

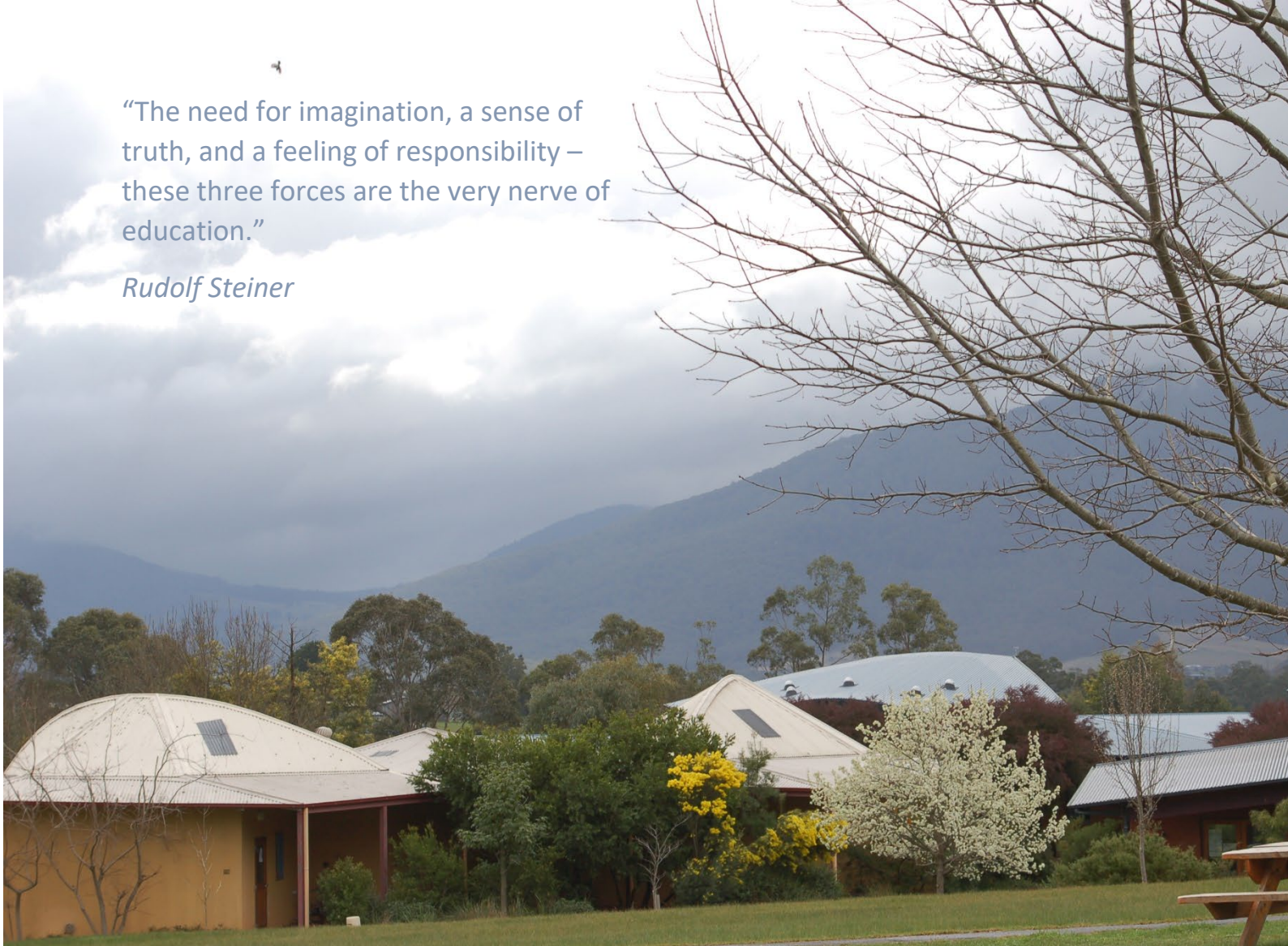
Little Yarra Steiner School



Strategic Plan 2024-2028

“The need for imagination, a sense of truth, and a feeling of responsibility – these three forces are the very nerve of education.”

Rudolf Steiner



Our highest endeavour must be to develop free human beings, who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives.

Rudolf Steiner

Anthroposophy is the study of the developing human being. It inspires our work and our vision. In economics, a gift is always for the future, and Little Yarra Steiner School began with a gift of land provided by a local farmer in 1989.

Little Yarra Steiner School is independent, co-educational and non-denominational, offering a high quality comprehensive education based on Rudolf Steiner's educational philosophy. It is the only private secondary education provider in the Yarra Valley,

Located in the picturesque Upper Yarra Valley of Victoria, the K-12 school is spread over 12 acres on a 60-acre property incorporating a farm (slowly being returned to a natural state), orchards and significant wetlands adjoining the Little Yarra River.

This Strategic Plan builds on the foundation of the previous 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. It contains ten key focus areas for development and improvement. We have excellent teachers who are committed to our values and philosophy and to working together to enable our students to thrive. Our renewed focus on the modern day value of the outdoor classroom, coordinated learning support and even higher achievements will consolidate and realise the richness of our educational approach.

The school has serviceable debt, healthy cash flow and robust financial management processes in place. The Master Plan (reviewed and revised across 2023 – 24) includes planned risk for future capital expenditure, building and maintenance projects. This will enable us to provide the resources, facilities and support for our teachers, staff and parents to fulfil their own important tasks

Our coming generations need to be confident, well-rounded, courageous and resolute to meet the emerging demands of our time. They need a strong sense of themselves and who they are. We take our work seriously: to plant seeds for the future, to encourage and support the highest human values and deepest understanding so that today's young people are equipped and ready to serve the greater good for humanity and the planet.

It is with this intention that we present our Strategic Plan to all members of the community, our teachers and most of all to our students as our own gift for the future.

Ms Maria Brouwers
Chair, Board of Directors
Little Yarra Steiner School

Mr John Stewart
Principal
Little Yarra Steiner School

Vision:

Working out of Anthroposophy, we learn and grow, inspiring our students to act with courage for the good of humanity.

Purpose:

To awaken in our students the capacity to reach their highest goals through the strength of their individuality and intercultural understanding.

Our Values:**Understanding**

Our curriculum and pedagogy use content and teaching methods based on a deep understanding of the stages of child development.

Meaning

We strive for students to experience a meaningful and rewarding education leading to a lifelong love of learning and accomplishment as adults who can think and act freely and responsibly.

Environmental responsibility

Our educational offering combines the safety and beauty of our rural and artistic environment with twenty first century academic rigour and reverence for the environment.

Community

We promote a welcoming and inclusive whole school environment in which the wider community can participate.

Respect

We encourage and foster a culture of respectful relationships and positive student behaviours.

Freedom

We are philosophically committed to the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including elected government, rule of law, equal rights for all, freedom of religion, freedom of speech and association, the values of openness and tolerance

Safety

Little Yarra Steiner School is committed to providing a child safe and child friendly environment, where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and are able to actively participate in decisions that affect their lives.

Our Structure

Synopsis of School Structure

Day to day management of the school is mandated to staff who have a portfolio of responsibilities, inclusive of the Principal and the Business Manager.

The College is an inclusive body of staff, with participation from those who are prepared to make a commitment to the work of College, who work with the overall wellbeing of the school and the deepening of the pedagogical work.

In addition to the school's legal, management and spiritual structure below, the following consultative and/or working bodies within the school include:

Parents Association

Kindergarten

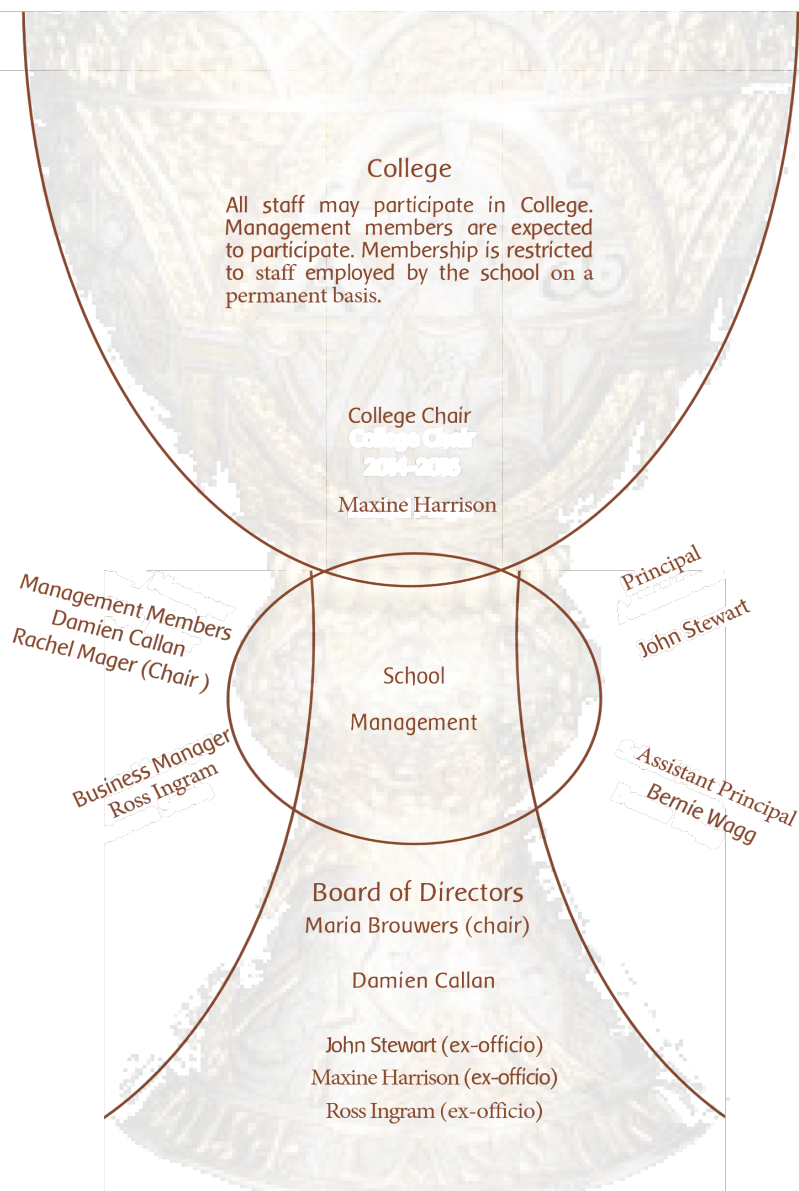
Primary Faculty

Upper Schl Faculty

Music Dpt

Learning Support

Visually, the school's structure can be seen as represented by a chalice:



Functions

Board

Our Board has overarching responsibility for the governance of the school.

It drives the school performance and sets internal benchmarks for fiscal integrity, strategy adoption and adherences to anthroposophical principles. Board members are drawn from college and, the community with significant levels of experience across various areas of school operations.

Management Group

The management group has a responsibility for the operational (day to day) functions of the school. This encompasses compliance with school policy, student care and well-being, curriculum integrity and other school functions. The group comprises the Principal, Assistant Principal, Business Manager and senior members of staff from a range of disciplines.

College

College has an oversight and care of the “spiritual” heart of the school. This encompasses anthroposophical study and discussion, child study and support.

Membership of College is open to all staff members, though not a compulsory aspect of employment conditions.

Our Criteria of Success

✓ High achieving students	<p>Have a strong, well developed sense of self</p> <p>Are compassionate, respectful, creative and able to think for themselves</p> <p>Have the confidence to follow their own path</p> <p>Have the capacity to achieve their personal and academic goals</p>
✓ Outstanding teachers	<p>Inspire and engage students</p> <p>Engaged in deep learning and professional development</p> <p>Acknowledged by parents, school leadership and colleagues</p>
✓ Well cared for environment and community	<p>Respectful relationships between teachers, students, parents and the community</p> <p>Physical spaces are safe, harmonious, comfortable and beautiful</p> <p>The grounds, gardens, domestic animals and wildlife are lovingly tended</p> <p>The natural environment is acknowledged and nurtured</p>
✓ Trusted leadership and effective governance	<p>Compassionate, timely, clear and effective communication is supported by the whole community</p> <p>Protocols and procedures are reviewed regularly and adhered to</p> <p>Integrity and working for the good of the whole school is consistently modelled</p>
✓ Strong and consistent financial performance	<p>Fiscal responsibility and integrity of financial systems and procedures</p> <p>Regular review and monitoring of income and expenditure</p> <p>Planning and review of capital expenditure</p> <p>Fundraising support is pursued</p> <p>Responsibility for and follow up of fees and outstanding debts</p>

Key Focus Areas

1: Whole School Program

Goal: All students achieve their full potential both within the classroom and beyond

- We offer innovative, rigorous and highly engaging academic programs to suit our students
- We develop curriculum to enable all students to attain the intellectual skills and learning strategies required for students to achieve their personal and academic goals
- Progressive development of outdoor classroom, hands on learning and child-centred learning experiences

2. Teaching and Learning

Goal: Little Yarra Steiner School's teaching and learning is characterised by innovation, quality and recognition

- Our focus is on delivering programs to students which are engaging, show depth of knowledge and encourage critical, independent thinking.
- Our teachers are engaged in deep learning and professional development

3. Student Engagement & Wellbeing

Goal: To maintain a safe and caring environment where students feel supported, safe and valued as they undertake their educational journey

- A quality integrated student support department which identifies and supports students and their teachers and parents with strategies that meet students' specific and ongoing needs
- We ensure effective transition processes are in place as students move through their educational journey

4. Staff Development

Goal: To attract, retain and foster high quality staff committed to educational excellence

- We provide professional development opportunities that enable staff to gain and improve their own skills and knowledge and to develop their capacity for excellence in teaching
- We support and encourage staff resilience, professionalism and morale
- We encourage and facilitate commitment and participation in the College of Teachers
- Our staff are valued and recognised for their contribution, commitment and participation

5. Enrolments

Goal: To grow and maintain enrolments.

- Strengthened links with feeder schools and their families
- Building waiting lists and excellent relationships with prospective families, including alumni

- Seek regular feedback through surveys, exit interviews and data analysis, and follow up on suggestions and findings
- Review and implement the annual marketing plan

6. Community

Goal: To maintain a high level of satisfaction for existing families and to build and safeguard the school's reputation in the wider community

- Foster a sense of belonging to the school community through events, festivals, news sharing, Parents Association support and communication
- We promote a welcoming and inclusive whole school environment in which the wider community can participate
- Students, staff, parents, alumni and friends are valued and heard in all their interactions within the school.
- We provide appropriate, meaningful, valuable and helpful information to parents, students and the wider community about the school and its work
- We build on the school's reputation through cultivating the alumni and wider professional networks and contacts (eg tertiary education)
- We support respectful relationships between teachers, students, parents and the community, and celebrate diversity and inclusion, including sensitivity and awareness of the indigenous peoples and culture.

7. Environment

Goal: To strengthen our relationships to the natural and built world by making conscious choices for sustainability and respect for our physical and environmental spaces

- We respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which our school stands, that, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation and honour the elders and custodians, past, present and emerging.
- Our educational offering combines the safety and beauty of our rural and artistic environment with twenty first century academic rigour. Our students build understanding through participation in environmentally and outdoor focused activities and projects.
- The natural environment is acknowledged and nurtured, physical spaces are safe, harmonious, comfortable and beautiful and the grounds, gardens, domestic animals and wildlife are lovingly tended.
- We are committed to sustainable environmental practices and choices in our day to day operations and in our planning, purchasing, construction and maintenance of educational facilities and resources

8. Administration

Goal: To ensure robust, secure and responsive administrative systems and skilled staff able to meet current and emerging requirements and expectations internally and externally

- Systems, IT support and services are reviewed and updated
- Skills development and best practices
- Privacy, Data Breach and Emergency response training and support
- Team development, relationships, conflict resolution and front of house training and support

9. Finance

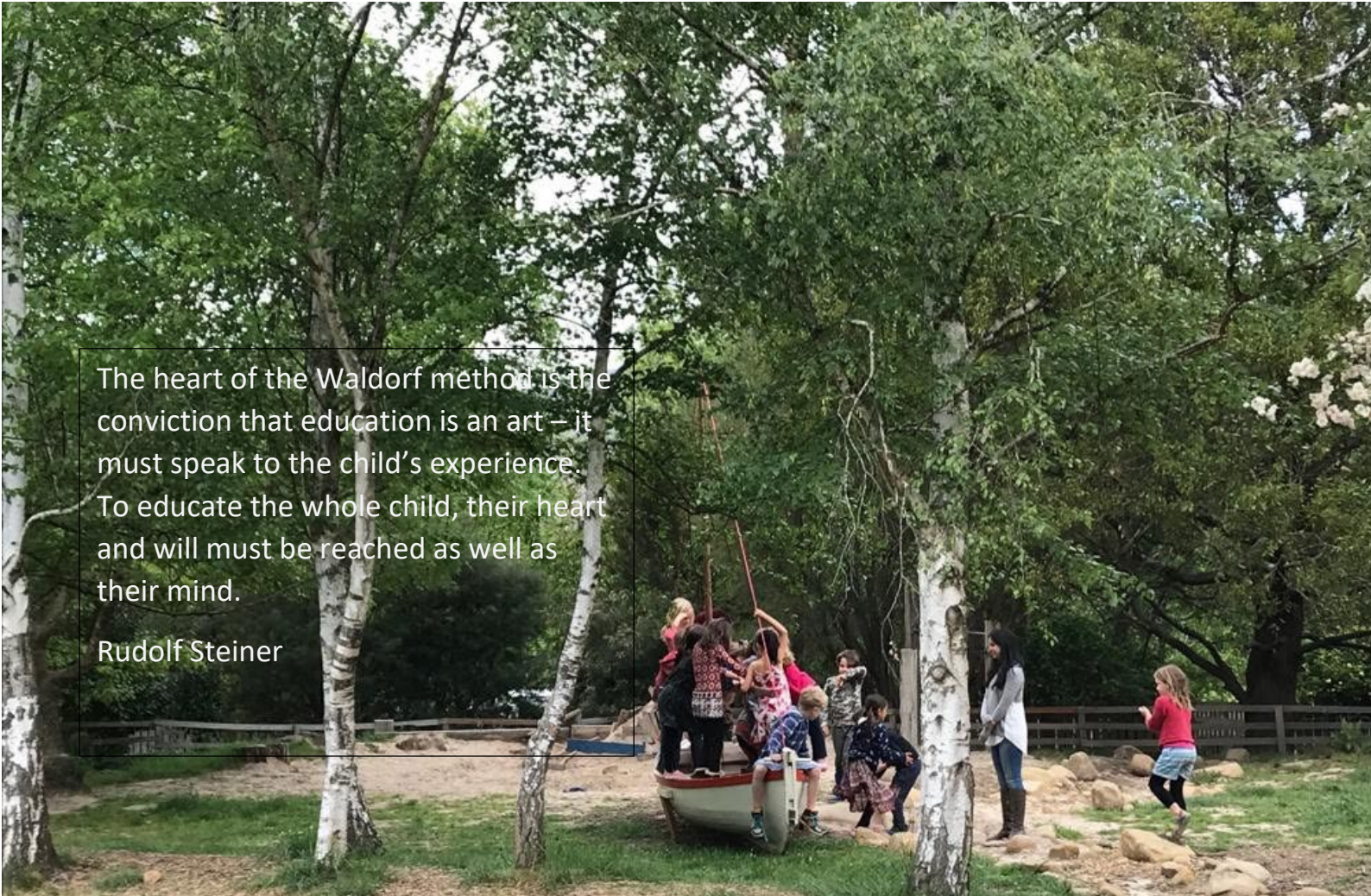
Goal: To deliver financial surpluses able to support long term and capital investment balanced with affordable fees and competitive staff remuneration

- Operating within recognised industry financial key performance benchmarks
- Maintaining all financial and legal compliances
- Developing expanded fundraising and funding resource base
- Improving asset security and maintenance
- Keeping school fees as low as is achievable within the parameters of meeting school needs.

10. Governance

Goal: To actively improve and develop the Governance of the school

- Recruitment, induction and retention of quality Board members
- Clear, consistent and transparent communication and practices
- Leadership professional development undertaken across the Board and Management
- Articulated succession planning

A photograph of a Waldorf school playground. In the center, a group of children are playing on a swing set that is shaped like a small boat. They are surrounded by large, leafy trees, and the ground is covered with grass and some rocks. The scene is peaceful and naturalistic.

The heart of the Waldorf method is the conviction that education is an art – it must speak to the child's experience. To educate the whole child, their heart and will must be reached as well as their mind.

Rudolf Steiner