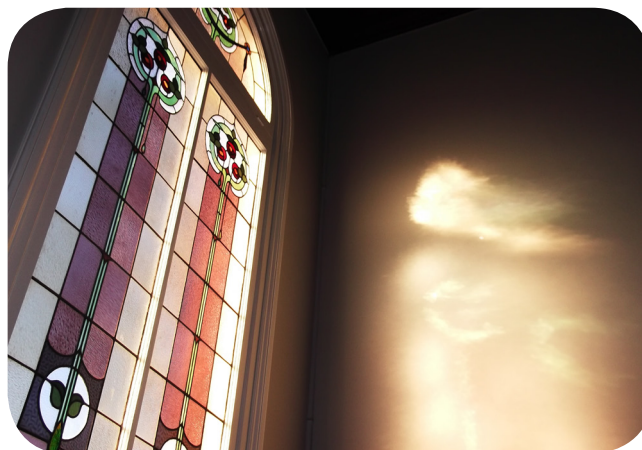


SOPHIA MUNDI

STEINER SCHOOL

2013 Annual Report



Principal's Report

2013 was a year of consolidation and affirmation at Sophia Mundi School although there has been considerable leadership change. Consistency and dedication of the teaching staff (with a retention rate of 97%) brought stability throughout the school.

At the end of the first semester our Principal, Jennifer West notified the school that due to her poor health, she would not be able to continue on in the Principal's role. During the third term Fiona Cock stood in as Principal while the position was advertised. At the beginning of Term 4, I was appointed Principal.

I came to Sophia Mundi from Sydney via Adelaide and bring with me an extensive biography of teaching and leadership in Steiner Schools both here in Australia and in California.

John Bradshaw was appointed as the new Business Manager in February. John brings to the school a long history of business acumen, being ex Head of Business and Information Systems at University as well as being a Registered CPA.

John was quick to implement new financial management strategies which resulted in more efficient business operations, lowering outstanding debt and more efficient fee collection.

In June the school appointed a new Receptionist and Admissions Registrar, Tania Sarmas who also has extensive experience working in administration in the private school sector.

With all the changes in the administration and leadership of the school, we now look forward to a stable period of school development with positive growth and clear goals.

2013 saw the graduation of the first IB Senior Class. The group started their IB studies in 2012, Yr 11 and following their comprehensive examinations went on to graduate at the end of 2013.

During the latter part of the year the faculties have been involved in discussions around improving student learning outcomes and how to work with Performance Development. Each teacher has been engaged in meeting with the Principal to establish a personal program which will monitor and direct Professional Development as well as Performance Development. We have also begun work on ideas of subject thematic class rooms which is a cultural move from previous practices.

As a measure to help increase student engagement in their educational journey we developed a High School student feedback form, through which every student could comment on and evaluate their performance in each main lesson. Students were also given an opportunity to reflect on the teachers performance, content relativity and assessment criteria and process.

As continuation of Behaviour Management strategies the teachers continued their work with the Restorative Practices which have been adopted within the school to assist with issue resolution. The practices are used across the Primary and High School for general issue resolution and behaviour modification. There are also times that Restorative practices are used in helping resolve staff issues as well as parent- teacher difficulties.

Norman Sievers,
Principal



Chairperson's Overview

Introduction

2013 marked the beginning of a new phase in the School's life. The building program has been completed, and the IB entered its second year with a great class of Year 12 students, who would be the School's first IB students to graduate. John Bradshaw, our Business Manager, started at the beginning of 2013, strengthening the administrative side of the School.

Perhaps most significantly, the Board appointed a new Principal, Norman Sievers, who started in the final term of 2013. Norman's appointment marked the start of an exciting new phase of the School's growth. For several years the School has been going through a metamorphosis – a period of growth and change. Metamorphosis is a necessary, but difficult, part of the growth of any organisation; it takes all the resources and goodwill of the organisation to achieve, but enables powerful transformation. So it has been for the School. In particular, there are two people the Board needs to thank, for carrying the School through this period.

Jennifer West, who stepped in at the start of 2011, agreeing to act as part-time Principal for a period of 1 year, and eventually stayed for 2½ years, giving her all to guide us in her sure and steady way through the turbulence and uncertainty of finishing the relocation from Nicholson Street, obtaining permission for and carrying out the building works at the Convent, and obtaining permission for and implementing the IB program. Jennifer gave much more than was asked of her, and we are very grateful to her for it; her presence through this period has given the School a strength and substance that it will have now for many years to come.

Fiona Cock has also given her all to the School. She has been responsible for bringing the IB program to the School, without which the senior school was foundering. With the IB program, and the beautiful, state-of-the-art new buildings to deliver it in, our senior school offering is now being watched with interest around the world. 2013 marked the graduation of the first class to go through the IB program, an amazing achievement, which would have been impossible without Fiona's tireless efforts, ingenuity and intelligence in obtaining permission from the IB and then implementing the program, all within a short period of time. Fiona also took on the role of Acting Principal in the third term of 2013. She showed enormous strength and ability in carrying out a difficult role, under difficult circumstances. During her time as Principal, she also started the process of establishing a kindergarten within the School, a service it has been unable to offer since 2006, and an important strategic initiative.

The Board is very grateful to both of them, and feels sure that their contributions will long be remembered by Sophia Mundi's members, the Board, and the staff and parents of the School.

Of course, in an organisation like the School, everything is a team effort, and the Board's deep thanks go out to all of the teaching and administrative staff of the School, without whom the transition we have gone through would quite simply not have been possible.

Education

2013 was a strong year for the educational offering in the School. The School's first Year 12 IB class graduated, with strong results. There was continued national and international interest in the way the School is setting about offering the IB qualification within a Steiner school. Looking forward, the Board decided that a new Kindergarten should be established during 2014, and began work on this important strategic direction. Work also began on having

increased and better continuing professional development and support for teaching staff.

Facilities

In 2012, the School completed a monumental building program, and signed long-term leases with the Convent, which together secured the School a firm future at the Convent. In 2013, the School has really lived into its new buildings, with classes of younger children enjoying the beautifully-lit, modern rooms and beautiful views out over the Children's Farm and Yarra, and the senior school working in the wonderful spaces equipped for science and art.

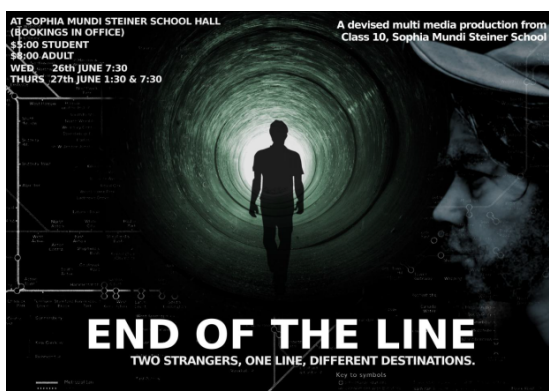
Finances

The School still faces financial challenges and in 2013 it continued to operate on a tight budget. The Board was greatly assisted by John Bradshaw, its new Business Manager, who throughout the year has taken control of the School's financial management and reporting systems, and attended Board meetings to assist the Board. He was, in turn, assisted significantly by Board members who worked to ensure a seamless transition from the School's previous financial management team, and to ensure that the Board's financial strategy was being implemented.

The enrolment numbers remained slightly below the Board's target, but the budget was adjusted accordingly, and the necessary savings were found without negatively affecting the quality of the School's educational offering.

The Board made a strategic decision to increase fees for 2014, and to make the fee system simpler and more

transparent, by including most fees within the annual composite school fee. The increase was necessary in order to fund much-needed improvements in facilities and staff resources within the School's budget, and in light of an accounting deficit for 2013 (see next page). A further strategic decision of the Board, that all school fee accounts more than 30 days overdue will incur an administrative fee of 1.75% per month of the total amount due, has resulted in more timely receipts, decreasing the amount of



A Class 10 production - End Of The Line



Parents helping to prepare the cottage garden for Playgroup

outstanding school fee debt. This was noticed by the Auditor.

The figures and charts below provide a pictorial overview of the breakdown of the School's income and expenses in 2013.

2013 Income Sources expressed as percentage

Government Grants	23.50%
Student Fees	68.60%
Fundraising	0.90%
Donations	0.20%
Rental	0.40%
Income Deficit	6.40%
	100.00%



2013 Expense Categories expressed as percentage

Employment	68.70%
Occupancy (incl Depreciation)	13.30%
Educational Delivery	5.00%
Administrative	2.00%
Financial (incl Interest)	5.30%
Other (e.g. Discounts)	5.70%
	100.00%



The 2013 Audited Financial Statements show an income Deficit. The 2013 total expenditure had increased by 9.1% over those of 2012. This is partly due to a significant amount of doubtful debt expenses being written off, which should have been done in 2012. In addition, there was an increase in the long service leave provision, interest charges have increased as ATO interest has been included, and depreciation has increased due to the new buildings completed in 2012.

Fortunately, the 2013 deficit was covered by the 2012 Surplus. Nonetheless, the Deficit amounted to 6.4% of 2013 total expenditures adding further support to the Board's strategic decision to increase fees for 2014.

The Audited Financial Account for 2013 is available on the SMSS Website.

Executive

John Bradshaw was employed as the School's Business Manager from February 2013. He brought strong experience and an enthusiasm for the education the School offers. Fiona Cock was appointed Assistant Principal, to assist Jennifer West (the Principal) during the first half of the year. Fiona was then appointed Acting Principal for third term, and then continued in the position of Assistant Principal. Norman Sievers was appointed mid-year as the new Principal. He was unable to finish in his previous position until the end of 3rd term. He therefore started in 4th term. Norman was appointed following a rigorous appointment process implemented by the Board with the assistance of an experienced external consultant.

School community

There was a strong focus on engagement with the School community during 2013. Parents attending a whole-School meeting identified the need for greater parent engagement and stronger avenues for parents to communicate feedback to the School. The Parents and Friends Association (PFA) was identified as an appropriate vehicle for communication and discourse. As a result, there was greater parent involvement in, and a re-enlivening of, the PFA. The Board aims to strengthen and increase this engagement into the future. The School continued to engage with Steiner schools around Australia and the world, and generated greater interest in the combination of a Steiner pedagogy with an IB curriculum. The School also became more actively involved with Steiner Education Australia, positioning it to strengthen its networks with other Australian schools

Looking forward

Looking to the future, the School will focus on supporting the teaching staff to continually improve the quality of education, as well as continuing to improve the beautiful environment in which our education is offered. We will also provide a Kindergarten for the first time since 2006. We will continue to facilitate greater community involvement, especially by parents, alumni and friends of the School. We will continue to look outwards, to increase and strengthen our network with other schools and communities in Australia and throughout the World. We will explore opportunities to share and lead in the growth and continuing renewal of Steiner education. We will continue to seek to stabilise enrolments and improve student retention. With greater enrolments, we will increase teaching salaries to be more in line with those in other systems. The Board and Management Team will engage in an intensive focus on the vision of the School and the role of the Board, in order to ensure that the School is working towards that vision in the most effective way. The Board needs to appoint new directors who will guide the School into the future.

In conclusion

2013 marked the beginning of a new chapter in the School's history. We have come through a period of turbulent growth and change to position the School to provide a world-leading education in the heart of Melbourne.

The new buildings and the IB program were in full flight. The Board was delighted to be able to appoint Norman Sievers from a pool of very strong candidates. We feel that the School now has the body, the tools and the leadership to focus on providing the best possible education for its students.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge in particular the following community members for their support and dedication during 2013.

- **Working Bees** – Rowan Doyle and all who attended.
- **PFA** – Deneille Elkington, Matt Deeble, Sam Mendelsohn and all who attended PFA meetings.
- **Marketing & online Strategy** – Denise Hall and Matt Deeble
- **Spring Fair and Convent Events** – Tatiana Kirkpatrick, Deneille Sutton, Bette Poulakos, Irina Riquelme, Poppy Lancashire and all who volunteered.
- **Board Sub Committee support** – Carlo Lacotta, Nick Conigrave, Matt Deeble
- **International Baccalaureate** – Fiona Cock
- **Delivering outstanding education** – Jennifer West, Fiona Cock, Norman Sievers and all of the teaching and administration staff.
- **Retiring Board Members** - Special thanks to Rowan Doyle and James Yeatman who stepped down from the Board after many years of service.

Yours Sincerely,

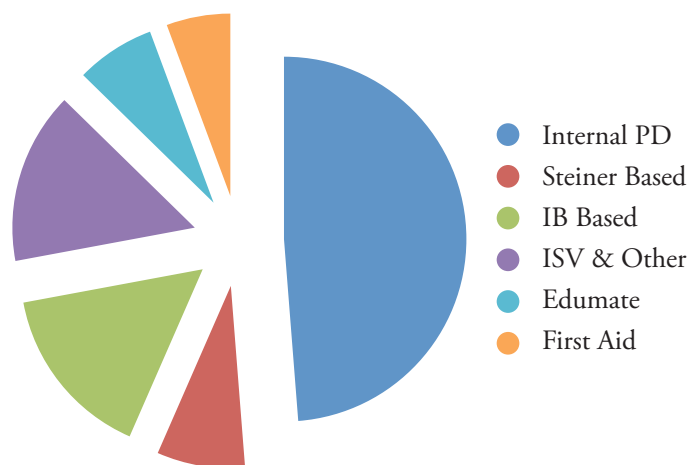
Emrys Nekvapil,

Chair, on behalf of the Board of Directors

Emrys Nekvapil: emrys.nekvapil@sophiamundi.vic.edu.au
 Robin Dexter: robin.dexter@sophiamundi.vic.edu.au
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Professional Development Expenses during 2013

A total of \$28,400 was spent on professional development in 2013. Internal professional development included mentoring and college presentations by Jennifer West, Lisa Devine and Dr Lakshami.



School Performance

Staff Qualifications

Qualification	Total
Bachelor of Education	10
Master of education	1
Graduate Diploma of Education	6
Diploma of Education	13
Steiner Education Qualification	16
Bachelor of Arts	11
Masters	4
Bachelor of Teaching	2
Bachelor of Science	3
Bachelor of Applied Science	1
Bachelor of Outdoor Education	2
Bachelor of Music	4
Bachelor of Physical Education	1
Bachelor of Visual Art / Fine Arts	3
Bachelor of Letters	1
Bachelor of Law	1
Bachelor of Early Childhood Studies	1
Advanced Diplomas	10
Certificates	3
Eurythmy Qualifications	3
Bachelor of History	1
Bachelor of applied Psychology	1

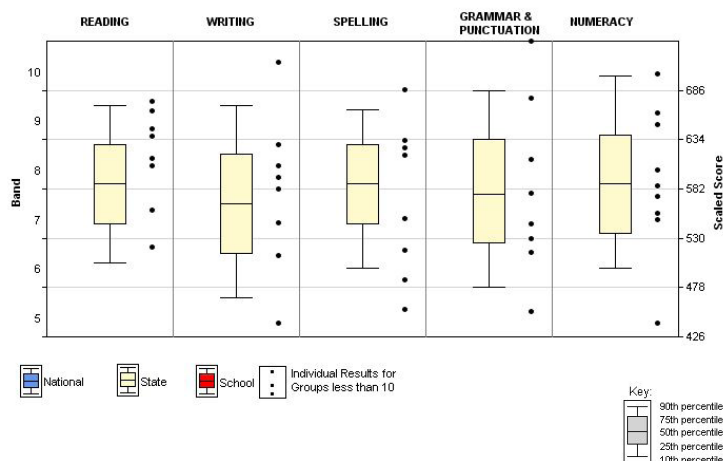
NAPLAN results for Year 9, 2013

Nine Year 9 students sat for the NAPLAN tests in May, 2013. The following table and graph show their results. As there were fewer than ten students sitting the tests, the results are shown as individual dots rather than as a rectangular distribution. At the time of writing this document, national figures were not available and the results shown for comparison are the Victorian state results. Most parents/guardians for students in Classes 3, 5

and 7 opted to remove their children from the NAPLAN tests so results are not reported here.

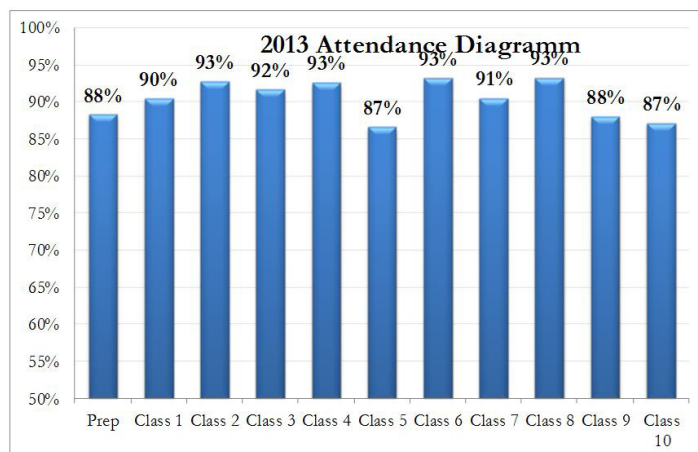
As can be seen from the graph, 75% of the students performed well above average in Reading and 62.5% in Writing (a persuasive writing exercise that does not show our students' strengths in this area). Spelling performance and Grammar and Punctuation scores were not as good, as is typical for Sophia Mundi students. Three students performed very well in Maths, three were about average and three did poorly.

These results reflect a wide range of performance from the Year 9 students. This result is what would be expected according to the experience of their teachers. This Year 9 class has a high proportion of students with learning difficulties, some of which would have interfered with their ability to perform on NAPLAN tests. However, some of these students wanted to sit the test to find out how they would perform on such a set of standardised tests. No special conditions were applied for these students. In the case of the International Baccalaureate, special conditions can be applied for to help students with documented learning difficulties. All in all these Year Nine results reflect a sound performance from those students who sat the NAPLAN tests.



Student Attendance

Student Attendance is now recorded on Edumate. Parents are required, under the school's Attendance Policy, to provide a satisfactory reason for non-attendance. Unexplained absences are followed up by an automated SMS message to parents.



Parent survey results

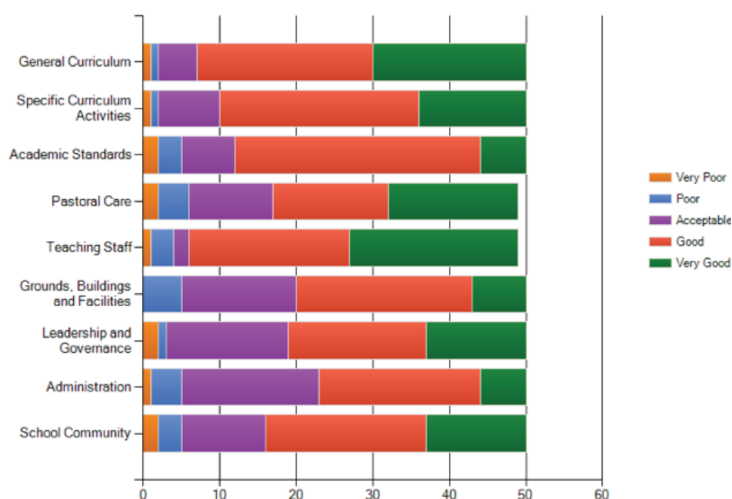
In August the school ran its annual parent satisfaction survey. We had 51 parents complete some or all of the survey which was a good response but down on last year's 64 responses. We had a good spread of responses across all parts of the school and many people provided additional written comments which was appreciated. School leadership and the board use the survey results to inform our plans and priorities for 2014.

Full details of the survey and the results can be found on the school's website.

In brief, the areas that were ranked of highest importance were Teaching Staff, Leadership and Governance and General Curriculum. The areas of highest satisfaction were Teaching Staff, and Pastoral Care and General Curriculum. There was a pleasing improvement in satisfaction levels across all areas compared with the 2012 Survey.

The graph below shows the spread of responses in satisfaction across the survey areas.

How do you rate the school's performance in each of these areas? Note you can make further comments about the school's performance in each area in the following section.



Graduating Class 2013

The students of our graduating class 2013 are to be congratulated on their outstanding success in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP). Their results were exceptional.

Of the Year 9 Class of 2010, 40% continued through to Class 12. Of this graduating class, 70% started at Sophia Mundi in Kindergarten and remained here for their entire education. The attraction of an IB DP within a Steiner School attracted students from Melbourne to India to join the inaugural cohort.

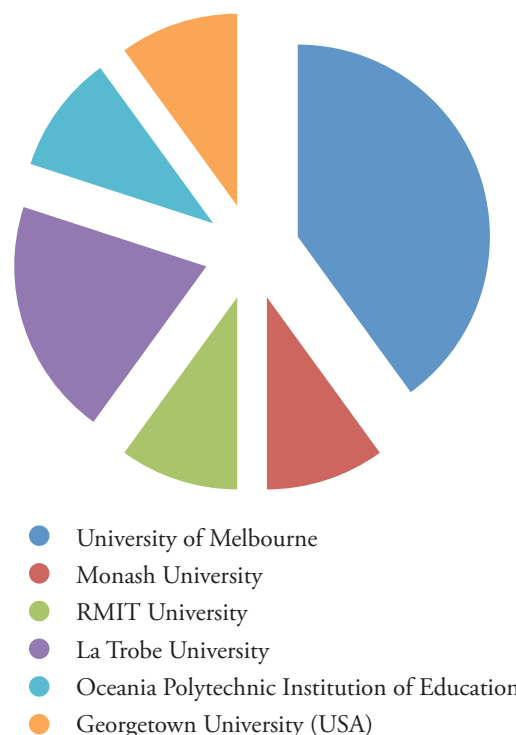
The two-year Diploma Programme curriculum encompasses the study of six subjects together with the core components of CAS (Creativity, Action and Service), TOK (a Theory of Knowledge course) and EE (a 4000 word academic research based Extended Essay). The aim of the challenging and rigorous Diploma Programme is to develop internationally minded people who strive to display the IB Learner Profile outcomes of being inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced and reflective individuals.

In Term 1 Classes 11 and 12 IB students had the opportunity to

attend a TOK Camp for three days in the quiet bush surrounds of Lower Plenty. The camp provided a unique opportunity for the students to bond as a group while participating in workshops and presentations from staff members that challenged their thinking across a range of subject disciplines and areas of knowledge, service of others, including Community Service. The International Baccalaureate CAS program, saw the Class of 2013 fundraising for a variety of worthwhile causes, raising over \$5,000.

The achievement of 80% of students receiving a Notional ATAR over 78.75 was nothing short of fabulous in the first year of the Diploma and is also testament to the quality of our IB staff. Sophia Mundi's average final score (32) is above the 2012 world average of 29.8 and the pass rate (80%) is slightly above the 2012 world average of 78.2%.

90% of our students were offered first round positions at Tertiary institutions and have gone on to study a range of courses – see illustration below.



Courses offered included: Bachelor in Arts (majoring in Music and Islamic Studies), Science (with a look to engineering), Arts plus a Diploma in Music, Outdoor Education, Paramedic Practice and Public Health Promotion, Political Science – in Foreign Service. Diploma Architectural Building Design (Vocational).

ACADEMIC Awards, Achievements, Scholarships

In February this year Lilian Li and Ondine Martin had their art work selected to be part of the Victorian and Tasmanian Visual Art exhibit in Glen Ira.

Angus McLean (Class of 2014) and Brigit Doyle (Class of 2015) were awarded Kwong Lee Dow Scholarships by the University of Melbourne. As a Kwong Lee Dow Young Scholar, students take part in exciting program of events and activities focused on expanding academic and personal horizons.

Summer Lyle-Holmes (Class of 2013) was not only accepted into Georgetown University (America) but was awarded a scholarship to support her in her academic pursuits.

Fiona Cock
IB Co-ordinator



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