



TALLOWOOD STEINER
SCHOOL
ANNUAL REPORT
2025

At Tallowood Steiner School we acknowledge the Gumbaynggirr people as the Traditional Custodians of this land. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and we honour the deep and continuing connection Gumbaynggirr people maintain with Country.

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1. A message from key school bodies

Chair Report

“Without patience no genuine results can be attained.” Rudolf Steiner.

Overall, 2025 has been another strong and positive year for Tallowood. The Board continues to benefit from a stable and committed executive team, along with dedicated teaching and administrative staff. We are also pleased to see steady growth in student enrolments.

This year, we welcomed Hedda Malde as a new Board member. Our small but effective team works collaboratively to ensure the school’s financial sustainability and strong governance.

We made some small adjustments within the executive team. Our Business Manager, Lyn is now mostly working remotely, allowing her to focus more specifically on the Strategic Plan and the building project.

The Board has great confidence in both Bec and Lyn to lead and guide the school in alignment with our community’s vision. Lyn did an outstanding job in securing high levels of BGA funding and maintaining the school’s strong financial position.

“Without patience no genuine results can be attained” – With this sentence from Steiner’s works “Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment”, We’ve continued to slowly drive the Strategic Plan forward. The board members all agree that this patience in growing our school will create great sustainable results in the years to come.

The school continues its journey toward single-stream classes. Thanks to Bec’s outstanding work on the NESAs application, we are excited to have commenced our Middle School, offering a Year 7/8 class from the beginning of 2026.

Looking ahead, we continue to actively seek new Board members—particularly Association members with expertise in building, architecture, or related fields. Such experience will be invaluable as we support the school’s next phase of development.

2025 has been a year marked by stability, with consistent school fees, the successful integration of new staff, and with Bec being a steady steward at the roots of our Tallowood tree, nurturing thoughtful leadership and direction for our growing school.

At the heart of everything we do are people—especially our students. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to my fellow Board members—Claire, Owen, and Hedda—as well as our dedicated staff and the wider Tallowood community for your ongoing support. Together, we create a truly nourishing environment for learning.

As we look toward 2026, we are filled with optimism. The Board and I look forward to continuing to serve and support our community in the year ahead.

Mona Grebing
Chair, Tallowood Steiner School Board

Principal Report

"The smallest thing in its rightful place can lead to the highest goals" Rudolf Steiner.

The goals for Tallowood Steiner School have been created collaboratively and set out in our Strategic Focus and Masterplan. The year 2025 was filled with small steps that were significant in moving the school towards these goals.

Our student numbers continued their steady climb, and we placed a small demountable in the grounds to house Class 2 on the other side of Class 1. This meant we had a classroom to comfortably hold our Library, and small student groups for targeting learning through the week.

We had NESA approval to begin Year 7 in 2025 but chose to pause and applied for both Registration & Accreditation for Stage 4 (Years 7 & 8) to begin in 2026. This gave the school more time to carefully plan for the facilities and staff needed to ensure a Stage 4 that offers an enriching Steiner education. Enrolment applications, staff recruitment processes and resource purchases were consolidated and prepared.

Future building works are now possible through the success of a Block Grant Authority (BGA) funding application, and the Council Development Application approval. A big thank you to our Business Manager Lyn Sellers for all the work that has gone into this application and the beginning of this building process. We look forward to the first 2 classrooms of our Masterplan proceeding in 2026. Thank you also to the Tallowood Steiner School Board, who are responsible for steering the school through these years of improvement and growth. They are representative of the care and commitment our school community has to provide an enlivened education for children in our valley.

I was pleased to be representing Tallowood, and small rural Steiner schools, through 2025 at both the AISNSW Excellence in Leadership and Teaching Council, and the AISNSW Leadership Program: Leading Small Schools and Special Schools. It is significant to place our school among the diverse independent schools in NSW who are providing educational choice and life-changing outcomes for children and young people.

An article included in the Steiner Education Australia (SEA) 2025 Newsletter compared Tallowood Steiner School to its' botanical namesake with reference to the community planting our students assisted through Landcare. The action of planting trees together reflects what we plant and nurture for our students.

From Josie: Tallowood Steiner School is a wonderful community filled with love and compassion. I am a Class 5 student, and my experience has been truly magical. Planting trees for Landcare made me proud of who I am and taught me the true meaning of working hard for a good cause. I love Tallowood!

Rebecca (Bec) Finch
Principal

2. Tallowood School Context

School statement

Tallowood Steiner School is a growing, independent school located in the beautiful rural setting of Bowraville, NSW. We aim for an enlivened education following the Core Principles of Steiner Education, adapted to meet the unique context of our natural environment and school community.

We provide dynamic learning opportunities through an integrated curriculum, cultivating a healthy life of imagination, connection and moral development. We encourage age-appropriate levels of individual responsibility from Kindergarten to Class Six, as they learn to work for the collective whole and celebrate diversity.

All integrated key learning areas are enriched with the arts, music, drama, creative movement, sport, outdoor education and community activities. Learning differentiation, assistance and individual tuition is enabled through our specialist and support programs. We strive to develop confident and successful learners who have purpose, imagination, a sense of connection, inner truth and a feeling of responsibility. We aim to assist children to grow as people who are able to feel deeply, think clearly and communicate effectively.

Characteristics of Tallowood Students

Enrolments in 2025 reached 94 students at census. Class 1 and 2 remained single stream classes and combined Stages were maintained for Class 3 & 4, and Class 5 & 6. Students travel to Tallowood from the nearby towns and locales of Eungai Creek, Congarinni, Macksville, Valla Beach, Urunga, Repton, Nambucca Heads, Scotts Head, Missabotti and Bowraville.

Student Population

Kindergarten	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
15	19	12	17	5	18	8

Philosophy/ Core Principles Statement

Tallowood Steiner School is a member of Steiner Education Australia and follows the Core Principles of Australian Steiner Schools:

This is a living set of principles arising out of a national collaboration of Steiner/Waldorf schools.

1. The recognition of the unfolding spirit of each individual informs all aspects of the school.
2. Steiner/Waldorf education fosters social renewal by cultivating individuals who serve an ethical world future.
3. Anthroposophical insights into child development guide the educational program and practice.
4. Steiner/Waldorf schools support creative freedom to teach within the shared agreements of the schools' collegiate.
5. The conscious establishment of human relationships fosters individual and community health.
6. Spiritual development for sustaining professional growth is an ongoing activity for the collegiate of teachers and staff and is supported by the board.
7. Collaboration and shared responsibility provide the foundations of school leadership and governance.

<https://www.steinereducation.edu.au/steiner-education/core-principles-for-australian-steiner-schools-2021/>

The strength of Tallowood's future is held in our collective vision.

Together we see Tallowood as a school for nurturing authentic individuals, ones who are able to collaborate effectively and have difficult conversations with compassion and empathy. We see a school that is part of our local and educational communities, continuing Tallowood's active participation in reconciliation and environmental sustainability.

Together we recognise the value of our small school community, and desire growth towards single-stream classes with nourishing student numbers and diversity for the children's enriched school experience. We desire financial stability for the school and expansion beyond Year 6, becoming a place where students can complete their childhood enriched through Steiner education.

Tallowood School's purpose, mission and values are written here as the tenets of our collective journey into the future. The strategic focus areas are the foundations for direction, decisions and ongoing collaboration. Together we are a strong community of learners, guides and guardians of the children in our care.

Our Purpose: Nourishing hearts and minds for community.

Our Mission: We strive to develop confident and successful learners who have purpose, imagination, a sense of connection, inner truth and a feeling of responsibility.

Our Values: Kindness, Empathy, Respect and Responsibility.

4. School Determined Priority Areas for Improvement

Strategic Focus 2024 - 2028

In 2023 the School developed the following Strategic Focus areas:

Authentic Individuals

Celebrating individuality with support and acceptance so that children develop self awareness, emotional understanding and personal strength.

Connection and Relationship

Practicing principles of open and inclusive conversation - celebrating diversity and personal responsibility.

Social Responsibility

Encouraging conscious and active participants in reconciliation and environmental sustainability.

Enlivened Education with Purpose

Developing values-based education with creativity, rhythm and consistency, critical thinking, deep listening and self reflection.

Financial Health, Sustainability and Growth

Committing to the ongoing health, sustainability and growth of the school through responsible financial management and strategic growth.

School Determined Priority Areas for Improvement cont.

Teaching and Learning

Further development of our Tallowood Steiner School Curriculum is continuous, specific to a multi-age and/or stage-based classroom and our small school context. The Curriculum must maintain flexibility to accommodate stage classes and single stream classes in Class 1 and 2 in 2025. The school works from the SEA curriculum as a foundation and adjusts to suit the Stage based classrooms over a two-year period. Adjustments are ongoing due to new requirements outlined by NESA, ACARA and SEA.

Priorities	Achievements	Status
Review whole school Literacy and Numeracy programs, and establish consistent Scope and Sequences for each Stage.	Literacy Scope and Sequences through the application of the NSWAIS Early Literacy Program, Australian Decodable Readers, SPELD and SA Spelling Assessment. Targeting Maths text books continued to be used for Upper Primary, with associated assessments plus SENA tests.	Literacy & numeracy programs to continue to be reviewed.
Continue to develop Steiner educational philosophy, curriculum and methodology at Tallowood.	Music, Art and Craft programs are improving with the employment of experienced Steiner teachers and their mentoring of others. Single stream classes also assist with the delivery of the Steiner curriculum. This is an ongoing evolution as our small school grows and expands.	Ongoing
Continue to maintain and develop our Student Well-Being and Behaviour Management processes.	Adopted the “We Thinkers” program and trained staff shared some aspects of the Berry Street Model. Wellbeing Officer employed through the National Student Wellbeing Program.	Ongoing
Pursue equipment, resources and classroom style set up which enhances the capacity to facilitate the Steiner educational philosophy.	Classroom facilities are refitted/refurbished to meet the needs of that class each year. At the end of 2025, buildings and classrooms were painted and re-floored. New furniture was purchased for Stage 3 and a new demountable was installed for 2026. The 2025 budget allowed for literacy, numeracy and science resources to be purchased.	Ongoing with growing numbers and expansion of facilities.

To gain regular access to Funding to enable diverse and challenging sporting experiences to our students.	Application for Sporting Schools grants successful delivering Bowls, Volleyball and Skipping for students.	Achieved
Continue with specialist music program and strings program.	The facilitation of opt-in string (Violin and Cello) tuition was interrupted by weather, school closures and travel requirements for the tutor.	Ongoing difficulties with access to violin/string tuition.
Maintain whole school Craft program.	Improved through collegial support and resourcing.	Ongoing
Continue to provide First Nations Gumbaynggirr Language and Culture Awareness experiences once per week for all students.	We registered our school's RAP in 2025, and maintained connection with the local AECG. Staff attended the Connecting to Country Program in September.	Achieved
Establish recurring camps, excursions and out of school activities - particularly local community connections with other local Bowraville schools.	Local excursions expanded and achieved. Overnight camps offered to all classes except Class 1 due to the needs of the students.	Ongoing

Student Welfare

Achievement	Comment	Status
Continue to include "Circle Time" as a regular part of the student's active learning each school day.	Circle time continues to be a core aspect of the Main Lesson time and includes speech, recitation, active literacy and numeracy activities, singing and recorder playing. This is also the time for teachers to get a sense of students' presentation and wellbeing each day.	Achieved and ongoing
To ensure that the existing class meetings and fortnightly whole school assemblies to discuss whole school issues and encourage positive peer relations	Assemblies were regular fortnightly events in 2025, with parent visitors welcomed. Classes offered the opportunity to share their achievements with the whole school student body.	Achieved

To continue to build the enrolments to ensure our school's financial viability and increase the student's opportunities for peer learning and collaboration, relationship building and team games.	Student enrolments grew to 94 students. The NESAs approval for Registration and Accreditation for new years in Stage 4 (Years 7 and 8) starting in 2026 improved retention of Stage 3 students.	Ongoing.
Ensure that staff are aware of and implementing the discipline policy, Zero Tolerance Bullying Policy and Student Code of Conduct at all times.	Achieved and ongoing through Staff Development Days, regular Staff meetings, collegial conversations and support.	Achieved and ongoing
Encourage teacher and parent communication by appointment to facilitate open communication regarding any issue that may affect a student/s.	Achieved through face to face meetings, and increased opportunities for communication.	Achieved and Ongoing

Staffing

Priorities	Status
Continue to employ qualified, experienced and passionate teachers who are provided with Steiner training and collegial support to teach effectively within the Tallwood School culture, programs and registration requirements.	New Steiner-trained and experienced teacher employed in Class 1. Steiner Professional development offered to all staff through various providers.
Continue consolidation of office administration support and management programs to address the increasingly complex compliance and reporting obligations of the school.	Achieved.
Continue to employ a Music specialist teacher.	A music teacher is employed for weekly sessions in all classes.
Ensure sufficient educational support for students with additional needs and literacy and numeracy support for individual students and in small and class groups.	Maintained 0.6 FTE Learning Support Teacher, and increased Student Support staff to 3.6 FTE. Targeted literacy, numeracy and social skill intervention program implemented across the school.
Ensure sufficient support staff to manage grounds and maintenance requirements of the school.	Achieved with additional capital works such as painting and installation of new flooring.

Facilities and Resources

Priorities	Status
Continue to create and maintain playground facilities which encourage creative play and enhance the physical and social development of our students	Access to bamboo resources utilised for student creative play and craft activities. Larger playing field maintained for sports activities. Sandpits maintained for Kindergarten, Stage 1 and upper Primary. Sports equipment replenished through Sporting Schools Grants.
Organisation of classrooms.	Kindergarten remained in Kindergarten room, Class 1 in upper classroom near play area, Class 2 moved to the new demountable building originally planned for the library. Class 3/4 and 5/6 remained in larger rooms. Library moved to smaller classroom and included the Learning Support resources and office space.
Maintenance of school grounds and buildings	Ongoing with employment of Maintenance and Bus Driver 3 days/week.
Maintain and monitor Water supply safety measures in line with legislation.	Achieved and ongoing with monitoring.

Administration and Financial Reporting

Priorities	Status
Continue to engage professional Auditor to review the chart of accounts used within the school administration, in line with increased reporting requirements.	Achieved and ongoing.
Continue to support financial and governance needs of School management and Board	Achieved and ongoing.
Policies, procedures, facilities and curriculum, reviewed and updated for NESA Registration and Accreditation of New Years (Year 7 and 8) process.	NESA Registration and Accreditation for Year 7 and 8 achieved for 2026.
Curriculum outcomes continually mapped to meet NESA Syllabus outcomes	Ongoing.

Governance and Management

Priorities	Status
Strategic and Master planning continued with the Board, Management and the Tallowood Association members and community.	Achieved and ongoing.
Develop a Master Plan for the development of the school facilities across the whole site.	Achieved and ongoing. Development Application approved for the Master Plan build and Building Grant approved for Stage 1 through the AISNSW BGA process.
Further define and document duties of each board member position	Achieved through Governance training.

5. Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility

'The highest endeavour of education is to help develop balanced individuals who are able, out of their own initiative, to impart purpose and direction into their lives.' Rudolf Steiner

Respect and responsibility for one's own actions and their impact on the school, home and society are an integral part of the methodology and pedagogy of Steiner Education. Weekly meetings in the Primary School will continue to play a significant role in monitoring the social health of the group and the well-being of each individual in the group. The student's maturing awareness of themselves as decision-makers and their ability to increasingly take responsibility for their actions is actively cultivated and developed, ensuring that Tallwood maintains a high standard of behaviour amongst its students and a respectful profile within the larger community. Weekly assemblies continue to be held with a focus on developing a whole school community awareness of personal safety and self-responsibility.

2025 Excursions, Incursions and Community Events

COMMUNITY EVENTS

- Community Working Bees each Term
- Freedom Ride - Stage 3 to community walk and film screening
- Bowraville Easter Hat Parade with local schools.
- Autumn and Harvest Festival
- Macksville Show Display in School Pavilion
- NAIDOC Week Art Exhibition at Phoenix Gallery, Bowraville
- NAIDOC Week assembly at Bowraville Central School
- Kindergarten Wattle Festival
- Winter Festival CANCELLED due to wet and windy weather
- Book Week Dress Up Day and Assembly - "Book an Adventure"
- Grandparents Day - Classroom visit and morning tea
- Spring Fair (school community involved and broader community invited)
- Bowraville Central School 100th Anniversary - maypole display
- Summer Festival held on-site and visit to Wia Ora (school community invited)

SPORTING EVENTS

- Whole School Cross Country held onsite
- Combined Athletics Carnival with Casuarina Steiner School

CAMPS

- Class 2 Overnight Camp (2 nights) at Tasman Holiday Park, Nambucca Heads
- Class 3 & 4 Overnight Camp (2 nights) at Oxhill Farm, Port Macquarie
- Class 5 & 6 Overnight Camp (3 nights) at Hosanna Farmstay, Tweed Valley

EXCURSIONS

- Class 1 to 6 - Bellingen High School Musical "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory"
- Class 1 & 2 to Billabong Zoo, Port Macquarie
- Class 2 to Shelly Beach, Nambucca for their Summer Main Lesson
- Class 2 Hyim Horse Stud Excursion
- Class 2 Dorrigo Excursion
- Class 3/4 and Class 5/6 planting day at neighbouring Bowralea Dairy with LandCare
- Class 5/6 to Coffs Harbour Botanical Gardens
- Class 5/6 - NPWS Back to Country at Mt Yarrahapinni
- Year 6 students to Trades-based activity at ShoreTrack

- Class 3 to 6 - Inspired Readers Festival, Charles Sturt University, Port Macquarie

INCURSIONS

- Responsible Pet Incursion (Kindy, Class 1 & 2)
- High School Information from Bowraville Central School staff
- National Simultaneous Storytime
- Bellingen Readers & Writers Festival - Writer visit by Jaclyn Moriarty
- Local Member Pat Conaghan visit to Assembly for flag presentation

6. Student Outcomes

Student Learning

Our students benefit from multi-aged classes in numerous ways; socially, academically and in their personal development. Peer support and cooperation and peer tutoring have significant benefits for each child and each student is able to both shine in the areas of their strengths and also to receive positive role modelling and active support in their areas of challenge, from the other students. Children coming to Tallowood from other schools where they may have had difficulty learning or socialising, often adapt well to our small school environment; staff promote a high standard regarding school tone, behaviour management strategies and positive, consistent expectations.

Our practice of theme block lessons (Main Lessons) unifies and integrates all curriculum areas and all teaching and learning activities. Lesson content is developed from each core subject and subjects are taught in three or four-week blocks, depending on the subject.

This approach ensures that the children are engaged and participating in all the ways in which they are active as learners and make full use of their natural need for movement and rhythmical activity. Presenting curriculum content through literature and story really appeals to children's feelings and imaginations. Art is embedded as practice in all subjects and this enables children to be continually active as creators.

Throughout the course of each year, all Key Learning Areas are covered, in line with the requirements of the NSW Education Standards Authority.

In line with Steiner Schools throughout the world, Tallowood celebrates the seasonal Festivals at the end of each term. These Festivals provide an opportunity for the whole school community to come together in celebration of our school, the cycles of the seasons throughout each year and the student's achievements and growth. Students' work and achievements and a school play or performance pieces can be shared at these celebrations. A healthy feast is an integral component of these festivals and an ongoing reflection and affirmation of our Healthy Food Policy.

Students experienced a diverse movement and sport program from Dance to Bowls and Volleyball. We held a whole school cross-country event at school, and enjoyed a combined Athletics Carnival with Casuarina Steiner School (off-site). Throughout the school day, students play cricket, basketball, handball and soccer, with lots of active skipping and running games as well as a continuing focus on fundamental movement skills.

Visual arts and craft lessons provided the children with the opportunity to weave their own recorder cases, sew their pencil cases, and engage in various art-based projects. All craft activities are meaningful, purposeful and relate to something that the children need to use on a regular basis. They can also focus on artistic representations depicting aspects of the theme being studied at any given time. These can range from clay modelling, constructing winter lanterns for use at our winter festival, making replica boats, tools and artefacts from different cultures and civilizations to creating backdrops for scenery to be used during school plays.

Creative play during break times is enhanced by the use of natural materials - particularly items from the school environment. Tallowood students have a number of bamboo poles and pieces sourced from the large bamboo stands on the school grounds. These pieces become cubbies, shops, horses, cups, bowls, megaphones, funnels and ramps.

School performance in National Literacy and Numeracy Testing

Tallowood School participated successfully in the online assessments for Naplan in 2025.

The number of Tallowood students withdrawn from NAPLAN by their parents/carers limits the available data for school performance - particularly in Year 3. There are other factors such as educational philosophy and the introduction of technology in later years that influence NAPLAN results. and Please see the *My School* site for 2025 Year 5 results: <https://www.myschool.edu.au/>.

7. Teacher Professional Learning

At Tallowood, Professional development is recognised as an essential component of professional practice and is embedded in the yearly calendar in a number of ways. These include in-service staff days that occur at the beginning of each term. The focus here is on whole-school approaches, which are developed in areas such as ongoing curriculum development, school rhythms and routines, student behaviour policies and procedures, Child Protection legislation, Work Health and Safety practices and professional readings.

In addition to this, weekly pedagogical staff meetings are standard practice. All teachers undergo approved NESA training courses including annual Child Protection, CPR and First Aid updates as well as Professional Learning across curriculum areas, behaviour management and pastoral care, professional practice and Leadership training.

Governance and Management development continue to be supported through the Association of Independent Schools (NSW) and Steiner Education Australia (SEA). Our small school context requires a close and highly cooperative collaboration between the Principal, Business Manager, staff and the Board members and it is this collaboration that underpins the success of Tallowood.

Professional Learning in 2025

Description of the Professional Learning Activity	Number of participants
<p><i>Positive Partnerships</i></p> <p>Two day workshop to support school staff working with autistic students. Participants learnt about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The diversity of autism in schools ● Sensory processing ● Wellbeing, mental health and behaviour ● Practical tools ● Working in partnership 	<p>Learning Support and Stage 3 teacher</p>
<p><i>Bellingen-Nambucca Sustainable Schools Network</i></p> <p>Meetings held each term in various locations - a collaborative initiative of Environmental Education NSW (EENSW) delivered by Sustainable Schools NSW, funded by MidWaste and supported by the Bellingen Shire Council and Nambucca Valley Council.</p> <p>Grant writing workshop held in Term 1 at Repton Public School, Creative Upcycling workshop hosted by Tallowood.</p>	<p>Teacher representative and Principal</p>

<p><i>AISNSW Excellence in Leadership and Teaching Council</i></p> <p>Principal invited to sit on the council and contribute from the perspective of a school leader in the context of a small, rural, Steiner school.</p> <p>Formation of the Excellence in Leadership and Teaching Council (ELTC) is designed to enable AISNSW services to meet the current and future needs of all independent schools in teaching and learning and school leadership as they strive for excellence.</p> <p>The council meets 3-4 times a year with executive members of the AISNSW to discuss</p>	Principal
<p><i>AISNSW Leading Small and Special Schools Course</i> <i>5 online modules offered through the year:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How small and special assistance schools can harness the strength of their communities and contribute to the wider wellspring of leadership across the sector ● Finance in Small and Special Assistance Schools ● Growing Small Schools ● Leading Change in Contexts of Constraint ● Building Efficacy and Resilience in Self and Others 	Principal
<p><i>Northern Region Steiner Leaders meetings</i></p> <p>Once a term, the Northern Region Steiner Leaders meetings are for discussion of philosophical and practical aspects of leadership roles within a supportive collegiate setting.</p>	Principal and Business Manager
<p><i>CMEA Interpretation Course - Teachers and PAOS Staff (NSW)</i></p> <p>This intensive interpretation workshop is for the experienced professional who is seeking an update on what has changed from the 2021 MEA's and the current 2025 CMEAs.</p>	Business Manager
<p><i>AISNSW Cyber Security Tabletop Workshop</i></p> <p>A facilitated workshop meeting of 3 hours duration with selected school staff to work through a series of cyber incidence scenarios in order to explore the school's preparedness and response.</p> <p>Through a process of active facilitation, the workshop facilitators provide the context of each scenario and asked the incident responders (the team) to consider how they might respond, what actions they'd take and who they'd inform.</p> <p>It allows the preparedness of people, technology and processes to be examined and improved.</p>	Principal, Business Manager, IT Contractor
<p><i>Local Aboriginal Education Consultant Group (AECG) Meetings (Termly)</i></p> <p>Held once a term with Principals and representatives from local schools to gather and exchange information about Aboriginal Education in the Nambucca and Bellingen Valley.</p>	Principal and Aboriginal Perspectives Teacher

<p><i>Steiner Education Australia Learning Support and Classroom Assistants Training Program 2 day intensive, 10x 2 hour online sessions</i></p> <p>Topics covered in this course include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Child development and curriculum ● 12 senses ● Constitutional Polarities ● ASD, ADHD, Anxiety ● SLD, Down Syndrome, hearing impairment, vision impairment ● Dyslexia, dyspraxia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia ● Boundaries, behaviour as communication, pro-active strategies ● Inclusive practices, positive reinforcement, time management 	<p>Classroom Support Worker</p>
<p><i>AISNSW Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviour Module 1,2 and 3</i></p> <p>Self-paced learning focussed on practical strategies to assist staff in responding to problematic or challenging behaviours by acquiring skills to identify behaviours, gather and analyse data to develop individualised Behaviour Support Plans. Participants will have the opportunity to examine a variety of data collection tools and learn about the functions of behaviour using Functional Behaviour Assessments (FBA) through the exploration of case studies.</p>	<p>Stage 1 Teacher</p>
<p><i>AISNSW School Governance Modules</i></p> <p>A suite of Governance modules that are designed to provide essential knowledge and understanding for prospective or newly appointed members to school governing bodies, and current members to address NESA's Registration requirement for proper governance.</p> <p><i>Module 3 - An Introduction to Legal Compliance (Principal)</i></p> <p><i>Module 5 - Executive Supervision (1 Director)</i></p> <p><i>Module 6 - Risk Management (2 Directors)</i></p> <p><i>Module 7 - Child Protection (2 Directors)</i></p> <p><i>Module 8 - Strategic Thinking in Schools (1 Director)</i></p> <p><i>Module 9 - Reputational Risk (1 Director)</i></p> <p><i>Module 10 - Child Safe Schools (1 Director)</i></p>	<p>Tallowood School Board Directors & Executive</p>
<p><i>Steiner Education Australia GLaM (Governance, Leadership and Management) Conference - May (Canberra)</i></p> <p>Workshops in areas of Steiner school governance, leadership and management which will provide an update on latest best practice for Steiner school leaders and Board members. The conference is an annual networking opportunity to share experience and learn from colleagues.</p>	<p>Principal</p>
<p><i>AISNSW 2025 Annual Briefing</i></p> <p>Annual Briefings for principals, business managers and executive staff of AISNSW member schools. Industry and sector updates, governance, management and education updates and information.</p>	<p>Principal Business Manager</p>

<p><i>AISNSW Reportable Conduct and Allegations Against Employees - Self-paced Learning Experience</i></p> <p>Designed to explain to all school employees what constitutes reportable conduct in NSW and what legislative responsibilities schools have in relation to allegations against employees. The course includes a brief overview of the child protection legislative context in NSW, an overview of how the NSW Office of the Children’s Guardian defines the categories of reportable conduct, identification of the behaviours the NSW Office of the Children’s Guardian defines as reportable conduct and provides guidance on who employees should report reportable conduct concerns to in their school.</p> <p>The overall aim of this course is to give school staff information to help them identify concerning behaviour and their responsibilities in relation to reporting this behaviour. This is important in creating safer schools for students as well as for employees, in terms of reducing the risk of allegations made against them.</p> <p>Addressed Australian Professional Standards for Teachers: 4.4.2, 7.2.2</p>	<p>All staff = 24</p>
<p><i>Identifying and Responding to Children and Young People At Risk - Self-paced Learning Experience</i></p> <p>Self-paced course familiarises staff with the types of abuse and neglect that children and young people are most commonly exposed to, examine indicators of abuse and neglect and review the reporting process for ROSH matters. The focus of this self-paced learning is to raise awareness of the responsibilities that teachers and other employees in Independent schools in NSW have in identifying and responding to children and young people at risk.</p>	<p>All staff = 23</p>
<p><i>AISNSW Planning and Programming with the new Mathematics 3-6 Syllabus - Self-Paced Learning Experience</i></p>	<p>Teachers = 4</p>
<p><i>Contextual Insights - AISNSW Education Research and Leadership Symposium 2025</i></p> <p>Keynote and other presenters on the Symposium program showcased research-supported strategies that enhance student success, translate research insights into actionable strategies for educators and school leaders, and explore innovative, research-based approaches to prepare schools for emerging challenges and opportunities.</p>	<p>Principal</p>
<p>Planning School Construction Projects</p>	<p>Business Manager</p>
<p><i>Essential safety Protection (ESP) Fire Warden Training</i></p> <p>This training provided staff with the knowledge and skills to effectively perform the duties of a Chief Warden/ Warden or Floor/Area Warden. The course meets the requirements of Australian Standard AS 3745 Planning for emergencies in facilities.</p>	<p>All Staff = 20</p>
<p><i>First Aid Training - Mid North Coast</i></p>	<p>Teaching and</p>

<p>The course covers assessing the casualty, providing safety, accessing emergency services, and using resources to provide first aid, such as providing CPR and using a defibrillator, administering an auto injector for anaphylaxis, administering asthma medication, assisting someone choking, using appropriate immobilisation techniques for envenomation, fractures, dislocations, sprains and strains, managing casualties with non-life-threatening bleeding and shock.</p>	<p>Support staff = 20</p>
<p><i>Restorative Practice</i> Training to help transform conflict, strengthen relationships and create lasting change in our community. Participants gained an explicit restorative framework and practical tools to immediately build and maintain stronger relationships. Skills to strengthen connections, navigate conflict with confidence, and repair harm effectively, without causing further damage.</p>	<p>Stage 2 teacher, Specialist Music Teacher and Classroom Support Worker</p>

Teacher Accreditation

Teaching Staff Accreditation	Number of Teachers
Conditional	-
Provisional	-
Proficient	11
Highly Accomplished Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	-
Lead Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	-

Teacher Qualifications

All teaching staff have completed tertiary qualifications at a minimum Bachelor Degree level. All staff are recognised as having qualifications and are registered by NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).

7. Workforce Composition

In 2025, Tallowood was managed by an Executive team consisting of a full time Principal and Business Manager. We started the year with a new Class 1 teacher.

School Staff 2024	
Principal	1
Teaching staff	9
Full-time equivalent teaching staff	6.4
Building Operations	1
Administrative and Clerical Non-teaching staff	8
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	5.4

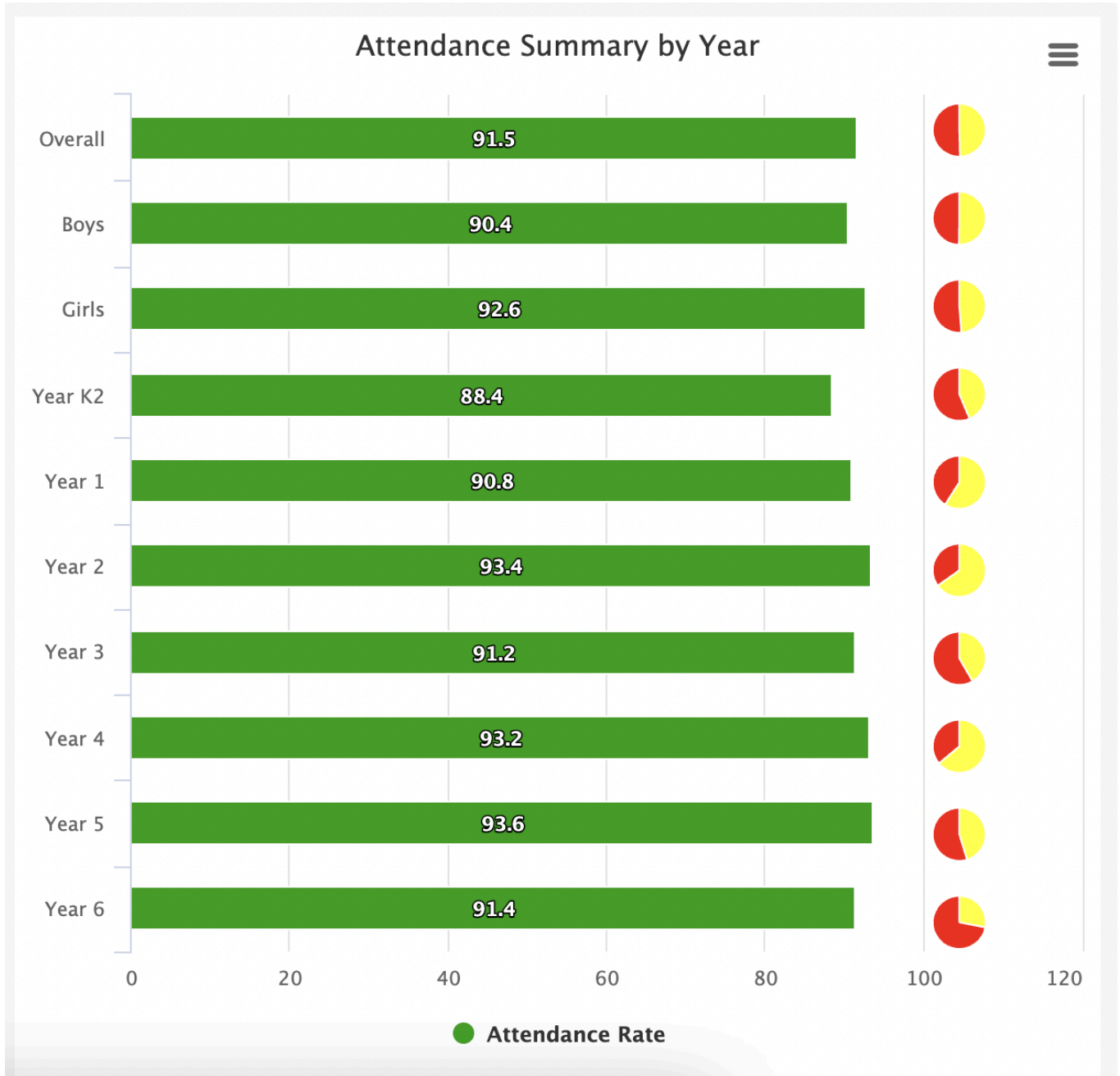
A description of the 2025 workforce composition can be found on *My School*: <https://www.myschool.edu.au/>

Tallowood Steiner School employs based on the principles of equity and anti-discrimination. We proudly employ a First Nations educator and contract local Gumbaynggirr elders and artists who identify as Aboriginal.

8. Student Attendance

Student Attendance Rates

Our overall student attendance rate at Tallowood School for 2025 was 91.5%, an improvement to the attendance rate in 2024.



Management of non-attendance

The Principal is responsible for maintaining the attendance register and has delegated the responsibility of overseeing the attendance register to the administration staff.

The attendance register is stored in FACTS (Student Management System) and backed up by FACTS regularly.

The attendance register is maintained for 7 years after the last entry is made.

The Principal has the discretion to accept a reason for student absence and the Principal decides the Minister's code that will be recorded in the attendance register for the absence.

The Principal can request documentation to substantiate an absence or to further substantiate an absence.

If a student is absent, there will be a record of full or partial absence and an attendance register code will be used to identify explanations of student absence or variation in attendance using the Minister's codes.

9. Enrolment Policies

Enrolment Policy - full text

POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR MAINTAINING STUDENT ENROLMENT REGISTER

The Principal of Tallowood Steiner School maintains an enrolment register, in a form approved by the Minister, of the enrolments of all children at the school, which includes information for each student as required by Section B7 of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual.

Enrolment register procedures

The principal is responsible for maintaining the student enrolment register. The principal has delegated the role of entering information into the enrolment register to administration staff.

The enrolment register is stored in the cloud FACTS student management system. The responsibility for backing up the enrolment register is with FACTS. The enrolment register is maintained for 5 years and then archived.

These procedures are enacted after an offer of enrolment has been accepted. The information is found in the digital enrolment forms submitted through the School website.

At point of enrolment

On enrolment, the administration staff will enter the following information into the enrolment register:

1) *The minimum information that the enrolment register will include are:*

- Name, Date of Birth, Residential Address
- The name and contact number of parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Date of enrolment,
- where relevant, the date of leaving the school and the student's next educational destination
- pre-enrolment situation or previous school (where relevant).

Students exiting the school

Upon notifying the school that a child is leaving the school, the administration staff will send the parent an enrolment withdrawal form. Year 6 and Year 8 students will also be provided with this form so the next educational destination can be captured and entered in FACTS.

The Principal can request further documentation from a parent to substantiate the next educational destination. If the principal is satisfied with the next education destination provided, the administration staff will enter the next education information and date of leaving school in the enrolment register (FACTS).

If the parent/guardian does not provide information about the next educational destination of a student of compulsory school age or if the information provided is not to the satisfaction of the principal, the principal will make sure a Destination Unknown form is submitted to the NSW Department of Education via email attendance@det.nsw.edu.au

The form will be sent with the following information by the Principal:

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Last known address
- Last attendance date
- Possible destination
- Full name of parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Contact information for parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Work, Health and Safety risks of contacting the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student
- Any information that may help locate the student

Any documentation that identifies the next educational destination, including the destination unknown form will be kept in the student's file in FACTS, unless the Principal makes a decision to keep it confidential. Any confidential information will be kept in the Principal's "Attendance" Google file.

In the enrolment register (FACTS), the Principal will enter the date the next educational destination unknown form was sent to the NSW DoE and note the location of the form.

Policy Name: Enrolment Register Policy and Procedure	Date of Origin: 31-3-11
Responsible: Principal, Administration staff	Review date: Every 5 years or as legislation requires.
Location: Executive Drive Board Approved Policies	Attachments: Withdrawal form Unknown Destination Form
Last updated: 23/03/2025	By Whom: Principal in consultation with AIS

Enrolment at Tallowood Steiner School is subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Parents/guardians will agree to allow the child to share fully in the life and programme of the school. Acknowledge and accept the principles of Steiner education and support the aims of the school in this regard.
2. Parents/guardians will support and agree to the [Parental Code](#) of Conduct and Conditions of Enrolment and will undertake to support the aims of the school and order their own lives and home so that the child will be given every opportunity to flourish in a holistic learning environment where children learn to work for the whole and the collective good.
3. Parents/guardians will undertake to provide the child with all necessary resources and other equipment of a personal nature that may be required to enable the child to benefit from the education offered. Provide the child with appropriate shoes, clothing, and wide brimmed hat and to ensure that the child is always sent to school in a neat, clean manner and suitably dressed to enhance their educational experiences. Acknowledge and adhere to the Tallowood Steiner School dress code and the Healthy Food Guidelines.
4. Parents/guardians will abide by Tallowood Steiner School's policies, protocols, procedures, management structure and decisions as they are and may change from time to time.
5. Parents/guardians accept the right of the school to employ such discipline as it deems wise and expedient for the child and agree to uphold in every way possible the school's authority and right to administer appropriate discipline in accordance with the policies of the school.
6. Under Chapter 16A of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998, the Principal may need to contact previous schooling institutions to discuss the student.
7. That the interaction of parents/guardians with the school and wider community will demonstrate fairness and consideration for the rights and responsibilities of the school, its staff, Board members, and other parents and students. Parents/guardians will maintain a positive attitude to the school. Deal with issues and grievances in a prompt and confidential manner by contacting the school and adhering to the school's Communication Pathways policy.
8. Fees are to be paid in full by the 3rd Friday of term 1, or by a direct debit instalment plan through FACTS. Additional fees are payable directly to FACTS. FACTS has missed payment fees which will be payable to FACTS if funds are unavailable.
 - a. A 10% late payment fee will be incurred for overdue fees.
 - b. There will be additional fees if any outstanding money needs to be collected by a Debt Recovery Agent. The full cost of debt recovery will be payable to the School.
9. That while enrolled at the school, the student will behave in a way that does not bring dishonour to the School or is disrespectful of others. That the student will obey the rules of the school and conditions of enrolment, as applicable.
10. Parents/guardians will give at least 1 term's prior notice of termination of enrolment in writing to the Principal and failure to do so may render them liable for 1 terms fees.
11. That where the School Principal or School Board believes that a mutually beneficial relationship of trust and co-operation between a parent and school has broken down to the

extent that it adversely impacts on that relationship, then the school Principal or the School Board may require the parent to remove their child/ren from the school.

12. That the school may suspend or terminate enrolment at its discretion for failure to comply with these conditions or other serious breaches of the school rules and regulations.

13. On acceptance of a position a non-refundable application fee of \$200 is payable.

I/we accept the conditions of enrolment as set out above and hereby apply to have my/our child/renenrolled in the school.

Signed.....Father/Guardian.....Mother/Guardian

Print

Name.....Father/Guardian.....Mother/Guardian

Date

Policy Name: Tallowood Steiner Conditions of Enrolment	Date of Origin:14/08/14
Responsible: Principal	Review date: As legislation requires.
Location: Enrolment pack	Attachments:
Last Reviewed: 8/5/23	By: Business Manager

10. Other School Policies

Student Welfare

Summary of Policy	Changes in 2025	Access to full text
<p>Safe and Supportive Environment Policy</p> <p>The School wishes to promote a learning environment where teachers and pupils should be mutually supportive. Students and Teachers should respect each other and not engage in conduct which undermines this mutual trust and support, and also respects the philosophy and ethics of the school. The School encourages consultation between all members of the School community in matters which affect them.</p>	No changes were made in 2025	The full text of the school's policy can be accessed by request from the Principal, from the school website, and from the school intranet.
<p>Student Welfare Policy</p> <p>The policy is premised on the right of all students and teachers to engage in a healthy Learning and Teaching environment.</p> <p>Collaboration between school staff, students and parent(s) or carer(s) is an important feature of Tallowood Steiner School Welfare and Discipline Policy.</p> <p>When parents enrol their children at Tallowood School they enter a partnership with the school. This partnership is based on the commitment to provide students with opportunities to learn and grow within the framework outlined by the Tallowood School Curriculum.</p>	No changes were made in 2025	<p>The full text of the school's policy can be accessed by request from the Principal, from the school website, and from the school intranet.</p> <p>Appendices available by request from the principal.</p>

Anti-Bullying

Summary of Policy	Changes in 2025	Access to full text
<p>Zero Tolerance of Bullying Policy</p> <p>The Principal, all staff, students and parents at Tallowood School are committed to a Zero Tolerance approach to Bullying. This is built through the positive and proactive strategies outlined in the Student Welfare Policy, the Behaviour Management Principles, and the Codes of Conduct for all staff, students, parents and volunteers. When there is a report or observation of bullying behaviour in the School it is addressed immediately with a consistent and procedurally fair response as outlined in the policy, and in the supporting policies and documents.</p>	No changes were made in 2025	The full text of the school's policy can be accessed by request from the Principal, from the school website, and from the school intranet.

Discipline

Summary of Policy	Changes in 2025	Access to full text
<p>Behaviour Management Principles</p> <p>Tallowood School deals with behaviour management issues in a manner which is both fair and supportive to the students involved. Our behaviour management strategies meet the requirements of Federal and State legislations and are designed to support a safe and supportive learning environment.</p> <p>Tallowood School does not support, endorse or allow corporal punishment.</p> <p>Tallowood School does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by nonschool persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.</p>	<p>No changes were made in 2025</p>	<p>The full text of the school's policy can be accessed by request from the Principal, from the school website, and from the school intranet.</p>

Complaints and grievances resolution

Summary of Policy	Changes in 2025	Access to full text
<p>Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure</p> <p>This procedure applies to Tallowood Steiner School in handling complaints made in respect of services provided by the school or against staff members, which includes employees, contractors and volunteers.</p> <p>This procedure does not extend to personal grievances between parents, guardians or other members of the school community.</p> <p>Complaints about reportable conduct will be addressed in accordance with the school's Child Protection Policy.</p> <p>Complaints regarding a grievance between staff members about work matters, including work relationships and decisions made by other staff members which impact on their work, will be addressed in accordance with the school's Communication Policy and Procedure for Staff, Volunteers and Contractors.</p> <p>Complaints regarding unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying between staff are generally</p>	<p>No changes were made in 2025</p>	<p>The full text of the school's policy can be accessed by request from the Principal, from the school website, and from the school intranet.</p>

addressed in accordance with the school's Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Statement.		
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For further information please see the School website:
<https://www.tallowood.nsw.edu.au/about/annual-reports-policies>

11. Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

Parent Satisfaction

The school gauges the level of satisfaction of a parent's experience, through regular communication channels such as Newsletters, Class meetings, student progress reports, Parent/Teacher meetings and Parent surveys. Parents are invited to meet with the Principal for open discussion. The Communication Policy and Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure, outline procedures for complaints and grievances, and these are brought to the Principal's attention.

In 2025 parents generally reported a level of satisfaction in improvements seen across the school - particularly in communication, management and areas of the curriculum, teaching and learning. Areas of discontent regarding issues or events for individual students are addressed through open conversation in meetings involving class teachers, support teachers and often the student if developmentally appropriate.

Student Satisfaction

Student satisfaction and well-being are monitored in the middle/upper primary class through class discussion meetings, which provide a forum for students to provide feedback about their own perceptions and level of satisfaction with their school. These conversations are brought to staff meetings in order to monitor school wide patterns of behaviour and general wellbeing. Teacher observation is highly effective due to the size and physical layout of the school.

With the case-studies and perspectives provided by the new Principal's previous school, and those of other new staff, Tallowood's positive, kind and harmonious student body was evident. Overall, Tallowood students show resilience, respect and interest in their school environment. Disagreements, issues and concerns are shared readily with teachers and support staff, and worked towards a shared resolution.

Our school ethos is founded upon care, respect and consideration towards each other and our school environment. Clear and consistent expectations about behaviour, striving for individual personal best and responsibility for individual actions and attitudes are at the core of our approach. The mixed aged classes allow for the full benefit of peer tutoring and peer interaction to be developed and the children's happy faces as they come to school each day is a pleasure to see.

The care and support for student learning is provided by our competent and committed class teachers. Additional literacy/ numeracy support teachers allow for each child to receive some individual help where needed and this contributes to the progress in academic skill of each child. The school uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the learning framework. These include teacher observation, annotated checklists, individual projects and presentations and more formal assessment tests relating directly to the subject content under study. The school also offers the NAPLAN literacy and numeracy testing program for parents who agree to their child participating in this testing. Information on student progress is communicated on a regular basis and written progress reports were provided in June and December. Parents are encouraged to be involved in regular communication with their children. Class teachers and teachers aim to foster communication pathways with parents to support a united ethos regarding student education between home and school.

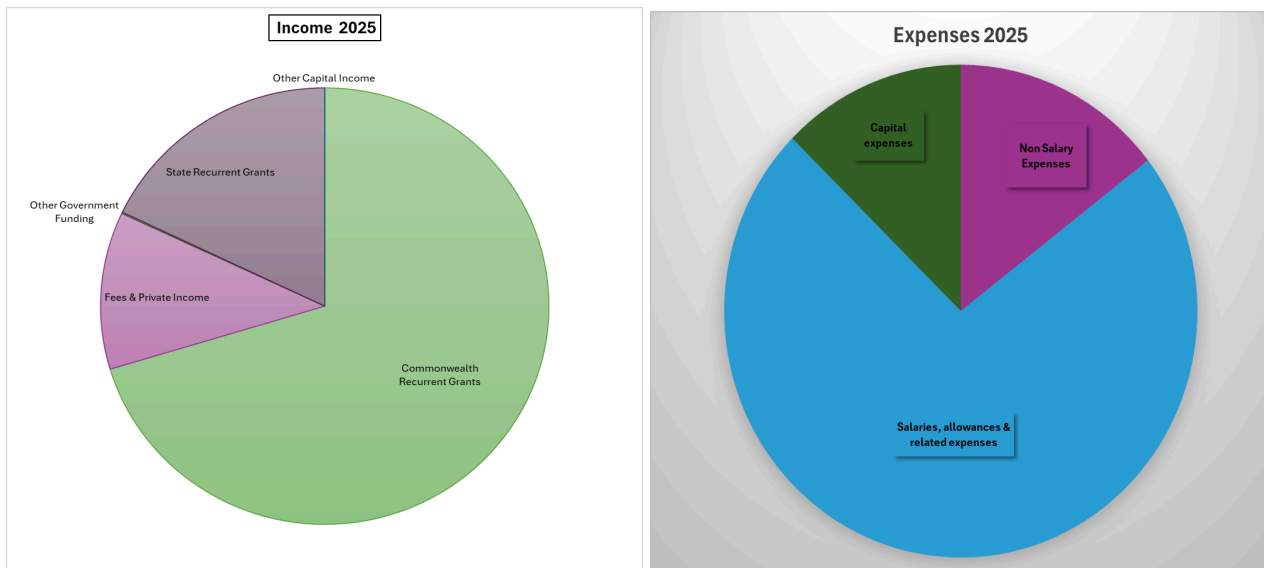
Staff Satisfaction

Staff have expressed and demonstrated commitment and hope for the future of Tallowood. As 2025 progressed there was a growing sense of trust, harmony and collegiality, building a strong sense of support and cohesion in our small team. Weekly staff meetings, daily briefings and regular in-service staff days allowed discussion and study of mutually beneficial topics. Our staff are a dedicated and highly motivated team, and this underpins the success of Tallowood School.

12. Summary Financial Information

Financial Summary

The operation of Tallowood School is dependent on funding from the Federal and State governments. This funding is calculated on a per-student basis and therefore our student numbers are critical to the school's financial viability. The school fees paid by parents are also a vital component of our operational budget. In order to remain a low fee-paying school, it is essential that our parent body agree to support our school by paying school fees promptly, attending regular working bees or alternatively, making an additional financial contribution in lieu and ensuring prompt payment of school fees, levies and excursion costs.



Facilities and Resources

In 2025 the School kept single stream in Kindergarten, Class 1 & Class 2. The school utilised the smallest classroom for the school library and Diverse Learning groups, and Class 2 moved to a new temporary demountable as we look towards new building works.

Administration operated from the reception area and an office shared with the Business Manager. The Business Manager worked from home on occasion.

School Contact Information:



Tallowood Steiner School Association
Gumbaynggirr Country

220 Bellingen Rd, Bowraville NSW 2449
Phone: (02) 65647224

Email: principal@tallowood.nsw.edu.au
Website address: www.tallowood.nsw.edu.au