



tarremah
steiner school

School Improvement Plan 2017



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

Foreword

Steiner schools have traditionally considered the 'nature' of the school from a four-fold perspective; the physical grounds and infrastructure of the school, the children and their well-being, the curriculum, programmes, ideals and values which create the cultural life of the school and the teachers and staff who are the intentional agents responsible for the school.

The school is;

- a) The grounds and facilities
- b) The children
- c) The curriculum and cultural life
- d) Teachers and staff

All healthy development depends on the harmonious development of all four aspects of the 'being' of the school. An apt analogy may be the inordinate development of one wall in a building to the exclusion of the other three walls; the single wall will be all the weaker for its exclusive development, and each wall when raised together serve to provide a mutual strengthening of one another.

The Tarremah School Improvement Plan is intended to guide and support a planned and systematic review and development of the activities and operations of Tarremah to improve teaching and learning outcomes and the administration and facilities in the school as well as enhancing the well-being of teachers and pupils alike. It is also directed to creating opportunities for staff, parents, students and other community members to critically reflect on the school's performance and to identify areas for further development in its quest for the highest quality educational outcomes for students.

The School Improvement Plan plays a critical role in the implementation of cyclical school review and improvement activities.

Tarremah's Review process includes:

- a) An annual **Tarremah School Performance Report** (delivered to the TSSF AGM).
- b) A **School Improvement Plan**
- c) An annual **Staff Review and Development Process** (Tarremah Pathways)
- d) An annual **Parent Survey**
- e) An annual senior **Student Survey** (Classes 8, 9 & 10)

The School Executive and the School Council have established and are driving a strong improvement agenda for the school, grounded in evidence from research and practice and expressed in terms of improvements in measurable student outcomes. Explicit and clear school-wide targets for improvement are sought for and communicated to parents and families, teachers and students, with accompanying timelines.

In 2016 we focused strongly on the following seven areas of development which will continue to be maintained or further developed in the planned improvements for 2017

- Improved educational and behavioural outcomes for boys
- Development of further Indigenous cultural knowledge programmes
- Further development of the school Library for the cultivation of book culture and self-directed learning across the school
- Fee relief for families who might not otherwise be able to attend
- Increased investment in Learning Support teachers, resources and Teachers Aides
- Increased PD for teachers in differentiation of content and methodologies in the classroom – with special focus on students with ‘disabilities’, and in Steiner educational teacher formation
- Development of a new school website with promotional video and creative graphics which better reflect the school’s vibrant and artistic culture

1. Introduction

Tarremah Steiner School is a unique independent school in Huntingfield Tasmania, which values the unique spirit of each child, offering an education which is practical, academically rigorous and artistic.

The school is based upon a strong community of children, parents, teachers and administrators working together. Socially the school offers a lively program of seasonal events, parent education and community participation.

As the school has grown, Tarremah has developed a more conscious approach to planning and documentation allowing for an informed and targeted approach to the development of resources and employees.

This year the 'Tarremah Tomorrow' community consultation day informed the development of the school's five year Strategic Plan and many of the initiatives from the day are now being guided by committees jointly run by parents and teachers.

Yearly surveys, critical data analysis and informal feedback help to inform decisions and the development of effective policies and procedures to ensure a professional and transparent model.

As a small school with limited resources, Tarremah has developed a planned and informed approach to the improvement of the school.

2. Tarremah Steiner School

Tarremah Steiner School was originally founded in South Hobart in 1988. The school soon outgrew its premises and land was chosen at Huntingfield - adjacent to a nature reserve and prime farmland. Tarremah now offers a holistic educational program from Playgroup to Class Ten for over 230 students.

The architecture of the school is informed by the ideas of Rudolf Steiner including the shape and colour of the buildings. The development of school buildings, landscaped gardens and playgrounds occurred as the need arose. A boost in government funding allowed the school to develop a beautifully designed Hall with sporting and drama facilities, commercial kitchen, dedicated music room and new toilet facilities. Since then a series of planned development have focused on the development of the upper school.

Surveys and parent feedback identified a need for more teachers to train in Steiner Education and the last two years have seen a focus of expenditure on staff resources and professional development. A restructure of school management has seen renewed confidence in the school.

Tarremah Steiner School is now poised for growth and the development of a differentiation strategy which will add value to the school curriculum and provide a rich source of learning for all students.

3. Philosophy and Values

Tarremah offers a unique style of education, which is informed by the social reformer and educational philosopher Rudolf Steiner. Tarremah is one of forty Steiner Schools nationally and hundreds of schools worldwide.

Rudolf Steiner was strongly influenced by the scientific writings of Johannes Wolfgang Van Goethe. His aim is to educate the child towards the freedom of spirit through giving strong attention to the individuality of each child.

“What should be taught and cultivated...must be drawn solely from a knowledge of the growing human being and of individual capacities...The questions should not be: What does a human being need to know and be able to do for the social order that now exists? But rather: What capacities are latent in this human being, and what lies within that can be developed? Then it will be possible to bring ever new forces into the social order from the rising generations. The life of the social order will be what is made of it by a succession of fully developed human beings who take their place in the social order. The rising generation should not be molded into what the existing social order chooses to make of it.” Rudolf Steiner

Each student is encouraged to strive for personal excellence within the rich social and intellectual forum that aims to promote attributes such as self-confidence, resourcefulness, initiative and social consciousness.

4. Steiner Curriculum

Tarremah teachers work with the indications given by Rudolf Steiner in his series of lectures to teachers. They work to become responsive to the children and responsible for their role in every child's development.

Teachers are guided by the Steiner Education Australia Curriculum, which meets standards approved by ACARA (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority) and delivers education in thematic rather than subject based methodology. They are encouraged to present their lessons in a creative and artistic way using the best materials and resources available to them.

Teachers stay with the same group of children for many years and develop a level of trust which encourages children to ask questions and learn.

5. Organisation and Governance

Tarremah Steiner School's organisational structures have developed out of the republican ideals promoted by Rudolf Steiner in the first school he pioneered, perhaps articulated most succinctly when he stated, "The school, therefore, will have its own management run on a republican basis and will not be managed from above. We must not lean back and rest securely on the orders of a headmaster; we must be a republic of teachers and kindle in ourselves the strength that will enable us to do what we have to do with full responsibility. Each one of you as an individual has to be fully responsible."¹ All staff are encouraged to take responsibility for the school and to participate as far as they are able with the deliberative decision making processes in the school. All parents are encouraged to participate fully in Class Parent meetings, the Parents and Friends Association, the Tarremah Steiner School Foundation and the School Council.

The main organizational groupings are captured in the diagram on the following page:

¹ Stuttgart, *Faculty Meetings* (GA 300a).

Governance Framework – Key Groups

Tarremah Steiner School Foundation (TSSF)

Membership is open to all parents and employees. Responsible for electing Council Members to oversee management of the school.

School Council

The governing body elected by the TSSF are responsible for overseeing the legal and financial obligations of the school are being met and the School Executive's management of the school remains congruent with the constituted aims of the school. Functions of the Council are elaborated in the Constitution of Tarremah Steiner School Foundation.

School Chair

The School Chair is an educator with a strong background in Steiner pedagogy who facilitates the management of the school through the School Council, College of Teachers and School Executive.

School Executive

This is the executive management group in the school. It is a representative body comprised of the ECC Faculty Chair, the Primary Faculty Chair, the Secondary Faculty Chair, the Educational Administrator, the Business Manager and the School Chair.

Business Manager

The Business Manager is responsible for the financial reporting and operations of the school

College of Teachers

The heart of the republican structure in Steiner Schools, this group decides on pedagogical issues including forming policies and procedures for the school. All teachers are encouraged to have some input in the management of the school working in consultation and co-operation with the Executive.

Educational Administrator

Supports the educational program including delivery of the Steiner curriculum and the development of teaching staff

Faculties

The Early Childhood Centre (ECC), Primary school and Secondary school areas are convened and represented by elected Faculty Chairs.

Parents and Friends

Parents and Friends are a voluntary group which meets each month to facilitate the social and cultural life of the wider school community, including supporting the school and teachers.

*** Student Council**

Representatives from the secondary school are given a voice through the Student Council

Governance Framework – Meetings

Group	Frequency of Meetings	Level of Responsibility
Tarremah Steiner School Foundation (TSSF)	Yearly	Electing school council
School Council	Monthly	Strategic and financial decisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review against KPI • Progress of strategic initiatives
School Chair	Daily informal interaction	School Management
Business Manager		Financial reporting
Educational Administrator		Educational development
Faculties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECC • Primary • Secondary 	Weekly	Decisions about day to day school operations
Student Council	Currently in development	
Parents and Friends	Monthly	Co-ordinate parent led activities
College of Teachers	Weekly	Whole school development
School Executive	Weekly	Approval of School-wide decisions

6. School Improvement Plan

Working with a decentralised organizational structure, Tarremah encourages staff, teachers, parents and community members to help inform the Strategic Direction of the school.

Parents are also involved in working bees and fund raising and so take some responsibility for the improvement of the school.

6.1. Community Consultation

This year, parents, teachers, alumni, administration staff and selected community members were invited to a facilitated community consultation day. At the Tarremah Tomorrow event the participants worked with identified strengths and overcoming weaknesses to identify areas for improvement.

From this event, the five year Strategic Plan was updated and core Initiative groups were formed.

The yearly Parent survey (and beginning this year the Student survey) will help inform how effective previous improvement plans have been, and what areas to focus on in the coming year.

Discussion at the College of Teachers, at Faculty meetings and with Executive will also determine priorities.

6.2. Improvement Plan Cycle

Strategic Plan (Five Years)

Marketing Plan (Three Years)

Improvement Plan 2017 (October 2016)

6.3. Review of Goals from 2016

- Successfully completed Science Laboratory and Art Room
- Completed new Class 9 and 10 buildings
- LOTE relocated into a dedicated space
- Secondary Learning Support relocated into a dedicated space
- Introduced the Tarremah Pathways – Employee Review and Development Program
- Introduction of a yearly Parent Survey
- Development of a garden and introduction of a horticulture program and teacher
- Recruitment of more Steiner trained staff (2 more)

- Development of a new comprehensive website
- Establishment of a teacher study group
- Establishment of a parent study group
- Review of the Five Year Strategic Plan
- Landscaping of areas around Class 9 and 10
- Water pump installed in playground
- Drainage of oval addressed
- Installed a long jump/beach volleyball sand pit

7. Goals for 2017

The five national reform directions dovetail into the 7 Goals identified in Tarremah Strategic Plan.

Quality Teaching and Quality Learning is approached through the Training and Education goal, whilst Curriculum Development assists us in Meeting Student Needs.

Transparency and Accountability is achieved through having clear communication policies and systems. Empowered School Leadership in a Steiner School means the entire teaching body takes responsibility for school decisions.

7 Strategic Goals

Goal 1: TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Enable each child to attain their highest potential through the depth & strength of our Steiner approach to learning

Goal 2: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Recognise that the Steiner Education is a living and growing pedagogy and as such we shall continue to review our curriculum in the context of the times in which we live

Goal 3: CULTURE AND VALUES

Establish a cohesive & nurturing culture that promotes diversity, well-being and connection to each other and our environment

Goal 4: POLICY AND SYSTEMS

Ensure we have strong foundations with clearly defined structures and mechanisms of communication to enable efficiency & professionalism

Goal 5: FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Grow and ensure long term sustainability through prudent investment and identification of alternative income streams

Goal 6: COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS

Create meaningful connections with our community and promote the unique educational offering of our school

Goal 1: TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Enable each child to attain their highest potential through the depth & strength of our Steiner approach to learning

Initiative	Project	Who is responsible?	Measure of Success
Steiner Approach to Teaching	Weekly Study Groups	College Chair	Teacher Attendance
	College Study	Educational Administrator	Teacher Participation
	Practical Experiences	Faculty	Faculty Participation
Professional Development Process	In-house, Local	Educational Administrator School Chair	Number of events Attendance
	National and International	Application for targeted PD	Teacher Participation
Transitions - Overcoming barriers	ECC to Primary	Transitions Working Group	Less drop off in numbers Ease of transition for children
	Primary to Secondary	Primary and Secondary Faculty	Less drop off in numbers
	Secondary to College	Educational Administrator	Ease of transition for students
Human Resource Policies	Review of all policies	Administration	Accessible, well known policies
	Bullying Policy	Policy Committee	Policy updated and on website
	Grievance Policy	Policy Committee	Policy updated and on website
Human Resource Processes	Employment/Induction Process	Form Committee	Employee satisfaction and knowledge
Parent Education	Regular teacher talks	Teachers	Participation at events
	Guest speakers	Parent Education - Working Group	Participation at events

Goal 2: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Recognise that the Steiner Education is a living and growing pedagogy and as such we shall continue to review our curriculum in the context of the times in which we live

Initiative	Project	Who is responsible?	Measure of Success
Engaging Boys Positively	Current Curriculum adaptation	Educational Administrator	Part of teacher planning and documentation process Boys more engaged
	Gender based mentoring	Teachers in the middle /upper school	Program developed and implemented (8 weeks 1 afternoon a week)
	Transition/Pathways gender program	EBP committee and Administration	Program in place and implemented 2017 (Class 5, 7, 9)
Artist in Residence	Weekend Workshops	Artisan committee	Program for 2017
	In-house teaching	Artisan committee and teachers	Integrate into teaching time
	On site artist working	Artisan committee	Establish program of visiting artists
Paddock to Plate	Canteen	Paddock to Plate Committee	Engagement of students and parents in lunch program
	Curriculum development		Teachers consider gardening in cross curricular planning
	Cooking classes	Education Administrator	Integrate into teaching time
Outdoor Education	Develop and refine program	Outdoor Co-ordinator Marketing	Marketing of developed program
Barnyard		Committee	Project to be established later
Balanced Approach to IT		IT Committee	More engagement in technology by students in the middle/upper school
Gardening Program	Garden is maintained and supported and developed	Gardening Teacher	Program established Garden
	Gardening classes run on regular basis throughout the school	Educational Administrator	Timetabled
Development of Student Council	Establish a forum of council	Health Teacher?	Project to be established later
Electives for School Curriculum		Student Council	Partner with another provider
Learning Support	Develop and refine programs	Learning Support Teachers	Social, Emotional, Academic improvement with individuals
	Improve communication to parents	Teachers, Management	Survey results

Goal 3: CULTURE AND VALUES

Establish a cohesive & nurturing culture that promotes diversity, well-being and connection to each other and our environment

Initiative	Project	Who is responsible?	Measure of Success
Establish Core Values	Facilitate a session to identify and refine VALUES for the school	School Chair	Establish and agreed set of values Integration of values into the things we do
Staff Induction Process	Audit, review, recommend, create process and documentation	School Chair, Educational Administrator, Business Manager	All staff have participated in the induction process
Develop leadership structure which supports these values	Review values in council, exec and college	Executive, Council, College	Culture of the school
Environmentally Sustainable Workplace	EMR	ES Committee	Review levels compared to initial audit
	Waste, composting	ES Committee	Review waste compared to initial audit
	Curriculum development	ES Committee	Integrate ES into curriculum at all levels
	0 carbon footprint	ES Committee	Review based upon initial audit
Alumni Development	Develop connection with and between Alumni	P&F, Marketing	Alumni participate in school events
Parents and Friends Activities	Spring Fair	SF Co-ordinator, Marketing,	Participation of community in event
	Heartwarmers	P&F	Participation of community in event
	Fundraising	P&F	Levels of working capital in P&F increase
Seasonal Festivals Review	Refine and develop seasonal festivals	SF Committee	Program of events for the year
Communication Group	Develop strategies		Survey results show marked improvement in communication
	Review policies		Survey results show that targeted areas have been addressed
Social/cultural events for teachers and administrative staff	Culture of support and recognition	Social Committee, Management, P&F	Improved morale
Low Income Fee Relief	Increase accessibility of Steiner education	Business Manager, Executive	Increased number of families participating in this program
Bursary for Refugee Family	Increase diversity in school	Business Manager, Executive	Increased number of families participating in this program

Goal 4: POLICY AND SYSTEMS

Ensure we have strong foundations with clearly defined structures and mechanisms of communication to enable efficiency and professionalism

Initiative	Project	Who is responsible?	Measure of Success
Policy Review and Development	Audit all Policies	College of Teachers	All policies are reviewed and have version control
	Availability of policies	Administration Marketing	Available in electronic and paper form. On website
Review Leadership Structure	Ensure functionality of organizational structure	Council	New school leadership model in place More responsible and active College
Review Compliance Systems	WHS	WHS Officer	Procedures and processes updated
	Risk Assessment	Council	Procedures and processes updated
Review Human Resource Systems	Recruitment Process	School Chair, Business Manager, Marketing	Process Established
	Employment Process	School Chair, Business Manager	Process Established
	Professional Development	College, Educational Administrator	Process Established
	Unsatisfactory Performance	College, Educational Administrator	Process Established
Enrollment Process	Review process and recommendations	Management	Link between tours, enrollment and ongoing support
	Establish friendly and efficient process	Dedicated personnel	Feedback from surveys

Goal 5: FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Grow and ensure long term sustainability through prudent investment and identification of alternative income streams

Initiative	Project	Who is responsible?	Measure of Success
Increase Student Enrollments	Marketing Plan implementation	Marketing, Executive	Increased classroom sizes
Increase Student Retention	Marketing Plan implementation	Executive, Teachers	Increased retention rates across identified points
Protect and Improve Financial Position	Identify alternate sources of income for the school and opportunities to grow the school in sustainable way	Council	Improved financial position
Risk Management – financial, safety etc	Risk Assessment and recommendations	Council	Decisions to reduce risk
Evaluate Fee Structure including bursary, family discounts etc	Advertising this Communication with families		
Capital Expenditure/Investment Plan	Establish a plan of capital investment and spending which supports strategies	Council, School Chair	Plan developed
Artist in residence studio Library ECC Extensions	Artist in Residence Studio	Executive, Artist in Residence Committee	Develop Studio
	Library	Executive, Librarian	New Library developed
	ECC Extension	Executive, ECC	Improved capacity in ECC
	Reception Area improved	Executive, Marketing, Administration	Plan for extension
	Permaculture Landscaping	Gardener	Ongoing
	Permaculture Fencing	Marketing, Executive, P&F	Fencing Plan established
Day Care, Holiday Program	Evaluate the demand and value to the school	Executive	Survey results

Goal 6: COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS

Create meaningful connections with our community and promote the unique educational offering of our school

Initiative	Project	Who is responsible?	Measure of Success
Create connection to other Educational institutions	UTAS Connections	Council	UTAS recognition
	Student Practicum Placements – Steiner and UTAS	School Chair	Students participate
	Working with other schools within Tasmania	School Chair, Educational Administrator	Cross curricular opportunities Professional Development
	Working with SEA and other Steiner Schools on the mainland	School Chair, Educational Administrator	Cross curricular opportunities Professional Development
	Independent Schools Tasmania	School Chair, Educational Administrator	Develop relationships and connections
Greater Awareness of Tarremah in the Community	Social Media Website	Marketing	HITS, Facebook followers
	Presence in community through events, displays	Marketing, Teachers	Increased presence in relevant events, libraries, Sustainable Living Tasmania
	Advertising and Media	Marketing	Dependent upon objectives eg Tour attendance
	Word of Mouth	Parents, Teachers, P&F	Enrollments, Attendance
	Tarremah holds events for wider community	Spring Fair Committee	Attendance at Community Events
	Develop parent education program	Parent Education Committee	Program established and running
Students Attend public events	Music concerts Students involved in school wide events and competitions	Teachers	Continue presence in the community
Alumni	Out Alumni become ambassadors for the school	Marketing	Promotion Alumni Attendance at Events

References

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014

ComLAW Website: Australian Education Regulation 2013

Guide to the Australian Education Act 2013

Guide to the Australian Education Act 2013: Section D3 and Planning Process

www.education.gov.au/national-school-improvement-tool-0

National Safe Schools Framework

<http://www.safeschoolshub.edu.au/documents/nationalsafeschoolsframework.pdf>

Tarremah Business Plan 2016-2021

Tarremah Pathways – Employee Review and Development Program

Tarremah Strategic Plan 2016-2021