



**Blue Mountains
Steiner School**



ENROLMENT HANDBOOK 2024

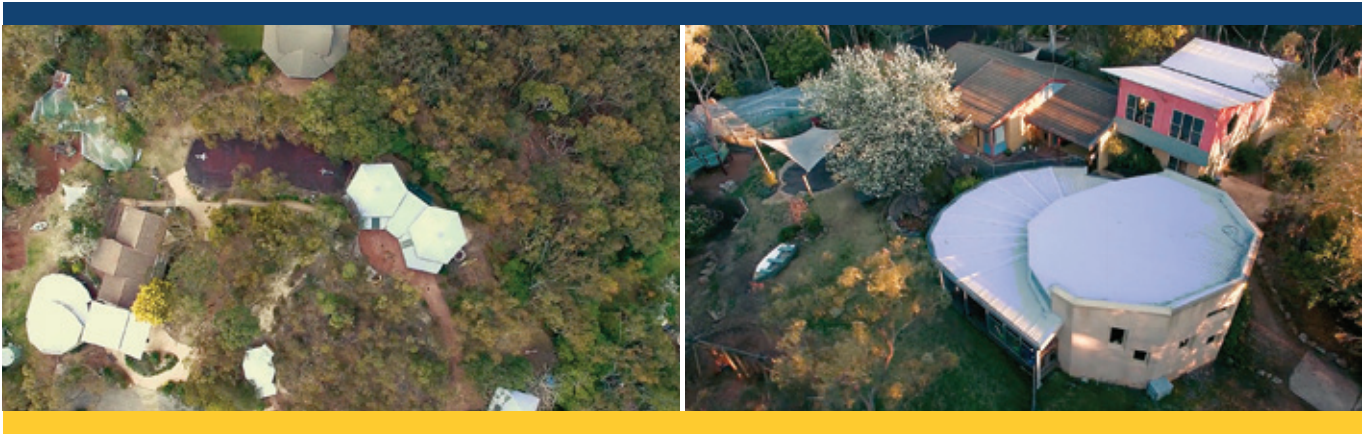
Inspiring a love of learning

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We acknowledge the Darug People, the Traditional Custodians of the Land, and Elders past and present.



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Principal’s message

Welcome to all new and prospective members of our vibrant Blue Mountains Steiner School community. As parents and teachers we will be participating together in an inspiring educational journey with our children. We invite you to explore this handbook to begin building a picture of our school and to gain an introduction to all practical aspects of our educational journey together.

At Blue Mountains Steiner School we educate the whole child according to the principles of Rudolf Steiner education. We provide a fulfilling, academic, artistic, culturally enriched and purposeful education for children aged from Playgroup to Class 6. We strive to develop the physical, emotional and intellectual capabilities of our students through an age-appropriate curriculum so our students can grow to be incredible adults.

We offer a unique, child-centred curriculum where students explore through their head, heart and hands, soaking in the world around them within a nurturing environment. This is supported by the strong relationship we build right from the start between parents, teachers and students.

The Blue Mountains Steiner School is a bush school and our amazing outdoor surroundings become our living classroom. Our school gives students a unique, creative edge in life long learning where children are supported, grounded and given the space to grow in confidence and flourish.

Thank you for your interest in joining our community and I look forward to meeting you.

Martin Buckmaster
Principal
Blue Mountains Steiner School

At Blue Mountains Steiner School we provide a fulfilling academic, artistic, culturally enriched and purposeful education for children aged from Playgroup to Class 6.



WATCH OUR VIDEOS

Learn more about our school and view our video gallery bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au/video-gallery/



Our vision and mission

Our aim is to receive our students in warmth, understand and respect them and prepare them for a bright future. We strive to assist them to develop skills necessary for a harmonious social life so their social relationships may flourish. We provide learning experiences that are informed, sequential, appropriate, whole and inspiring. In order to achieve this our approach is to work creatively to provide a balance between the thinking, feeling and will within each child. We believe that the life long learning of all members of the school is to be fostered. We recognise the importance of all staff member’s ongoing professional development and regularly refine our teaching and learning to deliver a progressive curriculum.

We welcome parents as an integral part of the school community and aim to provide opportunities for them to learn and share their skills. We strive for a working environment that is healthy, sustainable and educational, where the school’s Steiner ethos and curriculum is upheld and respected.

We recognise the importance of a good working relationship with relevant Government bodies. We aim to ensure that our students are provided with best teaching practice and high educational standards to meet and exceed the Board of Studies requirements.

The school’s executive team, comprising of the Principal and the School Council, aim to work co-operatively to ensure that the school is a well managed educational organisation where leadership is highly respected and serves the school pedagogically, financially and spiritually.

We are a member school of *Steiner Education Australia* and teach according to the *Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework*. We meet and exceed the standards required by all NSW and Federal educational regulatory bodies.

Our aim is to receive our students in warmth, understand and respect them and prepare them for a bright future.

ABOUT RUDOLF STEINER
“Our highest endeavour must be to develop free individuals who are able, out of their own initiative, to impart purpose and direction to their lives”.

Rudolf Steiner was an Austrian philosopher and social reformer who founded the first free Waldorf School in Stuttgart, Germany. He designed a curriculum to meet the developmental stages of childhood and to encourage the imagination and creative thinking.

Steiner schooling strives to support the development of well-rounded human beings who are able to feel deeply and broadly, to think penetratingly and clearly, and to act rightly out of conscious free choice.



Educators with a difference

OUR TEACHING STAFF

Our educators are dedicated to creating a genuine love of learning and respect each developmental stage of childhood when shaping lessons, planning activities, and creating the classroom climate and environment.

By teaching thematically and creatively, the academic subjects are enriched and enlivened in a way that meets the developmental stages of the children, offering both sensory and intellectual nourishment. Our teachers develop strong relationships with children and parents, and focus on developing positive emotional and social wellbeing within the child and class community. There is a strong emphasis on relational learning and close cooperation amongst the teachers in the provision of care to individual children.

At Blue Mountains Steiner School our educators understand the implications of the stages of development and have a deep commitment to supporting each child's journey in our small school setting. Daily rhythms are set in place so that the individual spirit of each child is nurtured on the educational journey, beginning in the early childhood sphere and continuing through the primary school years where our academic, artistic and purposeful education unfolds.

CLASS SIZE AND STAGE MODEL

At Blue Mountains Steiner School each teacher stays with their class group for two years. Students complete Stage One (Classes 1 and 2) with the same teacher, and then move up to Stage Two (Classes 3 and 4) and remain with that teacher until they enter Stage Three (Classes 5 and 6).

Teachers are specifically appointed to each stage according to areas of expertise and specialisation. We endeavour to provide low student to educator ratios, especially in the early years, to allow for increased individualised attention for each student.

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The Main Lesson

The Main Lesson is a key feature of our education and is taught in the first two hours of each day. Each main lesson is a unit of work on a particular theme or subject and is studied each day for three to four weeks. Each Main Lesson relates to the students stage of development and is linked to other subjects, building upon prior knowledge, experience and skills in creative ways. We teach thematically across the curriculum. The Main Lesson is a sustained and integrated teaching method that allows each subject to be studied thoroughly and brought to life for each child. Students are taught in an engaging and stimulating way which awakens curiosity, excitement and a desire to know more.

MORNING CIRCLE

Our day begins with Morning Circle where the children are welcomed into the classroom, and have an active learning experiences including singing, playing the recorder and joining in with rhythmic circle games which are ideal for numeracy and literacy development. The Morning circle brings the class together as a group, promoting strong social relationships.

The Morning Circle is followed by a teacher created story, linking that days' concept to the child's experience. The topics are approached through a variety of means including; stories, artistic activities, a practical group project, or working on Main Lesson books.

Our education encompasses a deep knowledge approach, using balanced and integrated learning strategies. Strong emphasis is placed on active learning and on teaching through the arts to enliven all subjects.

The Main Lesson is a sustained and integrated teaching method that allows each subject to be studied thoroughly and brought to life for each child. Students are taught in an engaging and stimulating way which awakens curiosity, excitement and a desire to know more.



Wattle Glow Early Learning

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Our preschool program is play-based, working in harmony with the National Early Learning Years Framework. Experiences are offered to the child that foster creativity; a love of learning; a sense of wonder; care of the environment; care of ourselves and each other.

Experienced educators provide guidance and help nurture the child in an atmosphere of care, compassion and kindness.

The rhythm of the preschool day is thoughtfully created to allow a healthy flow from free play to group activities and structured learning experiences. This rhythmic structure provides a flow to the child’s day and helps to foster consistency and security.

Steiner early childhood activities include; free play with natural materials, emergent learning experiences and assisted projects, circle games and movement, singing and music, cooking, gardening, care of animals, stories, art and crafts.

Wattle Glow Early Learning is licensed as centre based care with both extended hours care and pre-kindy programs operating Monday–Friday, 48 weeks a year, 7:30am–5pm.

Our Early Learning programs provide a bridge between home and school. It offers young children a gentle and caring introduction to early years learning.

BUSH PRESCHOOL

Our unique and innovative Bush Preschool program was developed to benefit childrens health, wellbeing and development through outdoor experiences in our stunning natural environment that surrounds our school.

Contact the School Office to receive your Bush Preschool flyer on 02 4758 6044 or wattleglow@bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au



Kindergarten

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The kindergarten year is characterised by children learning through imitation and their own creative experiences. Imagination and a sense of wonder are developed through stories, songs, creative play, and interactions with nature in our bush kindergarten.

Our Kindergarten environment is a warm, and nurturing place. It is filled with natural play materials and inviting outdoors spaces. Our kindergarten children learn through play and structured activities to cook, paint, garden, sew, share and problem solve.

Children explore their environment together, learning important cooperation skills and are supported by our educators to develop increased social and emotional wellbeing and positive self-esteem. In the kindergarten year foundation pre-numeracy and pre-literacy skills are grounded through rich oral and practical learning experiences.

The children experience the richness of language through, songs, verses, stories, sign language and an introduction to the Japanese language. Pre-literacy skills are developed through cultivating the child’s oral memory, opening up pathways in the brain through combining verse, movement and gesture. We use artistic endeavours to build imagination and rich and vivid picture images that will later translate into conceptual thinking. It is the foundation for a deep understanding of literacy.

Numeracy is a living experience for the children. How many children are at school today? How many chairs or placemats or bowls do we need? Can someone count the children? Verses and finger plays involve daily practice. Bread baking is a wonderful time to play with the four mathematical processes in a practical way (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division). We learn to count in ‘2’s during our practical experiences’ – 28 steps coming up from the oval on our bush walks.

Hand work, such as craft, painting and modelling strengthen the hand and fingers and encourage co-ordination. So when the time comes to write and begin to read the written word the children feel confident, hungry and able.

Our kindergarten is a natural, nurturing and creative environment that provides imaginative play-based learning to stimulate active minds.

BUSH KINDY

On Fridays our Kindergarten class participates in our Bush Kindy program to encourage children to undertake play within the amazing bush setting surrounding our school. The children are supported and encouraged to step outside their comfort zone to develop and foster self-esteem, team building and resilience.

KINDERGARTEN TEACHER



Francine O’Dea
Francine is passionate and dedicated about the benefits of a Steiner education and has inspired our Kindergarten students for 15 wonderful years.



Stage One: Class 1 & 2

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Stage One lesson content is delivered thematically and linked with an aspect of the creative arts and includes; story telling, creative writing, visual arts, music, drama and movement. This creates a living link between lesson content and the emotional life of the child and develops the capacity to appreciate beauty in the world. The academic, artistic, and social aspects are treated as complementary facets of a single program of learning, allowing each to inform the others.

The child first learns pre-literacy skills; developing oral language, phonological and phonemic awareness as well as knowledge of the alphabet. Self-regulation and development of working memory and sequential processing are supported through active story recall.

The child first learns to write using the shape of the letters to suggest meaning; M for mountain, V for valley. In addition, they may walk the shape on the floor and draw pictures that include that shape. The children write words and read from their own writing before working with printed literature. The children are nourished with quality literature and the rich heritage of wise folk tales, histories, legends, myths, dreamtime stories and biographies and through these build an understanding of human civilisation and cultural history.

An understanding of numbers is built on the basis of concrete, real-life tasks, by counting aloud, chanting of number patterns, musical rhythms and skipping games. As the children grow, learning becomes more academic although retaining the practical focus; dividing fruit to share when learning about division, measuring building materials to build a cubby when learning about units of measurement and other concrete materials to support mathematical understanding.

The main lesson flows through all aspects of the day, allowing for integration on many levels. This uninterrupted flow becomes an array of learning discoveries.

In Stage One imagination is an important gift to develop within the child. Imagination helps form the brain in such a way that it becomes flexible, questioning and observant, allowing us to see opportunities throughout our lives.



STAGE ONE CURRICULUM

Literacy

- ✓ Letters: writing from drawing
- ✓ Sight words
- ✓ Phonics
- ✓ Class 1: first readers
- ✓ Written texts from stories
- ✓ Words/ sentences: reading from writing
- ✓ Children create imaginative, informative and persuasive spoken texts
- ✓ Text structure, grammar, word usage
- ✓ Students write imaginative texts by planning, proofreading and editing their own writing using NSW Foundation Style

Numeracy

- ✓ Count, order, read and write two and three digit numbers
- ✓ The four operations (addition, subtraction, division, multiplication)
- ✓ Identifying the date, order of the months and the seasons of the year
- ✓ Reading analogue time on the half hour and quarter hour
- ✓ Counting odds and evens
- ✓ Times tables, initially through oral songs
- ✓ Number patterns and model objects divided into halves, quarters and eighths
- ✓ Estimate and measure using informal units for length, area, volume, capacity and mass
- ✓ Place value: units, tens, hundreds

Outdoor education

- ✓ Bushwalking
- ✓ Investigating indigenous perspectives and how to participate in caring for the natural places near our school
- ✓ Fitness classes (for example, a gymnastics course)
- ✓ Class 1 & 2 overnight camp on school grounds (parents invited)
- ✓ Katoomba community gardens visit
- ✓ Class 2 Yellomundee excursion

Wellbeing

Children are supported to grow into confident individuals with a strong sense of self worth and self-awareness and are taught skills to enable them to better understand their emotional wellbeing.

Enrichment programs

- ✓ Japanese language
- ✓ Science
- ✓ Craft: knitting, weaving, sewing
- ✓ Painting
- ✓ Drawing
- ✓ Games
- ✓ Eurythmy
- ✓ Form Drawing
- ✓ Music: singing / recorder in Class 2
- ✓ Drama

STAGE ONE TEACHERS

Soumya Tekkatte

Isabelle Bruderlin

Amy Brownlee



Stage Two: Class 3 & 4

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

As children approach their ninth year they pass through an inward development. They begin to lose their feeling of union with the all-embracing world of nature and become more independent and objective. Often they become critical and sympathies and antipathies become more conscious.

In these years children are more aware of their surroundings and their place in them. Stage Two lesson content is delivered with a practical approach as we study the human being in relation to the environment and includes main lessons on farming, house building, measurement, local geography, living history and the world of nature.

Stage Two children understand the need for rules and laws within our society through the historical context of studying ancient cultures and how rules and authority were first established within communities.

In Class 4 the children experience The Norse Creation Myths. The Norse tales tell of the withdrawing of powerful protective forces and the taking over of leadership by heroes whose outstanding quality is courage. A leading theme in these stories is that all progress is attained at some cost. A wide range of poetry is recited to reflect the dramatic Norse mood. Action poems satisfy the childrens growing need to express themselves vigorously. Children become eager to compose their own descriptive stories.

Stage Two children participate in our extensive musical program including joining the school orchestra, and learning to play the violin and recorder.

In Stage Two children are lead gradually from their imaginative world into the world of practical life.



Stage Two curriculum

Literacy

- ✓ Parts of speech, sentence building, punctuation, story-writing, letter-writing, tenses
- ✓ Australian Aboriginal Stories
- ✓ Expressive communicaton and participation in discussions of the great themes of humanity including creation myths, and cultural traditions
- ✓ Independent response to more challenging texts and the justification of ideas, information and events using a range of skills and strategies to evaluate and interpret a point of view
- ✓ Creating well-structured informative and imaginative texts using complex sentences, and correct punctuation and grammar
- ✓ Cursive writing

Numeracy

- ✓ Count, order, read and record numbers of up to five digits
- ✓ Solve addition and subtraction problems using a variety of strategies
- ✓ Long Multiplication & Division
- ✓ Perform simple calculations with money
- ✓ Represent commonly used fractions
- ✓ Participate in practical activities to measure length, area, volume, capacity and mass using formal units
- ✓ Read analogue time in hours and minutes
- ✓ Sketch and name two and three dimensional shapes
- ✓ Classify angles according to size

Outdoor Education

- Children participate increasingly in a range of outdoor learning experiences including:
- ✓ Living history and geography excursions
 - ✓ Orienteering
 - ✓ Bushwalks
 - ✓ Overnight camps
 - ✓ Investigating multicultural perspectives
 - ✓ Participation in practical farming and building activities

Wellbeing

Children are encouraged to express individual points of view during our circle time to assist in supporting the healthy social and emotional growth of the class group as a whole and to develop key skills in problem solving and conflict resolution.

Enrichment programs

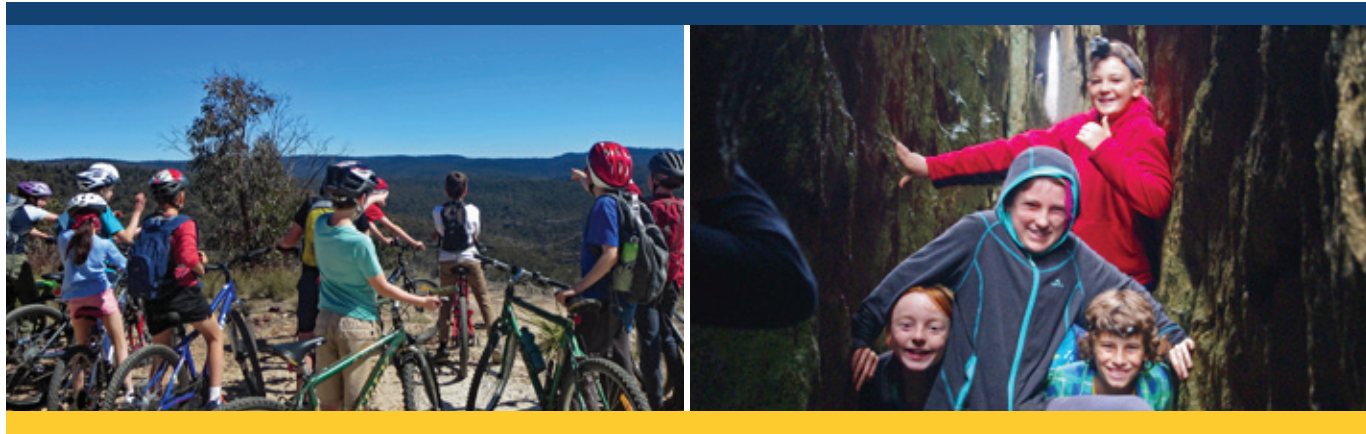
- ✓ Japanese language
- ✓ Science
- ✓ Craft: knitting, weaving, woodwork, sewing
- ✓ Painting
- ✓ Drawing
- ✓ Games
- ✓ Eurythmy
- ✓ Form Drawing
- ✓ Music: joining the school orchestra and learning to play the violin and recorder
- ✓ Drama
- ✓ Comparative Zoology (humans and their relationship to animals)

STAGE TWO TEACHER



Julie Humphreys

Julie is a passionate advocate for encouraging children to grow true inner self-confidence, as well as a sense of empathy and responsibility within our communities.



Stage Three: Class 5 & 6

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Our rich and immersive main lessons for Class 5 & 6 include: Ancient India, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome and China, Botany, Geology, Physics (Heat and Light, Sound, Electro-Magnetics), Astronomy, World Geography, Financial Literacy, Euclidian Geometry, Civics and Citizenship, Indigenous Australia.

Class 5 is often referred to as the golden age of childhood, as the children are becoming more self assured and capable, with one foot still in childhood and the other leading into the adult world. Class 5 children participate in an inter-school Greek Olympics, in addition to the outdoor education program.

Class 6 children have a strong orientation towards the outside world and their place in it. Their time at primary school is coming to an end, and their interests are turning outwards. Class 6 children participate in inter-school debating, inter-team sports and a School Leadership Program.

TRANSITION TO HIGH SCHOOL

To prepare children for their time at high school there is a growing emphasis on undertaking individual research and self directed tasks, and formal teaching of digital technologies. Children make regular presentations to their peers on main lesson related topics.

Steiner education builds capacities, keeps the mind and imagination fresh, and awakens life interests. The children take these qualities with them into future educational settings and are perceived as self-motivated and engaged students.

In Stage Three children are immersed in the history of our world, human evolution and the great cultures of the ancient world.



STAGE THREE CURRICULUM

Literacy

- ✓ Work productively and independently to express well-developed and well-organised ideas about texts and to evaluate ideas and opinions
- ✓ Independently read an extensive range of complex texts and respond to themes and issues within texts and justify interpretations referring to their own knowledge, values, and experiences
- ✓ Develop a fluent writing style to create well-written texts dealing with complex topics and issues
- ✓ Ancient history: India, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, China

Numeracy

- ✓ Select and apply mental or written strategies for the four operations and solve word problems and apply the order of operations to number sentences
- ✓ Identify factors and multiples and recognise the properties of prime, composite, square and triangular numbers
- ✓ Perform calculations with simple fractions, decimals and percentages
- ✓ Financial literacy and application of the four operations to money
- ✓ Construct complex geometric patterns and measure and construct angles
- ✓ Algebra

Outdoor education

Our Stage 3 outdoor experiences contribute significantly to our peer relations and are fundamental to the BMSS educational experience. Leadership skills are integrated into our outdoor education program with a particular focus on self-management and team support strategies. Outdoor experiences include:

- ✓ Exploring the Blue Mountains World Heritage National Park through canyoning, canoeing, bushwalking, adventure caving and camping
- ✓ Exploring the coastal environments through beach camping, snorkelling, coastal geological walks and surfing

Wellbeing

Our Stage Three children are supported to grow into confident individuals by participating in our challenging leadership and outdoor education program.

Enrichment programs

- ✓ Japanese language
- ✓ Botany
- ✓ Geology
- ✓ Physics (Heat and Light, Sound, Electro- Magnetics)
- ✓ Astronomy
- ✓ World Geography
- ✓ Civics and Citizenship
- ✓ Indigenous Australia
- ✓ Music: singing / school orchestra

STAGE THREE TEACHER

Elizabeth Williams



Enrichment Programs

SCHOOL ORCHESTRA

All of students from Class 3 & 4 and Class 5 & 6 participate in the school orchestra. From Class 3 all students learn a stringed instrument.

Music is an essential element of the curriculum offered in Steiner education. Music deeply nurtures the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual aspects of the growing child. It enriches the learning process of each individual, enlivens the family home, enhances the atmosphere of the classroom and draws together the whole school community. Acquiring the skills and tools for artistic expression offers an opportunity to explore and experience the highest qualities of what it is to be human. Music is interwoven into the daily flow of each class. Choir is optional from Class 3.

ITALIAN LANGUAGE

At Blue Mountains Steiner School, Italian is our chosen language. Italian is a phonetic language and is closely related to English, making many meanings easy to understand. Pronunciation is predictable, and new words can be pronounced easily using our own alphabet. Our weekly language program is for Classes K-6 and beyond speaking in Italian the children are provided with an immersion into the Italian culture through singing, stories, cooking and studies of special Festivals, seasons and days.

FESTIVALS

Festivals bring our school community together in a shared purpose. We celebrate each of the seasons at our quarterly festivals, held towards the end of each term. The festivals aim to awaken the child's natural reverence for the wonder and beauty of life as well as establishing inner pictures of the seasonal changes throughout the year.

We celebrate Christmas and Easter, as well as other cultural festivals throughout the year, which are relevant to main lesson themes such as, Diwali the Indian Festival of Lights or Hanukah the Hebrew Festival of Lights. The festivals throughout the year provide the opportunity for participation by the whole school community. There is joy in the preparation, the anticipation and in the celebration itself. The activities, songs and rhymes used in class also

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relate to the seasonal themes. Festivals at our school are part of the annual tradition and are looked forward to by the children and parents every year.

The Steiner curriculum is non-denominational and respects the individual beliefs of families. Students from any cultural or religious background are welcomed.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION, CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS

Our program begins in Kindergarten with challenges increasing each year, building from previous learning experiences. When the child reaches Stage Three the program becomes more challenging, with longer trips connected to the curriculum content, and with learning experiences specifically designed to assist in developing resilience, and improving problem solving and leadership skills. The Stage Three outdoor education experiences prepare the students for the transition to high school. The benefits of the program include improved self-awareness, better understanding of others, increased insight and independence, expansion of life experience, and assisting with developing the ability to problem solve and innovate.

Our program emphasises the importance of our connection with nature, as the children experience hands on, experiential learning and accrue practical knowledge. Our World Heritage backyard is the ideal environment to teach our sequentially designed and developmentally aligned Outdoor Education program.

The Outdoor Education program at BMSS is interdisciplinary and aims to assist students experience the many interrelationships in the natural world. Our program examines ecological, sociological and cultural concepts to assist the children to make informed choices relating to experiencing and caring for the natural world. Outdoor Education is 'about', 'for' and 'in' the out-of-doors and is a continual holistic educational experience.

Through outdoor education, students grow into their own capabilities and gain a sense of themselves in relation to their community. They are able to experience and reflect on their personal strengths, build resilience and experience improved emotional health and wellbeing.

The benefits of our Outdoor Education program include improved self-awareness, better understanding of others, increased insight and independence, expansion of life experience, and assisting with developing the ability to problem solve and innovate.

Enrichment Programs cont.

PHYSICAL FITNESS

Children participate in at least 5 hours of physical activity each week. As well as an organised program of skills, games and sport, we have extensive grounds that offer space for ball games, a bush playground, along with sandpits and play equipment, within the natural environment. Our ballcourt is used for sports such as basketball, soccer and cricket. Skipping, hopscotch, handball and other traditional games are actively encouraged.

The class teacher leads games in classes 1 & 2 which includes circle time and games and sport. Class 3 upwards are specifically taught skills to play a wide range of team and individual sports.

In Class 5 we participate in the ‘Greek Olympics’ in the Brindabellas along with many other Steiner school.

HEALTH: HEAD, HEART AND HANDS

In order to develop the potential of each student, our school aims to provide as broad an education as possible. Our teachers aim to nurture and develop for their future health, the physical, soul and spiritual capacities of each child through the daily educational experience. Our students experience daily connection to adventure in nature, secure and long term relationships, grow and cook healthy food, and have daily intentional, imaginative movement and activities embedded in their curriculum.

We aim to create a culture of adventure, creative activity, contribution to community and gratitude for the gifts of the earth.

DRAMA, ARTS AND CRAFT

Drama is part of the curriculum from kindergarten through to Class 6. From watching simple puppet plays in Kindergarten to Shakespeare’s ‘Julius Caesar’ in Class 6. It is both integrated in classroom life and brought to life through plays and festivals throughout the school year.

The drama program works in context with the Main Lesson program, and the yearly class play is a highlight in the school year. Craft including; knitting, sewing, clay-work, crochet and woodwork, is an integral part of the curriculum.

Teaching handcrafts is seen as a way of engaging children in the current topic and also assists in the early years with developing fine motor skills, hand eye coordination and spatial skills.

Enriching learning through individual and group craft projects promotes multiple skills and abilities and nurtures the development of cognitive, social and personal competencies. For example, in a Class 4 history main lesson the children may learn Nordic dancing, construct a Nordic ship and make and paint a shield. In every classroom, children design and make useful objects using natural materials, and this provides a foundation for innovation and practical activity in later life. Creating practical and useful objects can

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have the effect of stimulating the will, encouraging the child to develop the intrinsic motivation and self-regulation to complete a project.

Our craft program uses quality natural materials in the making of a wide variety of beautiful and useful things. Our students know the satisfaction of developing a growing base of traditional skills, and appreciate the opportunity to express individuality and creativity. Benefits flow through to the academic sphere; these include improved design and technology skills, and beautiful handwriting.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

History and geography are woven into daily life at a Steiner school. Through Main Lesson content the studies from Classes 1-6 cover local geography and history. The children start making maps of their classroom that extends to the school and in Class 6 the students work on a project with National Parks to make a map of the Blue Mountains tourist bushwalk to be used by tourists visiting the Greater Blue Mountains National Park.

History meets with geography, numeracy, science, literacy, music and the arts to bring each subject alive. From class 1-6 epochs covered include: Aboriginal dreamtime, Australian History, Norse Mythology, Ancient India, Mesopotamia, Persia, Egypt, Greece and Rome.

The study of each region begins with its geography and includes its mythology and literature.

INDIGENOUS STUDIES

It is upon the ancestral lands of the Dharug people that the Blue Mountains Steiner School is built.

“Today we stand in footsteps millennia old. May we acknowledge the traditional owners whose cultures and customs have nurtured, and continue to nurture, this land, since men and women awoke from the great dream. We honour the presence of these ancestors who reside in the imagination of this land and whose irrepressible spirituality flows through all creation.”
– Jonathan Hill

Our school has regular Indigenous Culture days where representatives from the local indigenous community are invited to attend and collaborate with the community to present performances and workshops. Lessons relating to indigenous culture are taught across all stages and we host regular workshops and conduct bushwalks where we explore aspects of our rich indigenous culture in the local area.

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Enrichment Programs cont.

STUDENT WELFARE

The cornerstone of the Blue Mountains Steiner School learning community is the promotion of health and well-being in the context of positive, respectful and meaningful relationships. It is the school's endeavour to be very mindful of the social and emotional competence of our students and to make this fundament to all of the schools pedagogical practices and programs. The incorporation of general well-being as a whole school endeavour augments benefit to our students in the realms of resilience, academic quality, general health and social capital. Student welfare is integrated into the entire life of the school as a collaborative community process.

In essence the Blue Mountains Steiner School aims to gently meet the child, explore the potential of the child's abilities, encourage personal problem solving, develop and enhance relationships and monitor the personal growth of every child in the cognitive, affective and kinaesthetic domains of learning. The Blue Mountains Steiner School offers an environment which is safe, supportive and caring and embraces inclusivity.

It is the intention of the Blue Mountains Education experience to promote and support a deep understanding of self, to build confidence and self-efficacy, offer opportunities for healthy risk taking, develop the capacity to make informed decisions, learn skills to contribute effectively in citizenship, develop the ability to set goals, practice negotiation and communication, participate in reflection, enhance the capacity for empowerment and connectedness.

Students participate in Peer Support Programs, Restorative Practice Work, Circles and Discussions, Self-esteem and confidence building in the natural environment, Adventure and Wilderness Education, Mindfulness training, Living History and Positive Education programs.

We strive to work together in close partnership with students and families to ensure the best outcomes for the students.

The incorporation of general well-being as a whole school endeavour augments benefit to our students in the realms of resilience, academic quality, general health and social capital.

SCIENCE

From classes 1-3 science, while not treated as a separate subject, is woven into the curriculum. In these years, teachers focus on the natural environment the children experience every day. First through stories, and then through daily discussion of the weather, close observation of animals, and the study of farming and gardening, the child's sense of belonging in nature and a reverent responsibility toward the natural world are nurtured. Before a child's ninth year, the teaching of science would be of little significance inasmuch as the child has not yet developed objectivity. Only when she or he begins to separate from the world does this ability emerge. Thus, the first block in natural science is taught in the fourth grade. The science curriculum begins with the animal kingdom and moves to the study of plant life and the earth itself in class 5 & 6. Laboratory sciences are not introduced until class 6, when the child is able to grasp causal relationships. In the upper elementary grades, the emphasis remains holistic and experiential, and avoids a reductionist or analytical approach.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Formal lessons instructing in the use, processes, and information systems relating to digital technologies properly commence in early Stage Three (Classes 5 & 6). Steiner primary education is a human centred and integrated experience involving 'head, heart and hands' in a natural environment where children develop a love of learning through use of the imagination, and creative thinking. There is a large focus on interpersonal and intrapersonal learning. The children are supported to become ecologically and environmentally receptive, and to build a sensitive, ethical and holistic understanding of the world around them. In Stage 3, the children become adept at using Word, PowerPoint, setting up templates, graphics and researching.

Children engage with formal learning in the areas of Information and Communication Technology from Class 5 onwards, to assist in developing the knowledge, skills and understanding to live and work in the 21st century.

For classes 1-3 science is woven into the curriculum. From class 4 the science curriculum begins with the animal kingdom and moves to the study of plant life and the earth itself in class 5 & 6.

Formal lessons instructing in the use, processes, and information systems relating to digital technologies properly commence in early Stage Three (Classes 5 & 6)



Enrolment

HOW TO ENROL

We encourage a visit to our school, followed by an interview with your class teacher, prior to enrolment. Please contact the school office to arrange a school tour, class teacher interview, or to attend one of our Open Days.

Please complete the Blue Mountains Steiner School enrolment form and return it to the school office in person or by email at admin@bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au. All applications will be processed in order of receipt, and consideration will be given to the applicants. Once enrolled, students are expected to support the school's ethos and comply with the school rules to maintain the enrolment.

There is an enrolment application fee of \$75 at the time of lodging an application.

Interviews for places in kindergarten are held in August/September for enrolments in the following year.

If the child's enrolment application is successful, the parents/caregivers will be notified in writing and, at that point, the parents/caregivers are required to pay the non-refundable enrolment fee of \$400 (this fee is per family who have children concurrently enrolled).

ENROLMENT ACTION PLAN

- ✓ Contact the school office to arrange a school tour
- ✓ Arrange a meeting through the school office with the class teacher
- ✓ Complete the Enrolment form and return it to the school office in person or via email
- ✓ Pay the enrolment application fee

Contact the school office to arrange a personalised school tour, an interview with your class teacher or to submit your enrolment form or application fee on on 02 4758 6044 or admin@bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au

School office support



Karen Perry

Karen runs our school office and will often be the first person you meet at our school. Along with her administration duties, Karen can be found in the sick bay, arranging the school marketing, and photographing our school events. She finds great joy watching the children grow over the years, especially when they come back to visit after they have graduated from Class 6.

School fee policy overview

- 1 Fees per term are payable in advance from the first week of term and must be paid within 14 days unless a prior arrangements in writing have been made with the Financial Manager.
- 2 Fees for a new student starting at the school after the term has commenced will be charged only for the term weeks s/he attends.
- 3 Full fees for a term are payable even when a child is absent from school during that term.
- 4 Four weeks' notice during term in writing is required for a student's withdrawal from the school. Failure to give the required notice will attract a week's fees for each week of notice not given. These fees are in addition to the term's fees. The term's fees are to be payed in full even if a student does not remain at the school for the entire term. Upon departure from the school all outstanding fees will be referred to a Debt Collection Agent.
- 5 The school reserves the right to not allow a child back to school in one term if the child's account is in arrears from the previous term.
- 6 Fee Relief is available to families who have been enrolled in the school for more than one year and all previous fees have been paid up to date. Fee relief is designed for families who experience unexpected financial hardship. Applications for fee relief are to be made in advance and not after a term's fees have gone unpaid. Applications for fee relief are to be lodged in May and November. Forms are available in the office. A small amount is set-aside in the budget for fee relief. Fee relief is graded on a sliding scale and is short term only. The fee committee will assess each application on its merits. Not all applications will be successful. Fee relief is granted for two terms at a time. Where fee relief is granted, failure to pay all outstanding monies by the end of term may result in the fee relief for that term being revoked.

FINANCE

ENROLMENT FEES FOR 2024

Wattle Glow Early Learning

Extended hour preschool hours are 7.30am – 5pm. The discounts for more than one child do not apply to preschool students.

Kindergarten to Class 6

These fees include some local excursions, most books and materials. Specific items like recorders and compasses may be charged separately. The same applies to class camps and some excursions. Fees are set at a rate that meet the cost of running the school.

EXTENDED HOUR PRESCHOOL FEES

- \$120* 2 yrs
- \$105* 3 yrs
- \$100* 4-6 yrs

* Extended Hour Preschool is a child care benefit approved child care service. Families will receive child care fee subsidy of Childcare Benefit (CCB) and Childcare Rebate (CCR) from the Australian government.

TERM FEES: KINDERGARTEN TO CLASS 6

(includes incursions/excursions \$10 or less)

	Term fee	Building Fund per term	Total per term
Kindergarten Fees	\$1,520	\$40	\$1,560
Classes 1-6 Fees			
1st child	\$2,237	\$40	\$2,277
2nd child	\$1,678	\$40	\$1,718
3rd child	\$1,118.50	\$40	\$1,158.50
4th child	Free		

2024 TERM DATES

- Term 1 Wednesday 31 January - Wednesday 10 April
- Term 2 Wednesday 1 May - Wednesday 3 July
- Term 3 Wednesday 24 July - Wednesday 25 September
- Term 4 Wednesday 16 October - Wednesday 11 December

Enrolment cont.

SCHOOL HOURS

9am to 3pm	Monday to Thursday
9am to 1pm	Friday (Kindergarten – parents have the option of their child staying until 3pm)
9am to 3pm	Friday (Classes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
7.30am to 5pm	Wattle Glow Early Learning

Kindergarten children are to be picked up from the Kindergarten playground, children from the other classes can be picked up from their classrooms or the circular driveway at the top of the school. The internal road from Kindergarten to the circular driveway is one-way.

OFFICE HOURS

Our school office hours are 8.30am to 4pm, Monday to Friday during the school term.

CLOTHING POLICY

The school has no set uniform however the Parent Association sells brightly coloured T-shirts with the school emblem on them. Alternately appropriate clothing should be plain, simple and colourful. Inappropriate clothing would include black garments and clothing showing slogans, advertising or commercial images. No Spiderman, Bob the Builder, Barbie etc. (the same applies for school bags and lunch boxes). No singlets straps or ¾ tops and no thongs to be worn to school. Garments should fit well for aesthetic, warmth and safety reasons and should be made of natural fibres where possible. Jewellery such as earrings etc are not allowed for safety reasons. All students must wear a hat at all times during outside play. The Parent Association also sell hand-dyed school hats.

INSIDE SHOES

Students wear plain simple, soft inside shoes in the classroom. These shoes are much like slippers.

FOOD POLICY

Students eat their meals inside their classrooms with their teacher before play time.

RECOMMENDED FOOD

Morning tea: Fruit, cheese, vegetable sticks or similar healthy snacks – no packaged food eg chips.
Lunch: Wholesome sandwiches, rolls, salads, fruit or other similar healthy food.
Lollies and peanut products are not permitted at school. Our school is a peanut free environment.
Traditionally children bring a healthy birthday cake to school for sharing with their class on their birthday.

CLASS FUNDRAISING

Often class groups will take turns to sell and serve meals to raise money for class camps. Food needed for these stalls will be determined by the class teacher.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

All materials used by the students (crayons, pencils, crayon bags, pencil cases, recorder bags, paints, craft materials), are supplied by the school or made by the children themselves. Where specialty items are required each class teacher will arrange a group purchase to ensure materials are of the same quality. Should materials not be cared for, not looked after, lost or damaged, the Family may be asked to replace these goods.

TOYS

Toys from home are discouraged. This helps the children to identify with the differing relationships to home life and school life.

TELEVISION, VIDEO AND COMPUTER GAMES

Teachers cannot emphasise strongly enough that television, video and computer games are damaging to children (especially young children) and inhibit the healthy development of concentration, imagination and general work habits. Television before school should be especially avoided if not discouraged altogether.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Queries can be brought to the Educational Coordinator for clarification.

Parent/Teacher meetings are held at least twice a year for each class. At these meetings class curriculum matters are discussed and parents participate in the artistic activities that the children are involved in. Individual interviews are arranged during Term 2 or 3, Teachers are open to make home visits where desired. Reports are provided for primary students at the end of Term 2 and 4.

Family and friends are welcome to attend school festivals. We ask that no filming and or photography is used (except where prior permission is granted where deemed appropriate). Festivals are an experience for the children they are not a performance.

Parents/Carers wishing to show visitors around the school are welcome to do so, please contact the Office for a suitable time. Visitors to the school are required to sign “in and out” at the office.

Parents/Carers and extended family and friends are welcome to take part in “Open Main Lesson” (Classroom observation) please contact the office to make a booking.

Parents/Carers are invited to join one of the many and varied Parent Committee’s; this is a wonderful opportunity to meet other parents and nurture the school community.

Parents/Carers are often involved in various classroom assistance activities; offering support to the class and Teacher. This is a wonderful opportunity to share in a child’s learning experience. The class Teacher will identify support areas and work in conjunction with the Class Representative to coordinate a Help Roster for those who enjoying assisting.

Parents/Carers who have a child enrolled in the school are eligible to become members of The Blue Mountains Steiner School Limited. Membership is required to vote at the Annual General Meeting held in Term One each year. To stand for election to Council (the Board of Directors) it is recommended that parents be a member of the school community for at least 3 years.

All staff working with children at our school must agree to have a “Working with Children Police Check” prior to employment. All volunteers must sign a “Prohibited Employment Declaration” by law.

SCHOOL POLICIES

- Copies of the following policies can be obtained from the office**
- ✓ Assessment Strategies
 - ✓ Grievance Procedure for Students
 - ✓ Accident Policy
 - ✓ Clothing Policy
 - ✓ Administration of Prescribed Medicines Policy
 - ✓ Confidentiality Policy
 - ✓ Anti-Racism Policy
 - ✓ Enrolment Policy and Procedure
 - ✓ Behaviour Management Policy
 - ✓ OH & S Policy
 - ✓ Child Protection Policy
 - ✓ Fire Drill Procedures
 - ✓ Child Attendance Policy
 - ✓ Gifted and Talented Policy
 - ✓ Food Policy
 - ✓ Sun Protection Policy
 - ✓ Grievance Procedure for Parents
 - ✓ Violent or Aggressive Behaviour Policy



Blue Mountains Steiner School

bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au

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Email: admin@bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au

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Hazelbrook, NSW, 2779