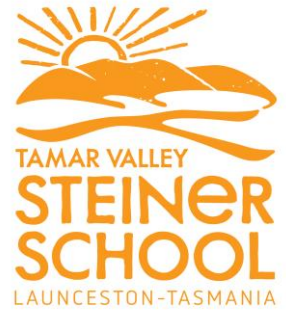


# Tamar Valley Steiner School

## Term 1 – Newsletter 2024



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### 2024 Term Dates:

**Term 1:** Wed 7<sup>th</sup> Feb – Fri 12<sup>th</sup> April

**Term 2:** Tues 30<sup>th</sup> April – Fri 28<sup>th</sup> June

**Term 3:** Tues 23<sup>rd</sup> July – Fri 27<sup>th</sup> Sep

**Term 4:** Mon 14<sup>th</sup> Oct – Thu 12<sup>th</sup> Dec

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### From the Principal

It is hard to believe that we are past the halfway point of term 1! The school has been buzzing with purposeful activity right from week 1 with students and staff eager to return - full of plans for the year ahead. Now that we are 6 weeks in, we have settled in to established routines and learning times are full of productive and engaging activities. When visiting classes I am always impressed by how eager the students are to share what they are learning with me, and as they speak about their learning their whole being is bursting with pride and a sense of accomplishment.

We have been blessed with beautiful, still, warm days, and this has seen the children fully enjoy the enriching outdoor play times. The primary school students have been inspired to engage in more imaginative play with the addition of cubby building materials. They are doing a great job of caring for the new equipment and stacking it away when required to pack up. Bush School has seen the challenge of some very warm days and an adjustment to activities more suited to the hotter weather. As the mornings grow cooler we look forward to the seasonal change where longer walks will feel more achievable.

Earlier this term we received a monthly update from the CEO of Steiner Education Australia, and I have decided to share it with you all. When I meet people who don't know about Steiner Education, I often feel challenged to try and explain what Steiner Education is and what it is aspiring to achieve in a way that is easy to relate to. Often people have had no exposure to the type of experiences children have at a Steiner School. Andrew's thoughts and wise reflections on Steiner's intent behind our educational approach were a beautiful reminder to me on the gifts of Steiner education and how it is preparing children for a life full of meaning and purpose.

I hope that when you read through it you can be reminded of the beautiful gift you are offering your child by choosing a Steiner Education for them. I also hope that it is something you can share with your family and friends when you find yourself in one of those conversations where it's hard to capture why you have made this choice for your children. Let's continue to bring meaning and purpose to our children's lives!

## From the CEO of Steiner Education Australia – Andrew Hill

### Hot Topic: 'Seven Reasons Why'

*“(S)he who knows the why of their life can bear almost any how.”*

Friedrich Nietzsche

***“Our highest endeavour is to produce young men and women who out of themselves are able to impart meaning and direction to their own lives.”***

Marie Steiner

This famous statement attributed to Rudolf Steiner was actually written by Marie Steiner (in her introduction to the first edition of Steiner’s founding lectures to teachers, more lately known as *The Foundations of Human Experience*). One imagines these two spoke a lot, so one can also imagine she was paraphrasing his own words. They are powerful words which have echoed down the past century and have found their moment today.

How do young people find meaning in life? When all the outer certainties are gone, how do young people find meaning **“out of themselves”** i.e. from within themselves?

Rudolf Steiner’s clarion call was so far ahead of his time. He was speaking to a time a century later, when schools would need to prepare young people not only to find a career and prepare for employment, they would also need to prepare young people to find meaning and direction, and it would need to be done “out of themselves”.

A century after Steiner spoke these words, there is now some fascinating research on what actually constitutes a meaningful life. You may have seen the very accessible book **The Power of Meaning: Crafting a Life That Matters** by Emily Esfahani Smith (Crown, NY 2017), which outlines the results of recent research. This research included work with survivors of such catastrophes as the Holocaust who went on to lead successful lives after unimaginable horrors as children. The author outlines four “pillars of meaning” which the research identifies as contributing to a life of meaning: purpose, belonging, story-telling, transcendence.

Of course these four are all fundamental to Steiner education. And I can come up with some more that we could add to the list.

So building on this research, how does a Steiner education help young people growing up in a post covid world find meaning and direction “out of themselves”? Here are my seven reasons why it does.

#### 1. The Human Story:

The Steiner curriculum provides a glimpse into the global and historical story of humanity, the long journey of the human mind. Through story and text, our students pursue the huge story that charts the rise and fall of epochs across the globe, preparing them to take their place as global citizens ready to play their part in the next chapter of the grand narrative that is human life. They also experience the Australian story within the world story, locating them as citizens of this country on First Nations land.

## 2. Creating beauty:

Our students learn the creative arts, to draw, paint, sing, sculpt and act. We are not art schools, we simply teach our students the arts so they learn to think in multiple perspectives, to enrich their feeling lives, and to be able to create beautiful moments that can provide them with fulfillment throughout life.

## 3. Designing and making useful things:

Our students learn to make things, both useful and beautiful, designed by themselves. From sewing in kindergarten to blacksmithing in high school, they build skills of the entrepreneur which enables them to create products and artefacts able to be communicated to an audience.

## 4. Learning to collaborate rather than compete:

The most successful world leaders through covid time have brought diverse people together and built community. Our non-selective, non-ranking classrooms prepare future leaders to work collaboratively in building communities of individuals who can work together. Every day in every class we work on fostering each student's unique gifts and learn to build community out of diversity.

## 5. Living in Nature:

As a T shirt I saw recently says, Nature can help us heal. We immerse children in the natural world, helping them see with wonder the wisdom in the world around them. Our outdoor education experiences challenge students to go beyond their physical and personal limitations to reach a level of resilience and strength that can surprise their parents. When some adults are paying good money for "Soil to Soul" wellness retreats, our schools offer regular doses of the healing power of Nature.

## 6. Play:

*We are most human when we play*, said Schiller. We value play as a form of learning in the early years and as a creative expression of our humanity. From self-directed play in early childhood, to intense sport and games in high school, our students bring a sense of the playful to all that they do.

## 7. Transcendence:

A sense of the sublime, the "phosphorescence" of life, weaves through our classrooms, our schools and our community life. Morning and afternoon verses bring mindful moments to the classroom each day, while festivals give shape and colour to the turning year. Our lessons draw out the meaningful connections between the inner world of humanity and the outer world of nature. We are inspired by the sublime moments of all cultures, founded on Australia's First Nations roots in The Dreaming.

We humans are fundamentally beings of meaning. Our Steiner schools seek to realise the image of the whole human being in all that we do. What could be more meaningful than that?

**Andrew Hill**

CEO

March 1, 2024

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## Playgroup

We have had a lovely start to the year. The Wednesday morning playgroup is a smaller group with usually around five families. On Friday morning we have eight to twelve families attending. Then we have Jill running the Friday afternoon group with about four families.

So far this year we have had a free play session, made walnut boats, had a drawing session, made orange juice and have had a planting day as well. We are all looking forward to some engaging autumn activities coming up.

Every week we make butter, a parent makes the bread, and we share a joyful morning tea together and share stories about our week.

Playgroup is an enriching community, and it is lovely to see our committed mums join in with our weekly activities.

We had a special visit from a new baby called Maya on Friday.

Thank you,

Rebecca Phillips.





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## Kinder

In Kindy, we have been finding our rhythm and flow of our days and weeks together. The Kindergarten children have been establishing their connections and sense of belonging within our space and growing community. The children have started to develop some beautiful blossoming friendships which we will continue to nurture and support throughout the term.



The children have loved finding moments of connection through our shared mealtimes, rest times and shared learning experiences. Current favourites in our Kindy program have been baking, beeswax modelling and gardening.

### Morning Verse

*Morning has come,*

*Night is away,*

*Rise with the sun,*

*And welcome the day.*





# Prep



Firstly, a huge Thank You to all the families who have made and donated resources to the new Kinder. A special Thank you to Stephanie who knitted the beautiful farm animals.

Prep have had an excellent start to the year. We welcomed one new friend, Arlo, into our class.

As you can see from the photos above, we have been busy, starting the year with seasonal songs, stories and crafts all about the beach and the sea. Each week we have been baking with produce from the home gardens of our class.

We have begun our structured drawing lessons, we have been felting each week, and many other activities. Our handwork bags are filling up with finger-knitting already ready to be stitched into something special.



Traditional nursery rhymes have featured in our Summer Morning Circle along with movement activities; Wee Willy Winky, Row, row, row your boat and Rub-a dub-dub. We are looking forward to the changes that Autumn brings.

Helen, Kadek and Hadar.

## Morning Verse

*The earth is firm beneath my feet*

*The Sun shines up above,*

*Here I stand so straight and strong*

*All things to know and love.*





# Class 1

## Morning Verse

The Earth is firm beneath our feet,  
The Sun shines bright above,  
And here stand I,  
So straight and strong,  
All things to know and love.  
Good Morning, Good Morning, Good  
Morning.





## Class 2

“Miss Spider spins her crystal web. In spiral shapes of silken thread. She weaves her perfect net at night, to catch her food then wrap it tight. And when it’s time for her to sleep, her blanket is a soft curled leaf.”

Class Two are currently exploring times tables in our Number Patterns Main Lesson. The children worked carefully to complete their multiplication wheels by sanding their wooden rounds, thoughtfully painting them, and then hammering their dowels into place. We have been full of wonder and awe as the different skip counting patterns emerge, like spider webs, on our wheels.





## Class 2/3

Class 2/3 have settled into the rhythm of our new class and new school year, connecting and reconnecting with each other and broadening friendships. It has been wonderful to welcome our new students, Hunter and Sienna, who have both joined us from interstate.

We have been delighted by the glorious sunflowers outside our classroom, grown from seed and planted by Andrew and the Class 2 of last year and now providing joy for us as well as food for the insects this year.



Our class has enjoyed foraging for blackberries and turning them into delicious ice cream and muffins, as well as making Elderberry Syrup as gifts for our loved ones, to ensure they feel well during the seasonal changes ahead.

We have enjoyed the adventures of Finn MacCool during our first Main Lesson Celtic Tales block and would love to share the stories of Finn and The Salmon of Knowledge and The Giant's Causeway with you if you care to ask!

Class 2/3 are very keen makers, extending and utilising their many skills in so many ways each day. We have already seen soft toys and cushions created, lots of knitting and finger knitting, some crochet, wax modelling, loom weaving of pencil cases, wood carvings and mini theatre designs in preparation for a play.



On Wednesday Bush School days with Andrew we have been tuning into the sun's path and creating shelters for shade. In small groups, the children constructed lean-to shelters with easterly orientations to create shade during the warm mornings we've been spending at Trevallyn. We then made these shelters more weatherproof by adding to them to construct basic A-frame designs. As always, the children are eager to beautify their creations with bush weavings and various other decorations!

There is still much to look forward to this term; our Main Lessons in Mathematics and Creation Stories, continuation of Strings and recorder skill development, the Autumn Festival and Easter break as well as all of the unexpected joys that we experience each day with this very special group of people.

### Morning Verse

*In the morning I arise*

*To greet the bright and boundless  
skies*

*Dark of night has fled away*

*We greet the bright new day*

*Good morning, morning, morning*

*We greet the bright new day*

*Good morning, morning, morning,*

*We greet the bright new day.*



## Class 4



Class 4 has been having a ball working on the Norse Myths, getting to know the gods in the stories and upskilling their writing. We have painted both land of fire and ice and Odin, modelled his crows out of beeswax, drawn the creation tree Yggdrasil and really started getting to know both the mighty and the sneaky characters. They have worked with fierce concentration and vigor, just as the Vikings would have done.

Over the past few weeks, we have created elaborate sentences, worked with self-written stories and language features through poetry. Each and every activity this year has been met with enthusiasm and force, just as to be expected from a class 4 group.

In morning circle, the children have been introduced to staves and singing in 4 parts and they are really getting the hang of it!

### **Morning Verse**

*I stand erect between earth and sky*

*The centre of the world am I*

*My right-hand points to the cold north star*

*My left-hand points to where the hot lands are*

*Behind my back is the rising sun*

*In front of me is where the day is done*

*North, south, east, and west*

*Where I am is the best.*



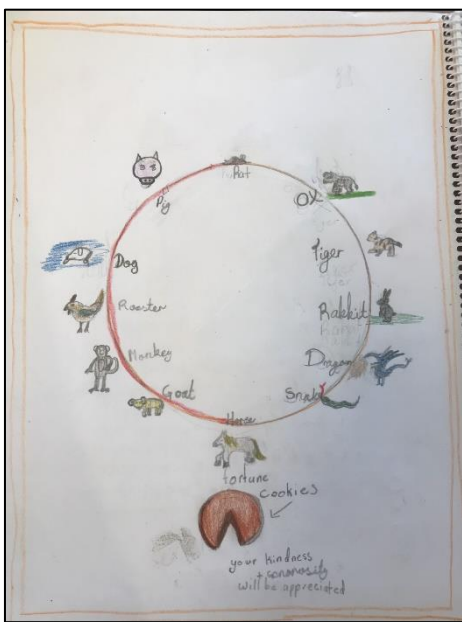


## Class 5/6

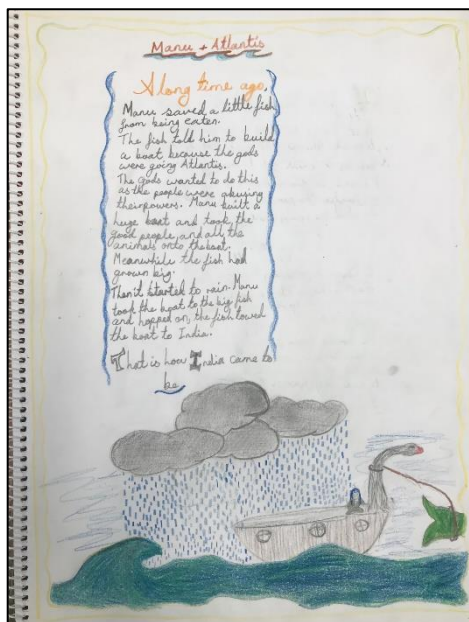
Class 5/6 have been exploring Cosmic Beginnings as their first Main Lesson. We have learned many stories incorporating the Moon Stars and Sun in Creation Stories.

We closed our Main lesson with an Indian Festival, the Holi Festival, which is traditionally held on the coming Full moon.

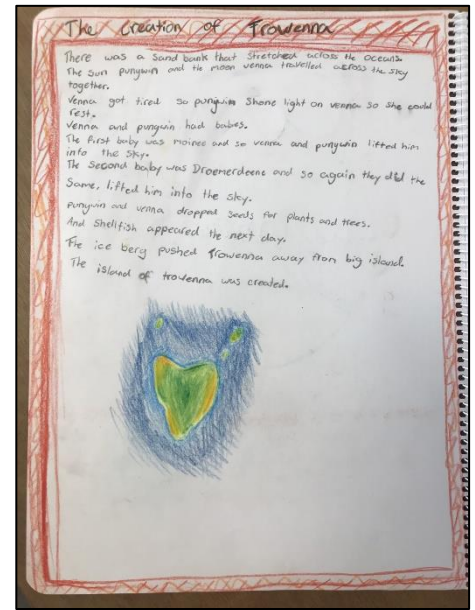
Class 5/6 would like to thank Ambalika, Tonia, and Rona for supporting the class in preparing their Feast. A special thanks is given to Charlie's grandfather, who was visiting from overseas, and able to share with us the traditional Hari Krishna story of Prahlad and Holika.



Creating calendars with Creation of the Lunar New Year, from China



The Formation of India; the Story of Manu and the Fish



Local palawa story of the Creation of trowunna



Celebrating the Chinese Year of the Dragon

### Morning Verse

I look into the World,  
In which the sun is shining,  
In which the stars are gleaming,  
In which the stones are lying,  
The living plants are growing,  
The animals, they are feeling,  
In which the Human Soul,  
Gives dwelling for the Spirit.

I look into the Soul  
Which lives within myself,  
God's spirit weaves in light  
of sun and Human Soul;  
In world of space, without.  
In depths of Soul within.  
God's spirit, 'tis to Thee  
I turn myself in Thought  
That strength and blessing grow  
In me, to learn and work.

# Whole School News....

## Strings and Ensemble

Class 3 have been very excited to start violin lessons this year, bringing focus and effort to their classes. We have begun with the basics of learning the violin: holding the instrument for playing and in “rest position”, open string names and where they live on the written music and note lengths and how they combine to make rhythms. Soon, class 3 students will be confident with using the bow and learning how to use left hand fingers to change the notes.

Classes 4 and 5-6 have continued with their learning from last year, working in pairs or individually on Mondays to progress through their Blue Strings Rock books. Some class 4 students have moved on to the cello, and they have patiently returned to learning some of the basic skills - just on a bigger instrument - as well as how to read bass clef music. Many cello and violin students will be ready to learn from a new book soon, providing them with additional skill-building challenges.

On Friday afternoons, class 4, 5 and 6 students combine for an ensemble class, where they play pieces with multiple parts. This often means playing in harmony and playing different rhythms against each other. It is very satisfying for us all to hear the pieces coming together and we hope to be able to share them with parents and friends later in the year.

Denni Sulzberger, Strings Teacher

### INVITATION TO PARENTS:

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 3.15-3.45pm – Parent Information Session - Strings

Denni will be holding a parent information session on the afternoon of Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April for parents who would like some tips for helping their children practice their violin and cello at home. Including tuning, holding the instrument, and answering any questions you might have. Meet in the multi-purpose room at 3.15pm. The session will run for about 30 minutes and a teacher will be on duty to supervise children in the playground.

