

# Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School

## Performance Information - 2008

*Under the Australian Government's Programmes for Schools Quadrennial Administrative Guidelines 2005 - 2008, all schools are required to make a commitment to ensure that School Performance Information is made publicly available in at least two formats, within six months of the completion of the programme year. That is by June 30<sup>th</sup> 2009, schools must publish information relating to 2008.*

### Professional Engagement

#### 1. Staff Attendance

The staff attendance rate for 2008 was 96.6%.

#### 2. Staff Retention

The staff retention rate for 2008 was 95.8%.

#### 3. Teacher Qualifications

All our teachers are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching

B Arts	15
Assoc Diploma Mech Eng	1
B A Outdoor Ed	4
B A -LOTE Hon	1
B Applied Science	1
B Applied Science (Human Movement)	1
B Ed	6
B Ed - Music & Drama	1
B Ed -Physics	1
B Music	2
B Sc - honors	1
BA Honors	2
B Science	5
B Surveying	1
Certificates	6
Dip - Early Childhood Ed	2
Dip Bio Chemistry	1
Dip Community Development	1
Dip Curative Eurythmy	1
Dip Ed	17
Dip Ed - Honors	1
Dip Ed Infant & Primary	1
Dip Eurythmy	2
Dip Fine Arts	2
Dip K.T.C.	1
Dip Music Performance	1

Dip of Teaching	1
Dip Social Studies	1
Dip Teaching - Primary	2
Dip TESL	1
Grad Dip - Art Therapy	1
Grad Dip - Outdoor Ed	1
Grad Dip Ed	5
Grad Dip Physics Ed	1
Grad Dip Primary Ed	1
Grad Dip Special Ed	1
Grad Dip-Adolescent Health & Welfare	1
Higher Dip Teaching Sec	2
M A -Social Ecology	1
M A	2
M. Music	1
M. Special Ed	1
Ph D	2
Post Grad Dip Fine Arts	1
Post Grad Dip-Computer Science	1
T.S.T.C.	1
Steiner Education Qualifications	30
Currently undergoing Steiner training	3
Our Music teachers have various qualifications and many are active performers, composers, recording artists and some even go on tour.	

#### **4. Expenditure and teacher participation in professional learning.**

The total expenditure for professional development provided by the school in 2008 was \$19,849.19 Staff were involved in activities such as Further Study, Steiner Teacher Training, Lectures, Seminars, AISV special briefings, Conferences, Inservice/Curriculum Days, and Training (e.g. First Aid, timetable).

Staff also fund their own training for example weekly eurythmy classes, study groups, music classes and conferences.

Most staff participated in some form of professional development during 2008 including weekly College Meetings where thirty minutes is dedicated to on-going professional development.

### **Key Student Outcomes**

#### **5. Student Attendance**

Prep	92.2
1	93.1
2	92.1
3	94.9
4	94.7
5	93.4

6	95.6
7L	95
7U	94.9
8L	92.6
8U	90.6
9L	95.7
9U	96
10L	91.4
10U	91.4
11	92.6
12	96.4
Average	93.7

**6. Proportions of Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 students meeting national reading, writing, spelling and numeracy benchmarks**

As 100% of parents chose to remove their children from participation in these tests, it did not allow for a large enough sample to be indicative of the School's Performance. Therefore results are not available.

**7. Changes in benchmark results from the previous year**

The percentage change in the number of students achieving national benchmarks.

98% of parents chose to remove their children from participation in these tests in 2007. 100% of parents chose to remove their children from participation in these tests in 2008. This did not allow for a large enough sample for comparison therefore results are not available.

**8. Value added**

What Makes Our School Unique

*Confidence is one of the golden words that must govern social life in the future.*

*The other golden word is love, love of that which we have to do.*

*And in the future, good deeds will be done out of love for humanity.*

*~ Rudolf Steiner*

At the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School we work with the philosophy elaborated by Rudolf Steiner (1861 - 1925) which describes the child as a spiritual being who brings his or her own gifts into the world. It is the task of the teacher to recognise and foster these gifts and to help the child to become his or her true self. This gives education a purpose which extends beyond that of getting a job or into a course. Steiner education strives to provide an environment - physical, emotional and intellectual - where not only the thinking, but also the will (striving towards a purposeful destiny) and the feelings of the child can grow and truly reflect the whole person.

Rudolf Steiner awakened a new impulse in education with this philosophy.

In earlier centuries the feeling and will life of children naturally followed the teaching given to their minds. So children who had well-educated thinking would, as a result, have deep and appropriate feelings and be practical and active. We know that in this time this is no longer so. Children with finely

trained minds may have difficult feeling lives and may be lacking in initiative and committed action even to ideas they think of as good.

In Steiner ("Waldorf") Schools we strive to teach children in their feelings and their will more directly, in association with each area of knowledge that we tackle. We are trying to help the children develop their feelings as they grasp ideas, and help them gradually cultivate their own impulses of action and initiative.

We believe education can be a process of growing in the light of truth and the warmth of a community dedicated to improving our world. Being clever is not enough in our times; the solid human qualities of freed will and healthy deep feeling must accompany clear thought.

At the same time one of the issues of great concern to many people in our somewhat troubles times, is whether or not education is actually meeting the real needs of today's, or particularly tomorrow's, world. Many parents want an education which, while not overtly religious, reflects a spiritual view of the world.

And so we ask what do our children need from us? What do we most wish to do for them?

*Love* is, of course, the essence of the answer to both of these questions. Our children must have our love to nourish them every day of their growth to adulthood, and it goes beyond this, for they need our love every day of their lives, even after we have passed over the threshold of death. We, for our part, will know our life to be fulfilled as we give love to our children and share their joys and trials on the path towards maturity. We may feel many tasks to be essential in our life, but loving our children has first claim upon us.

Therefore we teachers work closely with our community of parents to share in this task. All parents who support the values and intentions of the teachers who bring the education at The Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School, recognize the unique qualities that define Steiner Education and are specific to our school.

Education prepares our children for life. The way children are educated by family, school and society determines so very much about their innate attitudes and their will to act in the world. Children live in deep community with their parents and teachers and guardians, because by their nature they are innocently open to all the influences of the world. In consequence, what we adults really are, and what we are really trying to do with children has a profound influence upon their character. Our being and our deeper impulses have more influence than our educational techniques or our stated aims. It is of the essence, therefore, that all of us who educate children shall educate with love for them, for their eventual independence, and for their aims and aspirations. We parents and guardians and teachers therefore strive to create a community which will lovingly care for the interests of the children, and will protect them from self-seeking influences which seek to rob the youngsters of their natural growth to freedom. Commercial and political and dogmatic religious influences can be balanced in the soul of a mature adult, but we must protect the children from such influences which are not based upon a loving concern for their free development.

Each of our years of education, from the innocent early childhood years to the trial by fire of the Victorian Certificate of Education, requires that we look with wonder and love at the efforts of the child to become a citizen of the Earth, and the challenge is always there to find loving methods to initiate the child into our ways of understanding the world.

At this school we provide an education which is based upon an understanding of children as divine beings who have descended to Earth from spiritual spheres. Because we teachers have been on Earth longer than the children in our care, we have the opportunity to help them find their way into human culture. We know that we are not adequate to this task but our understanding is that by our loving interest in the children, and by our constant striving to engage fully with them and with our subject, we allow them to grow beyond us to their own full potential for self-realization and working for the world. It is a miracle to

observe again and again how our students can take what we teachers offer them and use it to develop faculties and knowledge far beyond that which we can demonstrate or embody. Our teaching therefore is offered in service to the unfathomable potential and destiny of each one of our children, and it must be offered with imagination and love for both our students and our subject if it is to nourish the free development of the human beings in our care.

We have what is called the *Steiner Curriculum*, this being a shared body of knowledge accumulated by hundreds of Steiner Schools over eighty years and in many different national settings. This is a blessing to us, for it allows us to enjoy the fruits of experience of the world community of Steiner Teachers. However it is secondary to the principle of we teachers striving to understand the nature of the children before us, and learning to love them in a deeply responsible way, and bringing our subjects to them in a form commensurate with the stage of growth they are enjoying. We are trying not to force demands of the subjects upon the students, for this would require us to step into a rather impersonal and unsympathetic role. Rather we use the great tools of true imagination, art and music, and we work to engender the warmth of enthusiasm, and the glow of reverence for that which is worthy of the children's devotion. This does not preclude the necessity for plain hard work to finish that which must be completed, or to learn that which must be known, but it is vital that these demands are presented in the context of a loving and supportive community.

We watch generation after generation of young people pass through the school and grow through the community life of our school. We teachers try to grow with them, we rejoice in their triumphs and transformations, and we watch them leave us and go out into the next stage of their lives. Now we have many students who are children of former students, and we feel that the culture of our school grows richer by the year. Each new generation brings fresh and remarkable impulses both to our school community and to the world, and we strive to create an educational system which allows them to express their unique contributions to society.

We teachers of the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School therefore strive to educate children in an atmosphere of human love, of preparation for good and noble deeds, of penetrating thinking.

Our school is non-denominational, co-educational, and invites students of any race, ethnic or religious background. We cater for children from kindergarten through to VCE.

For detailed information about curriculum and our school community please see our website [www.mrssl.com.au](http://www.mrssl.com.au) or telephone the school on 9876 2633 for our prospectus and further information.

## **9. Average standardized assessment results for Year 9 and Year 10 students**

There was no standardized assessment undertaken for students in 2008.

## **10. Senior Secondary outcomes**

Last year we had excellent VCE results overall, and below is a list of the courses students have been offered. They have either enrolled or deferred. All but one student was offered their first preference.

17.6% achieved an ENTER score over 90  
32.3% achieved an ENTER score over 80  
26.5% achieved an ENTER score over 70  
23.5% achieved an ENTER score under 70

14 enrolled in full time courses and 18 either deferred or did not enrol, looking for more clarity after a year's break from study.

1 student took an apprenticeship.

Courses applied for and offered were:

Computer Science
Visual Arts
Science
Arts
Engineering-Produce Design
Fine Art
Biological Sciences (Advanced Science)
Biomedical Science
Osteopathy
Arts (Global)
Engineering
Nursing
Visual Merchandising
Engineering-Mechanical
Environmental Horticulture (Ass. Degree)
Building Design & Technology
Printing & Graphic Arts (Multimedia)
Paramedic
Applied Photography
Design/Business
Environment
Marine Biology

This shows a wonderful diversity of interest. We congratulate all the students of 2008 for their excellent work and wish them all the best in their studies.

#### **11. Proportion of Year 9 students retained to Year 12 (or equivalent)**

From the 51 students in yr 9 in 2005, 34 were still at the school in Yr 12 in 2008.  
66%.

#### **12. Post-school destinations**

Our students come from a wide range of family backgrounds, and we offer a broad enrolment policy, and a fairly broad program in years 11 and 12, so it is to be expected that our school destinations reflect this breadth.

While the majority of students enrol at university, several undertake TAFE training and some will take up trade training or direct employment options.

We have students at a wide range of universities, and we have many outstanding alumni, having taken deep interest in their field and been offered marvelous opportunities.

Our students are well represented in broad fields of employment and study. We have strong interests and

accomplishments in science, maths and environmental studies, in the arts, and in particular music, fine arts, architecture and film. There is also strong interest in nursing, midwifery, teaching and social service.

### **Satisfaction**

#### **13. Parent, student and teacher satisfaction**

No education can be effective unless the relationships between all members of the school community - students, teachers and parents - are real and meaningful. This is one of the reasons why the teacher travels with the class through each level from class one to eight. In those eight years strong relationships are built between, not only the child and the teacher, but also all significant people in the child's world, their family. Parents can contact teachers at any time to arrange personal interviews or phone conversations. Class liaisons meet with teachers if any issues need to be raised. Class meetings held each term inform parents of the work being done in class and festivals and invite the families to share in the fruits of each particular year's work.

From year levels nine to twelve 'class guardians' accompany their class into their final years. In this way every child can be loved as a fellow person, not just another student passing through. Class meetings are held each term and parents can contact teachers at any time to arrange personal interviews or phone conversations.

The journey of each child through the school is celebrated on the 'Year Twelve Farewell Day' On this day the school and each class room is beautifully and sensitively decorated by the year twelve students as a farewell gesture. In turn all the class children prepare gifts representative of their specific year. At mid-day the whole school gathers in an assembly to honour the particular year twelve class. Year eleven students make a banner and form a guard of honour as the graduating students enter the school hall.

Many founding teachers are still teaching in the school and we have a very low turnover of staff. Recent staff turnover is the result of maternity leave or retirement. We are fortunate to have several past students on our staff and many children of past students now attend or are enrolled for when they reach kindergarten age.

We have waiting lists for kindergarten and classes one through nine.

Our parents support the school in many ways and we value their contribution greatly. They become involved in many ways to support class activities but also in monthly markets, Open/Fair days and an annual Art/Craft exhibition and sale.

Steiner Adult Education Classes are held each Wednesday night throughout the term year. This offers parents and the broader community, the opportunity to study and experience the curriculum including main lesson content and artistic activities. This is very well attended by our parents. Feedback informs us that they greatly value this opportunity both to study Steiner education and meet the teachers who bring it to their children.