



The Alice Springs Steiner School

2010 ANNUAL REPORT

School Context

The Alice Springs Steiner School came into being due to the energy and vision of a group of dedicated parents and friends and began with a kindergarten in 1996. Strong community support and involvement has seen the school steadily grow and develop. The school has four playgroups, four kindergarten classes and primary classes from One to Six. The school moved on to its permanent site for the 2005 school year and since 2007 has steadily replaced demountable buildings with beautiful architect designed permanent buildings with established grounds.

The Alice Springs Steiner School offers a broad but solidly integrated curriculum interweaving academic subjects with art, craft, music, storytelling, and drama. This is complimented by a rich program of practical and outdoor activities, with the aim of balancing and developing the whole child - "head, heart and hands". We aim for creative and imaginative teaching to instil and inspire a love of learning and self motivation, which continues throughout life.

We are committed to;

- Educating the growing child through love.
- Fostering a love of learning and the pursuit of truth.
- Striving toward a collaborative relationship between home and school that supports the child's development.
- Protecting the integrity of childhood.
- A comprehensive curriculum, which develops the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual potential of each child.
- Maintaining a distinct curriculum that reflects the major developmental stages of children.
- Fostering respect for one another and the environment.
- Striving to overcome racial, sexual and other forms of prejudice, and working positively in the community both socially and in the natural world.

Some of our recent achievements are;

- An award winning music programme (Flame award, Eisteddfod strings and choir)
- An award winning school garden (ABC school garden of the year)
- Junior Wearable Arts award
- Bush foods cooking award
- AISNT teacher excellence Award

Chairpersons Report

AGM 2011 (for the 2010 year)

2010 was a year of growth and change. As the year progressed it became increasingly evident that our model of a volunteer run school was not sufficient to meet the challenges that lie ahead. These include myriad legal, pedagogical, quality assurance, financial and increasingly complex reporting requirements that are required to keep this school healthy and viable.

At the end of 2006 we had a school entirely operating out of demountables with less than 87 children coming on site (primary 54, Kindy 23 and play group 10). This year we have our permanent buildings (5 classrooms, a library, administration and ablutions block with the completion of the library and classroom block) and 194 children on site (primary 78, kindy 62 and play group 54). This is a 123% increase in 4 years! We now also have 30 staff on our payroll. This growth has been achieved through phenomenally hard work by all staff and a group of volunteer parents who assisted on many committees making our vision become reality.

Along with the excitement of these new buildings we were entering our first full year of a transition to a new management structure as we attempted the difficult move from a "frontier developing school" to a developed and sustainable school run along more professional lines with less reliance on volunteers.

The Distributed Leadership Model (DLM) adopted in late 2009 was our first attempt to create a transitional model between the grass roots school, based on sacrifice and the creative tension between the teachers and foundation parents, and the more professionally accountable school necessary in today's legalistic and increasingly complex bureaucratic environment. It could also be said that the DLM may not have succeeded here for a number of reasons including: breaches in the bonds of harmony and unity reducing effective collaboration; inadequate resources to properly implement the system; a lack of continuity of individuals on the Council and College from the adoption of the model in 2009 to its implementation so participants as individuals, institutions within the school and the community itself were not sufficiently familiar with the DLM model. And finally teachers did not have adequate time to devote to the Management Circles adopted by the school, leaving the job to individuals.

From early on it was recognized within Council and the School that the structures in place were not sufficient to the task of safely managing the school and efforts were made to set up a review. Subsequent events in the school made this even more urgent as you are aware.

We are aware that progress can be achieved through the dialectic of crisis and victory and setbacks are inevitable in this organic process of growth. Nevertheless this sanguine view was hard to find in the midst of the turmoil of the last week of term 4 in 2010.

As a result of this perturbation the review was confirmed, and significant efforts were made by a number of caretaker managers, the current school manager, Council, as well as the teachers themselves to ensure that 2011 has achieved a safe start.

This year also saw many changes in our staff both in the office and teachers. Lucy Scott, Caroline McNair, Deborah Merrick and Angela Hennessy in the office; Maria Becker, Robin Clarke and Michael Frayne as primary teachers came, contributed their skills and moved on. We saw Caroline West, Anne Yffer, Kayla O'Keefe begin as learning support assistants; Amie Sanderson took over the Billy Button space; Lenley Bursall after looking after Ruby Saltbush so lovingly has also moved on at the end of 2010 and Katie Egar is now at the helm. M'liss Scott after nurturing play groups for so long is now in 2011 looking after Billy Button.

Council would like to commend and sincerely thank all our dedicated, creative and resilient teachers, other staff, parents in their trust of the care of their children to our School, council and committee members, volunteers and friends who have given so generously of their time, efforts and spirit to the ongoing success of our school.

Challenges:

1. What accountability structures and processes need to be in place to ensure the school moves through this transition period without losing the spirit, dynamism and goodwill of all its current participants' students, teachers, staff and parents and friends? The review by SEA will help us here.
2. The Implementation of the Review recommendations.
3. Managing the increasing reporting requirements of Government.
4. National Curriculum and accreditation requirements.
5. Communication and Transparency.
6. Being able to incorporate the opportunity that the Early Childhood faculty offers for the future assured growth of the school. This will mean amongst other things the need to plan for a new classroom in 2012.
7. All of these also incur a financial cost which implies the need to garner extra sources of revenue.

One of the solutions to these challenges is to ensure that we as a community remained focussed on what we have been able to achieve so far; recognise and accept that we are in a well recognised development stage of our school that implies the need for hard work, willingness to work through conflict and difference, the need to maintain unity of purpose and action, and above all to harness cooperatively the many talents that our school community can bring to the multiple tasks to move our school through this next but necessary stage of our growth. We all recall watching the fledgling attempts of our children as they tentatively took their first steps. We did not scold them if they fell but helped them up and praised them for their efforts and delighted when they succeeded.

We would therefore call upon all parents to consider carefully what they can bring to our school whether it be attendance at working bees; working at the fair; committing their expertise to the many committees that will be most probably needed over the next year or so such as Employment and HR, Early childhood, Finance and Submissions, Policy and school registration, Strategic planning, Facilities, Fundraising, and an active Parent and Friends group.

The role of Council as you may appreciate is one of governance rather than having a purely operational mandate. So in the perfect world this would mean assisting in policy deliberations and strategic planning. The reality now is that the Council's role is a blend of governance and operational responsibilities. It is a rewarding and invigorating experience and the Community welcomes those who will work at this level. You will appreciate working as a team with great staff and teachers.

In conclusion we as a school community treasure the sacrifice and efforts of so many who have made the school as it is today. Moreover as the broad membership of TASSA we hope to realize the collective longing to honour and safeguard the special qualities of a Steiner education for our children and to contribute to a community life that is vital, vibrant and mutually nurturing. Rudolf Steiner has so eloquently summarized our strivings:

“A healthy social life is found only, when in the mirror of each soul the whole community finds its reflection, and when in the whole community the virtue of each one is living”

Marcus Tabart

Chairperson

On Behalf of TASSA Council

2010 Satisfaction Survey Results

A = Very Satisfied B = Satisfied C = Dissatisfied D = Very Dissatisfied

Response rate 22%

| Survey Questions | A | B | Satisfied or Very Satisfied | C | D |
|--|----------|----------|------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| 1. How do you feel about the <u>quality of teaching</u> at our school? | 70% | 27% | 97% | 3% | 0% |
| 2. Are you satisfied with the <u>curriculum</u> for your child(ren)? | 57% | 43% | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| 3. What do you think about the effectiveness of <u>communications</u> between the school and the parents? | 42% | 48% | 90% | 10% | 0% |
| 4. How do you rate the <u>sense of community</u> throughout the school? | 71% | 19% | 90% | 10% | 0% |
| 5. Are you satisfied with your opportunities to <u>participate</u> as a parent in the school community? | 70% | 30% | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| 6. How do you feel about the <u>leadership</u> aspects of the school administrators? | 32% | 61% | 93% | 7% | 0% |
| 7. Are you satisfied with the amount of <u>parent education</u> in Steiner philosophy and methodology? | 23% | 58% | 81% | 16% | 3% |

This school community survey was carried out in August 2010. In the later part of the year the school did experience a degree of discord and this is touched on in the Chairperson's report.

Student Performance in National Literacy and Numeracy Testing

NAPLAN, The National Assessment Program- Literacy and Numeracy assesses all students in Australian schools at years 3, 5, 7 & 9.

The Alice Springs Steiner School does not currently extend past Class 6 so NAPLAN only applies to Classes 3 & 5. In 2010 all Class 3 parents sought withdrawal from testing for their children and so NAPLAN testing consisted of just Class 5 as was the case in 2009

Overall NAPLAN Results

| Test Area | Above Minimum Standards | Below Minimum Standards | Band 6 Or Higher |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Reading | 90% | 10% | 70% |
| Writing | 100% | 0% | 80% |
| Spelling | 90% | 10% | 70% |
| Grammar & Punctuation | 100% | 0% | 90% |
| Numeracy | 100% | 0% | 70% |

Major Events

2010 saw the completion and opening of our BER project, a library, classroom and outdoor learning area complex. This was a major project and a great addition to our school.

Our May fair was another major event which involved our whole school community and grossed around \$26,000

Financial Assistance

Other than the normal government grants the school received no special or emergency government financial assistance or support.

School Buildings and Facilities

The school's permanent buildings are all less than five years old and in good repair. We have two demountable buildings also in good repair. In 2010 our Library classroom complex was completed and extensive perimeter and internal fencing was constructed. A four metre children's climbing frame (*spida*) was also added to the playground in 2010. A multi use hard surface play area will be completed in 2011. In 2012 there will be a need for another classroom in the early childhood area.

Teacher Qualifications

| Category | No. Teachers |
|--|--------------|
| T - 6 Teachers having qualifications sufficient to meet the requirements of the NT Teachers Registration Board. | 6 |
| T - 6 Teachers <u>not</u> having qualifications sufficient to meet the requirements of the NT Teachers Registration Board. | 0 |
| Pre school working towards Teaching Degree | 2 |

Primary Workforce Composition (including transition)

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Teaching Staff over 2010 | 7 |
| FTE Teaching Staff over 2010 | 5.4 |
| Music specialists | 3 |
| FTE Music specialists | 0.6 |
| Non teaching staff 2010 | 6 |
| FTE Non teaching staff 2010 | 3.7 |

Student Attendance

From Ruby Salt Bush Kindy (pre school) to Class 6, the overall attendance for 2009 was 90.8%. Class breakdown is as follows:

| Preschool (RSB) | Transition (Cassia) | Class 1 | Class 2 | Class 3 | Class 4 | Class 5 | Class 6 |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 94.3% | 91.4% | 87.3% | 90.1% | 94.6% | 90.6% | 88.9% | 86.4% |

Management of non attendance.

Rolls are marked by teachers. Office staff go daily to classrooms in early morning with messages of absentees. Rolls are checked and any unexplained absences are followed up via phone calls to parents and attendance rolls marked accordingly.

Current Staff

Early Childhood

11 Staff 114 children

| Name | Position | Load |
|----------------------|--|------|
| Susanne Doecke | Transition (Cassia Kindy)Teacher | F/T |
| Kitty Braks | Assistant | P/T |
| Katie Egger | Preschool (Ruby Salt Bush Kindy) Teacher | P/T |
| Holly Burke | Assistant | P/T |
| Ammie S | Mentor | P/T |
| M'lis Scott | 4 year old Kindy (Billy Button) Teacher | P/T |
| Skye Grainger | Assistant | P/T |
| Kylie Brown | Play Group Leader | P/T |
| Lisa Kingma | Play Group Leader | P/T |
| Katja Lamb | Play Group Leader | P/T |
| Karen Andrew-Roberts | Play Group Leader | P/T |

Primary

12 staff, 79 children

| Name | Position | Load |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| Vivienne Desmarchelier | Teacher | F/T |
| Ann Poulsen | Teacher | P/T 0 |
| Pam Shiers | Teacher | F/T |
| Noel Ferry | Teacher | F/T |
| Katrina Stowe | Teacher | F/T |
| Carol Muir | Learning Support Teacher | P/T |
| Merren Weaver | ISA | P/T |

| | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-----|
| Jane Coleman | Music specialist | P/T |
| Nick Hempel | Music specialist | P/T |
| Marita Thompson | Librarian | P/T |
| Megan Hatton | Release Teacher | P/T |
| Adelaide Church | Release Teacher | P/T |

Administration and Facilities

5 staff

| Name | Position | Load |
|-----------------|------------------------|------|
| Elaine Barrett | Administration Manager | P/T |
| Karyn Zlatkovic | Administration Officer | F/T |
| Chris Gillen | Finance Officer | P/T |
| Bill Pechey | Facilities Manager | P/T |
| Chris Shilton | School Manager | F/T |

Professional Learning

| Professional Learning Activity | No. Staff |
|--|-----------|
| <i>Meyer-Briqqs Personality Type 2 day workshop</i> | 12 |
| <i>John Allison , team development, decision making - 3 days</i> | 12 |
| <i>Ellen Sallows, learning support seminars - 5 hours</i> | 12 |
| <i>Kolisko Steiner teachers conference 5 days</i> | 3 |
| <i>Senior First Aid training - 3 days</i> | 8 |
| <i>Class observation / mentoring Wilunga 5 days</i> | 1 |
| <i>Teacher's Registration Seminar</i> | 1 |
| <i>Sally Anderson -mentoring & Appraisal - 2 weeks</i> | 2 |

Spending on Professional development - \$8,843