

Available online at www.newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au or by contacting the School administration

Table of Contents

Messages from key school bodies	3
Message from the School Board	3
Message from the Co-Principals	3
The School Context	4
Student performance in state-wide examinations	5
NAPLAN	5
Record of School Achievement	5
Senior Secondary Outcomes and Student Achievement.	6
Professional learning, teaching standards and workforce composition	9
Professional learning	9
Teacher Accreditation	10
Teaching standards	11
Workforce composition	11
Respect, Responsibility and School Satisfaction	12
Respect and Responsibility	12
Parent, Student and Teacher satisfaction	12
Student attendance, retention rates and post school destinations	13
Student attendance rates	13
Management of non-attendance	14
Student retention rates and post school destinations	14
Characteristics of the student body	15
Policies	16
Enrolment policy	16
Other School Policies	18
Determined Improvement Targets	21
Meeting target areas of improvement in 2023	21
Improvement Targets for 2024	22
Summary of financial information	23

Ngayin bangayi Awabakal-a barayi-dha ngayin Ngayin ngarrakal yalawa-a, yalawa-n, yalawa-nan.

Today we are on Awabakal land we give respect to our ancestors, our elders and all of those who have gone before them, past, present and future.

Messages from key school bodies

Message from the School Board

During 2023, the Newcastle Waldorf School Board continued implementation of a long-term strategy to ensure the school works strongly and sustainably into the future. Our focus was on planning development application for the new school properties as well as temporary classrooms on that property, which, by the end of 2023 was in progress.

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 general staff, assistants, volunteers, parents and everyone who worked tirelessly to support the school and students in so many ways.

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

Participation from years 3 was below the threshold allowable for publishing results.

The average results of students who participated from class 5, 7 and 9 are available <u>here</u>, however, they are below the 80% participation rate required to compare to similar or all Australian results.

Newcastle Waldorf School offers NAPLAN to all students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9. The school does not practice NAPLAN style tests or prepare in any way other than through a wholistic curriculum.

Record of School Achievement

At the end of year 10, 5 students left the school to follow a variety of pathways. 3 students pursued entry into university through the Open Foundation University program as an alternative to the HSC. 2 students turned 17 (outside of compulsory school age). Both are eligible for the ROSA.

Senior Secondary Outcomes and Student Achievement.

In 2023, 8 of 9 students were eligible for the award of the HSC. One student is yet to complete their minimum standards tests to be formally eligible. That student completed their exams satisfactorily and will be awarded the HSC when they take the time to complete their minimum standards exams. One student was overseas at the time of the exams in an elite sport program but was able to sit the exams at an approved venue to complete their HSC.

The band analysis table below shows the spread of results mostly in bands 4 and 5, which are good results consistent with their work through years 11 and 12. There were also some exceptional results in band 6 for mathematics, music and visual arts. One student was nominated for Encore, the music performance in the Sydney Opera House.

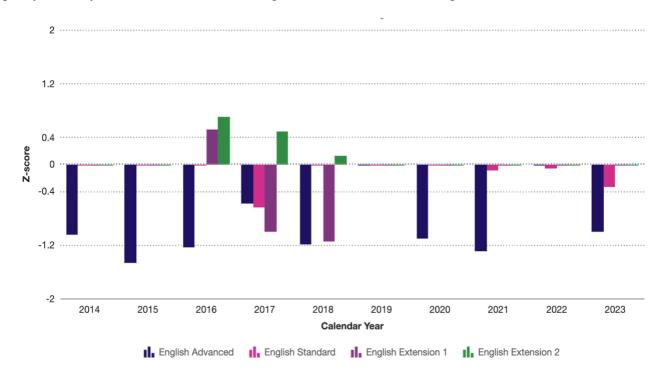
Course	Name	Included Students	Omitted Students	Band 6	Band 5	Band 4	Band 3	Band 2	Band 1
15140	English Advanced	4				4			
15130	English Standard	5				2	2	1	
15236	Mathematics Standard 2	4		1	1	1	1		
15290	Music 1	9		1	3	5			
15400	Visual Arts	6		1	4		1		
	Band Total			3	8	12	4	1	

Z-Scores

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 of our school average from the state average. Where the bar is above the 0 line, on average, our students performed above the average student from the state. Comparing the z-score analysis to the band table above helps to interpret what constitutes and particular z-score. For example, in visual arts, one band 6 and four band 5s combine to be a z-score just above the average of the state.

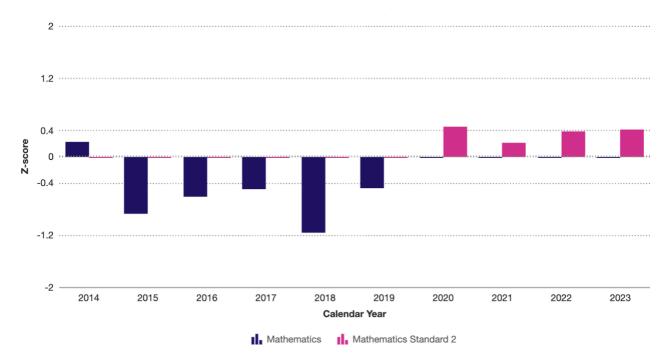
English Z-Scores

In 2023, students chose Standard and Advanced English and performed below the state average. In past years they have chosen Advanced English for the more interesting and diverse content.



Mathematics Z-Scores

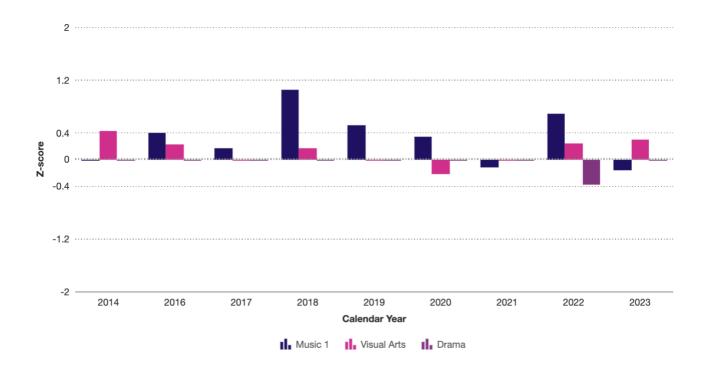
All students chose Standard Mathematics this year and averaged better than the state. Until 2019, students had chosen Advanced Mathematics for the more interesting content of the course.



Arts Z-Scores

Visual Arts students performed well in comparison to the state.

In Music, one student was nominated for *Encore*, the state's showcase of HSC music performances.



Vocational or Trade Training

In 2023, 33% of students included vocational or trade training in their HSC. Publishing results would jeopardise privacy of these students.

Professional learning, teaching standards and workforce composition

Professional learning

This list is not exhaustive but comprises a selection of the PD activities undertaken by staff in 2023.

Number of staff	course	duration	date
Most primary teachers and assistants	Pedagogical Section, Anthroposophical Society Annual Primary Teacher Intensives at NWS	4 days	January
Most High school teachers	Lakshmi and Patries	4 days	January
Most teachers	Neuro Diversity and Autism in Edcuation – Craig Smith	2 hours	January
Most staff	Child Protection Training AISNSW		February
Most teachers	First Aid Refresher	1 day	March
5 teachers	Lakshmi and Patries Inner development module 5	3 days	March
2 teachers	SEA March Delegates meeting discussing Steiner School issues in an Australian context	2 days	March
10 staff	Youth Mental Health First Aid	3 x 2.5 hour sessions	March
6 staff	Duty of Care and Risk Assessment workshop AISNSW	4 hours	March
6 staff	Visit from David Newbatt - international artist. teacher and special needs teacher - Weekend workshop	2 half-days	March
2 teachers	David Newbatt - Weekend workshop at Sydney Rudolf Steiner House	½ day	April
1 teacher	International Projective Geometry presentations with South Africa, Egypt and UK Waldorf teachers	10 days	April
1 teacher	World Teachers Conference for Steiner Education in Switzerland over the school holiday break.	4 days	April
1 staff	Youth leadership conference in Switzerland.	2 weeks	June

4 teachers	SEA national Teachers Conference	4 days	July
8 teachers	Module one of Lakshmi and Patries Teacher Development modules with teachers from our school, Noosa and Tasmania Steiner Schools Module 6 of Lakshmi and Patries with teachers from our school, Noosa and Samford Valley attending, both held at our school.	3 days	July
2 teachers	Wilderness First Aid	4 days	July
2 teachers	Wyla Sustainability - Indigenous Culture program introduction	1 hour	September
1 teacher	Australian Steiner Curriculum History review and improvements for SEA for years 7-10.	6 hours	September
2 teachers	Sydney Rudolf Steiner Spring Seminar	2 days	September
1 teacher	Sydney Rudolf Steiner House - Water colour workshop run by a NWS teacher	4 hrs	October
Most teachers	Wyla Sustainability - Indigenous Culture and Sustainability presentation	1 hour	November
1 teacher	new SEA website writing support	4 hours	November
Some high school teachers	Ongoing Michael Merle High school teacher training	Optional 1 hour sessions total 12 hrs	4 sessions each term 2023
4 staff	Zoom study and preparation for 2024 Pedagogical Section, Anthroposophical Society Annual Primary and High School Teacher Intensives at NWS	8 hours	December

Teacher Accreditation

Level of accreditation		Number of Teachers
Conditional		2
Provisional		1
Proficient Teacher		22
	Total number of teachers	25

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	25
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	25
Full-time equivalent teaching staff	22.4
Non-teaching staff	37
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	16.6

The Newcastle Waldorf School welcomes students, parents, carers, staff and visitors from all races, religions and cultural backgrounds. We have a member of Staff who is a First Nations person, and we are pursuing another contract with a First Nations educator and cultural specialist for 2024.

The high number of non-teaching staff includes many peripatetic music teachers and casual support staff.

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.

The school published a diversity statement early in 2023: The Newcastle Waldorf School welcomes students, parents, carers, staff and visitors from all races, religions and cultural backgrounds. We welcome people of all genders and sexualities, and we model and teach inclusivity in age-appropriate ways across the school. We highly value the richness that comes from diversity and the opportunities for learning and understanding that diversity brings to us. Above all, we strive to create a loving space that allows each and every child to grow and flourish unimpeded by discrimination of any kind. We make adjustments to be inclusive while respecting the privacy of the individual, fostering a safe environment where each individual has the opportunity to learn and grow towards their potential.

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.

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.

The school continues to grow in enrolment numbers with the majority of primary classes often full and some high school classes quite large.

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 2023, 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	2021	2022	2023
K			91%	92%		90%	91%
1	94%	93%	93%	93%	97%	88%	95%
2	92%	90%	94%	93%	94%	88%	90%
3	92%	93%	93%	87%	93%	83%	92%
4	90%	92%	92%	93%	91%	85%	90%
5	95%	90%	93%	93%	95%	86%	90%
6	93%	93%	91%	94%	91%	86%	85%
7	95%	91%	90%	94%	92%	81%	87%
8	95%	92%	85%	94%	88%	85%	82%
9	95%	86%	89%	87%	86%	83%	88%
10	94%	96%	85%	90%	89%	87%	88%
11	95%	97%	96%	95%	87%	90%	87%
12	95%	86%	98%	98%	83%	85%	88%
School	93%	92%	92%	92%	91%	86%	89%

Student attendance rate (based on years 1 to 10), semester 1 2023:

- All students 88%
- Indigenous students 85%
- Non-Indigenous students 89%

Student attendance rate (based on years 1 to 10), term 3 2023:

- All students 89%
- Indigenous students 89%
- Non-Indigenous students 89%

Student attendance level (students attending 90% or more of the time) Semester 1 All students 55%, Indigenous students 27%, Non-Indigenous students 58% Student attendance level (students attending 90% or more of the time) Term 3 All students 62%, Indigenous students 66%, Non-Indigenous students 61%

Nearly all measures of attendance have improved in 2023, especially the percentage of students attending more than 90% of the time, which was down at 35% in 2022.

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 a Co-Principal.
- Unsatisfactory attendance information will be transferred to student reports.
- Students who are habitually absent may be reported to DCJ under the Keep Them Safe quidelines.
- 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 have historically been good through primary years. The classes often maintain numbers in these years. This year saw a fall in retention rates when comparing 2022 with 2023 with more students leaving more recently. At the end of 2023 more students than usual left from classes 6 and 10 which are the transition years into high school and senior high school respectively.

Some of the reasons for departure are:

- Variety of courses offered by other schools
- Students pursuing employment or further studies at TAFE

- Students wanting a larger peer/social group
- Parents following an ethos different to that of the school
- School is not a legal requirement for young people over 17 years of age.
- Students choosing a different pathway into university, such as the Open Foundation option.
- Financial reasons and inability to pay fees

The retention rate of students from year 10, 2021 through to completion of year 12 in 2023 was 50%. The majority of the students who left, did so at the end of year 10. Students who left between year 10 and year 12 mostly went to different schools or vocational training. Some pursued employment. The school is pleased to see them prospering in their life choices.

Post school destinations of the students finishing their HSC in 2023 are in paid employment or tertiary education at University. All students achieved the results in their HSC that allowed them to access their chosen post school destination.

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

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total enrolments	160	195	211	225	244	241	254
Girls	82	100	108	114	114	119	125
Boys	78	95	103	111	130	122	129
Full-time equivalent enrolments	159	189.7	204.6	216.6	236.6	239.4	246.7
Indigenous students	8%	7%	7%	9%	11%	11%	9%
Language background other than English	8%	7%	12%	12%	12%	9%	8%

In 2023 the school resumed its general growth trend in student numbers after a dip in enrolment numbers in 2022.

Policies

Enrolment policy

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).

- 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 2023	Access to full text
Supporting Positive Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy Newcastle Waldorf School endeavours to promote a healthy positive environment, where students: gain an understanding and appreciation for the importance of spiritual, social, emotional, mental, and physical health and wellbeing; grow to be healthy individuals who are able to assess and maintain their own health throughout their lifetime, in order to develop appropriate and healthy relationships both professionally and personally; have an appreciation for aesthetic, artistic, and creative movement; and have a lasting sense of responsibility for, and appreciation of, the environment in which many of these pursuits take place.	This Policy was re-worked considerably in 2023 in response to parent feedback from a survey that was conducted on the new Whole School Wellbeing Policy in September 2023.	Full text available on request to the School Administration and publicly in the School Downloads section of the NWS website here: https://www.newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au/school-downloads.html
1.1 This policy outlines the schools' approach to positive behaviour management, including guidelines to support and manage student behaviour. In Kindergarten honouring the mood of the world being Good we build a shared culture of Reverence. In the Primary within the mood of the world being Beautiful we build a supportive culture of loving Authority. In High School within the mood of the world being True it becomes worthy of Love. These developed moods and cultures within the classes across the stages support and nourish a student's positive behaviour.		
1.2 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.		
1.3 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. 1.4 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. 1.5 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 policy addresses: Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviours and preventing inappropriate behaviour Managing/Guiding behaviours Student welfare Suspension and Expulsion & Exclusion Inclusivity - Gender, Race and Disability - Anti-Racism Anti-Bullvina Serious incidents between students **Child Protection Policy, including:** No major changes in 2023 Full text available on request to the School Prevention Administration and Reporting Risk assessment publicly in the School Downloads section of the Roles and responsibilities NWS website here: https://www.newcastlewa ldorfschool.nsw.edu.au/sc hool-downloads.html Whole School Wellbeing Policy This policy was new in Full text available on 2023 and it supersedes and request to the School Newcastle Waldorf School Whole School Wellbeing encompasses the NWS Administration and Student Welfare Policy. publicly in the School Policy aims to provide information on the wide range of Downloads section of the ways that students and families can engage fully in the NWS website here: It was the result of a school healthy life of school. It provides an outline for how our community survey as well https://www.newcastlewa community can communicate and collaborate to support ldorfschool.nsw.edu.au/sc as collaboration through the growing wellbeing of the children in our care. hool-downloads.html the parent/teacher circle forum. This policy covers the areas of:

- Curriculum to support wellbeing
- Learning support
- Community wellbeing
- Medical treatment and first aid
- safety and supervision
- student expectations

- professional development and continuous improvement		
Complaints and Grievances Newcastle Waldorf School understands that from time to time parents and students may raise complaints in respect of services provided by the school or against staff members, which includes employees, contractors and volunteers. The following policy and procedures outlines the way in which complaints will be handled by the school. If parents raise concerns early, and they are addressed informally by class and subject teachers or a Co-Principal, the likelihood that they will turn into formal complaints may be greatly reduced. Concerns Complaints Allegations Procedures & flowcharts	Under Review	Full text available on request to the School Administration and publicly in the School Downloads section of the NWS website here: https://www.newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au/school-downloads.html

Determined Improvement Targets

Meeting target areas of improvement in 2023

The 2022 Annual Report identified the following areas for improvement in 2023:

Targets	How these targets were met in 2023
Teaching and Learning	
To support the wellbeing of teachers, students and families.	 creating a whole school wellbeing policy with parent and teacher collaboration. improving festivals and other community events identifying and proactively responding to psycho-social hazards for teachers
To continue to support new teachers in the development of their understanding of the education philosophy of Dr. Rudolf Steiner	 NWS hosted, for the first time, the Pedagogical Section Primary Intensives concurrently with Lakshmi and Patries inner development modules for high school teachers, Michael Merle online and SEA conferences. Numerous Steiner professional development opportunities through the year (see PD table) including experts: Lakshmi Prasanna, Pastries Orange, Michael Merle, David Newbatt, Lisa Devine. Weekly study sessions as part of College meetings and in smaller groups.
To continue to develop and embed our Indigenous Culture Program across the school	 Consultation with WYLA for renewing our cultural program offering employment to Jess Wegener as a school cultural leader, consultant and educator in the school.
To improve Steiner curriculum continuity across the school, particularly in the high school	 Online series of curriculum presentations on subject areas by Michael Merle. high school teacher collaboration for subject overviews and presentation at high school information evening. employing a Eurythmist to work K - 12 on a weekly basis.
To increase enrolment numbers and strengthen the educational program in the high school	 Holding termly open days holding annual high school information evening presenting a high school showcase concert and art exhibition

To update Governance policy and procedure	- not achieved this year
Facilities and Resources	
To renovate or replace the administration building	This target has not been met as the development of the school's new sites takes priority. The existing administration building has been improved by small internal renovations and remodelling.
To establish the Kindergarten at #46	The Development Application was approved in 2023
To develop the extensive grounds of #46 and #40 to extend the school's farm animal program.	Classes were involved in fencing and lantana clearing in anticipation of having a cow. Regular mowing and care of the land will mean this is possible in 2024.

Improvement Targets for 2024

This annual report identifies the following areas for improvement for 2024 based on the strategic planning document developed over 2023:

To improve Steiner curriculum continuity across the school particularly in the high school.

To continue to develop and embed our Indigenous Culture Program across the school

To support teachers in the development of their understanding of the education philosophy of Dr. Rudolf Steiner

To strive for cooperation between teachers, other educators, parents and children and to provide regular educational and social opportunities for close relationships to be formed between teachers, pupils and parents and to involve parents in aspects of the day-to-day work of the school.

To share the experience of school life with the community and public to stimulate interest and build a positive understanding of school endeavours.

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 2023, sourced from the School's audited accounts.

The majority of the school's income (around 80%) is from federal and state funding which is determined by student numbers.

The majority of our expenditure (88%) is on salaries and staff related expenditure. This percentage is higher than previous years and reflects the need for additional support staff to cater for a higher diversity of student needs.

