as creative, ethical and responsible citizens.

At Ballarat Steiner School, we strive to build confidence, initiative and responsibility. We actively work towards an accepting and compassionate community which is founded on a harmonious partnership between school and home.

A vibrant and healthy school environment must be maintained by all members of the school community – teachers, children and parents. Our comprehensive Codes of Conduct/Communication Policies for both teachers and parents lay down clear guidelines for all parties, presenting direction for clear communication and effective procedures for the resolution of differences.

We have a maximum of 22 students per class, so that we can nourish each child and cater for individual differences.

The children are a constant source of delight. There is a high level of care evident in the student community as children from classes 1 – 6 play happily alongside each

other. A child in additional need is discussed at staff meetings and a support group may be formed for him/her.

Student attendance is regular. Absenteeism is limited to the usual patterns of childhood illness, or to special circumstances which are discussed with parents.

The teachers' committed and generous participation in school life is a model for the students' behaviour, as they too have relatively few days of absence. Students attendance rate for 2009 was 93%.

Our parent body is supportive in many ways. We recognise that each day there are many parental contributions which enrich the lives of our students, for example, practical assistance with reading or a project, or the sharing of knowledge or skills.

A community is a living and growing organism that requires ongoing sustenance.

Parent Information Sessions and Class Meetings address the children's development and foster dialogue about education and the challenges of parenting.

The celebration of seasonal festivals offers another opportunity for community sharing. The schools as a whole, gathers together each Monday morning to begin the week to sing and to share. Parents are welcome to attend.

## *History*

Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten was founded in 1990 following the commencement of a playgroup a few years earlier, on the initiative of a group of parents and teachers who held sight of a long-term vision to create a Rudolf Steiner educational establishment for the community of Ballarat and district. The Ballarat Steiner Primary School was founded in 2000 and is situated on a picturesque 10 acre site near Buninyong.

## *Landmarks in 2009*

The year began with a Teacher's Day when we came together for nourishment and new beginnings with Evelyn Lange facilitating an art workshop.

Our Professional Development days included a Non-Violent Communication workshop with the school community facilitated by John Cunningham, an anaphylaxis training session and numerous workshops in literacy, numeracy and well-being undertaken by individual teaching staff.

Parent Education during 2009 included evening talks, workshops and class meetings.

The children from classes 1-6 contributed over \$500 to their Friendship School in East Timor from soup and toasty fundraising days.

The festivals are a highlight of each year. At Easter the whole school gathers for verses, story or a play before participating in a shared lunch. At midwinter, a whole school spiral is walked in the darkness accompanied by singing and recorder-playing before lanterns are lit and the community walks around the school. Spring is a festival of flowers and joyful sharing with Christmas culminating in a whole school play "The Shepherds' Play".

Work began on our National Pride Project – a new kitchen, with final planning decisions and engagement of contractors undertaken for a two-storey classroom building, library and music room with the assistance of government grants.

These are some aspects of the deep and rich life of Ballarat Steiner School – the way we live our vision to further the growth and nourishment of our entire community.

The College of Teachers and the Committee of Management of Ballarat Steiner School, June 2010.