

"In order to carry out a positive action
we must develop a positive vision."

Dalai Lama

A photograph of three children standing in a grassy field. A taller girl in a dark blue patterned hoodie stands in the background, holding a large bundle of tall grass. Two younger girls stand in front of her; one on the left wears a red jacket and the one on the right wears a red and white checkered jacket. They are all smiling and holding smaller bundles of grass.

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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Welcome

This is the Daylesford Dharma School's 13th Annual Report

The year 2021 was a time of significant change for the School and the opportunity was taken to revisit the teachings of the Five Precepts at the annual Board and Staff retreat, as the foundation for understanding the view of reality and its quality of impermanence. This set the stage for an optimistic and purposeful community transition into the new school year of 2022.

As with our fellow Victorian schools emerging from the prolonged lockdowns of the pandemic, the School embraced another year of classroom disruptions, moving between face-to-face and remote learning. This was a challenge that staff met well, and it has provided students with a new appreciation for their fellow classmates and the school environment.

The Principal, Jennifer Willis, resigned in November due to family and health reasons and a School Transition Manager was appointed to guide the school through this process. The timeframe of this resignation did not enable a Principal to be appointed so late in the year. Andrea Furness resigned her position as Chairperson to step into the role of Interim Principal to guide the school into 2022 while new leadership was recruited and to enact the marketing strategy to increase enrolments. Mel Ogden was appointed as the acting Chairperson.

Fundraising and Marketing

The Board undertook a Strategic Marketing Strategy with the communications consultancy 108 Collective, that focussed on reviewing the Strategic plan in a post Covid economy with enrolment growth and financial sustainability at the fore. A general decline in enrolments in independent schools across regional Victoria was reported and this also impacted the school due to its smaller student population. The marketing strategy was aimed at identifying and communicating the accessibility of the school, its specialist Awareness program and place-based learning Bush School curriculum as points of difference.

A major re-development of the school website took place with a focus on parent connectivity and a members portal to carry the school's new development initiatives to support staff development and parents.

The school community decided that Fundraising events were best cancelled to relieve pressure on families, already balancing remote learning with work commitments and capacity.

Due to the personal circumstances faced by the previous Principal and the impact of the pandemic, it was not possible for the Parent, Staff and Student surveys to be conducted. During Term 4 the school community was finally able to return to onsite learning and welcome its families back, and a detailed school community consultation was conducted by the Interim Principal to plan community engagement in 2022.

Curriculum

Remote learning was reviewed and strengthened to increase student engagement online with a focus on the wellbeing of students by incorporating nature-based activities. Zoom sessions and daily lessons were increased to include daily Awareness morning lessons, an afternoon storytime and 3 specialist classes in yoga, chinese and performing arts. There was also a weekly online check-in for parent support.

The development of our Indigenous curriculum was continued through staff professional development around Indigenous memory systems and the use of memory boards in the classroom setting. The school was able to run its community STEM night in between lockdowns to support the home/school learning partnership.

A new curriculum stream of experiential, place-based, environmental learning was initiated. The curriculum development, documentation and teacher induction was led by Dr Genevieve Blades. This new Bush School program will become a hallmark of the school's educational approach and a core part of student integration into the secondary program, when commenced.



Creek playspace supplied and donated by 'Bells Water Gardens' in 2020

Learning Manager, Tanya Wiggins, continued her work documenting and resourcing the Awareness Program with the support of the Dharma Education Subcommittee (DESC). This work has been of great benefit to the staff, enabling them to strengthen and deepen their delivery of this important program.

The DESC developed a strategy to guide and recognize the professional development of staff in our Buddhist pedagogical approach, and the governance of our educational research and implementation. It also continued its valuable work reviewing the rigour of the school's philosophical program and teaching materials including a teacher induction resource.

Grounds Enhancement

Throughout the lockdowns of 2021, the grounds and facilities development continued. A Sensory Meditation garden with stone benches and plant identification labels was planned and installed by parent Miri Taube in partnership with the Daylesford Rotary Club and with support from skilled stone mason Les Futoh and the parent community.

The western boundary was planted with oaks and blackwoods to provide wind shelter. A fire pit with surrounding seating was installed thanks to Overwrought Garden Art and the parent community.

The School was awarded an ISV Shade Sail grant and with investment from the school, was able to plan for an outdoor classroom area. A planning permit was issued and Martin Bird Builders was the successful contractor with the works to be completed in 2022.

With the support of Hepburn Wind and Energy's Taryn Lane, the school was also successful in its application for a Sustainable Victoria solar array grant which was scheduled for installation in 2022 as part of its strategic planning for sustainability.

Board of Governance members

Mel Ogden - Chairperson

Dorje Warren - Vice Chairperson

Treasurer - Kim Woodrum

Secretary - Vacant

Casual vacancy member - Nadeeka Wimalasuriya

Sevilla Furness-Holland - ex-officio member

Zane Diamond - ex-officio member

Governance

Our Core Mission

To share a Buddhist educational philosophy that promotes academic excellence, with wisdom and compassion at its core and generosity at its heart, to grow a more mindful and sustainable world.

Vision

Our vision is of a flourishing school community, nurturing each child's capacity to contribute with wisdom and compassion to the world they live in.

"Live to be kind, Learn to be Wise."

The Daylesford Dharma School is a not-for-profit Incorporated Association with tax concession charity status, governed by a Board of Governors comprising between five and nine Board Members. In 2011 the Australian Taxation Office endorsed the school as a deductible gift recipient (DGR) for our School Building Fund.

All activities of the Daylesford Dharma School are overseen by a Board of Governance comprising a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Ordinary Board Members, with a minimum of five members and a maximum of eleven members.

The Board is assisted by five permanent Sub-Committees that are ongoing and support the Board in a defined area of governance, and three project based Working Parties that operate for a defined period or until the completion of a task. The Sub-committees are convened by the Board according to Terms of Reference and are open to membership from parents, staff, volunteers and advisors, to enable our community to engage in supporting and developing the direction of the school. They report to the Board on a monthly basis, and operate in harmony with the school's ethos and behaviours.

Daylesford Dharma School Board of Governance

Chairperson – Melissa Ogden, (Master of Arts - Canberra University)

Vice Chairperson – Dorje Warren Gibson, (Bachelor of Arts - Psychology, Diploma of Youth Leadership, MBTI Accredited)

Secretary (Interim) – Andrea Furness, (Bachelor of Health Science - HONS, Victoria University)

Treasurer – Kim Woodrum, (Bachelor of Accounting, NAU, Bachelor of Business Administration, USW)

Ordinary member – Sevilla Furness-Holland (Bachelor of Arts - International Studies)

Ordinary member - Professor Zane Diamond, (Faculty of Education, Monash University)

Board Invitee – Devon Taylor (Grants coordinator)

Board Sub-committees:

Finance & Audit committee – Treasurer, Chairperson, Principal.

Governance & Risk committee – All Board members from 2020.

Dharma Education committee – Dr Sue Smith (Chairperson), Venerable Geshe Konchok Tsering (Honorary Sangha Advisor & School Founder), Venerable Phuoc Tan OAM (Honorary Sangha Advisor), Dr Genevieve Blades, Professor Zane Diamond (Ex officio), Sevilla Furness-Holland (Secretary).

Fundraising & Marketing committee – Principal, Gabrielle Magree (parent representative), Board members, Invitees.

Stakeholders and Communications

Committee – Dorje Warren Gibson, Fiona Robson (parent representative), Principal.

Board Working parties:

Land Management working party - Principal, Tanya Wiggins (Learning Manager), Miri Taube (parent representative)

Middle Years School Working Party

Centre for Cultivating Wisdom Compassion project

Our Board meets monthly to manage the school's finances, fulfil its legal obligations, set the strategic plan and track these objectives against our Action plan. We ensure that the school's philosophy is embedded in the school culture, education practices and all operations. We are committed to implementing the practice of Dharma and ethics in our corporate management and leadership of the school.

Our school is led by the Principal who is appointed by the Board and is supported by the Learning Manager, and a team of Teachers, Learning Assistants and Administrative Staff.

The school operates under the philosophical patronage of Geshe Konchok Tsering – school founder, Tibetan Buddhist monk and Australian resident.

The school's governance, operational structure and its staff, draw from the wisdom of the philosophical teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha and reflect and take guidance from the Mahayana lineage teachings of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso.



"An open heart
is an open mind."

Dalai Lama

Staff and Qualifications



Christina Halvy - Y2,3: VIT Registered, BEd (Primary), Federation University.

Patsy Taylor - *Specialist Art and Chinese*: VIT Provisionally Registered, BEd (VisArt) Federation University, ADip (VisArt) North Adelaide School of Art.

Joanne Tsakoumagos - *Specialist Performing Arts*: BA, Victoria University; DipEd, Victoria University.

Selena McVeigh - *Learning Assistant*: BSc Biology, Latrobe University, Dip Community Service.

Jaala Freeman - *School Chaplain*: MA App (Science & Innovation), RMIT; DipEd Latrobe University; BA (Cultural Studies) FIT; Cert IV Community Services Pastoral Care.

Annshar Wolfs - (on leave) - *Specialist Chinese language*: VIT Registered.

Administration

Rosie Berenyi-Mansell - *Office Manager*.

Avic McLay - *Finance Administrator*.

Faculty

Jennifer Willis - *Principal*, resigned 2021.

Andrea Furness - *Interim Principal*: BHSc (Hons), Victoria University.

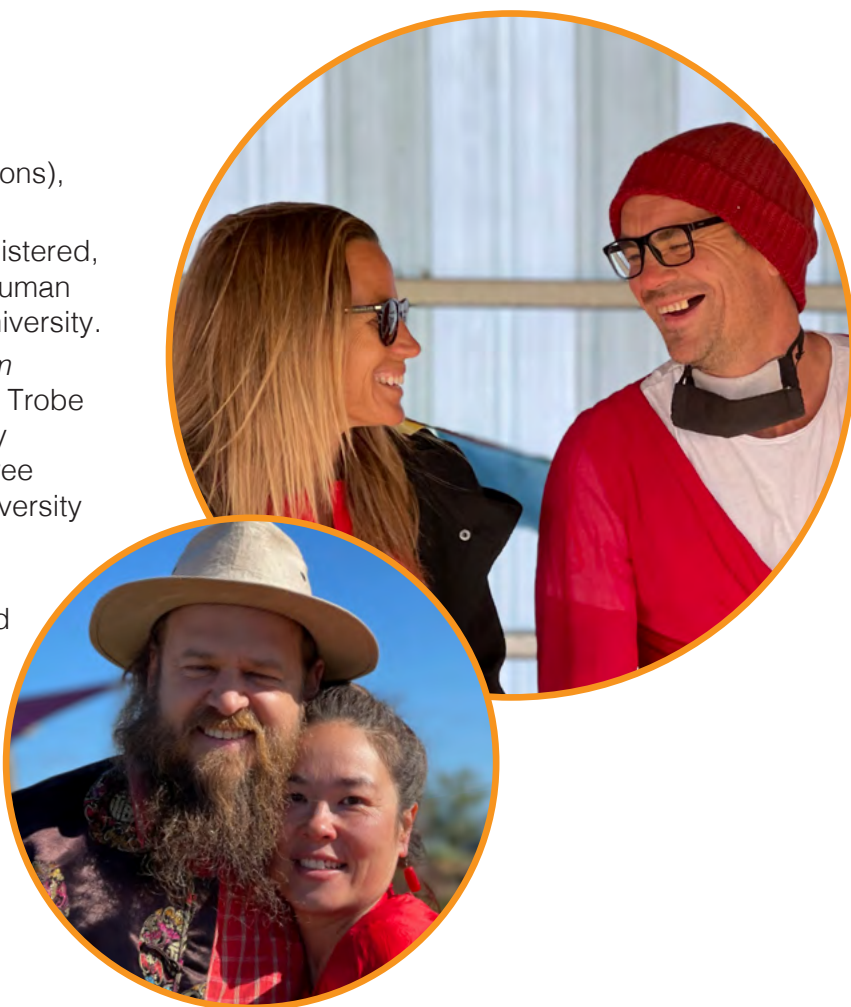
Tanya Wiggins - *Learning Manager*: VIT Registered, MA Ed Federation University; BAppSc (Human Movement) RMIT; GradDipEd Latrobe University.

Dr Genevieve Blades - *Bush School Program Consultant*: PhD, School of Education La Trobe University; MA(Social Ecology), University of Western Sydney; Undergraduate degree (Hons), (Human Movement Studies), University of Queensland.

Amanda De Lacy - Y4,5,6: VIT Registered; BAppSc (Cartography), RMIT; GradDipEd (Primary), Victoria University.

Angelique Downing - YF, 1: VIT Registered; BA (English, History), Latrobe University; DipEd Latrobe University.

Rachel Cooper - Y2,3: VIT Provisionally Registered,



Students

Enrolment

Grade	Male	Female	Total
Prep	3	3	6
Grade 1	3	4	7
Grade 2	5	3	8
Grade 3	1	6	7
Grade 4	2	2	4
Grade 5	0	3	3
Grade 6	0	1	1

Total Enrolments: 36 Students



Attendance

Attendance is monitored and reported three times daily. All absences, latecomers and early leavers are required to inform the school via phone, email or through the Compass platform. Unexplained absences are followed up by class teachers or Administration via phone or email. Attendance rates are reported twice annually to parents in student reports, and can be viewed at any time in Compass.

During remote learning, attendance was measured through student presence in Zoom classes, or via parent email confirming the student was engaging in learning activities each day. Absence rates were higher than usual years due to parents managing work and remote learning.

Year Level	Attendance Rate
Prep	83.0%
Grade 1	80.1%
Grade 2	90.3%
Grade 3	82.9%
Grade 4	91.0%
Grade 5	91.5%
Grade 6	98.1%

NAPLAN Data 2021

The lead up to the 2021 NAPLAN assessment saw our students experience a number of Remote Learning periods throughout 2020 and 2021. Our Remote Learning programme included daily student check ins as well as whole school awareness each morning, to bring us together as a community. Each class had daily explicit teaching sessions through Zoom and set learning tasks that they uploaded through an App called See Saw. Our aim was to support the continuity of academic learning as much as we possibly could, whilst also supporting the health and wellbeing of our students and families.

Even with the learning disruptions due to the pandemic, in 2020 and 2021, our year 3 and year 5

students performed predominantly above or at the National Minimum Standards across the five testing areas with 83% of the year 3 students scoring above the National Standard in Reading and Numeracy and 100% of our year 5 students scoring above or at the minimum standard in Reading and Numeracy.

In 2021 there was a continuation of our whole school approach to spelling and the introduction of a systematic phonics approach to reading in our early years. Numerical reasoning was also a focus with the continuation and further development of number talks as a regular part of our maths program.

Year Level	Year	National Minimum Standard	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
Yr 3	2021	Above	83%	100%	100%	100%	83%
		At					
		Below	17%				17%
Yr 5		Above	100%	100%	100%	67%	67%
		At				33%	33%
Yr 3	2020	NAPLAN TESTING NOT CONDUCTED DUE TO COVID					
Yr 5		NAPLAN TESTING NOT CONDUCTED DUE TO COVID					
Yr 3	2019	Above	67%	100%	100%	67%	100%
		At	33%			33%	
Yr 5		Above	100%		100%	100%	
		At		100%			100%
Yr 3	2018	Above	100%	86%	71%	86%	86%
		At			29%		14%
Yr 5		Above	75%	75%	75%	100%	75%
		At	25%	25%	25%		25%
Yr 3	2017	Above	100%	78%	80%	90%	70%
		At		11%			20%
Yr 5		Above	50%	50%	50%	50%	100%
		At	33%	50%	50%	50%	
Yr 3	2016	Above	100%	100%	33%	67%	67%
		At			67%	33%	33%
Yr 5		Above	75%	100%	100%	100%	100%
		At	25%				

Treasurer's Report

During 2021 the school fulfilled its intention to upgrade equipment and improve internet connectivity which assisted with remote learning during the Covid lockdowns.

Numerous projects were undertaken and initiated :

- Hepburn Wind and Energy assisted and co-funded a Sustainable Victoria Grant for a 25.2kW solar system to achieve a net zero footprint.
- Daylesford Rotary Club helped provide funding for our Garden Project which saw a fire pit, hedges and plants for the Meditation Garden
- ISV provided funding for an outdoor classroom grant which will support the new Bush school program, food garden and a versatile learning area.

- Upgrade to the school website

We also benefited from community donations of \$7,723.00.

Overall, our budget performed well despite the impact of Covid and this was reflected by the audit delivered by Count Pro, showing that despite the drop in enrolments, the School achieved remaining under budget across the year.

We thank the whole community for all the support and assistance that was so generously given.

Kim L Woodrum

Treasurer

Daylesford Dharma School Board of Governance, Aug 2022

INCOME		
Donations	7,723	
Tuition and Fees	45,457	
Federal / State Grants	619,284	
Special Grants	120,862	
Interest and Sundry	20,455	
DDS Investment Account	30,000	
TOTAL AUDITED INCOME	843,781	843,781.00

EXPENSES		
Wages	664,970	
Administration Costs	32,982	
Curriculum Expenses	34,719	
Marketing and Advertising	3,065	
Property, Building Maintenance	23,311	
Loan Interest	17,574	
Professional Fees	29,926	
Insurance	24,653	
Total without Depreciation		831,200.00

*"I have always had
this view about the modern
education system: we pay attention
to brain development, but the
development of warmheartedness
we take for granted."*

Dalai Lama

