Newcastle Waldorf School Annual Report 2020



 $Available \ online \ at \ \underline{www.newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au} \ or \ by \ contacting \ the \ School \ administration$

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Messages from key school bodies

Message from the School Board

During 2020, the Newcastle Waldorf School Board continued implementation of a long-term strategy to ensure the school works strongly and sustainably into the future.

The Board acknowledges the contributions of the many parents who supported the School through a range of activities throughout the year. These efforts help create the wonderful atmosphere of the School that is enjoyed by everyone. The Board will continue to work with the parent body to facilitate their involvement in line with the long-term strategic direction of the School.

Message from the Co-Principals

The Co-Principals would like to thank the College of Teachers for their interest and hard work over the year as we continue to navigate the rapidly changing educational environment. We would also like to thank the aides, volunteers and all of the parents who work tirelessly to support the school and their children in so many ways.

The Co-Principals would also like to acknowledge the Awabakaleen and Awabakal People, the traditional custodians of the land and pay respects to their Elders, past, present and future.

In 2020, flexibility was required from all staff and we particularly acknowledge the work that teachers put into the work from home packages and lessons developed during COVID lockdown.

The School Context

The Newcastle Waldorf School values a culture that allows children to fulfil their physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual potential in a way that will enhance them individually and as members of the community and society in which they choose to live as adults. The teachers at the School focus on this pursuit by nurturing the children according to the indications of Rudolf Steiner, so that all aspects of their development proceed in accordance with what is beautiful, good and true. The features of the School which aid in this pursuit are its beautiful grounds and buildings, which have been conceived, designed and in many cases actualised by the efforts of teachers, parents and former students of the School. The School's curriculum allows students to achieve a well-balanced and cultural education. For all students, this includes experience in the fields of music, visual and dramatic arts, handwork, design, gardening and cooking, as well as rigorous academic exercise. This wide curriculum allows for a range of future career choices.

Student performance in state-wide examinations

NAPLAN

There were no NAPLAN tests in 2020 due to COVID.

Record of School Achievement

At the end of 2020, 2 students left to pursue further studies at TAFE. They were eligible for a RoSA.

Senior Secondary Results

The following HSC results are displayed graphically to show the trend of student performance over time. One way to measure this is to use Z-Scores, which show the variation from the average for our school. Where the bar goes below the 0 line, on average, our students performed below the average student from the state.

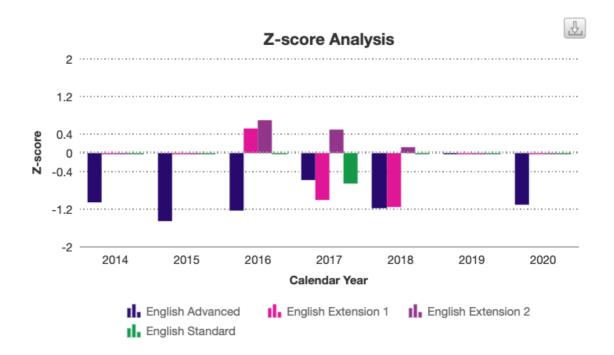
It should be noted, as always our school offers both ATAR and non-ATAR pathways, and that averages can be heavily influenced by one or two students, because cohorts are relatively small.

Importantly, the results achieved by students in 2020 allowed all graduating students to access their preferred choice of further education independent of whether they were on the ATAR pathway or not.

In this cohort, one student did particularly well overall achieving an ATAR above 90, the result of aptitude and dedication to their studies.

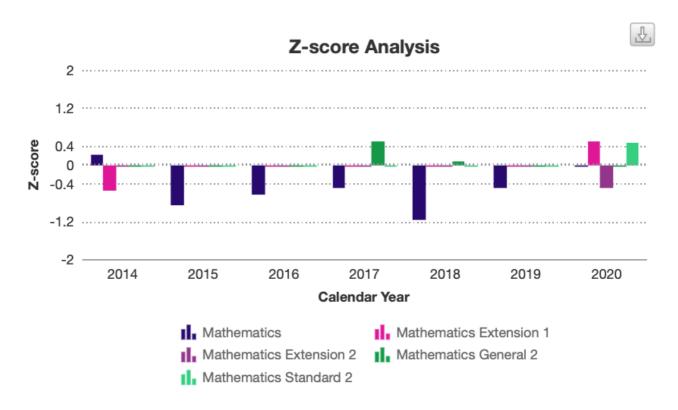
English Z-Scores

The English Z-Scores show that advanced English (which has been the only course offered except for in 2017) is below the state average. Again, it should be noted that with a small cohort subject choices are limited and students who would have otherwise studied English Standard enrolled in English Advanced due to the quality of the course. English is a mandatory HSC subject and over 60% of the 2020 cohort were on a non-ATAR pathway. This has an influence on the average mark of our students.



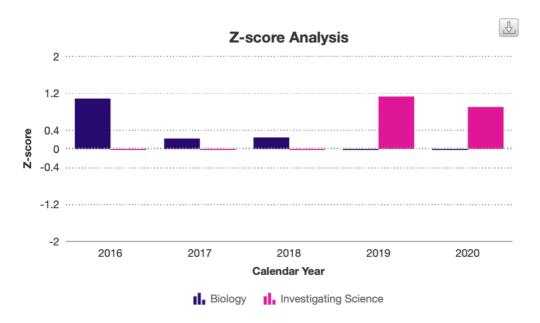
Mathematics Z-Scores

The mathematics Z-Scores show above average marks in both the Standard and Extension 1 Mathematics courses, there were no Advanced students in 2020. In 2020 two students completed extension 1 and extension 2 mathematics and the other students who chose standard mathematics also did well. One Extension 1 Mathematics student achieved in the top band.



Sciences Z-Scores

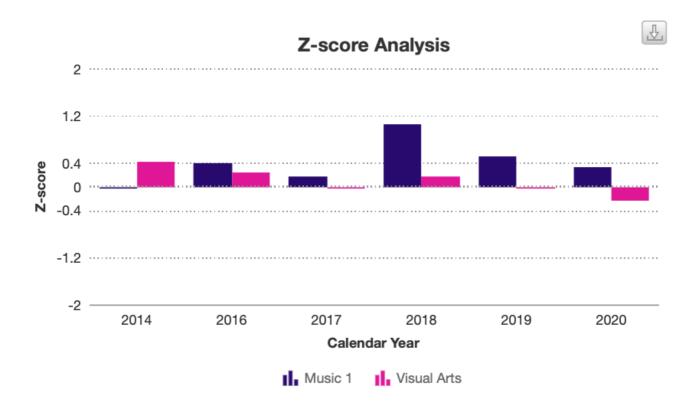
Students have consistently performed well in sciences over the years, and this has continued with the change from Biology to Investigating Science.



Arts Z-Scores

Arts continue to be strong for the school with Music 1 students consistently achieving high results. Again, our school had one student achieve in the top band and a composition nominated for the NESA 2020 Encore

There was a slight downward trend in Visual Arts. However, again, there was one student who achieved in the top band and whose art work was nominated for the NESA 2020 Art Express exhibition. Visual Arts is a mandatory subject in our school and there was a mix of year 11 and year 12 students in the 2020 cohort completing the preliminary and HSC course compressed into one year. Next year, students begin the non-compressed version of the course where they study the preliminary year and HSC courses in their corresponding years.



Vocational or Trade Training

One student undertook a vocational or trade course. The student did very well in this course.

Professional learning, teaching standards and workforce composition

Professional learning

This list is not exhaustive but comprises the main PD activities undertaken by staff in 2020

Number of staff	course	duration	date
2	Steiner High School Teachers Intensive, Rudolf Steiner Seminar.	5 days	Jan 2020
4	Gleneaon Class Teacher Curriculum Intensives	5 days	Jan 2020
All teachers	first aid refresher	half day	Feb 2020
All teachers	PDHPE with Dr Laksmi Prasanna and Patries Orange	half day	Feb 2020
All teachers	Lakshmi and Patries Steiner PD	2 days	Feb 2020
All Teachers	PDHPE with Lisa Devine	2 hours	Feb 2020
1	Tim Dunn – recently retired HSC Coordinator and Science mentor from Samford Valley High School science support	2 weeks	Feb 2020
All teachers and available support			
staff	CP and Code of Conduct refresher Tim Dunn (recently retired HSC	2 hours	Feb 2020
	Coordinator and Science mentor from Samford Valley High School) Waldorf		
All Teachers	phenomenology	1 hour	
All Teachers	Erik Nieuwkoop (Dutch Geography teacher/mentor) Waldorf curriculum overview	1 hour	
3	Erik Nieuwkoop (Dutch Geography teacher/mentor) High school Geography mentoring	All term	Term 1
All Teachers	Lisa Devine attended College meeting and held a community talk in the evening.	1.5 hours	July 2020
All teachers	Sydney region Waldorf schools "The Wonder of Nature" – Hayden Washington	2 hours	Sept 2020
1	GLaM conference	1 day	Oct 2020
1	2020 HSC B.O.W marking	3.5 hrs	Oct 2020
1	Using Stellarium from the STANSW	1.5hrs / 2hrs	Oct 2020
All teachers	Continued weekly study with Educaredo.	20 minutes per week	weekly
5	Weekly study of Steiner Lectures on Education	1 hour per week	weekly
New and developing teachers	Regular mentor sessions for new teachers Weekly study meetings	30 minutes per week	weekly

Teacher Accreditation

Level of accreditation		Number of Teachers
Conditional		1
Provisional		7
Proficient Teacher		14
	Total number of teachers	22

Teaching standards

Category	No. of teachers
Teachers having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI- NOOSR) guidelines	22
Teachers having a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications	0

Workforce composition

Teaching Staff	22
Full-time equivalent teaching staff	18.9
Non-teaching staff	19
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	10.6

The School employed one casual and one part time Aboriginal member of staff in 2020.

Respect, Responsibility and School Satisfaction

Respect and Responsibility

Respect is one of the key values highlighted by the School in its Supporting Positive Behaviour policy and procedures. The School teaches the value of respect in all areas of school life by modelling, telling relevant stories and positively acknowledging student effort.

The School provides creative activities in which all members of the School community can participate. These activities include playing and singing music, developing and performing dramatic pieces as well as appreciating the artistic endeavours of other students and teachers. These activities allow students to respect the efforts of their peers and take responsibility for their own contribution while sharing in something beautiful and worthwhile.

The School celebrates regular seasonal festivals where students are required to take responsibility for their individual part in building the School Community. Each class takes the responsibility for preparing a part of the meal or festival for the rest of the school.

Students and teachers participate in whole school excursions into nature where they can develop not only a sense of responsibility for their shared welfare, but also respect for the natural world and a feeling of responsibility for its preservation, integrating aspects of Indigenous Australian understanding for the environment.

Students, Parents and Teachers work together to create gifts for each other and loved ones in a festival in November. High school students and teachers lead mini workshops teaching parents and younger children how to create beautiful gifts.

Parent, Student and Teacher satisfaction

The degree of parent satisfaction emerges from twice-yearly one-on-one interviews with the class guardian. It is also gauged by the willingness of parents to participate in voluntary working bees, to attend talks, music and singing groups and cultural studies groups and school community events, which are offered throughout the year.

This year attendance and participation in these activities was significantly curtailed by COVID. Parents expressed their satisfaction through email correspondence relating to the standard of home learning support provided by the school during COVID.

The College of Teachers will continue to discuss and implement strategies to strengthen the connection between parents and the school, with school community events such as festivals, musical concerts and workshops being very popular among parents.

Enrolments increased by 7% from Census 2019 to Census 2020 as the school continues to expand.

Amongst students, the degree of satisfaction is evident in the way in which they engage not only in classroom activities, but also in music making, plays and recreational activities with their classmates. The cheerful ambience of the School and its environs speaks of students who are happy to engage with their education. In 2020, most students continued to be actively engaged in the course work as well as extra-curricular activities, depending on their preferences.

The willingness of staff to be involved in all aspects of the life of the School and the long service of many of the teachers has demonstrated a high level of staff satisfaction.		

Student attendance, retention rates and post school destinations

Student attendance rates

The following data is from the first semester of each year since 2017.

	2017	2018	2019	2020
K			91%	92%
1	94%	93%	93%	93%
2	92%	90%	94%	93%
3	92%	93%	93%	87%
4	90%	92%	92%	93%
5	95%	90%	93%	93%
6	93%	93%	91%	94%
7	95%	91%	90%	94%
8	95%	92%	85%	94%
9	95%	86%	89%	87%
10	94%	96%	85%	90%
11	95%	97%	96%	95%
12	95%	86%	98%	98%
School	93%	92%	92%	92%

Associated with accepting students midway through their education is the possibility of also inheriting their poor attendance habits. Though we do mostly see improvements in attendance habits over time, this is not always the case, especially late in their education. This does influence the high school attendance rate as evidenced in year 10. There are also some students with considerable health concerns and, where a class is small, such as year 9, this impacts the attendance percentage significantly.

Student attendance rate (based on years 1 to 10), semester 1 2020:

- All students 92%
- Indigenous students 91%
- Non-Indigenous students 92%

Student attendance rate (based on years 1 to 10), term 3 2020:

- All students 91%
- Indigenous students 87%
- Non-Indigenous students 91%

Management of non-attendance

The following information regarding the management of non-attendance is extracted from the Newcastle Waldorf School's attendance policy. The full policy can be viewed on request to the School's administration.

Strategies to improve poor attendance

- Class teachers/guardians interview parents of students who have poor attendance, discussing the importance of regular attendance and the rhythm of the school week, term and year.
- If the above communication is unsuccessful, a letter will be sent by the Principal.
- Unsatisfactory attendance information will be transferred to student reports.
- Students who are habitually absent may be reported to Community Services under the Keep Them Safe guidelines.
- Principal has a discussion with parents when granting exemptions, especially with regard to mid-term holidays.
- HSC and Preliminary Students will receive formal warning letters as per the NWS HSC Assessment Policy
- A section on attendance is included regularly in notes and newsletters, especially at the beginning of the year.
- Attendance is discussed at class talks.

Student retention rates and post school destinations

Student retention rates are good through primary years. The classes often build in numbers in these years. The retention rate in the upper high school is the lowest over the school. This is attributed to families seeking schools that are more established in their delivery of the HSC and with a wider range of subject choices and larger class numbers. Reasons given by families changing schools at this time include:

- Variety of HSC courses offered by other schools
- Students wanting a larger peer/social group
- Parents following an ethos different to that of the school

The retention rate of students from year 10, 2018 through to completion of year 12 in 2020 was 73%. This was generally a strong cohort comprising students who supported each other and worked well together. Generally, retention fluctuates from year to year based on the dynamic of the cohort. Students who left between year 10 and year 12 either went to different schools or vocational training. We are pleased to see them prospering in their life choices.

Post school destinations of the students finishing their HSC in 2020 include University, TAFE and paid employment. All students achieved the results in their HSC to allow them to access their chosen post school destination, be it further education or paid employment.

Characteristics of the student body

The following information comes from the My School Website, which provides information based on the census.

https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/43716

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total enrolments	142	145	160	195	211	225
Girls	75	76	82	100	108	114
Boys	67	69	78	95	103	111
Full-time equivalent enrolments	142	145	159	189.7	204.6	216.6
Indigenous students	6%	6%	8%	7%	7%	9%
Language background other than English	8%	8%	8%	7%	12%	12%

The increase in enrolments is concurrent with a strong interest in Kindergarten and primary, we continue to see increases in second generation children (children of Alumni) and associated friends. We also have a successful playgroup associated with the school which feeds the Kindergarten.

The increase in Indigenous students may be connected with the strengthening Indigenous program offered by the school supported by a strong parent/teacher Indigenous cultural group, some very active members of the College of Teachers, and our Indigenous Cultural Leader, Jarn Hodgson.

Policies

Enrolment policy

The following complete text of the Newcastle Waldorf School policy was current for 2020. The enrolment Policy can be found on the School's website at:

http://www.newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au/school-downloads.html

The Newcastle Waldorf School is comprehensive and coeducational from K to 12, providing an education based on the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner within the framework and regulations of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).

- 1. Applications for enrolment may be made at any time by the parent/carer(s). The school will process applications in a timely manner having regard for all aspects of the application process, the gathering of information and the consideration of this information by the College of Teachers.
- 2. The school may accept students who are 4, turning 5 in the term of enrolment or older.
- 3. Where there are spaces in the class, applications will be processed by considering the student and family's fit with the school, ie:

Family:

- the applicant holding attitudes, values and priorities that are compatible with the ethos of the school, as outlined in the school handbook and at interview.
- siblings already attending the school or the family having a close connection to the school
- either parent having attended the school or another Steiner school.

Student:

- the student having attended the School or another Steiner School
- the contribution that the student may make to the school, including the co-curricular activities
- reports from previous schools
- engagement in the educational program of previous schools.

School:

- ability of the school to meet the special needs or abilities of the student
- the current composition and dynamic of the of the cohort
- order of receipt when the application to enrol is received by the school
 - 4. The school has an absolute discretion in determining the weight of each of these factors, and other criteria determined by the school from time to, in deciding whether to offer a place for the student.
 - 5. If a class is deemed to be full, the school may operate a waiting list or ask the applicant to contact the School regularly throughout the year.
 - 6. Continued enrolment at the school is dependent on the student having a pattern of attendance accepted by the school and the student and the parent/carer(s) observing all codes of conduct and other requirements of the School which are applicable from time to time. The school's expectations are communicated through its handbooks, at parent/teacher interviews, at class meetings and through regular notes, newsletters, emails, phone calls and face to face discussions.
 - 7. Payment of fees is the collective responsibility of the Parents/Guardians on the Enrolment Contract. They are payable at the start of the term and no remission will apply for students ceasing enrolment during that term.

Other School Policies

The following policies relate to student welfare, discipline, anti-bullying and resolving grievances.

Policy	Changes in 2020	Access to full text
Supporting Positive Student Behaviour and Discipline	The school began an	Full text available on
Policy	extensive review of this	request to the School
•	policy, beginning with a	Administration and at
This policy outlines the School's approach to positive	parent survey in late 2020.	http://www.newcastlewal
behaviour management, including guidelines to support and	Changes were accepted	dorfschool.nsw.edu.au/sc
manage student behaviour. In Kindergarten honouring the	into a draft policy for	hool-downloads.html
mood of the world being Good we build a shared culture of	further consultation in	
Reverence. In the Primary within the mood of the world being	2021.	
Beautiful we build a supportive culture of Authority. In High		
School within the mood of the world being True it becomes	The summary included	
worthy of Love. These developed moods and cultures within	here is from the draft	
the classes across the stages support and nourish student's	policy of late 2020	
positive behaviour.		
We teach students positive behaviours across the different		
environments and different times of the school day. We teach		
values of, reverence, truth, goodness and creativity where		
students are encouraged to share in a vibrant learning		
community. The School environment is one in which students		
can explore, connect, make mistakes, grow, develop, and learn		
to be strong, ethical individuals who have the capacity to		
productively contribute within the school and wider		
community context.		
We endeavour to individualise acknowledgement and		
consequences for students that are related to the situations		
and contexts in which the behaviours occur. By doing this we		
aim to build resilience in our students. The development of		
human capacities and behaviour is purposefully integrated in		
our school learning program in a way that addresses student wellbeing throughout their school life.		
wellbeing infoughout their school tife.		
The School prohibits the use of corporal punishment in		
disciplining students attending the school. The School does		
not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of		
corporal punishment by non-school persons, including		
parents, for any reason at the School. Teachers are aware of		
their legal responsibilities and update their knowledge		
annually.		
Children all have a right and responsibility to work, play and		
learn in a friendly, safe and helpful environment. Teachers all		
have a right and responsibility to teach in a friendly, safe		
school, which is supported by the school community. Parents		
all have a right to be informed, feel welcome and know their		
children work, play and learn in a friendly, safe school		
environment.		
This relies addresses		
This policy addresses:		
Expectations & Support		
Consequences for persistent behaviour issues		
Individual planning		
 Suspension, expulsion and exclusion 		
 Anti-bullying 		

Child Protection Policy, including:	Changes made to reflect	Full text available on
Prevention	legislation changes	request to the School
Reporting		Administration
Risk assessment		
Roles and responsibilities		
Student Welfare Policy:	No changes	Full text available on
Newcastle Waldorf School Provides a safe and supportive	_	request to the School
environment for all students.		Administration
This policy addresses the following areas:		
Security		
Supervision		
Homework		
Dress Code		
Pastoral Care, Communication and Support		
Student Leadership		
Individual Planning		
Medical Treatment		
 Excursions 		
Communication and Support		
Complaints and Grievances	No changes in 2020	Full text available on
		request to the School
Newcastle Waldorf School acknowledges that from time to		Administration
time parents and students may raise concerns, complaints or allegations about matters regarding their experiences with the		Full text available on the
School. The following policy and procedures outline		School's website at
processes that are designed to address concerns before they		School's website at
turn into complaints or allegations. If parents raise concerns		http://www.newcastlewal
early, and they are addressed informally by class and subject		dorfschool.nsw.edu.au/sc
teachers or the Principal, the likelihood that they will turn into		hool-downloads.html
formal complaints is greatly reduced.		
Concerns		
 Complaints 		
 Allegations 		
Procedures & flowcharts		

Determined Improvement Targets

Meeting 2019 target areas of improvement

The 2019 Annual Report identified the following areas for improvement in 2020:

Teaching and Learning			
2020 Progress			
- Progress was made with a DA for the facilities at 64 Reservoir rd., but there have been other perspectives and opportunities raised and the school is reviewing its options for after school care			
 Weekly inclusion of study material in College meetings. Weekly readings of "Foundations of Human Experience" Dr Lakshmi Prasanna and Patries Orange attended the professional development days for teachers in the week prior to school. We completed our fourth module of their training program. We also had a half day with them where we discussed our planning for PDHPE. Online workshops with Dr Lakshmi Prasanna for Easter. Zoom meetings with Steiner schools for different age groups. Practical PD of developing online School at Home website collectively. Professional development budgeting continues to be directed towards Steiner based PD. Development of an induction booklet for new teachers including ongoing feedback from the staff 			
- Commenced.			
 Student support and needs is a standing item on the weekly teachers' meeting agenda Class 7 identified and supported at our February college meetings to support them in the transition into high school. Planning for COVID-19 changes Structured employment of teacher's aides to support specific learning needs Engagement of a school counsellor to commence in 2021 			
 Term 1 Community talks by visiting Waldorf Experts including Dr Lakshmi Prasanna, Patries Orange, Tim Dunn, Erik Nieuwkoop and Lisa Devine Term 2 and 3 community events were on hold due to COVID-19, however collaboration continued with Jarn Hodgson for Indigenous aspects of our curriculum. 			
 Difficult to achieve in COVID climate, however, field studies of local Indigenous sites were possible in terms 3 and 4 Student sustainability initiative – Clothes exchange 			
Ongoing strengthening representation in Steiner education Australia Ongoing submission of event and journal articles for SEA website			

Improvement targets identified in 2019	2020 Progress
To manage the growing maintenance of existing buildings and expand facilities for changing needs	Under the supervision and organisation of our Maintenance team leader, the school made significant progress in 2020 in this area. - Library fascia and gutters replaced - Northern deck to Art room replaced Construction of a new building containing two general classrooms and one dedicated music classroom has been completed Bottom paddock and field revitalised for playing areas - Construction begun on a dedicated play area for Kindergarten and Lower primary students Bush Tucker Garden extension and regular maintenance - New lunch tables and stools - Year 10 construction of a set of new music stands for the hall - Substantial revitalisation of the field and lunch tables using sandstone blocks and extensive landscaping New set of desks and chairs to match increasing student numbers - Dedicated second Kindy commenced Mural on D&T exterior wall facing the school entrance - New artistic panelling for defining the developing outdoor workspace to the South of the D&T complex
To audit and replenish teaching resources, particularly through the high school.	 Server and computer upgrades Video Projectors and Sound Systems cabled in. Purchase of a set of guitars for class lessons Pianos for more rooms Audit and restock of the science lab

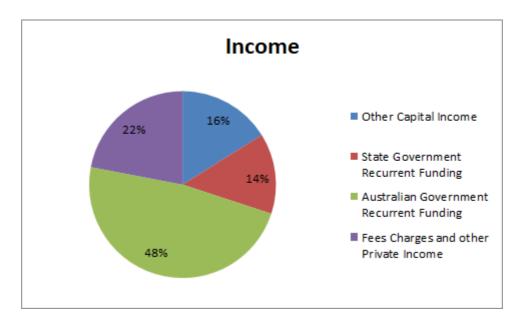
Improvement Targets for 2021

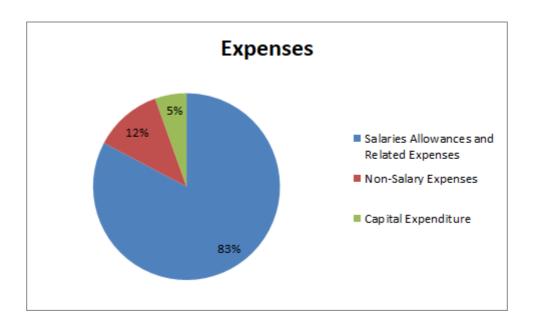
This annual report identifies the following areas for improvement in 2021 based on the strategic planning document developed over 2020:

Teaching and Learning
To establish Before and After School Care and Preschool facilities
To update governance and management policy and procedure
To constantly monitor individual and group needs across the school as well the process for
identifying need and how those needs can be met. The focus this year is on the increasing
diversity of individual needs.
To support the wellbeing of teachers, students and families.
To continue to support new teachers in the development of their understanding of the education
philosophy of Dr. Rudolf Steiner education.
To continue to review and plan for parent collaboration
To continue the work of Reconciliation by embedding Indigenous culture in the school.
Facilities and Resources
To renovate or replace the administration building
To purchase and install a school management system.
To continue to progress plans for utilising the school's second property to be part of the education
facilities of the school.

Summary of financial information

The Newcastle Waldorf School financial information is summarised in the following sector graphs of income and expenditure for the period of January 1 to December 31 2020, sourced from the School's audited accounts.





The other capital income includes COVID support. This has a flow on to increasing wage related proportion of expenses. All other figures are growing with the school student numbers but are similar to previous years in percentages.