



PARENT HANDBOOK 2015

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WELCOME TO CAIRNS HINTERLAND STEINER SCHOOL

We hope that you will have many happy and enriching years with us. To help you and your child settle in we ask that you take the time to read through this Parent Handbook. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions.

Section 1. Steiner Education and History of the School

Who was Rudolf Steiner?

Rudolf Steiner (1864-1925), an Austrian scientist, humanitarian and philosopher, was a man ahead of his time. He developed a new approach to many essential aspects of life including medicine, architecture, agriculture, the arts, social science and education. He ventured beyond the study of humans as merely creatures of intellect and physical form, to acknowledge the importance of human spirit. He viewed the world holistically as well as spiritually and foresaw both the problems arising in our modern world as well as perceiving insightful solutions. His work is having an increasing impact in many countries around the world.

Anthroposophy, meaning 'the wisdom of humanity', is the name given to the philosophical perspective underpinning Steiner's work. It is not a religion. Steiner's writings may be studied by anyone according to interest and inclination. There is no compulsion and no dogma and Steiner's ideas are not actively promulgated within schools. They merely provide a perspective from which the teachers can deepen their understanding of children and develop their teaching craft so that they can nurture their students in more meaningful ways.

What is Steiner Education?

Steiner education endeavours to educate the whole child. It addresses equally the areas of academia, artistic experience and practical skills along with a nurturing of the human spirit. Educating head, heart and hands is regarded as important so as to produce well rounded, capable adults. Through this balanced approach students develop clarity of thought, a sensitivity of feeling, and a constructive strength of will, forming a foundation for balance in thought, feeling and action as adults.

The Steiner method removes competitive pressures. It prefers to see each child reach his or her own full potential and express his or her own uniqueness and individuality. This individuality can unfold in a creative, nurturing, stress free, peaceful and respectful environment. We believe a child's individuality is inhibited when children are required to compete against each other to achieve externally imposed goals. Steiner education prefers motivation and direction to come from within the depths of each human being. It is the teacher's role to kindle the spark through creative, caring and inspired teaching. The teacher then allows the individual, in freedom, to unfold that which lies within.

Steiner education uses the arts as a medium through which learning can take place. The teacher may introduce drawing, painting, modelling, drama, music or poetry to any lesson content, be it language work, mathematics, history, geography, science etc. The Arts balance intellectual achievement and allow for aesthetic self-expression and a depth of feeling experience. They act as a healing and nourishing force.

Steiner education divides childhood into three distinctive seven year cycles. Each cycle has its own work, needs, expressions and defining features. Teachers actively work to provide curriculum content, tasks and experiences that harmonise with the age and stage of development of the child. The theory of childhood cycles arises from Steiner's insights into human nature. It does not depend on popular modern theorists who focus on external behavioural milestones. The human being in their totality and depth is acknowledged and encouraged.

History and Planning

Cairns Rudolf Steiner School grew out of a perceived need for a genuine educational alternative in our local community. In 1997, Nila Chambers, an experienced Steiner teacher from Melbourne, began planning for the school. The school subsequently opened its doors in 2002 with 25 children accommodated in a small house in Stratford. A 40 acre bush property in Kuranda was purchased six years later as a permanent school site. The property is a beautiful, tranquil place, traversed by walking tracks and seasonal creeks, with a 10 minute walk to the lovely Barron River. After the move to our permanent site in 2008, the school was renamed Candlenut Steiner School. The Candlenut tree is a native bush tucker tree found in the area and, in its simplest form, means 'seed of light'. In mythology, the Candlenut tree symbolises enlightenment, peace and protection.

Up until 2010, the school offered kindergarten and preschool through to class seven. In November 2010, the school received accreditation to also offer classes eight to ten. Class eight was initiated in 2011, progressing through classes nine and ten in the following two years. From 2014 we offered twice weekly playgroup sessions, a two day four year old programme, two combined kinder prep classes and single stream classes one to seven on the primary campus and classes eight to ten in our newly completed high school campus. The high school incorporates a science laboratory, a manual arts room, a visual arts room and a general learning area.

The twenty fifteen school year has already seen many exciting changes and additions, with more to come throughout the year. We have rebranded the school to 'Cairns Hinterland Steiner School' as part of our reaching out to Australian and International partners. A Mandarin language programme has been introduced from Early Childhood to Class Ten. It is intended that Class Nine and Ten will experience a school exchange with a Steiner school in China. With the assistance of Independent Schools Queensland we have a Chinese Language student joining our school for 2015. She will work closely with our Mandarin teacher to ensure curriculum integrity and will also introduce many cultural nuances to the students. A learning support teacher has been appointed to work closely with classroom teachers to ensure all children are achieving to the best of their ability. Twenty fifteen has also seen the combined kinder and prep classes split into two separate classes.

School Vision

It is our aim to be true to the spirit and intentions of the educational impulses and insights offered by Rudolf Steiner.

We aim to support each individual child as they strive to reach their own full potential. We work to encourage each child's unique gifts and potential to unfold in a creative, nurturing, peaceful and respectful environment.

We strive to develop equally the faculties of thinking, feeling and willing – head, heart and hands – within each child, so strong foundations are laid for initiative and moral strength in adult life.

We aim to create a place where goodness, beauty and truth permeate the pedagogical, physical and social fabrics.

It is our intention to be aware of and responsive to the unique learning opportunities provided by our local natural environment.

We are continually striving to provide and develop a curriculum and learning programme that is inspired by a deep understanding of human development. A curriculum that embraces and reflects the universal values of freedom, equality, peace and democracy and that values diversity and individual worth. A curriculum that enables children to develop into productive and moral adults, who are, in and of themselves, able to impart meaning to their lives.

We view ourselves as a community of learners – teachers, parents, and students – striving to achieve individual, communal and global growth and understanding.

Section 2. School Life

Kinder/Prep

Early Childhood commences with a structured playgroup for 2 & 3 year olds, once a week. The 4 year old kindy programme runs over two days, Tuesday and Wednesday. It is held in the same room – Sunbird- as the playgroup, and by the same teacher. This allows for a very gentle transition for the child.

Our school begins with a kinder/prep programme for children turning five and six. In an environment that is more like a home and less like a classroom, a warm, secure and calm atmosphere is created where, surrounded by beauty, the young child's imaginative play and creativity can unfurl.

Every feature of the kindergarten from the choice of colours to the design of the wooden furniture has been carefully chosen to provide the optimum mood to allow a young child's consciousness to unfold.

The children are not introduced to an academic programme at this time, they are simply allowed to be children. A great deal of what they need to learn at this age can be achieved through their own rich and rewarding world of self directed play, with the watchful presence of loving adults.

The children are also free to join the teacher in a range of wholesome, home based activities, artistic pursuits and music. They may be involved in baking bread for morning tea, working in the garden to grow vegetables that can be made into soup for lunch, growing flowers for flower garlands or fairy rings, sweeping and mopping, washing tea towels or doll's clothes and hanging them out to dry, building cubby houses, weaving or sewing, painting or clay work, singing and hand craft.

Each day the children have circle time when they come together for verses, songs, finger plays and action dances. Later in the day they all "meet" again for story time where they are exposed to traditional folk, nature stories and fairytales with their layers of meaning and inner truths.

The year is also enriched with the celebration of various festivals. The children spend much time preparing for these and the excitement mounts as the day approaches. The school celebrates a Harvest Festival, Bush Dance, Festival of Lights with our major being the annual Rainbow Fair and Open Day.

The Primary Years

The children usually enter Class One in the year they turn seven. All academic work in the primary years is taught in an artistic and holistic way; for example, in Class One the children learn the alphabet through traditional tales in which strong images occur. The story is told, the images are drawn out of the story, and the children find in the images, the letters of the alphabet. A mountain might unfold into the letter "M", or through the image of a valley they might discover "V". They might paint the letters or draw them, model them or sew them. In Class Six science they might paint the different types of galaxies or dance the different types of planets. In Class Five history they might act out being citizens of Athens debating in the forum. Academic learning is never dry and abstract; rather it is a living, breathing, creative process.

The children are also given grounding in practical skills. They are involved in gardening and cooking, furniture making and building, looking after animals and maintaining school grounds. In craft they make things they will need to use including recorder bags, book bags and pencil cases. These diverse skills assist in producing well rounded, practical adults.

All children are involved in music and the arts. They may be involved in acapella singing groups, recorder ensembles, orchestra or drumming groups. From Class One, all children learn recorder and from Class Three or Four they are encouraged to take up a stringed instrument. They are also involved with the dramatic arts, with each class performing one play each year.

The sport's programme in our school is often linked to other work spheres. In Class Five for example, the children study ancient China and in sport they will do a block of Tai Chi. They also study ancient India and would be offered yoga classes. When ancient Greece is being studied, athletics is offered and this may culminate in a classical Olympic games. Australian history might be linked to horse riding or survival skills such as swimming and orienteering.

There is a strong emphasis placed on the non-competitive aspects of sporting achievement. Team work, individual effort and mateship are highlighted instead.

Computers are not introduced in the primary years as they deaden the child's creative potential. These skills are introduced in Class Eight and since we feel that the children can easily catch on to computer technology, the later introduction is no disadvantage.

The Class Teacher

It is the ideal that one class teacher guides the children's learning throughout the primary years. The Class Teacher is supported by specialist teachers, including gardening, cooking, sports and music teachers. The classroom is therefore like a small country school in atmosphere and the teacher is more akin to a parent who is intimately connected to the class. They grow together over the years.

The teachers are involved in ongoing studies of Steiner education to unfold their own potentials and capacities. They have standard teaching qualifications and receive ongoing specialist Steiner teaching training through the school's Professional Development Programme.

The Main Lesson and Lesson Blocks

The day is divided into three teaching periods. The first lesson, or main lesson, extends for two hours in the morning. The day begins with rhythmic body work to ground and centre the children. This is followed by recorder work to tone and harmonise. The academic work is then presented in an artistic manner and there is enough time for the children to become engrossed in a holistic task.

There are no textbooks in the primary years. Instead the children develop their own individual work books as they record what they have learnt in each main lesson block.

The main lessons are worked into blocks that may extend over a 2-4 week period. The content of the blocks will vary across class levels. Maths and language work are taught from class one onwards. Additional subjects such as science, history, geography etc are introduced over time.

Following main lesson, storytelling will feature along with revision activities, foreign language work and reading.

The afternoons are devoted to non - academic pursuits: art, craft, music, drama, dance and movement, sport and practical life skills (gardening, cooking, building projects).

The High School Years

From the age of around 14 years, students are taught by specialists in their field as they are challenged to awaken their capacity for discerning thinking and independent judgement. The

curriculum, building on and extending the subjects covered in the primary school, unfolds a rich panorama of world and life through the sciences, arts, humanities and practical subjects. Understanding arises through students wrestling with the questions they confront in the study of the different subjects. This calls upon their independent judgement and stimulates original thinking. With their inner activity aroused in this way, students find their place in the world as they learn to know and work into it. This is what gives them their ground for independence and frees them to follow a path into life that allows them to grasp and shape their future.

The School Community

The methods and intentions of a Steiner School are deep and far reaching. A home life that embraces similar values, activities and mood as the school allows your child to receive maximum benefit from a Steiner School education. We seek to work alongside parents to ensure that together, we can offer the children the very best. School and home are seen as two elements that create a whole. Both must be working harmoniously towards the same goals for a successful outcome.

The families forming our school community have the opportunity to share in the rich cultural life of the school in festivals and celebrations, concerts and plays, excursions, fundraising, craft and study groups.

Quality Assurance

Cairns Hinterland Steiner School is committed to delivering a high quality Steiner education experience. This commitment begins with a detailed and thorough recruitment process. Staff appointments involve not only an interview but also a practical classroom demonstration of skills. Our staff must have the right personal qualities as well as professional qualifications to join the school. Once the right person has been appointed, we support them with a mentoring system where more experienced teachers can support those with less experience. Finally, all of our teachers receive ongoing specialist Steiner teaching training through the school's Professional Development Programme.

The Structure of the School

Cairns Hinterland Steiner School is a **not for profit company** with a **Board of Directors** who oversee the long term planning, legal and financial management of the school. The board is comprised of dedicated educators who are supported by legal and financial advisers.

The day to day running of the school is guided by the **Management Committee and the College Executive**, democratic bodies that, in consultation with the **College of Teachers** collectively make educational and philosophical decisions based on insights gained from the study of Rudolf Steiner's indications. The **Management Committee** liaises with outside organisations, the Board, the administration and school parents.

The office is the first point of contact for all general inquiries. Office hours are 8am-3.30pm, Monday to Friday, and the telephone number is (07) 4093 8809.

Supporting the Ethos of Our School

As mentioned, the methods and intentions of a Steiner school are deep and far reaching. When you enroll in a Steiner school you are asked to support the ethos of the school. A home life that embraces similar values, activities and mood allows your child to receive maximum benefit from a Steiner School education. The Parent Handbook provides detailed explanations of the themes underpinning the school; however, several important areas are outlined below:

Protecting the Meadow of Childhood

We believe that the beauty and innocence of childhood is under siege in our modern world. Children are often encouraged to dress, behave, speak and understand in adult ways. As a result, the natural “soul mood” of the child can be distorted or harmed and problems can emerge later on. This may not only affect the child concerned, but it can affect other children, the class and the whole tone of a school. The sources of disturbance and harm include the pervasive negative influence of television, videos, movies, computer games (especially **excessive, unsupervised and inappropriate exposure**): unsuitable toys; food with high levels of sugar, preservatives, additives and pesticides; clothes designed to promote juvenile aggression or sexuality; inadequate quality and quantity of sleep; lack of quality parenting time to nurture close bonding; lack of guidance in good manners and appropriate social skills. The school will actively promote an ethos that seeks to protect and nourish childhood and parents who join the school must agree to support these values.

Supporting the College of Teachers

Decisions concerning the day to day running of the school are made by the Management Committee in consultation with the College Executive. These groups work closely with the College of Teachers in making decisions in all matters concerning curriculum, staff appointments, timetabling, holidays, discipline issues, and reporting. On a daily basis the teachers are assessing and reassessing the best way for the school to run effectively and harmoniously. We seek to work collaboratively with the whole school community where possible and while feedback and input from parents is valued, there will sometimes be confidential matters that lie behind decisions that are made. When decisions have been made we expect that parents will abide by these decisions and trust that all concerned are working for the good of the school as a whole.

Communication

The office is open from 8:00am to 3:30pm, Monday to Friday, during term time. Written or telephone messages can be left at the office. The school phone has an answering machine that is cleared throughout the day if your call cannot be answered. Communications for teachers, staff, or directors may be left at the office.

To communicate efficiently with parents and in consideration of the environment, we will communicate with parents via the email addresses they provide us.

If you do not provide us with an email address, you must provide us with a written request for hardcopy communication. You will be required to pay an annual fee of \$25 to cover administration and printing costs.

The onus is on you to ensure that the school is provided with current contact information.

Fundamental to our school ethos is a focus on the development of positive and healthy relationships between all interested and involved parties. Healthy relationships require open and honest communication.

Cairns Hinterland Steiner School recognises the importance of every parent feeling that they can be involved in their child’s educational journey at our school. We also recognise that the most convenient times for parents to speak with their children’s teachers can often be at drop off and pick up time, especially for those families that live some distance from the school.

Our teachers are committed to being available to talk with parents, and are always happy to discuss their child’s progress or behaviour with them. This willingness of the staff to be available can sometimes lead to parents not realising that approaching their child’s teacher just before or after school may not be appropriate.

The half an hour before school begins in the morning is generally the busiest time of the day for the teacher. There is always much to be done in preparation for the day ahead. It is the time when the teacher prepares not only the physical space of the classroom, but also prepares themselves inwardly to meet the children in the correct way. It is a time of intense focus for each teacher.

Similarly, the end of the day is often a time where the teachers feel tired, and may be focussing on planning for the next day, meetings to be attended or a variety of other pressing issues that demand their attention.

If a teacher is approached at this time, it can sometimes be that something personal or sensitive is discussed in a rushed way and in earshot of children or other parents. A very likely outcome of this is that a parent may walk away feeling unheard or even dismissed, which can create an additional issue. It may also be that the teacher feels under pressure to respond in the moment, and has not had sufficient time to give the matter due consideration.

Parents and teachers need to have the space and time to have conversations without distractions or pressure. Parents need to be able to ask for that meeting without feeling like they are imposing on their child's teacher who is already very busy. Teachers need to feel that they are able to choose a time and space that will allow them to have a conversation that gives their full consideration to the needs of the child who is at the centre of all that we do.

The staff at Cairns Hinterland Steiner School undertakes to notify parents and caregivers of their preferred method of communication and the times that they are available. We ask that parents respect this, and refrain from making a telephone call or sending a text or email in the moment unless the teacher has indicated that this is appropriate.

Relationships are undermined through issues being discussed in inappropriate forums. We require parents to commit to communicating any issues or problems they experience that relate to the school to the appropriate person within the school.

Some general guidelines in this regard:

- It is always preferable that the teacher is the first port of call for a parent with a query. If this is not possible or appropriate, our parent liaison person can be contacted at parentliaison@chss.qld.edu.au. Alternatively you could call the office or a member of the Management Committee.
- Any questions or concerns relating to fees or finances must be directed to the Business Manager. Teachers are not involved in fee collection, and are not made aware of any issues around financial hardship or non - payment of fees that may exist in their class.
- Any questions relating to day-to-day administration such as bus times, tuckshop, etc, may be directed to the reception staff in the office.

Once a meeting has been set, we would like to establish the following guidelines:

- Teachers may ask that another staff member be present in the meeting to take notes or provide support. Parents may also bring a support person to the meeting. Any support people attending the meeting must contribute to maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- The staff of our school commit to maintaining a respectful and non-aggressive tone in all interactions with parents and students. We require parents to commit to the same.
- Teachers and parents must confine the subject of the meeting to the child or children of the person present. It is not appropriate to discuss the children of other parents, other parents themselves, or for the conversation to stray into the personal realm of either party. Anyone who feels that the meeting is straying into inappropriate territory, or who becomes

uncomfortable with the manner or tone of another person within the meeting, may call the meeting to a close. If communication between the parties breaks down, the school's Grievance Policy will come into effect.

Our school endeavours to promote and support healthy communication in order to support the children in our care. We trust that everyone in our community is also committed to working together to this end.

Evaluation of Children's Progress

In Kindergarten and Preschool, assessment is by teacher observation and work samples. In the primary school, the development of the children's skills is assessed through main lesson books, class work, oral presentations and reviews. Reporting to parents is through individual parent/teacher conversations and in the written semester school reports.

The school holds an annual open day during which most of the children's work is on display. At this time teachers are available to share information.

The children's academic and artistic work is carefully stored at school and sent home at various times during the year.

Attendance and Punctuality

We require you to support your child's education by ensuring **daily attendance**, except in the case of illness. The establishment of regular and consistent daily, weekly and seasonal rhythms are deemed important for the well - being of the child. In a Steiner school, subjects are taught in blocks of 2-4 weeks; each day builds upon the last. Experiences missed due to absence are not easily made up at another time. It is not deemed to be the teacher's responsibility to provide extra assistance to students who have fallen behind because of extended or frequent absence. In such cases **parents may be asked to meet the financial costs of extra learning support that may be required as a result of extended or frequent absence.**

As a school funded by the government we have a responsibility to meet the guidelines of the Education Act with regards to attendance. The Act states that all school aged children must be in attendance at a State or Non State School on every school day except under the following conditions:

- *A child is receiving instruction from another authorised education body*
- *Sickness*
- *Temporary or permanent infirmity*
- *Unavoidable cause*
- *Fear of infection with diseases*

We require you to ensure that your child **arrives at school punctually**. Main Lesson begins at 8.40am with roll call, rhythmical body work, recorder playing and storytelling. Children who are late miss very important foundations for the lesson, and also interrupt the flow of the morning for other children.

If children arrive late to school, we require parents to deliver them to the office rather than the classroom. The child will be taken to their class at a time that is deemed to be the least disruptive for the group.

We require you to ensure your child is collected from the school grounds at 3pm. If children are left at the school outside of school hours, we are required by law to deliver them to the local Kuranda police station. In cases of emergency please ensure that the office is contacted before 3pm if possible so that your child can be taken care of appropriately.

Dress Code

We require parents to ensure their children are **dressed appropriately** for school and in compliance with the school's **dress code**. We do not have a school uniform as such, but do have cotton school T-shirts available in the shop. The children may wear neat, casual clothes made from natural rather than synthetic fibres. We require parents to ensure their children's clothing is free from obvious logos, slogans and images and are in plain rainbow colours rather than black and other dark colours. We require parents to ensure that their children do not wear makeup or jewellery; except for one small watch and a small pair of earrings. We require parents to ensure that their children come to school only with school - issue hats which are provided upon enrolment. **T-shirts:** Cotton, crew-neck or collar. In the interests of 'Sun Safety', shoulders must be covered at all times. T-shirts must be plain and in colours of the rainbow (no black). Floral patterns, stripes and dots are acceptable as long as they contain no black. **NO PICTURES, LOGOS OR WRITING.**

Shorts/pants: Cotton, in plain colours of the rainbow (no black). Floral patterns, stripes and dots are acceptable as long as they contain no black. **NO PICTURES, LOGOS OR WRITING. NO BOARD SHORTS.** Shorts or pants must be at least mid-thigh length

Skirts: Cotton, in plain colours of the rainbow (no black). Floral patterns, stripes and dots are acceptable as long as they contain no black. **NO PICTURES, LOGOS OR WRITING.** Must be at least mid-thigh length.

Dresses: Cotton, in plain colours of the rainbow (no black). Crew-neck or collar. Strappy dresses may be worn in summer, but children must have an appropriate over-shirt at school to wear for sport and lunch times. Floral patterns, stripes and dots are acceptable as long as they contain no black. **NO PICTURES, LOGOS OR WRITING.** Must be at least mid-thigh length.

Jumpers and Jackets: Must be in plain colours of the rainbow (no black). Floral patterns, stripes and dots are acceptable as long as they contain no black. **NO PICTURES, LOGOS OR WRITING.**

Footwear: Children must wear appropriate shoes while at school. During time in the classroom, children may take their shoes off for comfort. Gumboots and Ugg boots (or similar) can be worn in winter for warmth.

Jewellery: Only one small watch and a small pair of earrings. **NO BIG LOOPS OR DANGLY EARRINGS. NO BODY OR FACIAL PIERCINGS.**

Hair and Make-up: NO MAKE-UP, DYED HAIR, NAIL POLISH OR FAKE TATTOOS.

Hats and Bags: Hats – school issue only. Bags – the school will issue bags, however, you may provide your child with a plain, coloured, back-pack style bag.

When children are not dressed appropriately, teachers will:

- Have the child change into spare clothes
- Contact the parents to discuss the situation

Our high school students have a dress code that is slightly amended to be more developmentally appropriate. If you have a child in Class 8 or above, copies of dress code are available in the office.

School Lunches

Good work needs wholesome and sufficient food. A nourishing breakfast is an important start to the day and a lunchbox full of healthy food options is important if the child is to give their best all day. Children need healthy food without large amounts of sugar, preservatives, or additives for their morning snack and lunch. We also require that you do not include heavily packaged food items, or heavily processed food. Teachers who find inappropriate lunch items will remove them and send them home along with a letter explaining why the item does not meet the school standards.

Strongly recommended items	Items that will be sent home
sandwiches, rolls, pita breads, rice and/or corn cakes	Nutella or jam fillings
home cooked dinner leftovers	chips
raw vegies and salads with dips	lollies and/or chocolates
boiled eggs	fruit straps
cheese, low sugar yoghurt	commercial bars and snacks (check the sugar levels – even the “healthy” ones)
quiche	dairy snacks
sushi/nori	sweet biscuits, donuts, commercially produced baked goods
dolmades, antipasto, cold meats	soft drinks
dried fruits, seeds, nuts	fruit box drink
fresh fruit	
homemade custards, puddings, agar	
homemade baked goods (muffins etc)	
cold water, no added sugar juices	

If you need lunchbox ideas please come in and talk to us at the office.

Behaviour Management

For children to develop in a healthy way there needs to be a steady and progressive movement of authority from outer to inner. There is initially, with very young children, a need for constant and consistent positive and gentle guidance from adults who can model loving authority steeped in personal discipline. Gradually we begin to expect children to develop self-discipline and to take more and more responsibility for their own behaviour and actions. Teachers at Cairns Hinterland Steiner School support and encourage this process through the specific behaviour management techniques used at different stages of children's development. Our Behaviour Management Plan outlines a positive, proactive, holistic approach to managing student behaviour for the creation of a safe, supportive, loving and productive learning environment. It has been developed to reflect the values and beliefs of the community and to support the ethos of the school.

Steiner defined three golden rules for teachers: “to receive the child with gratitude, to educate the child with love and to lead the child into the true freedom which belongs to humanity.” To achieve this true freedom, children must be able to exercise a high level of will and self-discipline. The aim of any behaviour management in our school is to help facilitate the development of healthy and productive self-regulation. We require you to familiarise yourself with the school behaviour management policy and support the teachers in matters of discipline. The policy is available at the office.

Teachers will explain their expectations and the rules applicable in the classroom and school in general to new students. Ongoing failure to comply with school rules and code of conduct may result in a review of and possible termination of enrolment.

Termination would only occur after a period of consultation between the student, parents, teachers and the Behaviour Management Group.

Duty of Care

Supervision of students

School hours are from 8:45am to 3:00pm. It is the policy of the school to provide supervision of students whilst they are on the school grounds during these school hours only. Students are not to arrive at the school before 8:30am and are to be collected promptly after school.

During recess and lunch breaks the children may play only in the areas that are supervised by the teachers on duty. All students are clearly instructed on the boundaries of the school and play areas, and are expected to remain within the boundaries of the school at all times.

The teachers on duty encourage children to respect property and their environment. The school does not allow children into the car parking area. The teachers on duty during the breaks are active in their supervision of the children and any serious incidents are recorded and the class teacher informed for follow up. In the event that an extreme incident or accident occurs, parents will be notified, first aid will be applied and further medical attention will be sought as required. An accident form will be completed and the incident will be investigated.

Care of property

The school encourages respect and care of property and the school environment. This includes individual possessions, others' possessions and school possessions and equipment. Students who damage or deface school property will be asked to repair any damage they have caused, and where required, they will be asked to pay for the damage to be repaired.

Cyclone Procedure

Cyclones are a fact of life in Tropical North Queensland. The school will close under the following conditions;

- When the bureau of Meteorology has issued a cyclone **WARNING** for Cairns and/or the cyclone is a Category 2 or above and is expected to cross the coast in the vicinity of Cairns within eight hours.
- The school will notify local radio stations on the status of the school.
- The school will keep parents updated on the status of the school via email.
- In the event that the school loses power, parents will be contacted via the individual class "phone trees".

Medical attention

Sick or injured students must report to the class teacher during class time or the teacher on duty during breaks. The administration staff will make a decision as to whether the student will lie down in the wellness room, be sent home, be given first aid, or be transported by ambulance to hospital. The school will contact parents in the case of illness. The dispensing of medicines or homeopathic remedies will be administered by the school in accordance with the medical profiles on record. When an injury requires hospital attention, we will seek to inform the parents immediately. If parents cannot be contacted, a staff member may accompany the injured child to hospital.

It is important that parents keep the school up to date with their daytime contact numbers and relevant details of their child's health e.g. allergies, emotional issues and medication.

School bus

Dedicated school buses operate between Mareeba, Cairns and Smithfield and our school. For information on the bus times, routes and availability, please contact the office. Families wishing to use the bus service must sign a code of conduct for the bus and arrange payment via the office.

Parking

The school has limited parking space and parents are required to use allocated parking zones. The bus parking and turn-around-area is to be left clear at all times. The school car park is **ONE WAY** traffic only, so please follow signs.

School Drop Off/Pick Up

In the morning, you must walk your child/ren into the school grounds. In the afternoon, please collect them from their class and walk with them out to the car. Please **DO NOT** wait in the car park for your child/ren to walk unattended across the car park.

Lost property

Parents are encouraged to label their children's belongings and are requested to check the lost property box for the specific class for missing items. The lost property box is located at the office.

School Supplies

A materials levy is charged with your school fee invoice at the beginning of each term. In Kindergarten and Preschool this covers all supplies including crayons, felting wool, wool, beeswax, and a hat. In Primary School, this fee covers all supplies including workbooks, crayons, crayon bags, lyra pencils, handcraft materials, a hat, and a school bag. In the event that the items provided are lost or willfully damaged, the replacement cost will be charged to your account.

The materials levy does not include musical instruments, private music lessons or camping trips and excursions.

The children work with an expanding range of carefully chosen pure beeswax crayons, lyras and soft colouring pencils. Different colours are introduced at different class levels to develop aesthetic sensitivities and to support the main lesson material being offered in the classroom at that age or stage. **Please do not bring pencils and crayons from home unless asked.**

The School Community

In a Steiner school we seek to cultivate a wholesome atmosphere of love and respect. This is expressed in the way children are spoken to, the materials the children are given to work with, the classroom arrangements and equipment, the activities the children are involved in and the food available within the school. Everything is considered from the perspective of nurturing and caring for the child in the best possible way.

The families forming our school community have the opportunity to share in the rich cultural life of the school through festivals and celebrations, concerts and plays, excursions, fundraising and study groups. Participation in the life of the school gives parents the opportunity to become involved in the evolving school community and to gain a greater and practical insight into the workings of the Steiner Educational Philosophy.

There are many ways for parents to be involved in our school, depending on their skills and interests:

- Supporting school functions, social gatherings, open days and festivals
- Attending Parent Teacher conversations
- Parent lending library
- Attending information talks
- Reading school newsletters
- Attending Parents and Friends meetings
- Volunteering to be a class carer (duties include organising class social events and supporting the teacher as needed)

- Taking part in a community activity e.g. Working Bees, Craft Group, Rainbow's End shop, Community Choir, Markets etc

Section 3. Administration

School Structure

Cairns Hinterland Steiner School is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, with a Board of Directors who oversee the long term planning and the legal and financial management of the school. The Board of Directors entrusts the day-to-day operation of the school to the Management Group, which consists of the school's Steiner Education Australia Delegate, a representative of the College of Teachers and the Business Manager.

The Business Manager is responsible for administering the fiscal and business affairs of the school. The Business Manager works to overcome fiscal constraints, communicates the school's financial position to stakeholders, creates budgets, manages investments, purchases and sales, deals with funding bodies, seeks out and acquires grants and manages insurance, fee collection and salaries.

The Management Committee works in close association with the College Executive and College of Teachers and is responsible for the day to day running of the school in all areas of the school. The Business Manager and Board of Directors ensure that the school meets all government and legislative requirements. The school has a Parent Liaison person who is available each Thursday or at other times when necessary. This person works in close association with the Management Committee as a key point of contact for students, parents and teachers alike.

The College of Teachers forms the heart of the school, guiding its philosophical and pedagogical direction. All teachers employed by the school are entitled to belong to the College, and collaborate in building a shared understanding of the indications of Rudolf Steiner. Members of the College strive to continuously deepen their understanding of Anthroposophy, child development and the curriculum. The College mandates one of its members to represent them on the Management Group, and contribute to the efficient operation of the school. The College of Teachers also concerns itself with the wellbeing of children and staff, and is responsible for the cultural life of the school in planning events such as festivals. New teachers are granted provisional membership to the College for the first 12 months of their employment, after which they may be invited by the rest of College to become a full member.

The College Executive is a structure that arose out of study and conversation initiated by the College of Teachers. Because Cairns Hinterland Steiner School has an inclusive College that every staff member is entitled to be a part of, it was decided that there was a need for a smaller executive group to streamline decision making and represent the will of College. The College Executive is made up of the most experienced and Anthroposophically committed teachers at our school, who willingly carry the added time commitment and responsibility of belonging to this group. The members of the College Executive carry various mandates, such as the administration and chairing of College meetings, community liaison, wellbeing etc.

The College of Teachers delegates day-to-day matters relating to teaching and learning to the faculties. There are three faculties, made up of teachers teaching in the areas of Early Childhood, Primary and High School. The faculties are responsible for child studies, sharing skills, programme development and other matters relating to the daily flow of classroom teaching.

The Board of Directors

The Board is comprised of dedicated members of our core community including teaching staff and the Business Manager. The constitution of the school states that at all times a majority of the Board members shall be experienced Steiner educators.

The school is accountable to, and must report to, several government bodies to ensure continued registration and funding. There are many checks and procedures put in place by these government departments. An internal Board allows the direction of the school to be guided by people who are on the front-line and are fully aware of the day – to - day happenings of the school and the needs of the individual children enrolled at the school.

The Role of Parents

Parents are encouraged to be involved in enhancing the social and cultural life of the school. They might be involved in planning festivals, social events and organising fund raising activities. Any member of the school community is free to make positive suggestions or share ideas with the College of Teachers or the school management. These ideas are to be put in writing and addressed to the College or the appropriate person.

Personnel at Cairns Hinterland Steiner School

The Board of Directors:

Lorna Cannon
James Sheridan
Dave Halbert
Majella Smith
Steve Evans
Arlene Cairns

College of Teachers:

All teachers at Cairns Hinterland Steiner School have the possibility of working collegially as members of the College of Teachers. All new teachers are invited to pledge their commitment to this work after being at the school for one year. The College Executive is a smaller body that seeks to represent the will of the College in deciding pedagogical matters.

College Executive:

Regan Cameron
Alison Whitmill
Reinhild Tracey
Alan McLean
Susan Breeze

Administration Team:

Business Manager/Facilitator – Majella Smith
Frontline Manager – Donna Pickford
Site Manager – Dave Halbert
Administration – Nadeeka Wimalasuriya & Karen Ang
Accounts – Lynn Quinn

Complaints and Grievances

From time to time parents may have questions, concerns, or grievances related to teaching or other matters. Whenever there is a problem, it is better to talk directly to those concerned. Honesty, constructive suggestions and offers of help are appreciated. Classroom matters should be discussed with the class teacher in the first instance.

Grievance Procedures and Policies summary

At Cairns Hinterland Steiner School we recognise and value the diversity within our school community. We recognise however, that it is not always possible to achieve harmony and consensus amongst such a diverse group of people and at times grievances may arise. Our school believes that a strong and clear grievance procedure that facilitates and encourages direct communication between all parties involved, is the most effective way to resolve issues expediently, respectfully and satisfactorily. We encourage all members of our Steiner Community to be respectful of difference and to demonstrate a willingness to work collaboratively together to achieve and maintain a harmonious environment.

What is a grievance?

A grievance is an expression by an individual or group of dissatisfaction with their treatment by others. The school recognises and acknowledges that, if as parents you have concerns, you are entitled to raise them. If in doubt please contact the school, as we are always happy to help.

When should I make my grievance formal?

Many problems can be resolved in an informal manner. Efforts to resolve a problem should always precede the lodgement of a grievance. However the lodgement of a formal grievance is important if you feel that an issue has not been resolved to a point of mutual satisfaction for all parties involved. The aim of lodging a formal grievance should be to seek resolution of a problematic situation.

The school's Grievance Policy is available at the office.

Child Protection at Cairns Hinterland Steiner School

Cairns Hinterland Steiner School recognises that protecting students from harm and the risk of harm is fundamental in maximising their personal and academic potential. For this reason the welfare and best interests of the children within our School will always be a primary consideration. We expect our students to show respect to our staff and volunteers and to comply with safe practices and we expect all employees to ensure that their behaviour towards and relationships with students reflects proper standards of care for students, and are not unlawful. The School will respond diligently to a report of suspected or actual harm, or risk of harm to a student.

What does the School mean by harm?

Recent Queensland legislation defines harm as:

- Any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by:
- Physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect;
- Sexual abuse or exploitation; or
- Domestic or family violence.

How does the School protect students from harm?

The School has a comprehensive Child Protection Policy, which covers the actions to be taken if a member of staff or a parent of the school becomes aware or reasonably suspects that harm has been done to a student of the school by other staff, people outside the school or by other students.

What should you do if you become aware or reasonably suspect that harm has been caused, or may be caused to a student of the school by a member of staff, someone outside of the school or by other students?

You should report your concerns to the Management Committee or to any other member of school staff.

What will happen next?

If you report your concerns to a member of staff other than the Management Committee, the member of staff will report it to the Management Committee immediately, or if the subject of the complaint is a member of the Management Committee then the member of staff will report to the School Board of Directors.

What will the Management Committee or the Chairman of the Board do?

If the Management Committee or Chairman of the Board receives a report of harm or suspected harm to a student of the school; and he/she becomes aware of the harm having been caused or reasonably suspects the harm to have been caused then it will be reported to police immediately if the harm relates to sexual abuse; or to the Department of Child Safety if appropriate; or it may be dealt with internally if the matter does not require mandatory reporting to an outside body.

What happens with regard to confidentiality?

Your report will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Management Committee and those directly involved. The Chairman of the School Board may also need to be informed. It is the school's policy that confidentiality between the school and parents will be respected as much as possible and any concerns raised by parents will not rebound adversely on their children.

Each person who has access to information regarding suspected or disclosed harm has an obligation to observe appropriate confidentiality. However, the school is unable to promise absolute confidentiality since the steps of the Policy will require disclosing, internally and externally, certain details involved in responding to the report.

State authorities can compel people to give evidence about actions under the Policy and to produce documents. You would be fully informed if information you provided were to be passed on to a third party.

Any action, which needed to be taken under staff disciplinary procedures as a result of an allegation not requiring police intervention, would be handled confidentially within the school.

How will the School help my child?

The Management Committee will ensure that the following actions are taken to reduce the chance of harm occurring:

- Ensure that each staff member understands and fulfils their obligations under this Policy and the Policy for reporting abuse.
- Require all members of academic staff to be registered or provisionally registered with the Queensland College of Teachers (formally Board of Teacher Registration), or to have received special dispensation from the College;
- Require all non-teaching members of staff and all non-parent volunteers and contractors (including Board members who are not registered teachers), to hold a current Blue Card;
- In some cases, deemed appropriate by the School, paid or unpaid employees who work with children but are not required to hold a blue card (e.g. a parent volunteer) may be asked to consent to a criminal history check through the Queensland Police Service;
- Ensure that where volunteer parents are working with children, it will always be in the presence of academic or non-teaching staff who are cleared to work with children.

If the Management Committee receives a report of harm to your child, he/she will support the child by:

- responding rapidly and diligently to the report;
- reassuring the student;
- protecting the child's confidentiality as much as possible;
- offering continuous support, and providing counselling if requested.

What should I do if I require more information?

The School's complete Child Protection Policy is available at the school administration. Parents and students may have access to this policy at any time. You may also make an appointment to discuss the policy with the Management Committee if you wish to clarify any matters.

“Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives. The need for imagination, a sense of truth, and a feeling of responsibility these three forces are the very nerve of education.”

Rudolf Steiner