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Report from the College of Teachers

he year 2024 saw Kindlehill School renew its focus on Caring for Earth and Caring for People. An ethos that we have always shared. The time was right to bring some focus to these foundations.

It was a year where we consciously brought the community together and connected in real time and place as a way to foster friendships and conversation. It was an appreciation of how connecting in this way is most definitely a critical way we can overcome differences and

polarisation of ideas. There were renewed opportunities to meet each other as a class community, as a school community and as a local Blue Mountains community. There were opportunities to engage in formal conversations about topics and ideas that impact on us but also fostering a connection and care for people in smaller and personal ways.

At the same time, the School embarked on a path of renewed energy to work together to bring a participatory



element to the living and learning with climate change. The initiative saw things such as encouraging alternate ways to commute to school, to collaboration with the Blue Mountains Conservation Society to holding whole community events to save the Grose River from poisoning from abandoned mines.

Our students benefit enormously from being held within this community that models, works and collaborates to care for people and our planet. They feel the relevance and importance of their learning shaping and creating change in their lives and the world they are growing into.

It's care in action. No better education exists.

Erica Chaperlin Principal, on behalf of the College of Teachers



Board of Directors

2024 Board Review

ur most significant Board action in 2024 was the appointment of a new Principal to guide Kindlehill into the future. From the beginning, Erica demonstrated leadership capacities -facing challenges squarely, and in her creative and social efforts to get to know families and what is important to them. Another significant Board decision in 2024 was to go ahead with renovations to the front of School, including removing asbestos from the ceilings, creating a beautiful entrance and an upgrade of the toilets.

In our review of 2024, Directors reflected on the challenge that faced us mid-year with an enrolment dip, and how this galvanised strategic actions to address the concerns in a collaboration of Board, the Executive, College and a Marketing Group which included parents. Later in the year we returned to our strategic planning, revisiting agreements that influence ongoing decisions. This process continues as a key focus for 2025.

Board members also reflected on the composition of the Board. Though a small cohort there is breadth of perspectives and skills that are evident in the agility and confidence of discussion and decision-making.

In 2024, the Board welcomed two new directors from the parent body who have already made important contributions. At our AGM in May, the Membership reflected on an important direction that is now



embedded within our School -that of Place-based education where Country and community are teachers and teachings. In this context we also discussed Kindlehill's Climate Change Statement and how this was being implemented within curriculum as well as woven into community events.

We are excited for the next step, visioning and re-visioning in

collaboration with other School bodies as part of our Master and Strategic Planning processes in 2025.

In gratitude for the generosity and commitment Members and Directors bring to this important role of steering a steady and exciting course,

Lynn Daniel Chair of the Board

Report from the Membership or Parent Body



s a parent a year in the life of Kindlehill feels more accurately like a collection of seasons, celebrations, rituals, and moments.

2024 at our beautiful School felt like smiles at the gate at pickup, baking cakes and making coffee at the fair. It was the sound of laughter and singing, colour and beauty as you walked past a classroom.

It was kids climbing the tree house near the front gate, and games being played. It was piles of sleeping mats and camping chairs in the drive, as teachers pack the school bus for another camp of nature, discovery and friendship. It was our children returned to us fresh-faced and tired, with newfound independence.

It was the performance space filled again and again, with dance, singing, vision days, discos, music, drama performances and rituals of beginnings and endings.

Kindlehill, where our children are held as unique beings and where their curiosity and creativity, their natural love of learning and their need for belonging, are held as central and sacred threads of schooling.

Maddy Dignam

Care for Earth

he theme for 2024 was Care for Earth. Care for People. This theme arose from the Annual Vision Day in September the previous year.

The Learning and Living Together with Climate Change narrative that

was collaboratively devised as a guiding vision for 2024 galvanised some of our School community actions linked to the four elements highlighted in the vision statement.





Learning and living together with climate change

We are stronger together when we move toward change with the reflection and participation of many voices.

Goals and decisions are made in the presence of our children's futures and all life, while honouring the place where we live.

We work practically and creatively for achievable actions.

We hope to inspire positive change within our School and the wider community, reducing waste, sharing resources and strengthening connection.

This is important so that we can meet the global climate crisis with confidence, gratitude, humility and empowerment.

"We work practically and creatively for achievable actions"

We began the year launching the Permaculture Plan and joining in the wider Blue Mountains Edible Gardens Trail.

Mode Shift Mondays – We invited families to use an alternative to the one-family car-trip to School on Mondays. Class 5 – 6 conducted an audit of how many parent hours and dollars were likely spent under start of the year arrangements. Happily, many more students are now catching the train.



"We hope to inspire positive change within our School and the wider community, reducing waste, sharing resources and strengthening connection"

We focussed on threading connection and celebration through our sustainability actions which included Senior School Slow Fashion stall at the Autumn Fair and the Just Dance (and Swap) event.







"Goals and decisions are made in the presence of our children's futures and all life, while honouring the place where we live."

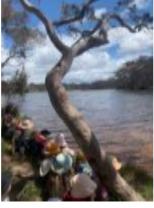
Learning and Living Together with Climate Change is embedded in everyday learning at Kindlehill:

- Kindy children went to the lake to make friends with ducks and dragonflies.
- Class 1 2 children each created and shared an activity or adventure connected to a local element of our environment.
- Class 3-4 conducted bird observations, Backyard Birds on our site and made nesting boxes.
- Class 5-6 headed to Wangat Camp amidst beautiful forests and creeks in the Barrington's and later, they camped at Crowdy Bay for a beach environment connection.

conscious understanding that we live in and with place. As we did the science around swamps and the water cycle, we came to understand how we can be part of addressing the impacts of climate change by the choices we make and the actions we take in our local place.

In High School, Care for Earth evolved into a more





"We are stronger together when we move toward change with the reflection and participation of many voices".

Our focus was "stronger together":

- It began with a sizzle! Families gathered the Friday before School term, to cook together and eat together around the fire in bush circle.
- We finished the term participating in the **Blue** Mountains Sustainability Festival, senior students highlighting the Students Send Plastic Packing in Katoomba Cafes. The campaign goal was to help reduce plastic milk carton waste in Katoomba cafes by 80%. We are excited to report that this project is now on the way to being implemented in 2025!





There was a burst of School community Fundraising to help the Senior Students' campaign to reach its fundraising goal of \$20,000, in support of Katoomba cafes converting to a milk system that reduces plastic by 80%. We also invited families to participate in Connect to Protect community event with Dharug elders and Consoc, in celebrating our connection with Blue Mountains waterways and in taking some practical actions to end the contamination of headwaters to the Grose River, by the abandoned Canyon Colliery.



"When you are taking action for climate, it's not for climate change it's for you. It's for your family, it's for everything you love, everyone you love, every place that you love – that's why you're doing it. What is climate change, at its core, other than a failure to love?"

Katherine Hayhoe, climate scientist.

For a peaceful planet, on behalf of the Climate Action Visioning Group Lynn

Vision Day 2023 where the Climate Change narrative was initially devised.

Care for People

are for People was evident through a renewal of focus on community building initiatives. The post-Covid world has caused perhaps a stronger reliance on building community through digital platforms. It felt important as a school community to model having conversations and being in closer connection with people beyond our immediate friendship circles. The intention was to create opportunities for human connections and renewing what feels the slightly lost art of conversation.



Community Engagement

Kindling Conversations - we ran a series of conversation with our parent body on Neurodivergence and meeting the new Principal.

There were opportunities created to gather more often:

- We focussed on welcoming new families through Afternoon Teas and connecting people through buddy systems as a way to introduce them to the culture of the school and connect them more quickly to other families.
- We held two Music Soirees where families could picnic and celebrate music together.
- We held a poetry slam evening where Kindlehill students and families and members of the broader community could share their poetry and stories.

- Film nights at school where families could gather and relax together.
- We reinvigorated the Craft Group

 people gathering to do craft,
 often for the craft stall, but also for enjoyment. This was supported by craft workshops including mending workshops, doll making and felt. It was a helpful way for more shy people to connect in smaller groups. We held an end of year Coffee and Craft stall as a final whole school gathering.
- Classes held Parent Evenings and added a more social dimension to it like a pot luck dinners and sharing about the culture of the school. Parents held a sizzle simmer and share event and organised a whole school-invited camp out west.















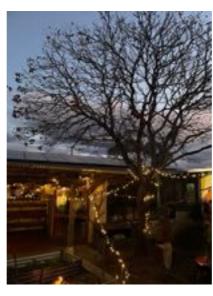


We celebrated our festivals, the Autumn Equinox, Autumn Fair and Open Day, and Spring Equinox through deeper connection to our local environment and the seasonal changes that are observable and relevant.

We were inspired by the local calendar featuring the changes of our local area and built a Winters Night Celebration around that. The celebration was an important connection to communities and to the land that we are educating on. Families walked through student-created displays of the seasons that highlighted the elements that were emblematic of it – the lizards, the eel migration, the cockatoos and the dianella. Local indigenous elders played didgeridoo, and small campfires welcomed.







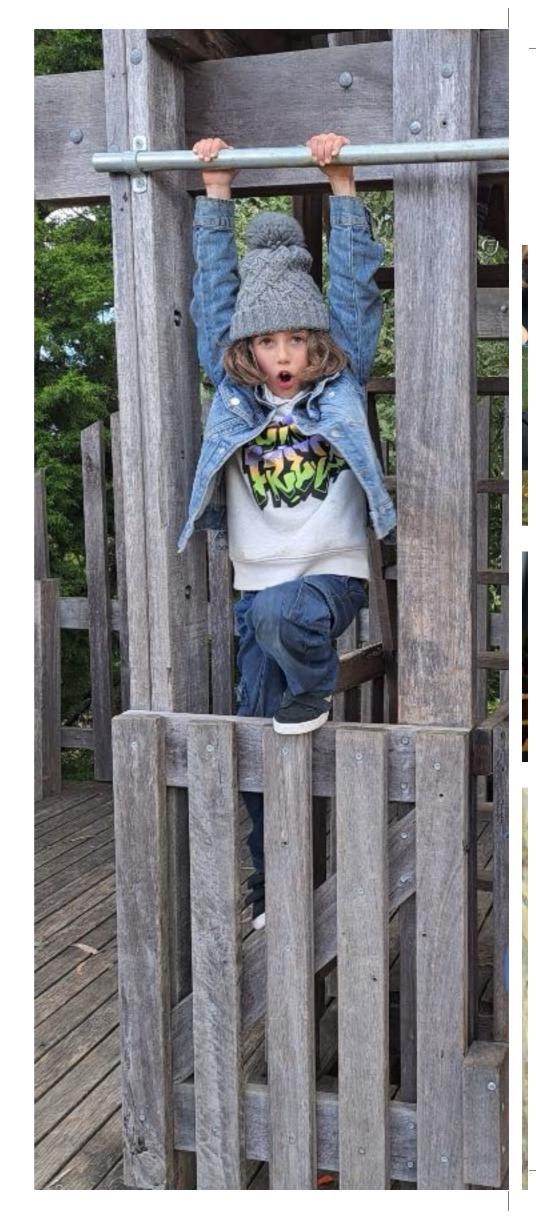


Student Wellbeing

e were successful in our application of the AISNSW Wellbeing grant which we used to focus on Attendance issues for our students. There is a growing concern, nationally but also evident in our community that attendance matters. We addressed the issue by bringing some low-key information to the parent community about attendance and interrupting the cycle early. Occasional days off can develop into problematic attendance issues. We wanted to create some awareness and discussion with families about the importance of regular attendance and intervening early when small problems begin.

We also wanted to support families through ensuring that there was a wellbeing focus in school which focussed on our connection to each other and to the natural world. We developed a Wellness Wednesday program where students in a small group would spend time connecting to each other in nature to build capacity for self-reliance, to appreciate the foundation of wellbeing as understanding our connection and to provide opportunity for conversation about the things that matter.

In the Primary School we addressed the issue of attendance through ensuring that students who were absent for periods of time whether as a result of illness or due to being on Country were supported to remain connected to the learning occurring at School through the provision of related work and connecting to a support teacher as a resource.



Creative and Performing Arts





































Outdoor Education and PDHPE

n graduating from Primary School, most students report that camps are their favourite part of their learning experience. They are a significant part of our curriculum and one which we consider to be fundamental to education here at Kindlehill. The camps bring students into closer connection to the things they are learning about in the classroom. It also, and probably more significantly, allows a natural learning to occur around respectful and compassionate care and communication between people and the environment. It's where we sense our connectedness to each other and the natural world in which it is occurring. It's little wonder they are such a favourite.

In High School, camps arise from the learning in Geography. There is a deeper connection to the learning about place when immersed in it.

















Initiatives that command respect and responsibility

- Connection with local indigenous Community – Winters Night Seasonal calendar
- Dharug Dalang songs and language
- Hiroshima Day
- Shoe Box project
- Wear it Yellow Campaign
- Fundraising for the Kids help Cafes Kick Plastic The school held several fundraising activities including Holey Moley Icy Poley, Happy Snaps (class photos), a Twilight Craft Market and a House Concert. This raised a significant amount of funds to the project as a whole.



Further contextual information about Kindlehill School, including student demographic information and details of funding the School receives, can be found at http://myschool.edu.au





















Outcomes and results

Information on student performance in all national or state-wide tests or equivalent and examinations can be found at http://myschool.edu.au

Post School Options

Kindlehill caters for students from K-12. Our Senior School provides a non-ATAR pathway to careers and further education. Students pursuing an ATAR pathway tend to complete their education at other educational institutions. 2025 is our first class 12 cohort to complete their High School education at Kindlehill.



Professional Learning

Professional Learning Activity	Number of Staff Participating
Five Day Steiner Intensives – Newcastle Steiner School	2
SpellEx Program	1
PreLit Training	1
Rudolf Steiner Autumn Seminar: Primary Years- Gleneon	1
Steiner Educations Student Support Conference	1
Desmos Activities for Stage 5 training	1
Colour Workshop – Blue Mountains Steiner School	4
Society and Culture Curriculum Senior School - AISNSW	1
Wingara Course – Weaving Knowledges Of Country through the Curriculum	1
Cracking the Hard Class	1

Teacher Accreditation

Level of Accreditation	Number of Teachers
Conditional	0
Provisional	0
Proficient Teacher	15
Highly Accomplished Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
Lead Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
Total Number of Teachers	15

Workforce Composition

Workforce composition can be found at http://www.myschool.edu.au/.

Kindlehill had no Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff in 2024.





Student Attendance

This year we received a grant from AISNSW for Student Wellbeing and we looked to increase some preventions strategies. In the High School we have 'wellbeing Wednesdays' when students led by an outdoor educator spend time in the local environment and have a chance to walk and talk about the relevant issues and concerns.

We developed a case management program for students with low attendance. It allowed for students to access learning from home via TEAMS platform or in the Primary School, liaising with parents more closely and having work sent home. We also work with allied health professionals to attempt to remove the barriers to better attendance.

Part of the prevention of attendance issues for students was to highlight the development of problematic behaviours with families so that intervention could be addressed earlier. This was done with individual families who had children with attendance issues, but also through articles in the newsletters. We developed some better monitoring strategies to identify at-risk students and provided regular feedback to class teachers.

This table displays the average attendance rates for each class level during 2024, as reported in the Australian Government student attendance collection process. For whole school student attendance rates, please refer to the School's data on the My School website: http://myschool.edu.au

Class/Year	% Days attended in 2024
Class 1	87.33
Class 2	84.86
Class 3	97.46
Class 4	84.76
Class 5	83.88
Class 6	84.47
Class 7	87.60
Class 8	82.38
Class 9	66.48
Class 10	78.01



School Policies

The following policies are publicly available on the school website:

- Child Protection
- No Bullying
- <u>Discipline</u>
- Complaints
- Enrolment

Stakeholder satisfaction

In 2024 we formalised the feedback from parents, staff and students through short anonymous surveys. The summary reports for those surveys are available through the website.

The key findings from the parent survey related to streamlining and improving the communication and accessibility of relevant information for parents about the events and activities within the school. Similarly, a common theme was addressing the physical space issues in the playground including the ball court and spaces to play other sports

One of the most significant themes that arose from the teacher feedback related to staffroom areas and spaces for teachers.

From the student survey we confirmed that friendships and connection are important. Hence size of school is a consideration for the students as is the breadth of subject choices.

The results were shared with the relevant stake holders and informed the school improvement plan and strategic directions for the school.

Feedback meetings were held for all relevant stakeholders.

Anti-Racism Statement

We acknowledge that Kindlehill School is situated on Gundungurra and Dharug land. We recognise the importance and value of listening to these communities in supporting and promoting a society which is just and equitable for all.

In so doing we hold the Uluru Statement from the heart and the Makarrata as vital and important in guiding the relationship with the Aboriginal communities in Australia and the local area. Kindlehill seeks to work closely with the Aboriginal community in addressing racism.

Kindlehill promotes and supports an ethnically diverse community. It holds as a core value the deep and enduring respect for the Aboriginal culture of Australia and the diverse migrant communities who have made Australia their home. Kindlehill supports and promotes social harmony where all people regardless of race and cultural background feel their place and their value within our school community.

At Kindlehill we strive to be conscious of forces which seek to dismantle social cohesion and harmony. Kindlehill recognises that racism occurs at many levels and hinders our progress towards a more just and equitable world.

At Kindlehill we recognise that racism is structural, not merely attitudinal. We endeavour to educate ourselves and our community in recognising racism and the ways in which we contribute to it and seek ways in which we can dismantle racism within Australia.

Financial Information

Report from the Business Manager

he 2024 year was a challenging year on a variety of levels. Cost of living pressures continued on from the previous year and as a way the School supported families and the community, it was decided not to increase School fees for the year. That being said, the School did continue to provide support and relief to families where able. The School itself was not immune to the economical climate and as a result realigned and fine-tuned its planned expenditure to cater for the increases in costs and supplies.

Enrolments experienced a significant dip in the middle of the year but regained somewhat in the latter half with the 2024 Census enrolment number being 110 enrolments. This Census number was 14% down on the previous year. As in 2023, the 2024 school year was punctuated with a number of students both starting and leaving, with the net result for the year being a drop of 3 students.

From a financial perspective, the School finished the year with a net operating deficit. Previous year surpluses enabled the School to absorb this deficit. The main driver behind the deficit is two-fold:

- 1. A significant drop in revenue resulting from less government funding being associated with the 14% decrease in the enrolment numbers reported at Census, coupled with the increased financial support and relief the School offered to families. And
- 2. An increase in employment costs.

The School's operating expenses, excluding staffing, despite being down on the previous year had minimal impact absorbing the increased employment costs.

The financial picture of the School is stable. Long-term enrolments and cash outlook is positive, with a sound and sustainable future ahead. We have no debt to the bank. The School has a strong Net Asset base, albeit 1% down on the previous year; and all the financial ratios are stable with no major deviations from 2023.

In 2024, the Administration team was made up of our Administration Officer Rebecca Cornish, Compliance Officer Lisa Parragi with Vikki Mironova who filled in as



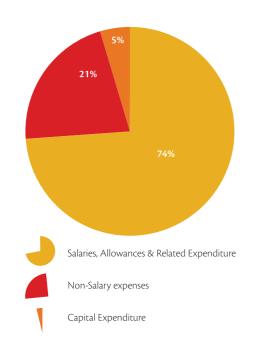
Compliance Officer in a temporary capacity in the first half of the year. Our Bookkeeper of many years, Kylie King finished her time at the School, with a new Bookkeeper Joanne Tomkins picking up the role in the latter half of the year. The team is completed by our Facilities/IT and much more officer Derek Johnston. All these staff members contribute so much to the successful service we offer at Kindlehill, they each bring their own unique and proficient skillset to their respective roles every day. These staff provide the backbone for the value and support the Admin Team provides not only me, but the School and the Community as a whole. The School is very grateful for their contributions.

Publication Requirements

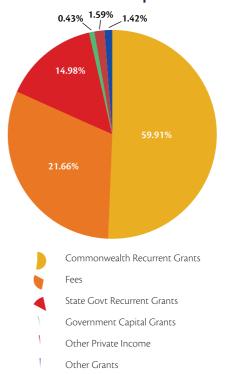
The Australian Government requires that this annual report be publicly disclosed, online via the School's website: www.kindlehill.nsw.edu.au. It is provided to NESA in electronic form and is also available in hard copy from the School administration upon request.

Summary of Financial Information

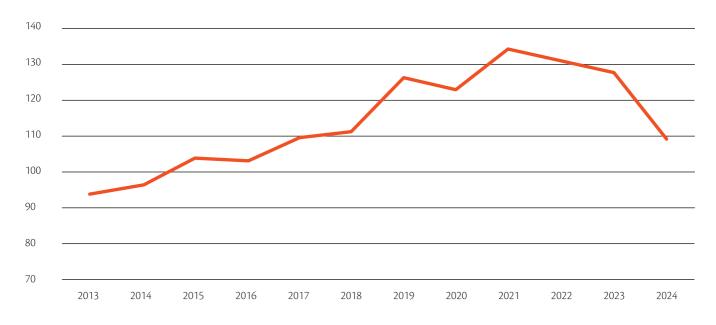
Kindlehill Recurrent & Capital Expenditure 2024



Kindlehill Recurrent & Capital Income 2024



Census Student Numbers 2013-2024



Acknowledgement

Kindlehill is situated on Dharug and Gundungurra land; we pay respects to the traditional custodians whose cultures and customs continue to nurture this land.

We support the Uluru Statement from the Heart,

Truth-telling about the impact and legacy of
colonisation, a Voice to Parliament enshrined in the
Australian Constitution and a process of Treaty making.



Kindlehill is a K-12 school with a philosophy in Rudolf Steiner Education

www.kindlehill.nsw.edu.au

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