

WARRAH



WARRAH SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT, 2007



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Chairman's Message from the Warrah Board

During 2007 Warrah Board received regular monthly reports from the Education Director (Teaching Principal), Ms Toni Wright-Turner. These reports addressed all key areas of the operation of the School, including budget, educational programs, critical incidents, enrolments, staffing, professional development and special projects. Ms Wright-Turner has also provided oral reports on School activities to the regular meetings of the Warrah community and stakeholders during 2007.

Through these reports to the Board and stakeholders, I am pleased to acknowledge the continuing excellence of the educational programs and support provided by Warrah School to our students with intellectual disabilities and their families during 2007.

Patrick Tierney
Chairman

Education Director's Comments

Warrah School is an independent Special School, operated by Warrah Society, an organisation offering services to children and adults with an intellectual disability based on the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner and according to the relevant State and Federal Legislation. The proprietors of Warrah School are the Board of Directors of Warrah Society. The Warrah Board is responsible for the good management and development of the School. The Board's responsibilities include the appointment of the Education Director for the School. The Education Director implements policy in the School under the direction of the Warrah C.E.O. and the Warrah Board. In 2007 Chair of the Warrah Board was Mr. Patrick Tierney; Warrah C.E.O. was Mr. Patrick McDonald and Education Director was Ms. Toni Wright-Turner.

Warrah School is registered as a School of a Prescribed Kind. Currently the school holds full registration for the period 1.01.2006 to 31.12.2010. Warrah School provides educational programs to children aged 4 to 18 years who have intellectual disability and/or autism that necessitates specialized teaching. The educational program is strongly supported by a team of specialist teachers, therapists and administrative personnel.

Each student at Warrah School has an individual education plan (IEP). This is a holistic and child-centered plan, designed collaboratively by the class teacher, therapists, the family and student and other key stakeholders. Families are acknowledged as important educators of their children and Warrah School values and nurtures positive and regular links between family and the School. Each student's IEP addresses all key learning areas including English, Maths, Science, Human Society and Its Environment, Physical Development, and aim to support each student to achieve their fullest potential in the areas of communication, academic skills, vocational skills, social and community skills, self-care and domestic skills and recreation skills. Warrah School maintains strong links with the local community, including Lorien Novalis Rudolf Steiner School in neighbouring Glenhaven, and students undertake integration as appropriate to their IEP goals. These integration sessions facilitate shared learning and opportunities for interaction among disabled and non-disabled students.

All students are treated with dignity and respect and are encouraged to participate to the fullest extent in learning activities and in the school community. The school's welfare policies are based on the principles of honesty, respect, fairness and natural justice. The school's duty of care to its students and the broader community guides its practices and procedures.

On the following pages, you will find important information about the school's performance in 2007. Additional information about Warrah Society and Warrah School is available through the Annual Report and on the Warrah website at www.warrah.org. The information contained in this report is a result of an evaluation of the School's policies and is a genuine account of the School's policies and procedures, achievements and areas targeted for improvement.

Toni Wright-Turner B.A., Grad. Dip Ed
Education Director

Enrolments

Warrah is a co-educational, non-denominational special school offering educational programs for children with an intellectual disability, from Kindergarten to Year 12. Enrolment is open to children with an intellectual disability who meet the Commonwealth Guidelines for Disability Funding. All applications will be processed in order of receipt and consideration will be given to the applicant's support for the ethos of the school, and other relevant criteria.

Enrolment procedures at Warrah School have regard to the following:

- All applications should be processed within the school's enrolment policy.
- Consideration of each applicant's supporting statement / interview responses.
- Consideration of each applicant's educational needs. To do this, the school will need to gather information and consult with the parents/family and other relevant persons.
- Identification of any strategies which need to be put into place to accommodate the applicant before a decision regarding the enrolment is made.
- Informing the applicant of the outcome.

In 2007, enrolment at Warrah School was 17 students. All enrolled students had a diagnosis of intellectual disability or autism across the full assessment range of mild to severe. Student attendance across all enrolments was 95.25%.

There were 4 classes at Warrah in 2007. These were a Primary class with 3 students, an un-graded Primary School Communication class with 4-5 students, a Junior High School Class with 5 students and a Senior High School Class with 4 students. The pupil: teacher ratio was 1:4.25. Each class teacher received assistance from the part-time support, specialist and therapy staff across the teaching week. This Aid and therapist support was applied to class groups as well as individually to address student IEP goals.

One senior student graduated in 2007. The retention rate Yr 10 equivalent to Yr 12 equivalent was 50%, as the other student who would have graduated in 2007 moved to another Special School which offered programs more suitable to his educational needs at the end of 2006.

Staff 2007

The teaching and support staff at Warrah in 2007 included the Education Director/Teaching Principal, 3 classroom teachers, a teacher's aide, the Remedial (literacy and numeracy) teacher, a Speech and Massage therapist for Term 1, a Curative Eurythmist for Terms 2,3&4, an artistic Eurythmist and Speech specialist and a Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapist. All teachers have been employed due to their expertise and work directly under the supervision of the Education Director who holds relevant tertiary qualifications and has 30 years experience in Steiner Education. All have relevant qualifications, training and/or long-term experience which enable them to work effectively in a registered Special School in N.S.W., according to the principles of Steiner Special Education and within the requirements of the NSW Board of Studies. Three of the teaching staff, the three Therapy support staff and the O/T student have relevant qualifications in Rudolf Steiner Curative Education, and relevant therapeutic training. Two teaching staff have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia, 1 has qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia, and 1 while not having State recognized qualifications as described above, has relevant Steiner training, significant and successful teaching experience, clearly demonstrate that they have appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context and is undertaking relevant professional development.

Teachers, therapists and support staff undertake relevant professional development throughout the School year. In 2007 professional development for staff included:

- attendance by individual staff at modules presented by the Association for Rudolf Steiner Curative Education and Social Therapy in Australia,
- one staff member undertook modules of the Certificate 4 in Early Childhood at Parsifal College

- a senior teacher completed a Graduate Diploma in Applied Counseling (specializing in disability)
- Weekly pedagogical study meeting for all staff
- In-house staff planning and development each Term

No teacher took any unauthorized leave during 2007, so official teacher attendance was 100%. However, a senior teacher took part-time LSL averaging 2 days per week over Terms 1, 2 & 3, and taking this, sick-leave and carer's leave into account, there was an average teacher attendance rate of 93.55%.

There was a significant change in 2007 when our long-term Speech and Massage Therapist, Pauline Fitzgerald, finished her work at the School in April. While our aid transferred to work predominantly in another area of Warrah's disability services, she continued to be available for casual relief as required. This change meant that while the teacher retention rate continued at 100%, overall staff retention was 94.04% over 2007.

Learning Programs and Achievements

The curriculum used at Warrah School is adapted from the curriculum for Rudolf Steiner schools in Australia and relates appropriately to the NSW Board of Studies syllabuses. The holistic Steiner education approach creates an 'integrated curriculum' where literacy, numeracy, communication, creative arts, independent life abilities and physical education are woven throughout all subject areas. Each student has an annual individual educational program (IEP) which is reviewed formally and/or informally each Term with parents and parents receive a written report on their child's progress twice annually.

In 2007 students at Warrah made significant progress toward achieving their IEP goals. These IEP goals and achievements reflect progress students make towards individually appropriate benchmarks which are determined collaboratively between the parents, teachers, therapists and the individual student. This individual benchmark process of the IEP monitors and assists each student to progress educationally. No students at Warrah sat the Benchmark Tests in literacy and numeracy in 2007, as all students in the eligible age brackets were exempt or withdrawn by parental choice.

Significant educational achievements by students in 2007 include:

- The successful integration of students into age appropriate lessons in mainstream K-12 Steiner programs. Integration sessions in 2007 were with Little Kindy and High School programs. The High School class participated with the High School in Electives, including the "Inventions of Leonardo da Vinci", across the year.
- High School students presented two major dramatic productions for the School and wider community across the year, the first in April was 'St George and the Dragon', and the second in September was "Knights of the True Fire". All students participated in Christmas and end of year performances.
- High School students again successfully competed in the Music and Speech sections of the Burwood and Penrith Eisteddfods in 2007.
- High School student Shai de Vletter-Sont received the Creative Futures Award from the State Minister.
- The students participated in rich social and cultural programs across the School year. These programs were often shared with our School parents and friends and the Warrah community as well as with the broader local community. Participation by parents, families, teachers and students in all our educational, social and cultural activities across the year, and informal feedback received in communication books and daily exchanges with families and other stakeholders provides evidence of a high level of satisfaction with the educational services being provided by Warrah School.

IMAGES OF WARRAH SCHOOL 2007

TERM 1



Attorney General and local Federal Member for Berowra Mr. Phillip Ruddock visits Warrah School to officially open the new air-conditioning throughout the School



Mr. Ruddock visits the classrooms



Mr. Ruddock at Goodbye time in the Primary



"St George and the Dragon"



Samuel at play in the new Kindy class

TERM 2



Farewell to Pauline



Welcome Jonathan our Curative Eurythmist



Artistic Eurythmy in the Hall



High School student Shai de Vletter-Sont receives his Creative Futures Award

TERM 3



Zachary (with snake!!) and Angela (with echidna) enjoying our annual Zoomobile visit

Cast of "The Knights of the True Fire"



Alethea and her mother Helen with Education Director Toni Wright-Turner at the Warrah School stand at the Schools Expo

TERM 4



Warrah High School students participating in electives at Lorien Novalis School: Forging and in the Inventions of Leonardo, making the bridge and wooden jack



The beautiful quilt made by parent Mignon Baker for our Christmas raffle talent



Graduating student Guy Fredericks displays his artistic talent

School Policies

Warrah Society policies are published in a Policy Manual that is regularly reviewed and may be accessed by contacting the School.

Warrah School gives each student the opportunity to develop respect and responsibility for self and for others. These personal and social values are integrated throughout all programs and activities. High School students are also invited to participate in our Leadership Program and develop skill to assist and support others in the School community.

Warrah School seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment for students which:

- minimizes risk of harm and ensures students feel secure
- supports the physical, social, academic, spiritual and emotional development of students
- provides student welfare policies and programs that develop a sense of self-worth and foster personal development

Warrah School seeks to achieve this through appropriate policy and procedure which has regard to relevant legislation and requirements in Child Protection, Security, Supervision, Codes of Conduct and communication, and in consideration of the principles of Rudolf Steiner Curative Education.

Warrah School recognizes that behaviour in children with disabilities can be a significant language of communication. It is part of our responsibility to strive to understand our students and support each student to develop appropriate communication skills and appropriate behaviour.

Socially negative behaviour which impacts on the emotional or physical welfare of other students must be effectively managed to ensure the continuing safety and well-being of all students in the short-term and addressed with strategies to replace it with constructive behaviour in the long-term. The development of such strategies is achieved in consultation with parents and with external professionals as necessary to develop appropriate positive behaviour support strategies.

Where the school and parents have agreed that the education programs at Warrah are not proving effective for the needs of their child the School's policy is to provide advice and support towards finding a more appropriate placement.

Warrah School recognizes that students, parents and staff members of Warrah School all have the right to make complaints and to have grievances heard. Warrah Society policy for dealing with complaints and grievances includes processes for raising and responding to matters of concern identified by parents and/or students. These processes incorporate, as appropriate, principles of procedural fairness.

The Education Director will investigate all written complaints or grievances and will make a verbal and/or written response as soon as possible.

The Education Director will inform the Warrah CEO, Board of Directors and/or the Chair of the Board of any serious complaints or grievances.

Our grievance policy provides an avenue for staff, students or parents who are not satisfied that Warrah's response to their concern has been adequate or fair.

Occupational Health and Safety

The Warrah OH&S committee met monthly throughout the year. Warrah School has an appropriately trained OHS representative to the committee. OH&S inspections were carried out, and issues were efficiently managed by the Warrah Maintenance Officer and monitored through use of a written reporting system.

Buildings and Facilities

In 2007 Warrah School received approval for a \$54,000 grant from the Federal government under the Investing in Our Schools Program, towards a range of facility refurbishment programs in the School facilities. The projects which are being completed in 2008 for this grant include bathroom and kitchen renovations, reticulation of our recycled water to gardens and grounds, upgrading our bus and car turning circle and playground facilities.

Routine maintenance of the buildings and facilities was efficiently managed by the Warrah Maintenance Officer and monitored through use of a written reporting system.

Goals For 2008

Warrah School aims to expand the Junior Primary class with further Kindergarten enrolments planned for 2008.

Warrah School will continue the work commenced in recent years towards the ideal of an annexed specialist support class in a mainstream Steiner School. While to date this has been very difficult to realize within our current enrolments and programs, the ground work for such a facility in the future is continuing. The ongoing integration of Warrah students with their individually appropriate classes and activities at Lorien Novalis Steiner School continues to provide a foundation for this program.

Warrah School is to undertake Policy review in the second half of 2008 with a view to publishing a new Parent Handbook in 2009.

Warrah School will continue membership in significant professional Independent Schooling and disability education bodies, including the Association of Independent Schools (AIS NSW), the National Independent Special Schools Association (NISSA), the Rudolf Steiner Schools Association in Australia (RSSA) and the Association for Rudolf Steiner Curative Education and Social Therapy in Australia (ARSCESTA). Through this high level professional involvement Warrah will continue to strive towards best practice in the education of students with intellectual disability and will continue to support appropriate enrolment for students with disabilities in the Steiner education movement around Australia.

Financial Report for 2007

Warrah School is maintained and supported by Warrah Society. Warrah is an independent school, and fees are kept as low as possible in recognition of the additional costs to which parents of children with disabilities can be subject. However, the tuition fee is still a significant contribution to the overall budget. There was a slight increase in fees of \$75 per term across the board from July 2007 to meet rising costs. A proportion of parents applied for and received fee relief.

Recurrent funding is received from the Commonwealth and State Governments at the level designated for special schools. Funding for students with disabilities is distributed to Warrah by the Department of Education and Training and through the Association for Independent Schools. Warrah Society also undertakes fundraising. The major event in 2007 was again the function with the Urban Task Force. However, Warrah School parents group commenced an independent fundraising effort in 2007, with the inaugural Christmas raffle. This was very well supported and raised over \$1,100.

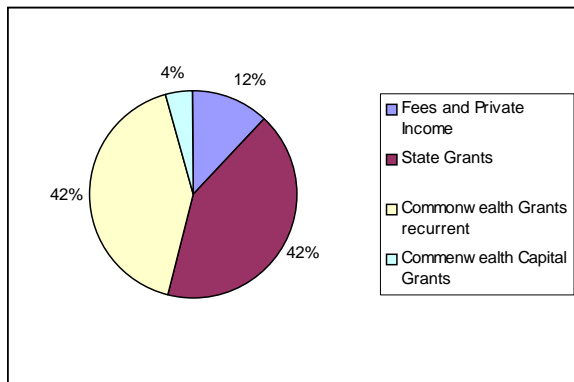
It is noted that expenditure per student is higher than in a regular school because of the high support needs of our students, requiring small class sizes, a high staff: student ratio, and the employment of therapists and other specialists.

Warrah School received an Investing in our Schools Grant from the Federal Government in 2006, and payment was received from DEST in March 2007 so it is reflected in these figures.

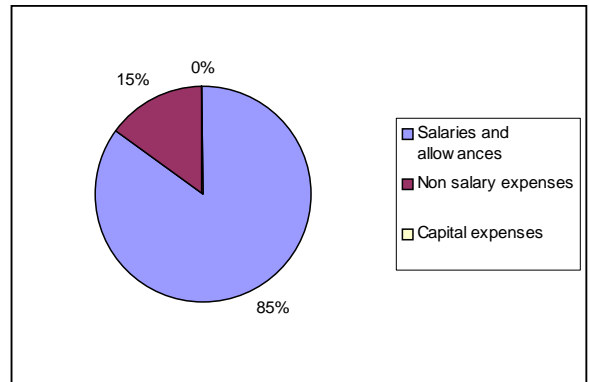
Income and expenditure for the year 2007 is shown in the following graphs:

Financial information for year ended 31st December 2007
School: Warrah Rudolf Steiner School of Curative Education

a) Recurrent/Capital Income year ended 31 December 2007

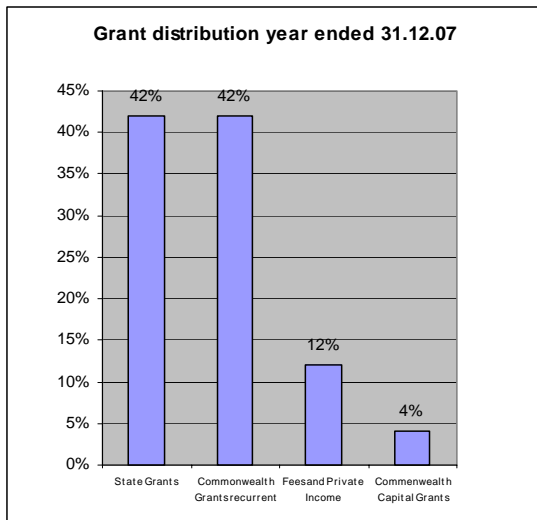


b) Recurrent/Capital Expenditure year ended 31 December 2007

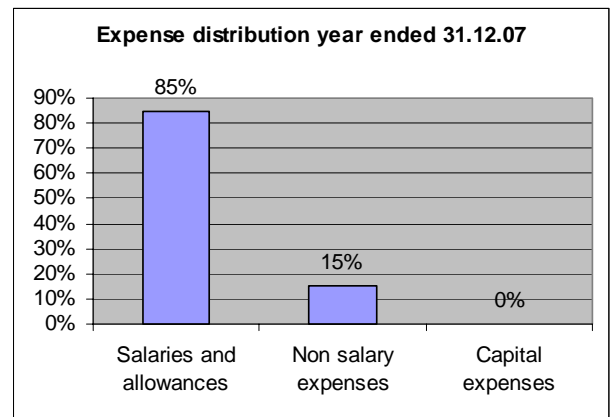


Financial information for year ended 31st December 2007
School: Warrah Rudolf Steiner School of Curative Education

c) Recurrent/Capital Income year ended 31 December 2007



d) Recurrent/Capital Expenses year ended 31 December 2007



Preparation of this Report

This report is submitted to meet the educational and financial reporting requirements for 2007 as laid out in the Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools' (NSW) Manual.

In preparing this report, the Education Director is the person responsible for:

- co-ordinating the final preparation and distribution of the annual report to the Board of Studies and other stakeholders as required
- determining the specific content to be included in each section of the report and reviewing this each year to ensure ongoing compliance, relevance and usefulness
- preparing the report in an appropriate form to send to the Board of Studies

For the areas relating to school description, policies and procedures, the Education Director is responsible for the collection, analysis and storage of the relevant data and for inserting the relevant information into the report. The Finance Manager is responsible for the collection, analysis and storage of the financial data and for providing this to the Principal for inclusion in the report.

The Education Director, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for setting the annual schedule for:

- preparation and publication of the report
- distribution of the report to the Board of Studies and other stakeholders

DEST Annual Financial Return

The Education Director and Finance Manager are responsible for completing the questionnaire. The Financial Manager is responsible for the collection of the relevant data and for ensuring it is provided to DEST in an appropriate form.



Zachary and Lara with Greg's class



"The Knights of the True Fire"



Guy, Chris and Shai doing wood work

