

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



CHRYSALIS STEINER SCHOOL
educating the whole child

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CONTEXT

Message from key school bodies

Report from the Chair to the Chrysalis Association

Role of the Board

Beyond appointment of the school executive, the Chrysalis board are not involved in the day to day running of the school. Instead, our focus is on overall governance and the strategic direction of the school.

The Chrysalis Board had a busy year in 2023 with a few key priority areas, the main one being our high school. Alongside this, our focus was on navigating the ongoing societal and economic change and ensuring the school is set up to continue delivering high quality education into the future.

We are always looking for new people interested in being a part of the Chrysalis board. We would encourage anyone interested in learning more about what being part of the Chrysalis board involves to reach out for a conversation.

High School

We had 20 students graduate from our Year 10 class in 2023, the first time in 17 years. A big congratulation to Nathan for teaching this class all the way from kindergarten. The first time a teacher has gone from Kindergarten to year 10 with the same class in the history of the school. Quite the achievement!

The board spent significant time throughout the year exploring options for a permanent high school site. We explored the purchase of land and building our own facilities, purchasing sites with existing approvals and facilities, and partnering with other nearby schools.

On top of this, we also needed to find a more suitable temporary home for years 9 and 10 and were pleased to secure the lease for the site at Hyde St – by all measures a significant upgrade on the previous arrangements!

Ultimately the most feasible option for the long term proved to be further development at our Thora campus. We are currently developing plans to build additional classrooms to house years 9 and 10 on site, with the goal of this being completed ready for the 2026 school year.

Chrysalis Teachers

As a board we highly value our teachers and the work they do. One of the consistent matters discussed at our meetings throughout the year was the national teacher shortage and the impact on Chrysalis. Throughout the year we discussed different approaches to ensuring we continue to attract and retain an incredible group of staff passionate about the education we provide at the school. We made a number of decisions throughout the year to support this including matching the raise given to teachers at state schools.

Collective Leadership

In September the Board and school leadership came together to attend a Collective Leadership workshop with Virginia Moller. Throughout the two days we explored how we can come together as a school community to work towards shared goals for the school, and our part to play in this as board members.

It was a thought-provoking program and we have seen the benefit of this coming through in the feedback from the school leadership team.

Finance

One of the key functions of the board is providing financial governance and ensuring the school remains financially viable. In 2023 the school returned a surplus of \$110,000 and maintained a strong balance sheet. This puts us in a good position as we look to finalise our permanent plans for years 9 and 10.

Thank you

I would like to recognise all the work put in by the Chrysalis board in 2023. Many of them put in significant personal time assisting the school with things like establishing the new high school site, developing plans for the Thora campus and researching suitable school vehicles. A big thank you for all your time and commitment throughout the year.

On behalf of the board, I would like to extend our gratitude and recognition of Lisa and Jeremy for their leadership throughout the year, and to all the staff at Chrysalis who work hard every day to make the school the amazing place it is.

Finally, a big thank you to the wider school community and a reminder that we would love to hear from any prospective future board members!

We look forward to continuing to work alongside you all through the coming year as we finalise our plans for years 9 and 10 and commence building their permanent home.

Rowan Lennox

Board Chair

May 2024 AGM



Report from Head of the School

*Help me,
Become the person I have always longed to be.
Give me the strength to serve,
And the knowledge to know where I am needed,
The perception to step forward when the time is right,
And the tact to withdraw when the job is done.
May I be true to my ideals,
Flexible in the ebb and flow of daily life,
Yet unswerving in upholding the truth.
May I find joy in my interactions with others
And practise kindness in the face of our mutual shortcomings.
Help me see the eternal in each human being,
Thus, releasing the goodness that this world so desperately needs.
I offer myself as an instrument
Of the higher intentions of this school.
For I believe in the future.*

from Initiative: a Rosicrucian path of leadership Torin Finser

I appreciate the support for Chrysalis School and the greater Chrysalis community. We can have all of the ideas in the world but it takes courage and will to share these ideas and to then put them into action.

Our wins in 2023:

- The Lodge building for Class 9/10.
- Our biggest class ever to complete Class 10.
- Nathan – successfully guided his class through from Class 1 to 10. This is a massive feat to accomplish and a rarity in Waldorf Schools right around the world.
- The new Story of Life camp.
- The Class 9 Camel camp and the student sharings with parents post trip of poetry, photos and songs composed on the trip.
- Hiring a specialist English teacher for Stage 5.
- The Arnhem Land trip and Arnhem Land Community project – Class 10.
- Our RAP work in Term 4 in which a staff member was able to dedicate a large portion of their time to forging important community connections with different Gumbaynggirr mob.
- Hiring a full-time Music Coordinator. This full time position will grow our future music program from the bottom up in future years to greatly strengthen our entire music program.
- Upholding a high level education system whilst we have been lacking a full staff team and Leadership Team.
- We reached over 245 students which was a record number within the school.
- Accreditation for Stage 5.
- Record of School Achievement for our future Class 10 students.
- Hiring a Language teacher to work with Class 6-10 students.
- NCIS participation and success in Athletics, Swimming, Mountain Biking, Surfing, Tennis and Cross Country.
- Duke of Edinburgh silver awards given to several Class 10 students.
- Work Experience – twice in the year. This is the first time we have run Work Experience at Chrysalis.
- End of Year Music concert back at the Memorial Hall. Not only was this a huge celebration of our staff and students, but an important way to come together as a community.
- Class 1-10 Play performances
- A full Class 2-10 camp program

- Whole School Festival participation
- Six Winter Festivals
- Increasing the Learning Support FTE from 0.6 to 1.0.
- Increasing Teacher Aide hours across the school.
- Hiring a High School Professional mentor to step in when needed.
- Hiring a Movement and Drama specialist to help with Plays and Festivals predominantly.
- The School App. is now in full swing.
- Increasing the FTE for office administration has helped enormously.
- Strings Concert in Term 3.
- Battle of the Bands.
- Busking licences for Class 4.
- Chrysalis School became a pilot school in the Collective Leadership Circle work.
- Managing an incredible amount of moving parts all of the time.



Our challenges and learning this year: For many of the Chrysalis staff team, 2023 was the toughest year we have ever experienced in the business. Whilst we have moved past Covid, floods and fires, we still dealt with the impacts; a ramped up world of social media, heightened anxiety across the board, mental health challenges, working with an 'us' and 'them' culture that was created, extreme teacher fatigue due to three years of being responsive to these challenges and a national teacher shortage as a result. At Chrysalis we have been short on staff for the past three years. We have had a record number of new staff that have had to be trained and supported and this year we have had a record number of sick days across our staff and student body. This increases the load and pressure for all of our staff and student absences impact our teachers to be able to carry out their teaching job in a way in which they can feel like they are teaching 'effectively'. This then impacts job satisfaction and their ability to carry out their job requirements. On top of this the

Chrysalis community have had to work with the insidious nature of vaping, easy access to drugs within the community, as well as how to navigate and work with screens and mobile phone use for our young people. This has been a massive extra load to navigate through and, perhaps the most challenging aspect here, has been the lack of partnership from some of our key stakeholders. As teachers and leaders we have also needed to pioneer our Class 9/10 program. A program just doesn't build itself and we have relied on key High School staff to work together and output a huge amount of hours to ensure that this program is successful and will continue over the coming years.

The learnings we have gained through these challenges include:

- We need to invest a bucket load more time into sharing and celebrating with staff and parents what we do well.
- A parent sharing with staff and students needs to happen after every major camp.
- Hiring an Outdoor Education Teacher as a Camp Coordinator. This position will also hold camp related Main Lessons and take a huge strain off the Leadership team.
- Ensuring that there are enough Leadership support systems in place so that the Education Director and Business Operations Manager can spend necessary time on: working with the Board, visioning, putting a Strategic Plan in place and implementing it.
- Increasing the level of Leadership support within the school to ensure that each class is able to be more supported in their areas of need as well as ensuring that all roles can be made sustainable within the school.
- Systems in place in which all processes and policies are carried out.
- All roles within the school are clearly defined.
- Hiring or restructuring staff responsibilities to ensure more behaviour support and follow up to the Education Director role.
- Hiring or restructuring of staff to ensure more HR support to the Education Director and Business Operations Manager's roles.
- Assistant Education Director role and Primary Coordinator role to be separated.
- Learning Support role to be Full Time.
- Marketing role to be given integrity so that we can not only advertise to incoming families but better share what we do with current families to help keep enrolments.
- More staff training to be better equipped to support behaviour management.
- More teachers for RFF to ensure sustainability.
- Staff wages to be at the industry standard or higher.
- More time given to each job to be able to do it well.
- Rhythm and routine to underlie everything.
- Ensuring that well-being remains a focus in everything that we do.

We continue to work with the Board on developing a Leadership framework which meets the needs of our growing school. In order to grow this we became a pilot school in the Collective Leadership Circle work facilitated by Dr. Virginia Moller. This work will take a 360 degree snapshot of our Leadership capabilities amongst the school in order to strengthen and grow Leadership capacity in all staff. With the changes in the world around us, we realise that Chrysalis may also need to change in some ways in order to meet the needs of our staff, students and parents. Collective Leadership unpacks the processes by which people come together to pursue change. Within these processes, participants jointly envision what the school can be and make the changes within in order to better serve the school. It also works on the premise that one leader cannot address all of the needs of the school and all of the staff come together to use their strengths creatively to address problems that one leader cannot do alone.

This work has been commenced with the Board as well as the Leadership Team and in 2024 we will share this work with our entire staff team. Underlying any change or "important" conversation in the school we are striving to hold the following 3 values in balance: Dialogue, Agency and Accountability.

We welcomed many new staff in 2023:

Lisa Kingma – Playgroup Coordinator
 Kirsty Dunn – Class 1 Teacher
 Alli Barton – Class 2 Teacher
 Allison Shirt – Office Administration
 Katrina Effern – Office Administration
 Howard Chaston – Music Coordinator
 Melissa Kerl – Movement Teacher
 Naomi Lishman – French Teacher
 Tamaryn Frauenstein – Class Aide and Casual Teacher
 Coral Vicario-Johnstone – Class Aide
 Sam Cook – Class Aide
 Colina Logar – Class Aide
 Aven Preston – Class Aide
 Kathy Kyle – Systems Administration
 Natalie Bak – Office Administration
 Josh Szabo – Music Tutor
 Aly Patmore – Music Tutor
 Lily Lethbridge – Music Tutor
 Jason Lowe – Music Tutor
 Michele Donovan – Class 6 support and Acting Learning Support Coordinator
 Ana Luz Camacho Anderson – Morning Star Teacher
 Neil Anderson – Stage 5 Maths Teacher
 Arlene Fletcher – Music Teacher

We farewelled the following staff in 2023:

Amber Tarling
 James Ross
 Neil Anderson
 Ana Luz Camacho Anderson
 Kirsty Dunn
 Katrina Effern
 Jacqui Dutson
 Kiva Stephens-Ladd (maternity leave)
 Dot Hogenbirk
 Julie Williams
 Bea Lopes
 Andrea Hearn

James: Your dedication to the Music Department must be acknowledged here. Thank you for helping to grow the High School music program and bring High School bands into being. Thank you too for creating the incredible Bluesfest initiative which will remain your legacy within the school.

Jacqui: Your service to Chrysalis has been outstanding. You have contributed generously and wisely for 18 years making a positive difference to the lives of many. Your legacy of supporting inclusion, the Learning Wings program, and meeting the learning needs of all of our students will be carried through in our daily practice at Chrysalis forever more.

Dot: Thank you so much for your dedication to the Chrysalis library program. Through your drive and initiative you have introduced both a senior and junior library to Chrysalis and introduced a passion for books and a love of reading to countless students as well as being instrumental in establishing our Book Week program.

The Chrysalis Leadership Team: To Cath, Jeremy, Nathan, Howard, Claudia, Jacqui and Michele – thank you for giving a huge chunk of your life to serve Chrysalis school and its students. Thank you for always turning up with a smile, giving your best and bringing warmth, creativity, courage and strength to every situation. Thank you for always believing in our incredible school and striving to make it a better place always.

The Board: Thank you for your extraordinary service in helping our students thrive and fulfil their potential. The Chrysalis Board makes a powerful difference through selfless acts of service and dedication. It can be a thankless task and we appreciate the many hours of deliberation and striving in order to best serve Chrysalis School.

Thank you to Nathan for the past six years of service on the Board. During this time you have brought about Leadership change within the school, helped Chrysalis to successfully ride through Covid, been a major catalyst in the current Class 9/10 initiative and most importantly brought stability. Thank you for your very important work.

My final thanks and acknowledgement goes to the Chrysalis students who bring meaning, joy and love to our daily tasks.

Warmly,
Lisa

Lisa O'Donnell
Education Director
May 2024 AGM



Report from the Chair of College

Our College has continued to strive in these times. Staff well-being is at the forefront of our work and staff are feeling the pressure of increased workloads as much more is asked of them from families.

Our College artistic activities have been varied. We decided to utilise the talents of our wonderful staff to draw upon the many talented individuals that we already have among our College members. Some artistic activities that were brought through 2023 included: geometry, singing, rhythm, painting, blackboard drawing, clay, singing recording sessions with Howard and Arlene, bush dancing with Melissa, and knitting. All of these activities not only help us to learn, but unite us as colleagues on a campus that, geographically speaking, keeps us quite isolated from one another. In our endeavours to create more connection in 2023, we identified the need to come together in morning verse each Monday prior to the school day commencing, which has commenced in 2024.

We had some wonderful visitors come and share their wisdom and knowledge of Steiner education. Melanie Deefholts came a number of times to share communication strategies through the lens of virtues, biographies, senses and developmental stages. She was here for the children and parents as well. As said above, teacher well-being is a big part of our work and Louise Stewart has come to share foot baths, healing packs, remedies and conversations to support our work. She has also shared her knowledge on self-care for us and our classes.

In 2023, College discussed wanting more practical colleges where we discussed what we did with each year group in regards to main lessons, artistic endeavours, and stories. We spent time in some of the classrooms sharing our knowledge, especially for the teachers who are new to Steiner educations. We also began delving into festivals and explored why we do festivals in Steiner education and anthroposophically studied the seasons.

Anyone can read the Steiner Curriculum, and easily work out 'what' we teach, but really delving into the reasons why we do what we do, is an essential underpinning for any Steiner school and for any class teacher who wants to teach anthroposophically. Likewise, enabling teachers to better articulate this understanding to interested parents. I believe the culture of our College is quite rare in that there is a very tangible desire to read and discuss anthroposophical concepts. The discussions and insights have been extremely fruitful. I have spoken to numerous College Chairs, and members from other schools over the years, who have expressed a degree of despair at the lack of interest in anthroposophical matters amongst their colleagues. I believe a culture of inquisitiveness and open-mindedness exists at our school and we are continuing to be that way as we find different ways of exploring anthroposophy.

In College we have explored working on our reconciliation vision and program. We have developed a focus group and initiated a College meeting once a term, where we discuss how this looks in the classrooms, and how to embed this school-wide with all staff.

As a College we have begun to unpack our values and work together to create new ones to support us as a whole school and share it in the wider community in order to be clear about who we are, our boundaries and what our behaviour system is in line with our values.

There is always much to learn as teachers and a school. The times we are in are moving and changing but we need to support each other as well as give and receive support from the board, families and communities.

Catherine Van Schie
College Chair
May 2024 AGM

“The healthy social life is found, when in the mirror of each human soul the whole community finds its reflection and when in the community the virtue of each one is living”
– Rudolf Steiner

Contextual information about the school

Steiner (or Waldorf) education is based on the philosophy of Austrian philosopher, scientist and educator Rudolf Steiner. It has stood the test of 100 years and is practiced in over 1000 schools worldwide, including more than 50 in Australia. Chrysalis School is an active member of our peak professional body, Steiner Education Australia (SEA). The curriculum fulfils all the requirements of NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and offers the children the scope and sequence to develop skills and understanding in all the key learning areas in a deep and enduring way.

Chrysalis School was founded in 1982 as a non-denominational and co-educational school for Rudolf Steiner Education. We currently offer classes for children aged Kindergarten through Year 10. We are situated in the Thora Valley on a spectacular site of 10 hectares, twenty minutes from Bellingen and 25 minutes from the Dorrigo Plateau. It would be hard to find a more beautiful learning environment for children and through our creative and dedicated building program in our pioneering years; we have a campus that features buildings of exceptional architectural beauty.

The educational philosophy is based on the insight into the needs and consciousness of growing children on many different levels: social and emotional, creative, academic, physical and spiritual. By taking into account the developing human beings’ spiritual nature, we honour and develop both what is unique and universal in each person.

A distinctive feature of Steiner primary education is the role of the class teacher. The teacher meets the children in Class 1 and together they share the journey through the curriculum. It is recognised that long-term relationships between a teacher and the class have lasting effects on learning and meeting the individual needs of each child. The growing child experiences a greater depth of learning when authority is established with someone they know and trust. This relationship between teacher and child provides continuity and a strong sense of security through the middle phase of childhood.

Vision

Chrysalis School is a centre for excellence amongst Australian Steiner schools in the delivery of Steiner Education in Australia, specifically in fostering an active understanding and practical application of education as indicated by the published works of the late Dr. Rudolf Steiner. Chrysalis is regarded as a shining example of the best on offer from independent schools being both financially sound and pedagogically stable. It has developed an international reputation.

The School reflects the changing needs of education within Australia whilst maintaining the Steiner philosophy that underpins the spirit of the school. This is carried out in a manner consistent with the ethos.

Mission

To expand and enrich the opportunities of Steiner Education available to the school community, providing a compelling and attractive educational model for parents through a comprehensive curriculum.

Chrysalis School Ethos Statement

The activities of Chrysalis School arise out of the impulse of Anthroposophy and are guided by the indications given by Rudolf Steiner for the renewal of education in the 21st century.

The ethos of Chrysalis School encompasses the following:

- a. **Anthroposophy.** We endeavour that the principles of anthroposophy are alive within the school. Anthroposophy is the wellspring from which Steiner education springs.
- b. **Community.** We support the development of community amongst students, parents, teachers, friends and those involved with the school. We endeavour to integrate our school within the greater Bellingham community.
- c. **Respect.** We honour and respect the indigenous people, the Gumbaynggirr Nation, and the rights of pupils, parents, employees and stakeholders of the school.
- d. **Best practice.** We work out of current best practice for schooling in accordance with the indications given by Rudolf Steiner and with due consideration to other current educational research.
- e. **Professionalism.** We are at all times a professional school in all facets of work.
- f. **Consensus.** We operate out of consensus, in the appropriate school forums.
- g. **Collaboration.** We work in the spirit of collaboration with the various bodies of the school.
- h. **Fairness and Due Process.** In social, interpersonal and professional interactions, we operate out of fairness, natural justice and the use of due process.



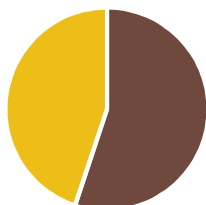
Characteristics of our student body

Of the 227.6 full-time equivalent students enrolled in 2023, 55% are boys and 45% girls. 14% of our students have a language background other than English and 6% identify as Indigenous. For further student information please see <http://www.myschool.edu.au>.

| | High School (Class 7 – 10) | Primary School (Classes 1 – 6) | Kindergarten (RS) |
|--------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Male | 46 | 65 | 9 |
| Female | 29 | 65 | 8 |
| Total | 75 | 130 | 17 |

Gender balance

■ Boys
(55%)



Priority areas for improvement

Chrysalis is accredited with NESA to provide classes from K-10.

With the addition of Class 10 in 2023, and an uptake in enrolments in other years, the School achieved its highest ever enrolments and saw our numbers rise above 240 for the first time. The initial operating spaces for Stage 5 in town presented early challenges. At one stage Chrysalis was teaching out of four different campuses before consolidating back to three. Our Board and Management team have plans in place to build on the Thora campus in the next 24 months so as to create teaching spaces to take up our increased capacity.

Our increase in enrolled students comes with an increase in administration. To accommodate this Chrysalis has put on an extra administration employee and has taken a focus on our operations to develop and refine our systems and further streamline our work practices.

In 2022, the School engaged Edstart to assist with our school fee collection and debtor management. We commenced conservatively with Edstart and in 2023 increased the number of families who engaged with Edstart as their payment plan option. This has been very successful in mitigating the number of families who fall behind in fee payments as well as providing a framework and path forward to those families who were in financial arrears with the school. We will continue our relationship with Edstart and offer this service to all families who will benefit from their flexible payment plans.

In order to better support our teachers we employed a Movement Teacher in 2023. This position not only supported teachers in Festivals and Plays, but also provided our primary staff with extra Release from Face to Face Teaching. This increase in release from face to face provided staff with more time to meet parents and colleagues. We aim to provide even more release from face to face teaching next year in order to make the job more sustainable.



Sustainability and Staff Wellbeing has been one of our priority areas for improvement. In 2023, we secured a school counsellor for one day per week in order to provide a service for students, staff and parents. We also set up termly visits with Melanie Deefholts from EducareDo as well as the option to have advice/debrief sessions for parents and staff via Zoom.

In 2023, it was a priority to establish stronger connections with our local Gumbaynggirr peoples. Our commitment to this plan was put into practice through the employment of one of our staff members for four days per week in Term 4. This time was dedicated to making and strengthening connections, renaming each of our camps to match the local area names, ensuring that each of our camps have a local cultural connection to place, people and country, and integrating First Nations culture into all aspects of our curriculum.

Within our College of Teachers we worked hard to bring about a Collective study and through this study we resolved to ensure that in all aspects of our School Life we would balance: dialogue, agency and accountability. This conversation became the catalyst behind the School Collective Leadership Program in which we embarked on in 2023. We are hoping that this work enables a greater understanding of Leadership within our school as well as creating more capacity through a better understanding of our Roles and Responsibilities and better Systems within the school as well as a clear Systems Awareness.

Within the Education systems at Chrysalis in 2023, we made improvements to creating more Maths practice times for students, we created more resources to support our intervention programs, and provided our teachers and students with more Teacher Aide support.

We are well aware that there are still many improvements needed to be made to better our school. We believe that with our new Leadership Team, we have made significant improvements within a short amount of time and we are striving hard to put systems in place to ensure continued improvements in 2024.



Actions taken to promote respect and responsibility

Respect and Responsibility are two of our Core Values at Chrysalis and are key to all of our programs and each of our classes. Positive Relationships through Positive Connections are also key to our work and we are constantly striving to foster and grow Respect and Responsibility out of these daily practices.

Circle Time and Restorative Practices: Each of our classes from Morning Star to Class 10 start their day in Circle. This Circle Time is a conscious practice to promote and explicitly grow Respect for self and each other and it requires the group to take Responsibility for each other as well as for themselves within the group. Respect and Responsibility Circle Time includes: morning singing within class and within year levels, weekly assembly, homeroom and PDHPE lessons to teach and grow Respect and Responsibility at an appropriate level to match the Developmental Stage of the Child, performing a Class Play together, performing Festivals together, performing music together, performing at Assembly together, studying and learning together, daily work by the group and the teacher to 'hear' and 'see' each member of the class, as well as daily time to share, address needs and concerns, reflect, have 'fun' together and create better practices continuously.

Restorative Practices: When conflict arises at Chrysalis between members of the class group or between a teacher and class member, a trained Restorative Practice Facilitator from the school will hold a Restorative session. These sessions are held until respect and understanding is gained by each of the participants involved and through this understanding and ability to see 'the other' each member involved is eventually able to take responsibility for their own actions.

Student Voice and Additional Student Responsibilities: With Chrysalis extending from Class 9 to Class 10 in 2023, we worked hard to bring to life our students' voices within the community and the voice of the student community back into the school. The Duke of Edinburgh award facilitated this through voluntary community hours in which the students needed to complete, student liaising with the Arnhem Land fundraising, students running the green waste service at the local Bellingen Show, students participating in two lots of Work Experience throughout the year, as well as full student participation in several local community Student Leadership workshops. Daily Class Circles and Reflections with their Pastoral Care Teacher also helped facilitate and capture the Student Voice within the school.

Student Engagement through Camps and School Projects: In 2023 we increased our Outdoor Education program along with our School Projects to ensure that all of our students have an abundance of opportunities to become Respectful and Responsible students who will go out into the World as Respectful and Responsible citizens of the World.

Two of our new camps included: a 23 day camp to Arnhem Land and the Northern Territory as well as a 15 day Flinders Ranges Camel Camp. The Arnhem Land camp was initiated to establish and grow; connections with the Gunbalanya and Mikinkg Valley communities, for the Class 10 students to engage in a 12 month fundraising project to raise enough money to fund and then build a community identified project for Mikinkg Valley and, most importantly, for the students to develop respect and appreciation for another culture and way of life, and take responsibility to make a positive difference in the world. This fundraising project raised \$17,000 and 20 students were involved for the 12 month period reaching out far and wide outside of school time to grow understanding for Indigenous Australians. At Gunbalanya, the students spent time at the school and, in Mikinkg Valley, the students built a grave for an Elder. It was a huge success and after the Arnhem Land camp, Chrysalis students have been invited back in the years to come.



The Camel Camp idea was born out of the idea for Class 9 students to learn to become cameleers and develop their animal husbandry skills over a long journey experience. All of the students really loved this trip and took on the challenge. Students were responsible for packing down and packing up their camel each day as well as doing all of the necessary jobs to look after the animals each day to ensure that their wellbeing was looked after. All of the students fell in love with the camels and found new respect for this large animal, the incredibly beautiful but harsh desert environment, as well as for each other. Some students were more natural with the camels than others and this was one of the great joys that unfolded along the way.



In Class 3, the students took on a major building project in which the students worked with their Class Teacher and parents to complete a chicken coup. This project also enabled the children to learn animal husbandry skills, a love of chickens as well as building skills, working together in community, learning that everyone always has an important part to play in such projects and finally taking responsibility for the chickens on a daily basis.

Our Outdoor Education program starts in Class 2 and goes right through to Class 10. Each of these camps foster community and respect for self, each other and the environment with the intention of enabling all of our students to intrinsically grow a want in them to become moral citizens who want to make a positive difference to the world.

Reconciliation Action Plan: The Chrysalis RAP really took off in 2023 through active community engagement and connection. This important work encouraged three main local elders to work with students and staff within our school and forge the way for a stronger future partnership.

Vertical Relationships: Buddy reading and Peer mentoring has always been an important part of our learning at Chrysalis. In 2023, we grew more Vertical relationships within the school that encouraged buddy reading across the classes, debating, running educational feedback sessions, along with peer mentoring and we explicitly encouraged older students to run social activities, games and sport sessions for the younger children. This was a huge success and in one of the classes we had one of these older students attend a younger buddy class school camp. This was a resounding success and we will look at doing this more in the future.



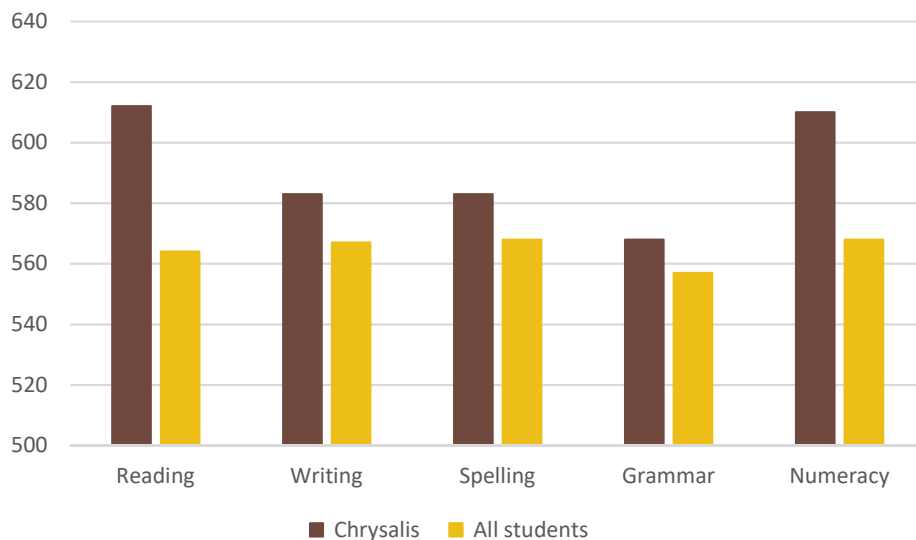
OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

National literacy and numeracy testing

In 2023, NAPLAN (National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy) was offered nation-wide to all schools. In 2023, parents continued to exercise their choice of their child being withdrawn from the tests.

Student performance on NAPLAN is uploaded to the My School website and further details can be sought: <http://www.myschool.edu.au>.

Class 9 results 2023



Post-school destinations

In 2023 Chrysalis School had the biggest Class 10 to ever complete the year with 20 students. All students went on to further study.



STAFFING

Accreditation status

| Level of Accreditation | Number of teachers |
|---|--------------------|
| Conditional | 0 |
| Provisional Teacher | 4 |
| Proficient Teacher | 26 |
| Highly Accomplished Teacher (voluntary accreditation) | 0* |
| Lead Teacher (voluntary accreditation) | 0 |

*7 of our proficient teaching staff have achieved Experienced Teacher Accreditation through the AIS

Workforce composition

In 2023 the school was led by Lisa O'Donnell, the Education Director. Lisa is supported by a Leadership Team, comprising the Business Operations Manager and portfolio holders of Primary, Secondary, Music, and Learning Support, as well as the Chair of the College of Teachers.

Staffing levels for 2023 are shown in the following table:

| Position | Number | FTE* |
|--------------------------|--------|------|
| Education Director | 1 | 1.0 |
| Classroom Teachers | 27 | 21.6 |
| Classroom Assistants | 22 | 10.0 |
| Administration | 5 | 4.2 |
| Building and Maintenance | 2 | 1.2 |

* FTE (Full Time Equivalent)

In 2023, 77% of our staff were female and 23% male.



STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Attendance rates

| Class | 2023 Year Average |
|----------------|-------------------|
| River Song | 77.7% |
| Class 1 | 82.7% |
| Class 2 | 85.2% |
| Class 3 | 82.5% |
| Class 4 | 82.6% |
| Class 5 | 80.9% |
| Class 6 | 81.2% |
| Class 7 | 74.6% |
| Class 8 | 81.4% |
| Class 9 | 67.2% |
| Class 10 | 78.1% |
| School Average | 79.1% |



Managing student non-attendance

Attendance Policy and Procedures

RATIONALE

The School aims to ensure all students are attending school or accounted for on all scheduled school days. Regular school attendance gives students the best opportunity for education and social wellbeing.

PURPOSE

To describe the policy and procedures that our School uses to ensure accurate and consistent attendance recording, monitoring and follow up.

POLICY

- 1) Chrysalis Steiner School maintains a Register of Enrolments in accordance with the Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual.
- 2) The School monitors the daily attendance of all students at the School and maintains a daily Attendance Register in the Student Management Software (Sentral), including reasons for student absence.
- 3) Student absences from the School are identified and recorded in a consistent manner by each class teacher, using the attendance codes approved by the Minister for Education.
- 4) A student may be granted an exemption from attendance/enrolment, or a period of extended holiday, by the Education Director in some circumstances, in accordance with section 25 of the Education Act 1990.
- 5) Unexplained absences from school result in an email to the parents. This is followed up with a phone call from the Administration Officer later in the day to ascertain the reason for the absence.
- 6) Where a student has a poor record of school attendance, or where there is an unexplained absence of three consecutive school days, the Education Director shall be informed, who will discuss the matter with the class teacher and make efforts to contact the parents/guardians.
- 7) Where unacceptable school attendance is identified, the Education Director will arrange an interview with the parents/guardians to discuss the attendance issue. Any notes or action taken are recorded, as appropriate, in the Student Management Software (Sentral) with any hard copies in the student file.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Register of Enrolments

- 1) The Register of Enrolments is maintained, using the School's Student Management Software (Sentral), by the administration officer appointed to oversee Enrolments (Enrolments Officer).
- 2) The School collects the following information on enrolment forms. Information is updated each year:
 - a) Name, age and address of student;
 - b) Name and telephone number of parent(s)/guardian(s);
 - c) Date of enrolment; and
 - d) For students over 6 years old, previous school or pre-enrolment situation.

- e) The School also collects information as required by NESAs, including parent education levels and employment, student and household primary language and indigenous status.
- f) The Enrolments Officer stores the Enrolment Form in the student file.
- g) When a student leaves the School, their parents complete a Student Exit Form (Appendix B), which provides the following information:
 - i) Date of leaving the school; and
 - ii) The destination of the student after leaving the school.
- h) The information is recorded into the Register of Enrolments in the School's Student Management Software (Sentral).
- i) The Enrolments Officer processes the Student Exit Form and transfers the information into the Register of Enrolments.
- j) Where the destination of a student is unknown, the Education Director will send an email or letter to the Department of Education and Communities officer with home school liaison responsibilities, to notify them of the following information:
 - i) The student's full name, date of birth and last known address;
 - ii) The last date of attendance of the student;
 - iii) Name(s) and contact details of the parent(s)/guardian(s);
 - iv) An indication of the student's possible destination;
 - v) Any other information that may assist officers to locate the student; and
 - vi) Any known work health and safety risks associated with contacting the parent(s) or student.

Attendance Register

- a) Parents are expected to inform the School of their child's absence on the day of or before the absence, by a written, dated note, by phone, or by coming into the office with the information.
- b) Office staff enter absences using attendance codes approved by the Minister.
- c) Class teachers complete the roll each day for their class(es) in the school database (Sentral). Alternatively, the teacher may contact an administration officer to input the roll in Sentral.
- d) Attendance data is checked daily in Sentral by the Administration Officer.

The Minister's Attendance Codes

- a) It is the Education Director's responsibility to ensure that staff have access to the current attendance codes. The attendance codes approved by the Minister, as varied from time to time, can be found on the website of the NSW Association of Independent Schools (AIS). The AIS also sends email newsletters to advise member schools of any changes in these areas.
- b) The Education Director regularly instructs teachers at College meetings about how to record absences so that teachers are recording absences consistently.
- c) Teachers use the attendance codes to record:
 - i) The reason for a student's absence or the reason for a variation in attendance. A variation in attendance includes the student's attendance at school camps, school excursions or school sporting events.
 - ii) The duration of the absence or variation. For example, absent for the whole day ('A') or for part of a day ('Pa'). If absent for part of a day, the time of arrival or departure is recorded.

Exemptions from Attendance/Enrolment, and Extended Holidays

- a) These Procedures reflect the 'Exemption from School Procedures' published by the NSW Department of Education and Communities (School Attendance Policy PD 2005 0259). When deciding whether to grant an exemption, the Educational Director will refer to this publication.

- b) The Education Director has authority to grant exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12-month period for any one student. The Education Director may only grant an exemption where it has been clearly demonstrated by the parent(s)/guardian(s) that it is in the child's best interests in the short and long term. The Education Director must consider and fully explore alternatives to exemption. For example, the Education Director must consider whether it is in the child's best interests to access distance education. The Education Director may discuss options with the NSW Association of Independent Schools, to gain their input and guidance where appropriate.
- c) Parent(s)/guardian(s) may make an application for their child's exemption from attendance at school, by completing an Application for Exemption from Attendance at School. A copy is attached at Appendix A.
- d) On receipt of an application for exemption from attendance/enrolment at school, the Education Director may grant full-day exemptions due to:
 - (i) Exceptional circumstances (including the health of the student where sick leave or alternative enrolment is not appropriate);
 - (ii) The child being prevented from attending school because of a direction under the Public Health Act 2010;
 - (iii) Employment in the entertainment industry; or
 - (iv) Participation in elite arts or elite sporting events.
- e) For any other matter not covered, the Education Director must consult with NESA.
- f) On receipt of an application for exemption from attendance/enrolment at school, the Education Director may grant part-day exemptions for students participating in school based programs that have been approved by NESA.
- g) If parent(s)/guardian(s) request authority not to enrol their child, the Education Director will consider this as an application for exemption from enrolment. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may make an application for their child's exemption from enrolment by completing an Application for Exemption from Attendance at School (Appendix A). On receipt of an application, the Education Director may grant an exemption from enrolment at school where: (1) A child turns six on or after 1 October and is engaged in accredited pre-school education; or (2) The health, learning or social needs or disability of a child requires the child's continuation in an approved program.
- h) Where the Education Director decides to grant an exemption from attendance or enrolment in any of the above circumstances, and having regard to the factors in d) of these procedures, the Education Director will complete a Certificate for Exemption under Section 25 of the Education Act. The Education Director will provide the Certificate of Exemption to the parent(s)/guardian(s), and also place copies in the student file and in a 'Leave and Exemptions' file.
- i) The Education Director must not issue a Certificate of Exemption where child protection issues or risk of harm have been identified. Prior to granting a Certificate of Exemption the Education Director will conduct a risk assessment to identify and manage any child protection issues. Where the Education Director is aware of existing child protection concerns, the Education Director will consult the Director, Student Engagement and Interagency Partnerships prior to approval being granted.
- j) If the Education Director chooses to decline an application for exemption, a letter will be sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s), outlining the reasons for the decision.
- k) Holidays taken by students outside of school holiday periods are considered as absences. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may complete an Application for Exemption from Attendance at School, a copy of which is attached at Appendix A. On receipt of such an application, the Education Director may complete a Certificate of Extended Leave – Vacation/Travel, where the parent(s)/guardian(s) have demonstrated that the extended leave is in the student's best interests in the short and long term. The Education Director may attach conditions to the Certificate where appropriate, such as requirements to complete reading or homework tasks. The Education Director will provide the Certificate of Extended Leave to the parent(s)/guardian(s), who must produce it when requested by

police or other authorised attendance officers. The Education Director will place copies of the Certificate on the student file and in a 'Leave and Exemptions' file.

Unexplained Absences

- a) If a student is absent without an explanation, the teacher or delegated office staff member will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) by phone or email to ascertain why the student has been absent and to remind the parent of their responsibilities in relation to their child's attendance at school.
- b) If the office staff member is not able to contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) by email, a phone call will be made, asking why the child was absent and reminding them to let the school know the reasons each time their child is absent.
- c) All activity is recorded in the Student Management Software (Sentral).
- d) Following a response from the parent(s)/guardian(s), the teacher or the delegated office staff member will report to the Education Director if there are any significant issues in relation to the absence.
- e) The teacher and/or the Education Director make every attempt to address any issues of hindrance for the child attending school.

Poor Attendance Record

- a) If a student is absent for three or more consecutive school days, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) have been unable or unwilling to provide a satisfactory reason, the teacher or the Education Director contacts the parent(s)/guardian(s) to:
 - i) Outline the School's and the parent's responsibility in relation to attendance and attach a copy or give website of the document 'Compulsory School Attendance – Information for Parents', published by the NSW Department of Education and Communities, and available on the website of the NSW Association of Independent Schools.
 - ii) Outline the support the School can offer to assist the family in relation to attendance.
 - iii) Invite the parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting with the class teacher and Education Director, to discuss ways to resolve the situation.
- b) Notes of any meeting/s are also saved on the student file.

Where a student is absent for 30 days, the Education Director will access the mandatory reporters section of the Keep Them Safe website (www.KeepThemSafe.nsw.gov.au), to determine whether a report is required.

Unacceptable Attendance Record

- a) Unacceptable attendance is clear when the child is not being given an opportunity to receive the appropriate education.
- b) If the parent(s)/guardian(s) do not respond to the School's correspondence, or co-operate with the School's requests in relation to their child's attendance:
 - i) The Education Director will contact Teaching and Educational Standards (NESA) to notify that the parent(s)/guardian(s) do not appear to have fulfilled their responsibilities in relation to their child's attendance.
 - ii) The Education Director sends a letter, this time by registered mail, which informs the parent(s)/guardian(s) that NESA has been notified because of the lack of response or co-operation regarding the child's unexplained absence from school. A copy of this letter is stored on the student's file.
- c) In some cases, the Education Director will need to forward documentation to the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) officer with home school liaison responsibilities, outlining the student's attendance record, and the efforts made by the School. In this case, the Education Director will also advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the DEC has been contacted.

- d) At the end of this process, the Education Director will send an email or letter to the parent(s)/guardian(s), notifying them that the child's enrolment at the School is no longer valid.

Storage of Registers

- a) The designated administration officer ensures that the Register of Enrolments and the Register of Attendance in the school database (Sentral) is accurate and complete.

Archiving of Registers

- a) The Education Director will determine when the Register of Enrolments and the Attendance Registers (hard copies) will be disposed of.
- b) The Education Director will ensure that the Register of Enrolments hard copies will be held in a storage site at the school for at least 5 years. Electronic Register of Enrolments will be accessible in the school database (Sentral).
- c) The Education Director will ensure that Attendance Registers (hard copies) will be in a storage site at the school for at least 21 years after the last entry. Electronic Attendance Registers will be accessible in the school database (Sentral).



SCHOOL POLICIES

On the School website there are links to Chrysalis Policies that relate to the student's life within the learning community of the school, as well as policies concerning the role of a parent within the school community. <https://chrysalis.nsw.edu.au/info/policies/>

Key policies and their links:

| Policy | Link on website |
|----------------------------|---|
| Child Protection Policy | chrysalis.nsw.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2024_Chrysalis-Child_Protection_Handbook.pdf |
| Anti-Bullying Policy | chrysalis.nsw.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/Anti-Bullying-Policy.docx.pdf |
| Discipline Policy | chrysalis.nsw.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/Discipline-Policy-2024.pdf |
| Managing Complaints Policy | chrysalis.nsw.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/Complaints-Policy-and-Procedures-2022.pdf |
| Enrolment Policy | chrysalis.nsw.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/Enrolment-Policy-2024.pdf |



STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION

During the year, Chrysalis continued the comprehensive, anonymous surveys of specific subsectors of the school. The intention from the Board and Management is to provide benchmark data from which to measure improvements against in future, whilst simultaneously getting some qualitative data from each group to help identify required areas of focus.

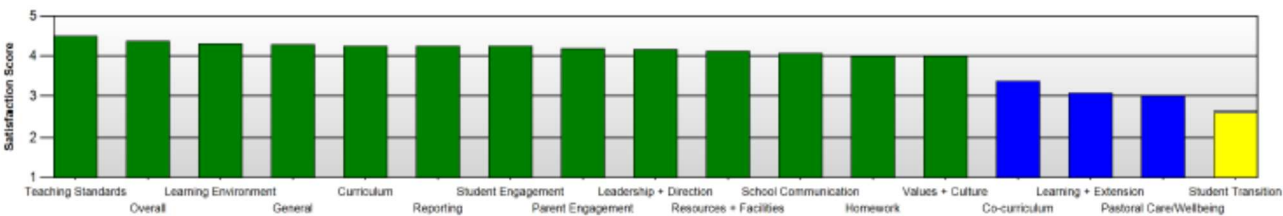
In 2023, for the general parent survey (K-1 to CI10) we had 92 out of a total of 254 eligible respondents, equating to a response rate of 36.2%. In 2020, we had 80 out of a total of 222 eligible respondents, equating to a response rate of 36%. Considering in both instances that eligible respondents included duplicates within families, the actual response rate is considerably higher. Importantly, in a busy year, the level of engagement has been maintained.

The general parent survey (K-1 to CI10) recorded an overall satisfaction score of 70% (3.48 out of 5). A key area rated as excellent was the Learning Environment, while Resources + Facilities, General, Reporting, Homework, Student Engagement, Curriculum, Parent Engagement, Values + Culture, Teaching Standards, Co-curriculum, School Communication, Leadership + Direction were all rated as good.

The final exit parent survey (CI10) responses were received from 8 out of a total of 35 eligible respondents. This equates to a response rate of 22.9%.

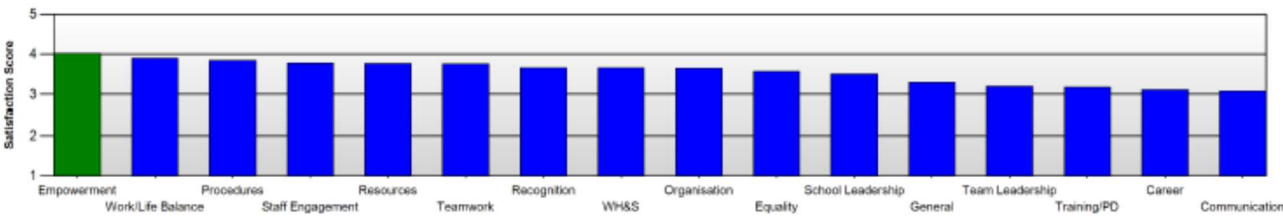
The final exit parent survey (CI10) recorded an overall satisfaction score of 80% (4.01 out of 5). Areas rated as excellent included Teaching Standards, Overall, Learning Environment, General, Curriculum, Reporting, Student Engagement, Parent Engagement, Leadership + Direction, Resources + Facilities, School Communication, Homework, Values + Culture. Areas rated as good included: Co-curriculum, Learning + Extension, Pastoral Care/Wellbeing.

Figure 1 shows the Summary of Response by Key Area for 2023 in the general parent survey.



Staff engagement and satisfaction was recorded at 71% (3.55 out of 5). Responses to the survey were received from 41 out of a total of 74 eligible respondents.

Figure 2 shows the Summary of Response by Key Area for 2023 for the staff survey.



FINANCIAL INFORMATION

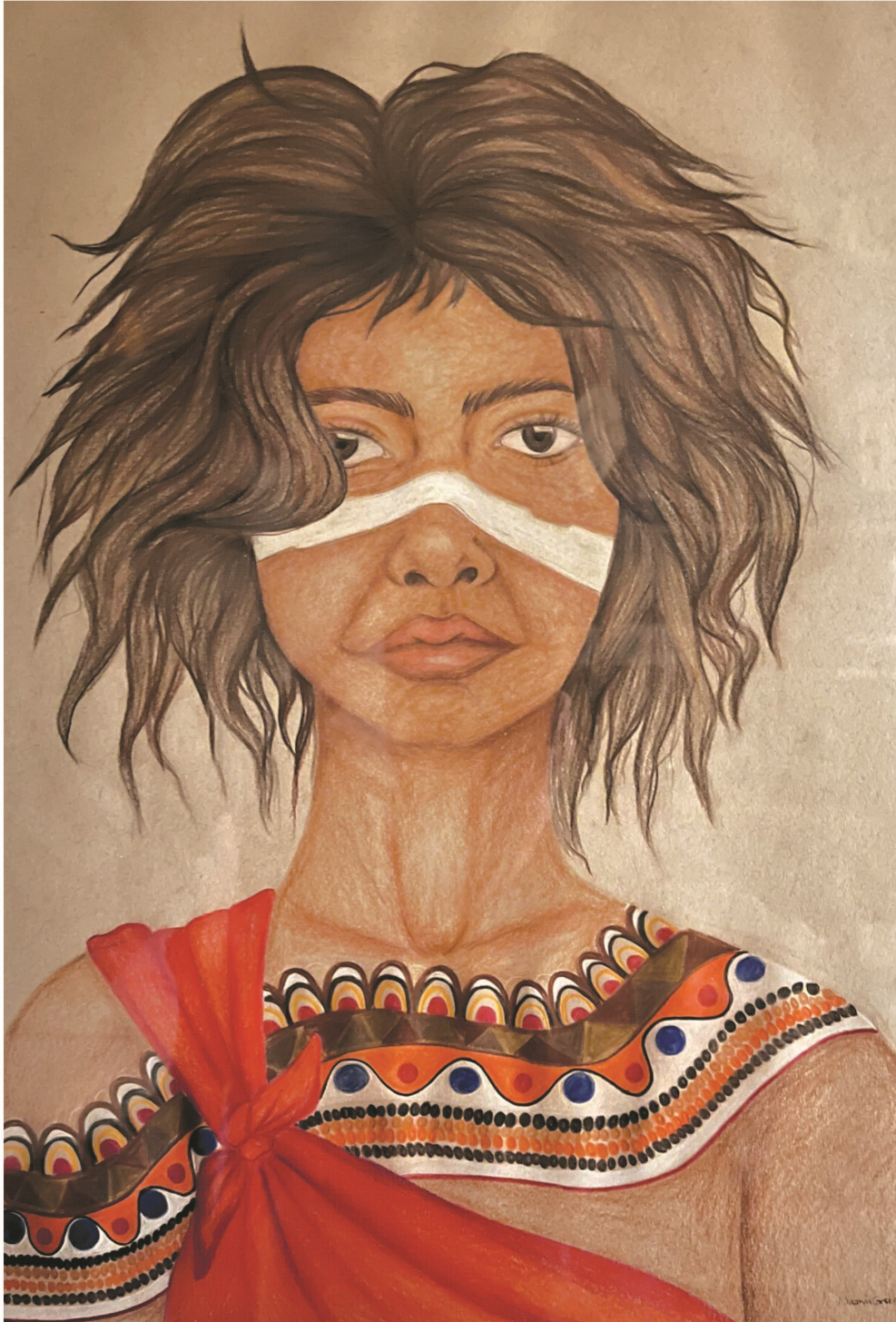
| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Recurrent Income | |
| Fees and Charges | \$1,591,258 |
| Commonwealth Government Recurrent Funding | \$3,593,456 |
| State Government Recurrent Grants | \$909,332 |
| AIS Grants | \$11,679 |
| Finance income - interest | \$24,838 |
| Other income – incl. Bad Debts recovered | \$43,343 |
| | <u>\$6,173,906</u> |
| Recurrent Expenditure | |
| Employee benefits expense | \$4,706,042 |
| Depreciation and amortisation expense | \$131,635 |
| Teaching materials and resources | \$464,944 |
| Occupancy costs | \$195,541 |
| Finance expense - interest | \$5,571 |
| Administrative expenses | \$531,213 |
| Bad Debt Expense | \$28,960 |
| | <u>\$6,063,906</u> |
| Capital Income | |
| | \$0 |
| Capital Expenditure | |
| | \$73,076 |
| General Financial Items | |
| Total Current Assets | \$2,053,774 |
| Total Current Liabilities | \$905,694 |
| Total Non-Current Assets | \$1,603,982 |
| Total Non-Current Liabilities | \$137,187 |
| Total Equity | <u>\$2,614,875</u> |

In 2023 Chrysalis was entering into a new financial paradigm where we had the full K-10 program operating. Throughout the year the school had an uptake on enrolments and crucially, many of these materialised just prior to the federal census day which sets our funding. As a result of this, we received a boost in the October funding round as well as an increase in fee revenue which ultimately set the school up for a surplus of \$110k.

2023 marks our fourth year in surplus which is commendable. We have had four years of growth and believe that this has peaked with the School now operating classes from pre kindy to Class 10. We will look to consolidate this with no further expansion of year levels planned. With the addition of Class 10, and an uptake in enrolments in other years, the School achieved its highest ever enrolments and saw our numbers rise above 240 for the first time. The initial operating spaces for Stage 5 in town presented early challenges. Finally in the Term 3 holidays we secured the lease for the building located at 121 Hyde Street. This location became home to Classes 9 and 10 from Term 4 and remains so today. We run the Class 9 and 10 High School programs here and utilise the restaurant quality kitchen for the Stage 5 Food Tech program. Centralising all Stage 5 into one location has been key to the ongoing success of the town based high school.



CHRYSALIS STEINER SCHOOL
educating the whole child



Artwork: Naomi Corser, Chrysalis Year 8 Project 2023

Chrysalis School for Rudolf Steiner Education

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