



## Welcome to The Orchard Waldorf School

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to the founding year at The Orchard. We hope you enjoy many years with us helping to grow our school community into a rewarding and enriching place for all to share.

The Orchard Waldorf School was borne from an interest to establish a school in which all children find their place in the community, develop a passion for learning, respect for their peers and a love for themselves. A seed was planted by a small group of parents and was nurtured into reality through dedication and passion.

### Waldorf / Steiner Education

Rudolf Steiner envisaged an education of not only the academic (head) but of the emotional/spiritual (heart) and physical/practical (hands), giving children a holistic educational experience. The philosophies of Rudolf Steiner also promote the cooperation of community in the education of the child. At each stage of development, the curriculum is designed to engage the abilities of the growing child.

*Our highest endeavour must be to develop free human beings who are able, of themselves, to impart purpose and direction to their lives.*

Rudolf Steiner

The early years focus on developing the child's will capabilities. In the early years, this is done through guided creative play, music, art, movement and nurturing of the child's natural curiosity and capacity to learn.

The primary years focus on developing the child's feeling capabilities. Throughout the primary school, the curriculum continues to be presented in an imaginative and artistic manner. The child is supported and encouraged to explore a diverse range of subjects appropriate to their age and maturation. Developing a sense of belonging and reciprocal responsibility with peers, community and the environment also plays a large role in throughout this phase.

The high school years focus on developing the child's thinking capabilities. The high school curriculum challenges the student's awakening capacity for independent thought, self-determination and self-reliability.

In this way the curriculum of a Waldorf school responds to the developmental needs of the pupils at each level.

### The Orchard

***The Vision of the Orchard Waldorf School is to create a school community that prepares the child for an unknown path by allowing them the freedom to explore both their internal and external world. The child will unearth the abilities within themselves to meet the challenges that will unfold on their unique journey, with purpose and direction they will be positive, productive community members.***

The Orchard community will be ***accepting of our individual strengths and challenges***. We will build upon our strengths and address our challenges to develop individuals (encompassing students, staff and parents) who are guided by an inner compass, building a positive foundation for conducting their own lives with regard for the social, economic and environmental issues which surround the world. Recognising that everyone has a valuable and valid contribution will promote tolerance and respect.

Teaching staff will **allow the natural growth and development of the child** by recognising the natural development cycles and individual attributes that will allow the child to grow and develop at their own pace. Children will experience a sense of knowing the world by truly knowing themselves. Student's of The Orchard will grow to be creative problem solvers who have self-worth and a positive, solid foundation in a modern world.

By **providing a safe, creative space for learning**, The Orchard will offer individuals the opportunity to grow and find connections that are meaningful and mindful. Developing an affinity with the natural environment, a respect for each other, a curiosity of learning and fostering lasting relationships will encourage the potential within us all.

The Orchard will **be a role model, in both actions and words**. It will strive to deliver surroundings and a curriculum in which Indigenous culture and inclusion is embedded, and where the local community participates in the education of the children. Children will learn as they live.

Rudolf Steiner '*aimed to create a holistic educational experience that enriched the life and development of the child on many levels, not simply through the development of the intellect.*'

The Orchard will create this holistic experience by offering an inclusive, contemporary curriculum which is responsive to the child, their development and the modern environment in which we live, providing an age appropriate education and development journey from the Early Years to Class 12. This non-denominational, non sectarian, co educational school will aim to guide the child on a path of self-discovery and learning.

The School will guide the child their educational journey, promote ethics and value the importance of a nurturing, relationship-based approach to teaching. The curriculum will respectfully address all the major religious and cultural traditions but will not instruct in any religion.

Our goal is to nurture appreciation and respect for the natural environment, support the growth of healthy and capable bodies, and kindle the flame of curiosity and understanding. We strive to grow a community of like minded families who will work together with a common goal. The School values its community and know there will be many opportunities for families and friends to come together and create a wonderful diverse '*orchard*' for our children to thrive in. Families will have the opportunity to share in the children's world through festivals, school functions, committees, volunteering and attending parent education sessions when offered.

To be able to support growth and learning, bodies need healthy wholesome food and lots of it. The School recognises that there will be many children who follow different diets for varying reasons. Nutritious, package-free, healthy food will be encouraged, as is an adequate breakfast to start the day.

The wider community will be embraced as a valuable part of the children's education. Together we will instil a sense of community and a pride in being able to assist with, and participate in, the rich and diverse cultures of the Gold Coast, national and international communities.

Festivals are integral to the learning processes and are an important part of honouring special occasions and the changes in seasons, giving thanks for the bounty that Mother Nature provides and reflecting on our place within that as well as coming together and celebrating as a community. We aim for a sense of reverence, gratitude and pride in our achievements.

The curriculum and pedagogy of the School is appropriate for a diverse range of students with differing cultural, economic, learning and social backgrounds. The curriculum is integrated and woven throughout the differing subjects in various ways following daily, weekly and seasonal rhythms. For example, Class 1 children may learn about maths by songs or drawings and learn morals and ethics through storytelling.

The Trellis program will be a flexible program that is interwoven into the classroom experience allowing flexibility in learning and support individual educational, social as well as physical needs. It will allow all children to find their place within the community, to feel safe and to flourish. Embracing diversity enriches all environments and promotes healthy and productive interactions.

The Orchard will also endeavour to build a Home School Hub, a learning hub that will benefit as many families and their children as possible. It is recognised that home schooling families, at times, experience some level of isolation and difficulties accessing appropriate resources. The Hub may provide a space where peer interaction can occur and friendships form and provide a resource / advisory support opportunity. Where space is available, home school children may join a specialist learning session such as music, language or sport.

To date Steiner Education Australia (SEA) has received recognition for English, Maths Science and History F-10. The Geography submission is currently in process with ACARA. Other subjects are being developed in line with ACARA's timeline.

ACARA have stated there will be no recognition process for Years 11 and 12 and as registration requirements for these years differ nationally, at this stage SEA will not be developing curriculum for the senior years. It will be up to individual schools to develop their own curriculum in accordance with meeting their own State/Territory registration requirements.

While the Steiner curriculum learning outcomes have been compared to the Australian National Curriculum at a federal level, the way in which the curriculum is taught differs significantly. Learning is active, by introducing topics in an age appropriate and world relevant way, children are more likely to retain and actively expand their knowledge.

Whilst The Orchard does not intend to have a uniform, children will be encouraged to wear the daily colours of Monday – *purple*, Tuesday- *red*, Wednesday- *yellow*, Thursday- *orange* and Friday - *green*. The daily colour gives the children a sense of rhythm throughout the week. An excursion shirt and hat will be required when children are on School outings.

The School day will be from 8.30am – 3.00pm with the Terms closely following those of other Queensland Steiner schools.

**An education based on the philosophies of Rudolf Steiner empowers the next generation to be independent thinkers, creative in their approach to issues whilst maintaining a considerate attitude.**