



tarremah
steiner school

Tarremah Strategic Plan

2016-2021



“Our highest endeavour must be to develop free human beings, who are able to impart purpose and direction in their lives.” Rudolf Steiner

Introduction

Founded in 1988, Tarremah now offers Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary education up to Year 10.

Applying the principles of Steiner education, Tarremah strives to recognise and respect the unique spirit of each child. Teachers work with a deep and broad curriculum to create an environment, which addresses the developmental changes of the growing individual. Steiner education aims to cultivate each child's inner life of imagination and creativity and enthusiasm for academic challenge and enjoyment of physical activity. Teachers strive to provide a balanced development of the intellectual, emotional and practical.

The creativity and joyfulness of healthy children is encouraged through an artistic approach to all learning areas.

Having passed its formative years, Tarremah now has the opportunity to build on its strong foundation and further establish as a significant independent educational institution. Steiner Education is more than ever suited for our time.

This strategy for 2016-2021 provides the direction for further growth and development of the School in a manner that sustainably delivers the best outcomes for our students, staff, families and the broader community. In particular, it aims to guide Tarremah through the development phase of the secondary school, while ensuring all aspects of the School's programmes are maintained.

The plan builds on findings of the yearly parental survey and outcomes of the Tarremah Tomorrow community consultation process, undertaken in 2016.

The Strategic Plan is primarily built around the premise of maintaining the health and wellbeing of three key platforms:

Education, both in our philosophy and programme delivery

Community, both within the School and without

Governance and finance, ensuring functional structures, regulatory compliance and financial viability.

A *School Improvement Plan* will be developed annually to outline priorities, timeframes and responsibilities for delivery of the agreed strategic initiatives. The School Council and College of Teachers will maintain responsibility for ensuring implementation, review and update of the *School Improvement Plan*.

Rod Tomlinson
School Chair

Michael Ashby
Chair, TSSF Council

Our Vision

The development of enthusiastic learners, creative individuals and active citizens through Steiner Education.

Our Purpose

To encourage individual students to reach their highest potential by:

- developing their emotional, cognitive, social, physical, academic and spiritual skills so as to equip them to meet the challenges of the future.
- supporting them to become adults who can impart purpose and direction to their lives.
- educating them to become committed members of society through their self-awareness, empathy, open-mindedness and creativity.

To contribute to the well-being of humanity by providing a centre of learning and inner development.

Our Values

- *Community*
- *Creativity*
- *Joy*
- *Passion*
- *Reverence*

Strengths and Development Opportunities

A simple analysis of strengths and weaknesses provides valuable insight as to where the school needs to focus its efforts. The following list of themes was identified from an open-ended question in the 2016 Parent Survey. The Strategic plan aims to maintain these strengths while addressing development and improvement opportunities.

Most positive experience about the school

- Watching Children Develop, Become Individuals, Build Confidence
- Festivals and Fairs, Ceremonies, Birthdays, Shakespeare,
- Community, Friends, Relationships,
- Outdoor Program
- Early Childhood Centre
- Happy, Fun, Enjoying School, Engaged
- No Cultural pressures, No Fashion pressure
- Belonging, Acceptance

How could the school Improve?

- Communication was overriding theme: Notification of Events, Parent-Class Teacher/Guardian Communication, Clashes with Events
- Disruptive Behaviour, Bullying Policy, Discipline
- More Steiner Trained Teachers, PD, engagement with anthroposophical ideas, follow Steiner Educational Principles, Parents pay for Steiner Education
- Range of high school subjects – more creative subjects, arts, maths/science IT improvement in upper school
- After school care
- Identifying Learning Difficulties, Support, Extension

A priority for Tarremah over the next five years will be to consolidate and enhance the School, focussing strongly on internal improvement and development. An internal focus recognises that the most important responsibility for Tarremah is its current community – students, families, employees and others who are already participating in Steiner education.

Critical Resources and Capabilities

At the core of Tarremah’s ability to succeed is the requirement for essential resources and capabilities that allow us to deliver our core service to our students. These resources and capabilities have been assessed as being at various levels of strength in relation to those required to deliver on our goals for the coming years. Depending on their current strength, different actions are required in response.

Strategically Important	Assessed Strength Relative to Requirement to Succeed	Action Required as a Result
Intangible Resources Steiner pedagogy Community Philosophy Identity Goodwill	Parity/Superior	Continue to value and nurture to maintain
Tangible Resources Curriculum Hall Natural environment New upper school buildings Science/Art lab	Parity/Superior	Continue to value and nurture to maintain
Tangible Resources Offices and reception Landscape, play areas Library Upgrade existing classrooms	Deficient	Boost investment to improve
Capabilities Consistency of teaching Level of Steiner training Level of remedial and special-needs learning support Fundraising capability	Deficient	Boost investment and support to improve

Given the extent of resource and capability development required and the growing nature of the School, there will be significant competition for limited resources over coming years. As a consequence, there is a need for careful resource planning to ensure a balance between capital development expenditure (new buildings, facilities and resources) and operational resourcing of what we have (e.g. facility maintenance, teacher development). The School cannot continue to meet the need of the community without a concurrent commitment to both development and maintenance expenditure.

Comparative Positioning

A critical aspect of ensuring Tarremah succeeds and remains viable as a school, is the recognition that we are one of a number of educational alternatives within the Hobart, Kingborough and Huon Channel districts. Each of these alternatives has their own attributes against which Tarremah must find and maintain strong points of differentiation.

Educational Alternatives	Key Attributes	Tarremah Differentiation
State Schools	Low cost Local	Educational philosophy Teaching methodology Teaching programs Small class size
Independent Schools	High quality facilities Well resourced Educational philosophy Focus on excellence Build social status	Educational philosophy Value for money – lower cost Independent school alternative
Catholic Schools	Value for money Educational philosophy Christian values underpinning	Non-denominational Small class sizes

Previous community surveys indicate that there is a high level of community recognition and positive perception of Steiner education and Tarremah. In 2015, a Marketing Plan was developed to target communications towards key areas of the decisions making process. Whilst Awareness was strong, actual conversion to enrolments needed to become the focus.

1. Penetration: position Tarremah within the local community as an independent school that offers a viable alternative to the larger primary and secondary State schools, with better academic outcomes, better non-academic outcomes, and a more nurturing school environment.
2. Convert Awareness to Enrolment: position Tarremah more broadly within the community as a high-quality independent school that offers a viable educational alternative with strong academic outcomes and a nurturing school environment.
3. Recognition: position Tarremah within the state and national Steiner community as a high-quality Steiner school that provides a strong educational option for families choosing to move to Tasmania.

Key Elements of Our Strategy

The above analysis of the strengths and distinguishing features of Tarremah, future opportunities, and resource constraints, informs how the path towards our Vision and our Purpose can be guided over the next 5 years. It can be summarized as follows.

<i>What do we do?</i>	We provide high quality Steiner education from early childhood to secondary school.
<i>How do we deliver it?</i>	We will develop teacher understanding and application of Steiner education methodologies.
<i>What makes us different?</i>	We provide an international educational alternative that is a <u>truly</u> holistic, child-centred approach that develops the mind, body and soul based on the philosophies of Rudolf Steiner.
<i>When are we going to get it done?</i>	We will consolidate K-10 until the existing programmes can be fully resourced and delivered to a consistent level of excellence and the school is on a strong financial footing.
<i>How are we going to fund it?</i>	Striking the balance between student numbers and fee levels can maintain value for money while generating adequate surpluses to ensure our long-term viability.

As a resilient community, we understand that maintenance of our current tangible and intangible assets and support and development for existing teachers is a priority, with expenditure on future development needing to be carefully planned and staged. A period of consolidation will allow enrolment numbers to reach the level required for financial sustainability of the school.

FIVE YEAR GOALS

- GOAL 1: ENABLE EACH CHILD TO ATTAIN THEIR HIGHEST POTENTIAL THROUGH THE DEPTH & STRENGTH OF OUR STEINER APPROACH TO LEARNING**
- GOAL 2: RECOGNISE THAT 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: ESTABLISH A COHESIVE & NURTURING CULTURE THAT PROMOTES DIVERSITY, WELL-BEING AND CONNECTION TO EACH OTHER AND OUR ENVIRONMENT**
- GOAL 4: ENSURE WE HAVE STRONG FOUNDATIONS WITH CLEARLY DEFINED STRUCTURES AND MECHANISM OF COMMUNICATION TO ENABLE EFFICIENCY & PROFESSIONALISM**
- GOAL 5: GROW AND ENSURE LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH PRUDENT INVESTMENT AND IDENTIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVE INCOME STREAMS**
- GOAL 6: CREATE MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS WITH OUR COMMUNITY AND PROMOTE THE UNIQUE EDUCATIONAL OFFERING OF OUR SCHOOL**

GOAL NO. 1

ENABLE EACH CHILD TO ATTAIN THEIR HIGHEST POTENTIAL THROUGH THE DEPTH & STRENGTH OF OUR STEINER APPROACH TO LEARNING

What will success look like?

- A strong professional development program in place for all teachers and staff which delivers:
 - A deep understanding of Steiner Education and its relevance in teaching today
 - An up to date view of educational developments within Steiner and mainstream education globally
 - Ensure the highest capability and knowledge across all areas within the school (breadth and depth in Steiner Education and teachers)
 - Encourages moderation and exchange of ideas with peers
 - Communicates to staff that they are valued and engenders enthusiasm
- The provision of the highest quality of teachers in line with the Steiner pedagogy and Tarremah school values and underpinned by effective attraction, retention and performance management practises
- A parent body who are engaged and aware/educated about the fundamental principles of a Steiner education and as such are able to share in their children's experience of this
- A comprehensive approach to the transitions our students make over the course of their education both within our school as well as out of the school

What will we do?

- Strengthen our current professional development program including processes of standards establishment, documentation, training audit, review and improvement
- Review & establish effective attraction, recruitment and on-boarding practises for new & potential teachers and staff in general (pathways & pipelines)
- Develop a clear perspective on the motivators for new and current staff and ensure policies, practises and programs are established to support these
- Establish a Parent Education Group and develop a planned schedule of activities and learning opportunities to meets the needs and expectations of parents and the broader Tarremah community
- Review the key transition points for students and build appropriate programs and procedures to support these including:
 - The development of strong relationships with colleges, government and other independent schools
 - A review of the seven year primary cycle and middle school structure

How will we know we are making progress?

- All teachers will have attended a minimum of 6 hours of mainstream professional development year on year
- All staff members will have participated in a Performance Appraisal and be working on their development opportunities by the end of 2017
- All teachers will attend College and Faculty meetings on a pro rata basis
- All current staff and new staff will have undertaken a Induction or Orientation Process
- Effective HR policies and procedures relating to teacher attraction and retention will be in place and are being followed by the end of 2017
- Parent Education Committee established and schedule of planned activities underway by [date to be added]
- A teacher postgraduate training fund established and professional development funding and opportunities expanded
- Feedback from the Annual School survey demonstrates an improved level of school performance with respect to those ideas established above

GOAL NO. 2

RECOGNISE THAT 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

Tarremah's educational programme is uniquely student-centred and developmental. 'Student-centred' means we judge successful teaching by the students' engagement; 'developmental' means the child's journey from the magic of early childhood to the questioning world of adolescence is supported by carefully prepared learning experiences, tailored to respond to specific age groups. Tarremah's pedagogy combines spiritual, intellectual, emotional and physical dimensions of learning – offering a truly integrated approach.

What will success look like?

- A Curriculum and Programme Development that:
 - Enlivens content and applies methodology to meet the needs of the students in time and place
 - Ensures that Curriculum and Programme Development in our school is informed by an understanding of the pedagogical indications given by Rudolf Steiner
 - Ensures that Curriculum and Programme Development meets with the requirements of local, national and Steiner specific curriculum components which have been adopted by the School
 - Ensure the curriculum addresses the particular age of each of our students and develops with increasing relevance for the times in which we live

What will we do?

- Align the school with the worldwide Steiner movement in terms of gesture, soul, growth of the whole community, governance and program development
- Share our professional expertise and broaden our understanding of the principles that underlie the curriculum
- Review curriculum with specific relevance to adolescence (and boys in particular) and assist teachers to engage appropriately to the particular age of their students
- Provide opportunities for Professional Development in the Steiner context and within specialist subject areas including eurythmy, gardening, outdoor education, drama and craft
- Keep abreast of technological developments to better understand the world in which young people operate and embed a more balanced approach to how we teach this

- Review all specialist programs for student experience and outcomes as well as Steiner pedagogical approach
- Review the electives that we offer our older students and provide them with a greater voice through the establishment of a Student Council
- Develop value-added subjects and programs to enrich the curriculum such as Artist in Residence program, gardening & cooking (Paddock to Plate), eurhythmy
- Bring Steiner curative therapy principles into action through the establishment and promotion of a curative therapy program

How will we know we are making progress?

- All teachers will have attended a minimum of 12 hours Steiner Education Professional Development per year (or pro rata for part time teachers)
- No. of scheduled school curriculum development & review days
- Feedback from the Annual School survey demonstrates an improved level of school performance with respect to those ideas established above

GOAL NO. 3

ESTABLISH A COHESIVE & NURTURING CULTURE THAT PROMOTES DIVERSITY, WELL-BEING AND CONNECTION TO EACH OTHER AND OUR ENVIRONMENT

What will success look like?

- Healthy partnerships between the School and the community, whether between teacher and student (past and present), parent and teacher, or within our local community
- A school that represent the diversity of the communities in which we exist and encourages inclusion for all, with continuing access for lower income families, as well as a diversification of cultural and ethnic bases
- Proactive, trusting and open communication between all sectors of the community
- A consistent and clear set of systems and symbols that demonstrate the values of the school
- A clear set of sustainability principles and drawing from the commitment and expertise of the community, we will not only educate students in environmental sustainability, but also provide a working model

What will we do?

- Revisit school values and how these translate into the systems, symbols and behaviours we experience
- Review our School Welcome (Orientation and On boarding) Approach, including roles and responsibilities, information and front of house design
- Ensure family and staff Exit Interview process is rigorously applied and acted on where appropriate
- Review OR develop school policies which relate directly of indirectly to the principles of inclusion and diversity
- Establish and run a Tarremah Alumni
- Review current internal communications practises and develop & implement an internal Communications Strategy to improve communications between Council, College, P&F, staff and parents
- Document and apply Environmental Sustainability principles by which the school will operate in all facets of operation and development
- Review approach to managing difficult behaviours within the school which ensure greater alignment to Steiner principles and more focus on pedagogical rather than disciplinary methods

- Review and strengthen current systems, process and competencies for staff/parent engagement, communication, feedback and issues management
- Continual focus on school events and communal spaces which provide opportunities for meaningful relationships to grow and flourish across our school community

How will we know we are making progress?

- Maintain bursary support at a level of no less than 3% of the school fee income
- A clearly defined, understood and 'living' set of values that are integrated into every facet of the school life – which is supported by feedback from the annual school survey
- A strong calendar of community and school events established and reviewed annually
- A school profile that aligns to the diversity of the community we exist in (Target to be agreed)
- Achieve Alumni membership of a minimum of 50% of school graduates (TBC)

GOAL NO. 4

ENSURE WE HAVE STRONG FOUNDATIONS WITH CLEARLY DEFINED STRUCTURES AND MECHANISMS OF COMMUNICATION TO ENABLE EFFICIENCY & PROFESSIONALISM

What will success look like?

- An effective and reinvigorated leadership model for the school that provides stewardship for the school's strategy and policy
- A healthy and fully functional College of Teachers that are at the heart of the school's policy and operational activities
- A thorough and robust set of Tarremah Policies and Procedures that inform the 'way we do things', align to the Steiner philosophy and school values as well as giving the school a 'license' to operate
- The School's Council is a visible and cohesive group of people who provide a strong and diverse set of capabilities who through their inclusive approach support the development and growth of the school

What will we do?

- Review current school leadership structure and responsibilities including the TSSF Council, School Management and College of Teachers to ensure functional clarity and relevance
- Review current policies and procedures to ensure alignment to Steiner philosophy, school values as well as legal requirements
- Where required undertake external and independent reviews of current compliance based activities such as WHS and Risk
- Identify Systems which need to be implemented to improve professionalism, retention and feedback across the school such as HR, Enrolment and other Finance systems
- Establish stronger governance and performance reporting to enable TSSF Council, School Management and College of Teachers to effectively act on their duties & responsibilities

How will we know we are making progress?

- New School Leadership model in place by February 2017 (TBC)
- A full set of School Policies and Procedures are in place and accessible to appropriate stakeholders (via website and other means) and a schedule for review is established by (TBD)

- Improved outcomes of organisational wide risk assessment including safety, educational, financial and legal (TBC) and other compliance assessments
- Feedback from the Annual School survey demonstrates an improved level of school performance with respect to those activities outlined above
- Revised Strategic & Operational reporting established

GOAL NO. 5

ACHIEVE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH FINANCIALLY RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE AS WELL AS THE IDENTIFICATION OF INNOVATIVE NEW IDEAS

What will success look like?

- A good balance between conservative financial management and appropriate resourcing and spending to ensure opportunities that lead to growth are encouraged and supported
- Strong level of growth in enrolments in the early years as well as retention throughout the remainder of students schooling lives
- A school program that is run on the basis that there is a clear understanding of its impact on the overall financial sustainability of Tarremah
- An ongoing focus on the identification of new and alternative sources of income for the school
- Strong cost management and robust fee collection that delivers a 4-6% net operating margin

What will we do?

- Maintain a rolling 5-year financial model that identifies target student number and fee levels as well as key financial sustainability indicators
- Review current funding model with consideration for potential impacts of changes in government funding, increases in school fees and alternate funding sources
- Review and revise current financial management systems and capabilities and develop and resource an effective business management model
- Undertake a series of projects to identify alternate sources of income and opportunities to grow the school in a sustainable way including (but not limited to):
 - A feasibility study on long day care
 - A review of current kindergarten, playgroup and childcare opportunities
 - A feasibility study on the leasing of premises to enable the school to provide services in different locations
- Maintain student enrolment numbers that ensure full utilisation of available School capacity

- Maintain fee levels that reflect the cost of education while representing good value for the educational services and facilities provided
- Ensure recurrent funding is being maintained after future reviews at a level that ensures student fees do not require even larger increases;
- Manage School running costs, particularly related to staffing (approx. 80% of the schools total operating cost), to ensure a surplus of income over costs that provides an adequate safety net and allows for investment in the development of School resources and capabilities
- Maintain debt at a sustainable level
- Undertake a review of all existing and planned infrastructure to determine improvement plan and associated ongoing maintenance and capital costs i.e. Artist in Residence Studio, ECC Extensions, Library/Learning Centre, Welcoming area .

5 Year Targets for Student Enrolments and Operating Surpluses

	2017 Actual	2018 Target	2019 Target	2020 Target	2021 Target
Student Enrolments (Prep - 10)	230	240	250	260	270
Net Operating Margin (Prep - 10)	1.0%	1.5%	2.0%	2.5%	3.0%

How will we know we are making progress?

- Achieve an average .5% annual increase in operating surplus for Prep to Year 10 operations. (TBC)
- Achieved a target of 270 students in prep to year 10 by 2021
- Completion of infrastructure development projects
- Established 2-3 new incomes streams by 2021
- Maintenance of a 4-6% net operating margin

GOAL NO. 6

CREATE MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS WITH OUR COMMUNITY AND PROMOTE THE UNIQUE EDUCATIONAL OFFERING OF OUR SCHOOL

What will success look like?

- Strong connections with local, national and international Steiner movement
- A broad community based program of anthroposophy-orientated activities which address local, global and societal issues
- Recognised for the unique and valuable educational offering and able to attract both students and the very best teachers and staff
- Recognised by the Steiner community as a model for Steiner education within Australia

What will we do?

- Enhance the community skills program so that community, gardening, beekeeping, art, craft and music can flourish in partnership between the community and the school
- Actively support Steiner Education Australia in its efforts to raise the profile and credibility of Steiner education, including extensive contribution to the development of the National Curriculum Framework.
- Actively engage with Association of Independent Schools Tasmania to build Tarremah's local profile
- Continue to build on the marketing and promotion of the school to increase awareness of our existence and the appeal of the school to target communities and ensure more focused promotional spending
- Strengthen the promotion of Tarremah within targeted student catchment areas including Kingborough, Hobart and the Huon Valley, focusing particularly on the achievements of the school in producing community leaders.
- Review the potential for partnerships with other educational institutions which may provide greater learning opportunities for all students as well as enabling learning transitions i.e. UTAS, Friends, Taroona High School

How will we know we are making progress?

- Greater awareness of Tarremah in the broader community (as identified through community focus groups or studies)

- Participation of School Management Team and other staff members in events and activities outside of the school that relate to both Steiner education, education in general and other community events i.e. Sustainability Expos, UTAS 'Thought Leadership' Events
- Response to marketing activity i.e. participation in school tours, website activity etc...
- Higher number of applicants for roles based on increased awareness and understanding of the unique value of the school and the Steiner approach to education