



tarremah
steiner school

School Improvement Plan 2018



"No one need try to discover a solution of the social question that shall hold good for all time, but simply to find the right form in the light of the immediate need of the time in which they live."

Rudolf Steiner

Foreword

Steiner schools have traditionally considered the 'nature' of the school from a four-fold perspective; the physical grounds and facilities 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 constituted of;

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

All school health depends on the harmonious development of all four aspects of the 'being' of the school. As with a building, if an inordinate development of one wall occurs in a building to the exclusion of the other three walls, the single wall will be all the weaker for being unsupported by the others. Each wall when raised in combination, provides mutual support to the others.

The Tarremah School Improvement Plan is intended to guide and support a planned and systematic review and development of the school's activities and operations to improve teaching and learning outcomes, 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 initiatives.

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-based research and practice and expressed in terms of improvements in measurable student outcomes. Explicit and clear school-wide targets for improvement are striven for and communicated to parents and families, teachers and students, with accompanying timelines.

Since 2016 we have focused strongly on the following seven areas of development embedded in our Strategic Plan 2016-2021 and we are striving to continue to maintain, further develop and improve these in 2018 in what ever measure is possible given our new fiscal circumstances resulting from the 2018 budgetary austerities:

- 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 the new school website with promotional video and creative graphics to increasingly 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 values 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.

At the beginning of 2016 the 'Tarremah Tomorrow' community consultation day informed the development of the school's five year Strategic Plan 2016-2021 and many of the initiatives from that day are now being guided by committees with both parents and teachers as members.

Annual parent and student 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 programme from Little Kinder to Class Ten for around 220 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 bathroom facilities, purpose-built upper school classrooms and Science Laboratory and Art Room.

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 in the area of professional development in Steiner Education. A restructure of school management has seen renewed confidence in the school.

Tarremah Steiner School is now poised for growth and the development of differentiation and learning adjustment strategies and Learning Support 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 ideas of 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 question 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 them to 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 desires 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's teachers work with the indications given by Rudolf Steiner in his many lectures to teachers. They strive to become responsive to the children and responsible for their role in every child's development and their role in the school.

Tarremah's teaching programme's content is provided by the Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework, which is ACARA (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority) approved and delivers education through a thematic rather than a 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 'Steiner' school and are 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 programme 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)	Annual	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 de-centralised, distributive organizational structure, Tarremah encourages staff, teachers, parents and community members to help inform the strategic direction of the school.

Parents are able to be involved in working bees and fund raising and governance and so take some responsibility for the improvement of the school.

6.1. Community Consultation

In 2016, parents, teachers, alumni, administration staff and selected community members were invited to a facilitated community consultation day, 'Tarremah Tomorrow'. At this event the participants strove to identify strengths, address weaknesses and to identify areas for improvement.

From this event, the five year Strategic Plan 2016-2021 was developed and core Initiative groups were formed.

The annual Parent Survey and Student survey will help as an integral part of community consultation to inform how effective previous improvement plans have been, and what areas to focus on in the coming year and to identify any trends developing in the community's perception of the school and its operations.

Discussion of the Survey results at the College of Teachers, at Faculty meetings, with the School Executive and School Council will assist in determining priorities for improvement.

6.2. Improvement Plan Cycle

Strategic Plan (every five years)

Marketing Plan (every three years)

School Improvement Plan 2018 (annual)

Business Plan 2018 (annual)

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 Programme
- Introduction of an annual Parent Survey

- Development of a school garden and the introduction of a horticulture programme
Classes 1-10
- Recruitment of more Steiner trained staff (2 more)
- Increased levels of school support for staff to acquire Steiner Professional Learning
- 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
- Construction of a Parkour facility by students
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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	School 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 student
Human Resource Policies	Review of all policies	School Executive / School Council	Accessible, well known policies
	Anti-Bullying Policy	School Executive / School Council	Policy updated and on website
	Complaints Management Policy	School Executive / School Council	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	Programme developed and implemented (1 afternoon a week as needed)
	Transition/Pathways gender programme	Primary School Faculty	Programme in place and implemented 2017 (Class 5)
Artist in Residence	In-house teaching	Primary and Secondary Faculties	Integrate into teaching programmes
	On site artist working	Primary and Secondary Faculties	Establish one-off programme for visiting artists
	Canteen	Parents and Friends Committee	Engagement of students and parents in lunch programme
Paddock to Plate	Curriculum development	Primary and Secondary Faculties	Teachers consider gardening in cross curricular planning for cooking classes
	Cooking classes	Primary and Secondary Faculties	Integrate into teaching time
Outdoor Education	Develop and refine program	Outdoor Co-ordinator Marketing	Marketing of developed programme
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	Programme established Garden
	Gardening classes run on regular basis throughout the school	Educational Administrator	Timetabled
Development of Student Council	Establish a foundation group	Secondary Faculty	Project to be established later
Electives for School Curriculum		Student Council	Partner with Secondary Faculty
Learning Support	Develop and refine programmes	Learning Support Teachers	Social, Emotional, Academic improvement with individuals
	Improve communication to parents	Faculties, Learning Support, School Executive	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 an agreed set of values and integration of values into the things we do
Staff Induction Process	Audit, review, recommend, create process and document	School Chair, Educational Administrator, Business Manager	All staff have participated in the induction process
Develop leadership structure which supports these values	Review values in School Council, School Executive and College	School Executive, School Council, College	Vibrancy of the school culture
Environmentally Sustainable Workplace	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 (Still undergoing review)	P&F	Participation of community in event
	Heartwarmers Cafe	P&F	Participation of community in event
	Fundraising events	P&F	Levels of working capital in P&F increase
Seasonal Festivals Review	Refine and develop seasonal festivals	College	Programme of events for the year
Communication Group	Develop strategies	P&F	Survey results show marked improvement in communication
	School policies review	School Executive / School Council	Survey results show that targeted areas have been addressed
Social/cultural events for teachers and administrative staff	Culture of support and recognition	Faculties, School Executive and P&F	Improved morale
Low Income Fee Relief	Ensure accessibility to Steiner education	Business Manager, School Executive	Sufficient allocation of funds to meet demands this year
Bursary for Refugee Family	Increase diversity in school	Business Manager, Executive	Sufficient allocation of funds to meet demands this year

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	School Executive / School Council	All policies are reviewed and have version control
	Accessibility of policies	School Executive and Administration	Available in electronic form online and hard copy in the Office
Review Leadership Structure	Ensure functionality of organizational structure	School Executive / School Council	New school leadership model in place More responsible and active College
Review Compliance Systems	WHS	WHS Officer	Procedures and processes updated
	Risk Assessment process	School Council	Procedures and processes updated
Review Human Resource Systems	Recruitment Process	School Executive	Process articulated
	Employment Process	School Executive	Process articulated
Enrolment Process	Review process and recommendations	School Executive	Link between tours, enrolment, induction, capturing data
	Establish friendly and efficient customer service	School Executive	Feedback from surveys
Exit process	Improve participation in exit surveys/interviews	School Executive / School Council	Improved rate of responses

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	School Executive / School Council	Increased classroom sizes
Increase Student Retention	Marketing Plan implementation	School Executive / School Council	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	School Executive / School Council	Improved financial position
Risk Management - financial, safety etc	Risk Assessment and recommendations	School Council	Decisions to reduce risk
Evaluate Fee Structure including bursary, family discounts etc	Advertising this Communication with families	School Council, Business Manager	
Capital Expenditure/Investment Plan	Establish a plan of capital investment and spending which supports strategic	School Council, School Chair	Plan developed
ECC Extensions and Gardening development	ECC Extension	Executive, ECC	Improved capacity in ECC
	Reception Area improvement	School Executive,	Progress with planning for extension
	Permaculture Landscaping	Gardener	Ongoing
	Permaculture Fencing	Marketing, Executive, P&F	Fencing Plan established
Day Care, Holiday Programme	Evaluate financial viability for the school	School Executive	Survey results and Business Manager's financial reports

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	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	Engage with Local Council initiatives	College and School Executive	Extent of engagement over the year
	Social Media Website	Marketing	HITS, Facebook followers
	Presence in community through events, displays	School Executive, Teachers	Increased presence in relevant events, libraries, Sustainable Living Tasmania etc.
	Advertising and Media	School Executive	Dependent upon objectives e.g. Tour attendance
	Word of Mouth	Parents, Teachers, P&F	Enrollments, Attendance
	Tarremah holds events for wider community	P&F	Attendance at Community Events
Students Attend public events	Develop parent education programme	Parent Education Committee	Programme established and running
Alumni	Music concerts Students involved in school wide events and competitions	Teachers	Continue presence in the community
	Our 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 Programme

Tarremah Business Plan 2018

Student and Parent Surveys 2017