



Thornbury Primary School
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The Steiner Curriculum at Thornbury Primary 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

Thornbury Primary School began its Steiner curriculum in 2006 after three years of preparation. We now have students from Foundation to Grade Six and have much to celebrate and be proud of.

STEINER EDUCATION

Steiner Education is a holistic approach to educating children, designed to nurture and balance the human faculties of thinking, feeling and will ("head, heart and hands"). The prime purpose of Steiner Education is to support and educate children in a way that encourages their own innate and unique human qualities to come to greater fulfillment.

THE TPS STEINER CURRICULUM

The Steiner program at Thornbury Primary School offers a dynamic and creative curriculum based on the educational philosophy of Rudolf Steiner – a philosophy that responds to different phases in a child's development and aims to create a genuine love of learning within each child. With a strong emphasis on the arts, social skills, creativity and developing opportunities for academic excellence, the philosophy and curriculum honours and protects the wonder of childhood.



WHO WAS RUDOLF STEINER?

Rudolph Steiner was an Austrian philosopher, educationalist and scientist active in the late 19th and early 20th Century. Steiner worked to establish various practical endeavours, including Waldorf education, biodynamic agriculture, and anthroposophical medicine.

FURTHER READING

Steiner, Rudolf, Education as a force for Social Change, Anthroposophic Press, NY

Steiner, Rudolf, The Education of the child in the light of Anthroposophy, The Rudolf Steiner Press

Petrash, Jack, Understanding Waldorf Education: Teaching from the inside out, Floris Books Steiner Education Australia:

steinereducation.edu.au/



FOUNDATION AND YEAR 3 STUDENTS PREPARING FRUIT FOR JAM MAKING

The Foundation year in the Steiner program aims to ease the transition from home to school by creating a warm, loving, homelike environment in which the children learn and grow.

The Steiner program at Thornbury Primary School is aligned with the expected standards for Victorian state schools – AusVELS – and is available from Foundation to Grade 6.

At each stage of development, the curriculum is designed to engage the abilities of the growing child. This is done through the imaginative and artistic presentation of material by the class teacher. The class teacher takes the major part of the class work and specialist teachers are with the children for Languages other than English (LOTE), music, craft, eurythmy and physical education.

DAILY RHYTHMS

The Steiner Curriculum is carefully balanced through daily rhythms, which help keep the children fresh and receptive.

A typical day starts with the Morning Circle, which involves the whole class and includes songs, dances, verses, numeracy and literacy activities which are movement based. Storytelling and song are offered to enliven and inspire the child to experience and imagine the ideas being presented in class.



The focal point of each day is the Main Lesson, the academic cornerstone on which the day is built. Subjects such as history (in later years), language, arts, science and mathematics are taught in blocks lasting from three to six weeks, giving the children a chance to live into the subject material and experience it at a deep level. The children then move on to the middle (practice) lessons of the day involving language, maths, foreign languages, eurythmy and music.

In the afternoon, practical activities such as craft, physical education, gardening, building, and instrumental music lessons are the focus.

Seasonal festivals and ceremonies are also followed to encourage the joys in anticipating, preparing, celebrating and remembering the rhythms and moods of nature and our human connections with it.

OTHER FEATURES OF OUR STEINER PROGRAM:

- Stringed music curriculum and orchestras (from Class 3)
- Eurythmy
- Specialist Craft Program

The Steiner Craft curriculum is structured with careful consideration of the stages of development of the child, and seeks to consolidate and build on techniques and skills learnt throughout each year level. Students learn valuable skills of stitching, embroidery, knitting and weaving while developing an awareness and appreciation of handcrafted objects for both their beauty and practicality.

The curriculum fosters an artistic feeling that promotes harmonious rhythm and balance, and a sense of colour and aesthetics. Children develop a deep connection to the joy and satisfaction of making something with their own hands whilst developing their hand-eye coordination and manual dexterity. Students also develop a practical intelligence based on the will, discipline, cooperation, organisation and self-direction to complete a worthwhile task. They are encouraged to work both individually and collaboratively in a supportive, caring and respectful manner.

STEINER AND AUSVELS

Our Steiner curriculum is within a State system and must adhere to the rules, regulations and laws of State education. The class curriculum is based on the AusVELS curriculum, which can be found on ausvels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/. Teachers in the Steiner program integrate this curriculum with aspects of the national Steiner curriculum, which can be found at steinereducation.edu.au



The school follows the state accountability processes for P-6 which include literacy assessments, maths online, on demand testing and the national assessment program (NAPLAN) in classes three and five. All students are involved in these processes. Our reports follow the standard government reporting format and children's academic achievements are based on the AusVELS progression points.

STEINER AND MAINSTREAM

All children at our school wear a school uniform, and all students play together at play and lunch breaks. Steiner classes collaborate with the mainstream classes at their level to enjoy learning and socialisation activities. Foundation children also have an older buddy who looks after them throughout their first year at school, and this is accompanied by a supportive buddy program conducted by teachers in the mainstream and Steiner classes.

Along with our mainstream children, children in the Steiner stream attend swimming, interschool sports, incursions within the school, excursions and camps with the whole school or relevant age group. Teachers work together across the school and many excursions are combined with both our mainstream and Steiner classes.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

If you wish to express further interest in applying for a place in the Steiner Program at Thornbury, please complete the 'expression of interest' form on our website - thornburyps.edu.au/learning