

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



CHRYSLIS 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. 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

The high school remained a big focus in 2024, with the year ending with us unfortunately having to cease use of the Lodge due to unresolvable compliance challenges at the site. This meant there was a massive effort at the beginning of 2025 to get the Thora campus ready for classes 9 & 10. As a Board we were really impressed with the resourcefulness and resilience shown by staff and students to make this happen in such a short period of time. We continue to explore options over the medium and long term for the high school.

Financial Governance

As you will see in the financial statements, 2024 was the first time in 5 years the school ran at a deficit. The board and school leadership team understand the importance of operating at a surplus, not just for the sustainability of the school, but so we have resourcing to deliver our strategic goals. The return to an operating surplus has been a key priority for the board and school leadership team, which has meant some tough decisions have had to be made in the best interests of the school. The good news is enrolments have increased in 2025, and the actions of the school leadership team have us on track to return to a surplus. On behalf of the board, I would like to acknowledge the work Lisa, Jeremy and the school leadership team put in to turn things around in such a short period of time, and for the understanding and commitment shown by staff and the broader school community.

Thank you

Once again, I would like to extend my thanks to the board for all their work throughout the year. The board is made up of members of the community and school staff, all who contribute their own time and energy to assist with the governance of the school, it is greatly appreciated. As always a big thankyou to our staff who work hard day in day out to make Chrysalis the place it is.

Rowan Lennox

Board Chair

May 2025 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.

Source: Finser, T. (2017). *A Rosicrucian path of leadership: The mystery of leading through service*. Steiner Books.

School Boards play a vital role in shaping the strategic direction, culture, and supporting the success of both student learning and the wider school community. Their governance responsibilities extend beyond compliance and oversight—they are instrumental in fostering environments where students, staff, and the broader school community can thrive. Research consistently highlights that when School Boards operate in close partnership with the school's executive team, particularly through shared vision, clarity of roles, and open communication, there is a measurable improvement in student engagement, wellbeing, and academic achievement.

This alignment between governance and leadership ensures that decision-making remains student-centred, proactive, and responsive to the evolving needs of the school community. At Chrysalis, we recognise and deeply value the role of our Board in holding both the long-term vision and the immediate needs of the school with care, integrity, and commitment. We are sincerely grateful for the ongoing support, dedication, and thought partnership that underpin this important work.

Feedback and Focus Areas

As part of our reflective practice, feedback from our parent, staff, and student surveys identified Trust and Communication as key areas requiring development. In response, the Leadership Team undertook focused work in Systems Awareness and Collective Leadership with the guidance of Virginia Moller and Kelley McGlashan.

Collective Leadership invites us to move beyond individual roles, working collaboratively to envision and enact meaningful change. It recognises that no single leader can meet all the needs of a school community; instead, by drawing on the collective strengths of staff, we can address challenges creatively and effectively.

In addition to this work, the information gathered through our surveys is being actively used to inform the strategic planning process for the school. These community insights are being integrated into our ongoing work with Virginia Moller and Darren Clark through the Strategy Program at Encite Partners. This program supports our Leadership Team in refining our long-term goals and ensuring they are grounded in the real needs, aspirations, and experiences of our school community.

This collaborative strategic work ensures our plans are not only visionary but also responsive, actionable, and reflective of the shared hopes we hold for Chrysalis moving forward.

Strategic Goals and Milestones

This year we have made significant progress toward a range of strategic priorities, including:

- **Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure**
 - Secured a permanent solution for Class 9 and 10 facilities
 - Refined enrolment targets and developed strategies to support future growth
- **Community and Stakeholder Engagement**
 - Established strong partnerships with local bus operators
 - Developed targeted marketing and engagement strategies to strengthen community connection

- **Staffing and Leadership Capacity**
 - Attracted and retained high-quality teaching staff
 - Built alignment and shared vision between the Board and Leadership Team
 - Embedded systems awareness and strengthened collective leadership practices
- **Commitment to Reconciliation and Inclusion**
 - Continued strengthening and implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

Governance and Leadership

At Chrysalis, we continue to embrace Generative Governance—a dynamic model of leadership that fosters deep inquiry, shared insight, and innovation. This approach invites Boards to engage not only in fiduciary and strategic responsibilities, but also in meaning-making and purpose-driven dialogue. It encourages reflective questioning, the exploration of emerging challenges and opportunities, and the co-creation of future directions.

At the heart of generative governance is a strong, trust-based partnership between the Principal (Educational Director) and the Board Chair. This relationship serves as a cornerstone for alignment between the school's day-to-day leadership and its long-term vision and values. Together, they model conscious leadership, shared responsibility, and a commitment to transparency and service.

By leading in this way, Chrysalis ensures that governance is not just about structure and compliance, but about stewardship of the school's mission. It allows us to maintain a clear focus on student wellbeing, growth, and learning, while remaining agile and responsive to the evolving needs of our community. In essence, this approach empowers the school to thrive—rooted in its values, yet open to transformation.

Highlights of 2024

- **Rich and Diverse Learning Experiences**
 - Successful operations at the Class/9/10 Lodge Campus
 - Termly Lodge concerts and ongoing music development
 - Busking Band and performance opportunities for Class 7 and 8
 - Class 8 Shakespeare production showcasing student creativity and collaboration
- **Strengthened Systems and Continuity**
 - Improved systems for managing events, reporting, and festivals
 - Ensured continuity of learning and operations during staff absences
 - Implementation and alignment of programming proformas across the whole school
- **Educational Excellence and Curriculum Development**
 - Strengthened pedagogical practices through our transition from LNAP to Explicit Teaching
 - Successful implementation of the new NES English and Mathematics curriculum outcomes from Morning Star to Class 10
- **Leadership and Professional Engagement**
 - A cohesive and resilient Leadership Team
 - Hosted the national SEA Governance, Leadership & Management Conference

- **Cultural Enrichment and Community Connection**
 - Maintained a vibrant and inclusive festival life
 - Continued development of our Reconciliation Action Plan with Bernard Kelley Edwards
 - Strengthened relationships with other Steiner schools across Australia

Challenges and Areas for Growth

- **Clarity and Accountability in Roles and Responsibilities**
 - Clarifying roles and responsibilities across all positions
 - Strengthening accountability measure
- **Streamlined and Consistent Systems**
 - Streamlining systems to ensure consistency and simplicity
 - Supporting accreditation and compliance processes
- **Enhanced Communication and Community Partnerships**
 - Deepening communication practices, including transparent and timely messaging
 - Strengthening partnerships with parents and students
 - Outlining clear discipline procedures across all activities
- **Inclusive and Responsive Learning Environment**
 - Creating awareness, understanding, and clear pathways for neurodivergent students
 - Integrating Indigenous Studies and Main Lessons across all Key Learning Areas (KLAs)
 - Recognising and celebrating Reconciliation Week throughout the school
 - Deepening communication practices

Our Commitments to Steiner Education

Central to our work at Chrysalis is the belief in the unique spirit of each individual. Teachers work to recognise and nurture the individual strengths and capacities of every student, fostering a sense of self-worth and a commitment to making a positive impact. Our challenge is to keep Steiner Education alive in every aspect of Chrysalis school life whilst meeting regulatory requirements and striking a more sustainable work life balance amongst our staff. We have a long way to go in striking this balance. 2024 helped us to focus on our clearer systems in order to provide a clear Form which can enable Freedom and Creativity to arise. Despite the challenges, our commitment to Steiner education is unwavering and we strive to work deeply with Steiner's indications in our work every day.



Looking ahead, our vision over the next 3–5 years includes:

- **Growth and Campus Development**
 - Full enrolments across all year levels, with waiting lists
 - A thriving Thora campus with double-streamed primary classes
 - Establishment of a second campus for Early Childhood and Classes 7–10, with future discussions for Class 11 and 12 underway
- **Educational Leadership and Identity**
 - A clear, distinct identity as Chrysalis Steiner School—where students flourish both during and beyond their time here
 - Recognition as a leading hub for Steiner education across Australasia
- **Community and Cultural Responsibility**
 - A respected and culturally responsible presence within the wider community
 - A vision that remains responsive and deeply aligned with the needs and values of our school community
- **Governance and Workforce Sustainability**
 - A Board and Leadership Team united in conscious and collaborative educative governance
 - Strong staff retention and recruitment, positioning Chrysalis as an employer of choice

We welcomed new and returning staff in 2024:

Carly Solomon – Class Aide
 Ella Mingaye – Food Tech Teacher
 Simon Blake – Camps Coordinator
 Tori Goode – Casual Teacher
 Vicky Mackenzie – Class Aide
 Emily Hungerford – Class Aide
 Jane Farrah – Learning Support Coordinator
 Troy Rogers – Class Aide
 Deborah Neale - Teacher
 Yarnam Swift - Teacher
 Carmen Corser – Music Tutor

We farewelled the following staff and contractors in 2024:

Alli Barton
 Jenny Boxtel
 Rebecca Barber
 Arlene Fletcher
 John Boxtel
 Sam Cook
 James Ross
 Kym Pitman
 Craig Hoggett
 Johanna Elton
 Lucas Dollisson
 Claudia Hoggett
 Chelsea Panaretos
 Mick Kirby
 Jon Argyle
 Karin Braidwood
 Lily Lethbridge
 Moala Mackenzie

Gratitude and Acknowledgements

To the Chrysalis Leadership Team — Cath Van Schie, Jeremy Street, Nathan Slatter, Howard Chaston, Rebecca Le Gresley, and Jane Farrah — thank you for your dedication and steady support. Your collaborative leadership has guided us through challenges and successes alike, helping our school grow as a united community.

To the Chrysalis Board — thank you for your passionate advocacy, strategic insight, and meaningful engagement. A special thank you to Rowan Lennox, whose role as Board Chair has been marked by thoughtful leadership and unwavering support.

We extend our sincere thanks to our Classroom and Specialist Teachers, Teacher Aides, Maintenance and Administrative Teams, Class Carers, Parent Helpers, and all members of the Chrysalis community. Your dedication and support play a vital role in enriching school life and nurturing the growth and wellbeing of our students.

Finally, and most importantly, to the Chrysalis students — thank you for the joy, wonder, and sense of purpose you bring to each day. You remain at the heart of all we do.

Looking Ahead Together

As we reflect on the achievements and learnings of the past year, we now turn our attention to the path ahead. With renewed energy, shared purpose, and a deep commitment to our vision, we look forward to all that we will create and achieve together in the coming year. It is through our collective efforts—students, staff, families, and the wider community—that Chrysalis continues to grow as a vibrant, connected, and inspiring place of learning.

Warmly,
Lisa

Lisa O'Donnell
Education Director
May 2025 AGM



Report from the Chair of College

In our recent meetings at Chrysalis College, we have been deepening our collective understanding and commitment to the values that guide our interactions with students. A central focus has been the ongoing exploration and integration of Anthroposophy into our educational approach. This foundational philosophy continues to inform our practices, and we actively share insights among staff and the broader college community.

Melanie Deefholts has been a strong and compassionate presence, particularly in the area of gender and sexuality education. Her work has been instrumental in supporting both students and teachers in maintaining the health and well-being of each class. She also collaborates closely with parents, offering insight and guidance to help them support their children through key developmental stages.

Lisa Harris has brought valuable perspectives from the Anthroposophical medical view, especially in supporting children with additional needs. Her contributions have shaped a more sensitive, informed, and holistic approach. In addition, Rebecca and Jane have shared practical strategies that continue to strengthen our efforts in creating a more inclusive and nurturing learning environment.

Irmhild further enriched these contributions with her expertise in both naturopathy and anthroposophy, deepening our collective understanding of holistic child health.

As a school and college, we are actively reviewing our core values to ensure they remain aligned with our vision and the evolving needs of our community. During this time, Lisa also offered visual aids—illustrations of main lesson structures and representations of anxious organizational dynamics—that have supported meaningful dialogue and strategic planning.

We were also fortunate to have local Gumbaynggirr elder, Gagu work closely with us throughout last year as part of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) journey. His weekly visits brought valuable knowledge of the local area and its people, offering recurring themes that enriched our cultural awareness and grounded our educational work in a deeper sense of place and purpose.

Towards the end of 2023 and into early 2024, we held College in various classrooms. These sessions were deeply insightful, as teachers brought photographs of their students and spoke about the developmental stage of their class, explaining how Steiner pedagogy responds to the needs of that particular age. The sessions I attended offered powerful reminders of the depth and intentionality of our work.

We also engaged in a rich variety of artistic activities—veil painting, singing, clay work, and poetry—which brought warmth, creativity, and renewal into our shared space. These moments reconnected us with the artistic heart of Steiner education and helped cultivate a sense of joy and presence within the College.

I have learned immensely throughout this journey and feel deeply honoured to have served as College Chair over the past four years. As I now step away from this role, I wish to sincerely thank each of you—teachers, board members, and the wider college community—for your support, care, and generosity of spirit. Your dedication and collaboration have made this work not only possible but deeply meaningful and rewarding.

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.

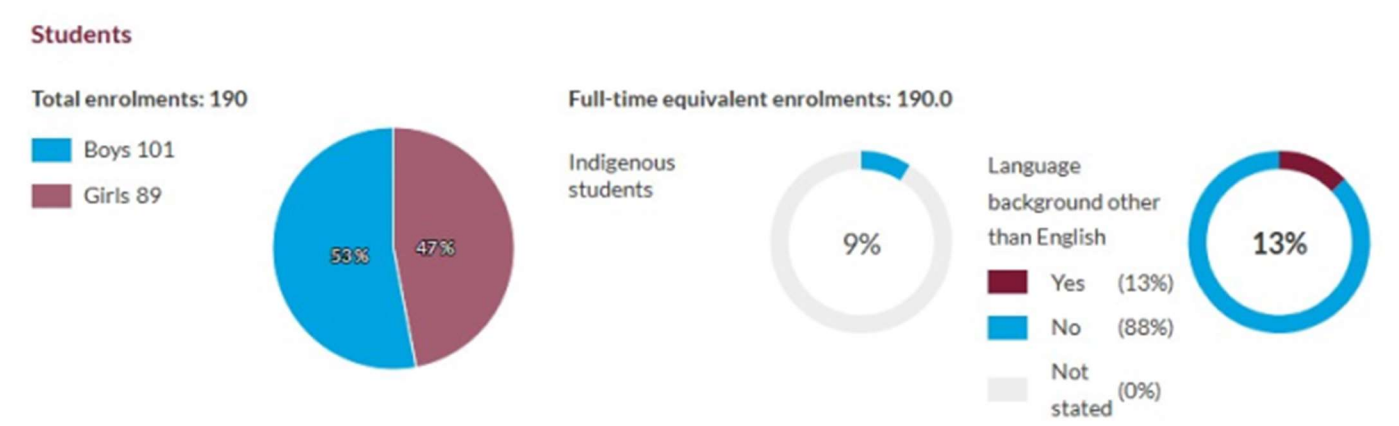


Characteristics of our student body

Of the 190 full-time equivalent students enrolled in 2024, 53% are boys and 47% girls. 13% of our students have a language background other than English and 9% 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	32	58	11
Female	25	55	9
Total	57	113	20

Gender balance





Priority areas for improvement

Based on the findings of our recent staff and parent surveys, three priority areas have emerged as central to our continued growth: communication, trust, and systems awareness. Each of these intersects with broader educational and cultural aims, and our 2024–2025 plan outlines clear steps for improvement.

Communication

Survey feedback highlighted a strong need for more transparent, structured, and consistent communication across the school community. In response, we are developing a comprehensive communication framework that will clarify:

- **What** will be communicated
- **Who** is responsible for the communication
- **How often and when** communication will occur
- **Through which channels** (e.g. newsletters, meetings, email)

Trust

Establishing a culture of trust requires clear roles, mutual accountability, and open dialogue. To support this:

- We are reviewing and clarifying **roles and responsibilities** across the school

- Structures will be introduced to support **equal participation and voice**, where vulnerability is recognised as a strength
- Professional dialogue will be encouraged through regular forums and feedback cycles
- Leadership will model relational trust and shared decision-making

Systems Awareness

To improve overall organisational efficiency, we are developing and documenting clear, accessible systems. These will outline:

- **Who is doing what and why**
- **How decisions are made and communicated**
- **What structures exist to support teaching, learning, and wellbeing**

We believe that well-functioning systems create the “form” that allows for meaningful freedom. With clarity in place, we can devote more energy to innovation, creativity, and high-quality education. A shared understanding of the school's operational ecosystem is essential for maintaining momentum and coherence across all areas.



Additional Focus Areas

Neurodiversity

Feedback and incidents in 2024 have demonstrated the need for a deeper understanding of neurodiverse learners and more inclusive practices. In response, we have:

- Delivered **five staff professional development sessions** focused on neurodiversity, run by experts including Irmhild, Dr Lisa Harris, and others
- **Mapped and refined** disciplinary processes and classroom adjustments for neurodiverse students
- Begun developing a **more robust toolkit** to support staff in meeting the diverse needs of all students

This initiative reflects our commitment to equity and informed, compassionate responses to student behaviour and learning profiles.

Quality Education

Improving learning outcomes in English and Mathematics remains a key academic priority. In 2024, we introduced:

- A whole-school focus on Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI), with coaching and modelling provided by an internal specialist
- Targeted PD for K–6 staff, with ongoing support for High School teachers including lesson observation and team teaching
- Employment of a full-time Extra Lesson teacher from Term 2, enhancing capacity to support a wide range of learning needs

Additionally, the Class 9 and 10 residential program at The Lodge in Bellinghen has proven successful in increasing student engagement, extending instructional time, and easing teacher workload. A formal proposal has been submitted to Council to continue The Lodge as an ongoing part of our educational program.

Collective Leadership

To strengthen our culture of collective leadership, we will implement structures and practices that recognise and draw on the diverse strengths and professional expertise of all staff. Key to this approach is the promotion of professional agency, shared accountability, and purposeful dialogue across all levels of the school. We are committed to the belief that leadership is not confined to positional authority but is a capability that resides in every member of the school community. By cultivating opportunities for distributed leadership and collaborative decision-making, we will enable all staff to take initiative, lead improvement efforts, and contribute to a shared vision. This strategic focus will foster a cohesive, future-focused environment in which leadership is modeled, shared, and continuously developed.

Conclusion

These focused improvement strategies reflect our commitment to evolving as a learning community. By strengthening communication, trust, collective leadership and systems awareness—and deepening our capacity to meet student needs through inclusive and evidence-based teaching—we are creating the conditions for sustainable growth and excellence.



Actions Taken to Promote Respect and Responsibility

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and Cultural Engagement

In partnership with Uncle Bernard, we have commenced regular College meetings to develop a dynamic and collaborative Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), grounded in ongoing dialogue and community leadership.

Uncle Miklo and Mailynn contributed to our Winter Festival by sharing traditional singing up country, connecting us to Country and honouring our Gumbaynggirr ancestors.

The annual Class 10 Arnhem Land immersion continued with deep cultural exchange. Highlights included:

A smoking ceremony performed by Yuurunga elders for our students as they departed Bellingen. Cultural gifts (clap sticks and local ochre gifted by the Yuurunga mob) exchanged between our students and the Gunbalanya mob as symbols of respect and reciprocity.

Students actively contributed to community projects such as building the Outdoor Kitchen at Meking Valley and forging peer connections with students at Gunbalanya School.

Restorative Practices

- Three additional staff members received formal training in Restorative Practice, enabling more widespread implementation of this approach to resolving conflict and restoring relationships.
- Our school counsellor initiated collaborative sessions with parents and teachers to support relationship repair, with a particular focus on bridging gaps between staff, leadership, and families.
- Restorative conversations and mediations have been embedded as a key part of student support and behavioural reflection.

Revisiting Core Values

- A term-long focus was placed on re-examining the College's core values, originally established 30 years ago. This involved:
 - Community-wide dialogue around their relevance and meaning today.
 - Embedding these values into daily practices and decision-making processes.
 - Deepening student and staff understanding of how our values guide behaviour, culture, and learning.

Student Wellbeing and Inclusion

A comprehensive, multi-tiered approach to wellbeing has been introduced to ensure all students feel respected, supported, and accountable:

- **Guardian Time:** Extra homeroom time with key teachers to build classroom cultures rooted in respect and inclusion.
- **Anti-Bullying Education:** Clear, explicit teaching of respectful behaviour and boundaries, reinforced through one-on-one conversations, parental engagement, and regular follow-up.
- **Individualised Support:**
 - Development and implementation of IEPs and behaviour support plans tailored to student needs.
 - 'Ready to Learn' plans created with input from students, teachers, and parents to foster ownership of learning and behaviour.
 - High school students now receive personalised reports and are active participants in their own planning and growth conversations.
- **Digital Wellbeing:**
- Whole-school digital education initiatives led by Tash from DigiDetox, offering targeted sessions to students, staff, and parents about the impact of digital technologies on mental health and learning.
- **Teacher Wellbeing and Professional Support:**
 - Staff offered access to counselling sessions through the school counsellor- **Nerida Oberg** and **Melanie Deefholts (EduCareDo)**.
 - Melanie and the school counsellor – Nerida conducted **in-class observations** to provide feedback and tools tailored to the social and emotional development of students across all stages.





Strengthened Systems and Shared Leadership

- A focus on clear systems awareness and collective leadership ensures that all stakeholders—staff, students, parents, and community members—understand how school policies and procedures operate.
- Mechanisms have been put in place to invite and respond to constructive feedback when systems are not meeting needs.
- This transparency and shared accountability are helping to build a respectful culture where leadership is distributed, and everyone has a voice in shaping the school's direction.

As part of our ongoing commitment to fostering a culture of respect, responsibility, and inclusion, the following key initiatives have been implemented and strengthened across the school community in 2024:

By creating an inclusive environment where each individual is treated with respect and equity, we will continue to strengthen our professional culture and community cohesion.

This framework will apply to all levels—school leadership, staff, students, and families—to ensure everyone feels informed, involved, and valued. Our goal is to ensure that communication not only informs but also builds connection and shared understanding across our community. Chrysalis is accredited with NESA to provide classes from K-10.

OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

National literacy and numeracy testing

In 2024, NAPLAN (National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy) was offered nation-wide to all schools. Parents at Chrysalis continued to exercise their choice of their child being withdrawn from the tests. Consequently, as a school’s NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate for a comparison, no comparison is available.

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

NAPLAN results 2024

	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Year 3	289	348	296	-	377
Year 5	445	394	408	466	416
Year 7	522	473	506	526	506
Year 9	-	-	-	-	-

NAPLAN participation for this school is 38%
NAPLAN participation for all Australian students is 95%

Post-school destinations

In 2024 Chrysalis School had 7 students complete Class 10 with all students going 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 2024 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 2024 are shown in the following table:

Position	Number	FTE*
Education Director	1	1.0
Classroom Teachers	27	21.9
Classroom Assistants	16	8.7
Administration	6	4.9
Building and Maintenance	2	1.2

* FTE (Full Time Equivalent)

In 2024, 68% of our staff were female and 32% male.

4% of our staff identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Attendance rates

Class	2024 Year Average
River Song	82.5%
Class 1	81.4%
Class 2	87.8%
Class 3	88.7%
Class 4	87.4%
Class 5	88.0%
Class 6	81.9%
Class 7	87.7%
Class 8	83.7%
Class 9	85.4%
Class 10	86.6%
School Average	85.5%



Managing student non-attendance

Attendance Policy and Procedures

All changes to our Attendance Practices have been highlighted.

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 Sentral with any hard copies in the student file.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Register of Enrolments

- 1) The Register of Enrolments is maintained using 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 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 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 NESAs.
- 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 NESAs.
- 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 absence will be entered via Sentral and a notification will be sent instantly to the parent(s)/guardian(s). A follow up email will be sent via Sentral and a notice will be published on the Sentral portal after the class rolls have been submitted.
- b) If the office staff member does not receive a response from the parent(s)/guardian(s) through Sentral, email or phone, 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 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.
- f) Each Friday afternoon, a report with an overview of the absences for the week and term to date is emailed to the Education Director, Business Manager and Enrolments Co-ordinator.

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, Learning Support Co-ordinator and Education Director, to discuss ways to resolve the situation.
 - iv) The Education Director will then construct an Attendance Plan that may request support from external professionals.
- 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 and contact NESAs.

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 (NESAs) 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 NESAs 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 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 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 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.

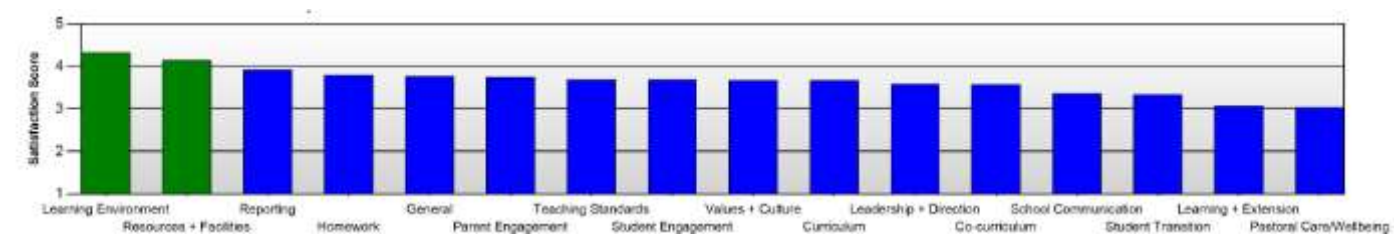
In 2024, for the general parent survey (K-1 to CI10) we had 76 out of a total of 245 eligible respondents, equating to a response rate of 31%. In 2024, we had 92 out of a total of 254 eligible respondents, equating to a response rate of 36.2%. Considering in both instances that eligible respondents included 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 73% (3.65 out of 5). Key areas rated as excellent were the Learning Environment, Resources + Facilities. General, Reporting, Homework, Student Engagement, Curriculum, Parent Engagement, Values + Culture, Teaching Standards, Curriculum, Co-curriculum, School Communication, Student Transition, Leadership + Direction, Learning + Extension, Pastoral Care/Wellbeing were all rated as good.

The final exit parent survey (CI10) responses were received from 2 out of a total of 13 eligible respondents. This equates to a response rate of 15.4%.

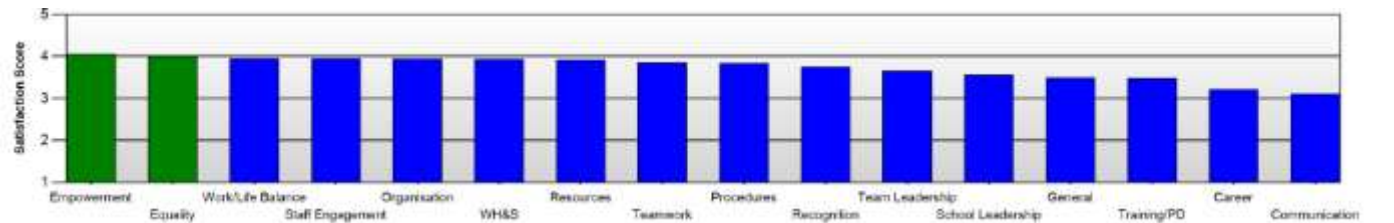
The final exit parent survey (CI10) recorded an overall satisfaction score of 73% (3.67 out of 5). Areas rated as excellent included Homework, Learning Environment, Reporting, Resources + Facilities, General, Co-curriculum. Areas rated as good included: Values + Culture, Teaching Standards, Student Engagement, Overall, Curriculum, Parent Engagement, Leadership + Direction, Student Transition, School Communication, Learning + Extension. Areas requiring attention include: Pastoral Care/Wellbeing.

Figure 1 shows the Summary of Response by Key Area for 2024 in the general parent survey.



Staff engagement and satisfaction was recorded at 74% (3.72 out of 5). Responses to the survey were received from 44 out of a total of 77 eligible respondents.

Figure 2 shows the Summary of Response by Key Area for 2024 for the staff survey:



FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Recurrent Income	
Fees and Charges	\$1,433,589
Commonwealth Government Recurrent Funding	\$3,184,908
State Government Recurrent Grants	\$814,009
AIS Grants	\$2,400
Finance income - interest	\$24,290
Other income – incl. Bad Debts recovered	\$126,075
	<u>\$5,585,271</u>
Recurrent Expenditure	
Employee benefits expense	\$5,260,470
Depreciation and amortisation expense	\$217,932
Teaching materials and resources	\$250,657
Occupancy costs	\$182,690
Finance expense - interest	\$14,301
Administrative expenses	\$556,026
Bad Debt Expense	\$21,523
	<u>\$6,503,599</u>
Capital Income	
	\$0
Capital Expenditure	
	\$94,266
General Financial Items	
Total Current Assets	\$1,022,248
Total Current Liabilities	\$650,972
Total Non-Current Assets	\$1,391,530
Total Non-Current Liabilities	\$66,259
Total Equity	<u>\$1,696,547</u>

Following a four year period of growth and four years of surplus, Chrysalis has posted a significant loss for the 2024 year. The 2023 enrolment situation provided a confluence of fortune, where several enrolments materialised just prior to census date and several departing families left just after census date, which maximised our numbers for funding. 2024, in comparison proved to be the perfect storm with direct contrasts to this. In the end we saw a drop in enrolment numbers of 30 students when comparing census numbers between the two years. This had a detrimental impact on our funding and saw this reduce by approximately \$650,000, equating to a similar effect on revenue.

The expenditure side of the budget had total expenses set at \$6.36 million. The actual total expenses for 2024 were just \$23,000 over that budgeted amount. This represents a budget variation of 0.3 of 1% which is a remarkable result. Keeping costs held to this degree greatly assisted us in the accurate prediction of monthly cashflow needs and provides a detailed platform from which to project future expenditure in subsequent yearly budgets.

Taking into account the additions of depreciation and amortisation, the operating result has culminated in our loss figure of **\$918,328**. The focus as we move forward into 2025 is to tightly

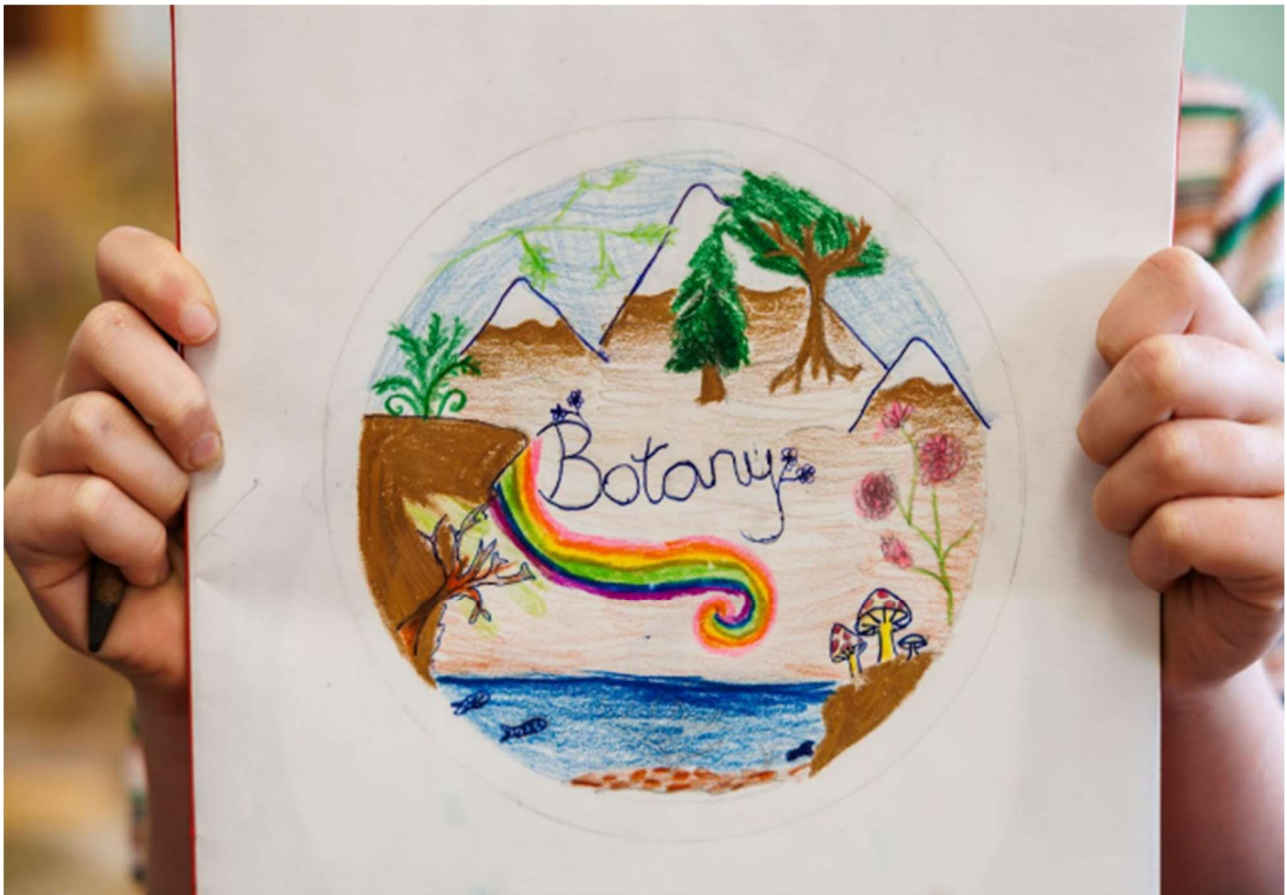
control costs and seek to retain our existing enrolments whilst we focus our marketing efforts to try and attract new students to the school.

The Board also recognised that we needed to increase revenue where possible and authorised an increase to school fees of 6%. This figure was well under many of the surrounding independent schools increases and not dissimilar to the other Steiner schools in the region. The Board and Leadership team recognise the impact that the cost of living crisis has had upon our community and sought to minimise the burden that this necessary fee increase would impose.





CHRYSLIS STEINER SCHOOL
educating the whole child



Chrysalis School for Rudolf Steiner Education

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