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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 of 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.

Characteristics of the student body

Characteristics of the student body can be viewed on the “My School” website under the school name “The Newcastle Rudolf Steiner School”, or found in more detail on page 12.

http://www.myschool.edu.au/
Messages from key school bodies

Message from the School Board

During 2012, Newcastle Waldorf School continued to build upon a secure educational and financial foundation. The School Board is pleased to report that during the year it developed and implemented improvements to some of its governance processes and documentation that have resulted in improved clarity of roles.

The School Board would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the contributions of the many parents of the School who supported the school through attendance at working bees throughout the year. Their efforts help create the wonderful atmosphere of the School that is enjoyed by everyone.

Message from the Co-Principals

In 2012 the College of Teachers made a decision to embark on an exciting new phase that will include providing education to students in years 11 & 12. Delivering the NSW HSC will allow students to continue their education at the school through a very important stage in their development. While initially year 11 & 12 will cater for a very small number of students, we envisage growth over the coming years that will give more security to enrolment numbers in years 9 & 10.

In the planning process for year 11 & 12, the school consulted with Lorien Novalis and Glenaeon Steiner Schools, and we would like to acknowledge their generosity with information that proved invaluable in the early stages of the process.

We would also like to acknowledge the hard work and long hours of the staff at our school who continue to build and improve the school from year to year while delivering a high quality education to all students.
Student performance in state-wide examinations

NAPLAN

NAPLAN data is reported on My School website (http://www.myschool.edu.au/)

The school offers NAPLAN tests to all students in years 3, 5, 7 & 9. In 2012 parents of the School elected to withdraw their children from NAPLAN testing for philosophical reasons. My School website reports student data as “Student population below reporting threshold” when numbers of participants are low.

Record of School Achievement

The strength of the School in all Key Learning Areas has been demonstrated over the years by the consistently above average results in the State-wide School Certificate exams in year 10. The Record of School Achievement has replaced the School Certificate in 2012.

The following table shows how results of Newcastle Waldorf School students compared with state averages in Key Learning Areas in the 2010 – 20011 School Certificate. It also shows the Grades awarded by the school in 2012 (since the abolition of the School Certificate).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage of students receiving grades in Band 4 or above:</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English literacy</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>Grades awarded: A, A, B, B, D, D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>64</td>
<td></td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>Grades awarded: A10, A9, A9, B8, C5, D4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>Grades awarded: A, A, B, B, C, C,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aust. History, Civics &amp; Citizenship</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>83</td>
<td></td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>82</td>
<td></td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>Grades awarded: A, A, B, C, D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aust. Geography, Civics &amp; Citizenship</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>83</td>
<td></td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>82</td>
<td></td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Professional learning, teaching standards and workforce composition

Professional learning

All teaching staff attended lectures and a workshop from Lakshmi Prasanna, a highly renowned Anthroposophical Doctor.

One Co-Principal attended the Steiner Teachers Conference in Dornach, Switzerland.

One Co-Principal attended a workshop on mandatory reporting and other child protection issues run by the Ombudsman.

One Co-Principal and another staff member attended an AIS/BoS information day on registration and accreditation requirements.

One staff member attended Techné, a Technology in Schools conference at Lorien Novalis Steiner School.

Two staff members attended the National Steiner Conference

One staff member attended regular meetings of the English Teachers Association

Many of the staff attended weekly eurythmy lessons conducted by our eurythmy teacher.

Teaching standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No. of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers not having qualifications as described in (i) and (ii) above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context. Such teachers must have been employed to ‘teach’ in NSW before 1 October 2004 (either on a permanent, casual or temporary basis) and as a ‘teacher’ during the last five (5) years in a permanent, casual or temporary capacity.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Workforce composition

(from My School website http://www.myschool.edu.au/)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Staff</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time equivalent teaching staff</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-teaching staff</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were no indigenous staff members in Newcastle Waldorf School in 2012.
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 eurhythmy pieces as well as viewing and 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.

Parent, Student and Teacher satisfaction

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

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, play 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.

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 demonstrates a high level of staff satisfaction.
Student attendance, retention rates and post school destinations

Student attendance rates

Student attendance rate (from My School) 94%

The pattern of attendance for each class during the 2012 STAT sample was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 8</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
<th>Year 10</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Management of non-attendance

The following information regarding the management of non-attendance is extracted from the Newcastle Waldorf School’s 2012 attendance policy. The full policy can be viewed on request in the School’s administration.

The school maintains a register of enrolments and a daily register/roll of attendance to monitor and identify absences from school. Unexplained absences are followed up and parents/guardians are notified regarding poor school attendance. Students’ unsatisfactory attendance information is transferred to student files.

Daily attendance is monitored as follows and is retained for 7 years after the last entry:

- Class attendance slips are completed by class teachers during the morning lesson.

- Attendance information is collated in the Rolls at 11:30 by a Senior Teacher at this time.

- Reasons for absences are recorded. Most parents notify the school on the day when the absence occurs via a recorded phone message before 9:00am. Alternatively a note explaining the absence is brought by the student returning from the absence.

Note: the common code approved by the Minister will be used from 2012

Follow-up procedures

Unexplained absences

- After 3 consecutive days of unexplained absences, a teacher phones the
home to request a reason for the absence. If this communication is unsuccessful after a period of 2 days, a form letter is sent to the home by the Principal (or delegate) and is recorded in the student’s file.

- Students who fail to attend school for unexplained periods will be referred to Community Services under the Keep Them Safe guidelines, and the Department of Education and Communities officer with Home School Liaison responsibilities in writing by the Principal (or delegate) as stated in the above register of enrolment procedure, and a copy of the letter kept in the student’s file.

**Poor attendance**

- The teacher will contact the student’s parents/guardians to discuss poor attendance in order to ascertain if there is some underlying cause that requires the school’s assistance.

**Unsatisfactory attendance**

- The teacher will phone the parents/guardians to discuss unsatisfactory attendance. If this communication is unsuccessful, a form letter is sent to the home by the Principal (or delegate) and is recorded in the student’s file.

- Unsatisfactory attendance information will be transferred to student files by the teacher/senior teacher

- Students who are habitually absent will be reported to Community Services under the Keep Them Safe guidelines

**Student retention rates and post school destinations**

The majority of students who complete their education to Year 10 at the School proceed to other schools or to TAFE colleges to complete their Higher School Certificate. A small number opt for apprenticeships or traineeships offered by TAFE colleges. Students of the School have gone on to achieve success in a wide variety of trades and professions.

Student retention rates are good through primary and secondary years 7 – 9 but class numbers lessen dramatically in year 10. Interviews with students and their parents indicate that the most common reason for this is the perceived need for students to settle into the school that they will be attending for years 11 and 12. The Newcastle Waldorf School aims to address this by offering years 11 and 12 as soon as 2014.
Enrolment policy

The following complete text of the Newcastle Waldorf School policy and procedures was current for most of 2012. The policy was due for review in August 2012 and is currently under review.

1. POLICY

The school is comprehensive and coeducational K – 10, providing an education based on the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner and registered and accredited with the NSW Board of Studies.

All applications are processed in order of receipt, and consideration is given to the applicant’s support for the ethos of the school, siblings already attending the school and other criteria determined by the school from time to time.

The School does not operate a waiting list. If classes are full, applicants are asked to contact the School later in the year.

Once enrolled, pupils are expected to uphold the school’s ethos and comply with the school’s code of conduct to maintain enrolment.

Enrolment to High School will not be automatic from completion of Year 6. Continuing enrolment will be determined by assessment of pupil’s ability to uphold Student Code of Conduct and the school’s ethos.

Suspension/Expulsion

If the principal, or any person deputing for the principal, considers that a student is guilty of a serious breach of the rules or has otherwise engaged in conduct which is prejudicial to the school or its students or staff, the principal or deputy may suspend or expel the student permanently or temporarily at their absolute discretion. The School does not exclude students from attending other schools.

Procedural Fairness

The implementation of this policy statement will follow principles of procedural fairness. If the school board or the principal believes that a mutually beneficial relationship of trust and cooperation between a parent and school has broken down to the extent that it adversely impacts on that relationship, then the school, the school board or the principal may require the parent to remove the child from the school. No remission of fees will apply in either case.

2. ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

2.1 Process all applications within the school’s enrolment policy.

2.2 Interview applicants if there is a vacancy in the class
2.3 Consider each applicant’s interview responses and supporting statement regarding their ability and willingness to support the school’s ethos.

2.3 Consider each applicant’s educational needs and requirements, by gathering information and consulting with parents/family and other relevant persons.

2.4 Identify any strategies or adjustments which may be required to accommodate the applicant before a decision regarding enrolment is made, taking into consideration the effect of the adjustment on the prospective student, as well as its impact on the School, its staff and other students.

2.5 Accept or reject the application.

2.6 Inform the applicant of the outcome.

2.7 Accepted applicant will be required to sign a copy of the School Prospectus Acknowledgement before completing the School Enrolment Form [E1] and Data Collection Form [E2]. Applicant will receive Car park Statement following OHS guidelines [E3].

3.8 On completion of Year 6 parents will be required to re-enrol pupils for High School and re-read the School Prospectus and sign the Acknowledgement form before a student can continue into High School.

3.9 Applicant will be informed of the Privacy Policy.

**Relevant Legislation**

- *The Disability Discrimination Act (1992)*
- *Disability Standards for Education 2005*

**Characteristics of the student body**

The following information comes from the My School Website 2012:

- Total enrolments: 139
- Girls: 67
- Boys: 72
- Full-time equivalent enrolments: 139
- Indigenous students: 1%
- Language background other than English: 0
School policies

Student Welfare and Discipline

The following Statement from the School’s Behaviour Management Policy summarises the School’s approach to student welfare and discipline:

*Newcastle Waldorf School aims to provide a warm, nurturing environment where individual students can learn.*

*We aim to do this by teaching values of respect, reverence, truth, goodness and creativity where students are encouraged to share in a vibrant learning community.*

*We encourage goodwill and empathy. We collaboratively set expectations and teach students positive behaviours across the different environments and different times of the school day. Students are expected to strive to meet these expectations and follow requests made by school staff.*

*We endeavour to teach these behaviours through positively acknowledging students. We also 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 teaching of expectations and the implementation of consequences expressly prohibits corporal punishment and does not sanction its use by non school personnel.*

*For serious breaches of expectations it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student.*

*The implementation of this policy statement will follow the principles of procedural fairness.*
The following policies relate to student welfare and discipline.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Changes in 2012</th>
<th>Access to full text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour Management - Supporting Positive Behaviour</td>
<td>• Evaluated in Feb 2012. No amendments necessary.</td>
<td>Full text available on request in School Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Protection Policy, including:</td>
<td>• Thoroughly revised in consultation with AIS and Implemented in May 2012</td>
<td>Issued to all staff members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Welfare Policy, including:</td>
<td>• No changes in 2012</td>
<td>Full text available on request in School Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline policy</td>
<td>• No changes in 2012</td>
<td>Full text available on request in School Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code of Conduct</td>
<td>• Thoroughly revised in consultation with AIS and Implemented in May 2012</td>
<td>Full text available on request in School Administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Complaints and Grievances**

*Newcastle Waldorf School acknowledges that misunderstandings, concerns or conflict may arise from time to time within the School community. We encourage parents to raise these concerns with the School by the appropriate means, as outlined in the ‘Complaints Procedure’ so that the matter may be resolved effectively and efficiently. All complaints using this procedure will be acknowledged and considered. If complaints are not put in writing, the School is unable to guarantee efficiency or consideration.*
Determined Improvement Targets

Meeting 2011 target areas of improvement

The 2011 Annual Report identified the following areas for improvement in 2012:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas for improvement</th>
<th>Improved in 2012 by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching and Learning:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Streamlining student assessment data collection and how it is stored to make individual teacher's jobs in this area less time consuming.</td>
<td>• Deciding to use student data management software, although selection of the particular software was not achieved by the end of 2012. Spreadsheet software was, however, being used efficiently by high school staff to record assessment marks and grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Making progress towards offering year 11 and 12 at the School in the near future.</td>
<td>• Deciding to apply for registration and accreditation to offer the NSW HSC as early as 2014.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facilities and Resources:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Building a custom designed forging and metal work area in consultation with the AISNSW and relevant authorities to allow forging to be included in the 7-10 TAS program.</td>
<td>• Updating existing facilities to ensure WHS requirements are met has made forging available in the 2013 educational program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reviewing current school buildings to assess what adjustments would need to be made to meet requirements to deliver years 11 and 12 in the near future.</td>
<td>• Careful scheduling and a proposed new building will allow year 11 &amp; 12 to have sufficient facilities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Improvement Targets for 2013

This annual report identifies the following areas for improvement in 2013:

**Teaching and Learning**

• Streamlining student assessment data collection and how it is stored to make individual teacher’s jobs in this area less time consuming (ongoing from 2011)
• Streamlining programming requirements for teachers (considering National Curriculum implementation and a potential Steiner Education Australia Membership application.)
• Consolidating the future direction of the school considering year 11 and 12, joining the Steiner Association and composite classes.

**Facilities and Resources**

• Efficient repairs to ageing buildings.
• Building a new facility to accommodate year 11 & 12.
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, 2012 sourced from the School’s audited accounts.

Income

- Fees and private income: 33%
- State recurrent grants: 18%
- Commonwealth recurrent grants: 2%
- Capital Income (Building fund): 2%

Expenditure

- Salaries, allowances, related expenditure: 21%
- *Non-salary expenses: 6%
- Capital expenditure: 73%