

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING THORNBURY PRIMARY & STEINER STREAM PARENTS FOUNDATION 2020 – CLASS SIX

Purpose

The purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding is to provide essential information to parents/carers who have enrolled or are considering enrolling their child/ren in the Thornbury Primary School (TPS) Steiner stream. The Steiner Stream at Thornbury Primary School offers an alternative stream within the setting and requirements of a Victorian Government school.

“Our highest endeavour 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

TPS Steiner Vision and History

TPS are proud to be one of only a handful of Victorian Government Schools that offer Steiner as an alternative stream within the setting of a government school. The staff of this program are committed to providing a rich Steiner Program for students, they have a core commitment to exploring and deepening the pedagogy through group study and mentoring. Parents/carers intending to enrol their children in this program should therefore familiarise themselves with the aims, practices and expectations of the Steiner Education Australia Program.

There are publications and a large range of literature available on the Steiner Education Australia (SEA) website (<https://www.steinereducation.edu.au/>).

TPS Steiner Community Connection

A strong community connection is considered to be central to the work of nourishing and supporting students to grow physically, emotionally, socially and academically. Teachers work closely with parents/carers through a strong Class Carer Network. The Class carer is a parent/carer who works to support the teacher to communicate to the whole class community.

The school and its staff organise regular community events including class meetings which are held twice a year. During these meetings teachers discuss curriculum and pedagogy with parents/carers. We encourage attending class meetings to learn more about the curriculum and classroom events and ways that you can support your child's learning. There are also opportunities to be involved in annual class plays and many school community events. We also seek parental/carer support in a number of areas including camps, class play preparation, festivals and class crafting workshops/working bees.

A decision to enrol a student in the Steiner Program carries with it the implicit agreement to support the work of the teachers, through both learning at school and home. Continuing to make wise and supportive choices in parenting, students will experience the full benefits of the Steiner education, from early years all the way through to later adolescence. Some options for supporting the Steiner learning at home include:

- Maintaining healthy rhythm and routine in the home life
- Encouraging a healthy diet and active lifestyle
- Promotion of creative, self-directed play
- Build on the emphasis on nature and the outdoors, and discourage the use of indoor electronic stimulation.

Non-negotiable components of TPS Steiner

Intending parents/carers should also note that enrolment into the Steiner Program at Thornbury Primary School is a commitment from Foundation to until the end of Class Six, after a one term trial period. TPS Steiner is a holistic package with essential components which are non-negotiable. These include:

- Art and craft lessons
- Music and orchestra
- Requirement to learn a string instrument (Violin, Viola or Cello) from the beginning of Class Three
- Start of day at 9.00am with Morning Circle. This is an important part of a holistic Steiner curriculum whereby students participate in singing, reciting poetry and movement activities.
- Wear school uniform options as per the TPS Uniform Policy

All these components are governed by the Victorian Government and school policies and ratified by the School Council. Parents who cannot wholeheartedly accept and support all aspects of the Steiner stream should consider other educational settings, including the Main Stream at Thornbury Primary School.

Related Policies:

- Enrolment Policy
- Parent Payment Policy
- Uniform Policy

Additional Fees specific to Steiner Stream

The components specific to the Class P-6 Steiner program are extra to those offered in the Main Program and therefore incur additional fees and levies, none of which are optional. There are fees for covering class stationery and consumables, art, music and orchestra which are detailed in the Steiner Fee Structure of Essential Education Items available at the school.

- Individual instrumental music costs (strings from class three) are additional to the Steiner fee structure.

Other school based costs can include personal stationery, excursions and incursions, camps, sport/swimming lessons and other special programs or events that occur throughout the year. The Steiner Program cannot run effectively without these levies, and failure to pay may result in a student being offered a place in the Main Program, where there is a smaller financial commitment.

Intending parents must also recognise that Thornbury Primary School is a Victorian Government school and as such all students, from all programs at the school, are expected to undertake formal assessments of programs for Literacy and Numeracy including NAPLAN testing and reporting student learning to the achievement standards of the Victorian Curriculum. Electronic devices may be utilised to facilitate these assessments.

Signing below confirms your intention to fully support the Thornbury Primary School Steiner Program in these matters.

CHILD/REN'S NAME:

CLASS:

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN:

DATE:

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL:

DATE: