



## Tarremah Steiner School, Tasmania

### About us

We are a small, co-educational, K–10 Steiner School, the only one located in southern Tasmania.

### Our approach

There are a number of reasons for our consistently good results in reading.

We have a positive and active reading culture. We encourage parents to read to their children and discourage overreliance on textbooks or technology. We have a strong story element to our teaching, and we use phonic-based programs to teach both reading and writing.

Reading for interest is encouraged and long reading projects are part of our curriculum. The students find reading familiar and relaxing, and want to participate in it.

Much time is spent in our early childhood centre in classes 1 and 2 covering preliminary skills and competencies which feed into writing and reading. In class 1 this includes letter combinations and qualities of the word expressed artistically (drawings, recitation, movement, song) and in class 2 students read their own written text and are later introduced to the printed word in books.

It is only in class 3 that whole classes are reading books, and the ‘slow’ introduction not only builds necessary skills but also engenders enthusiasm, confidence and anticipation without the stress of having to succeed early. The students will typically listen to a story, rest, revisit it by recall, reconstruct it verbally as a class, and finally record it – and this rhythm of learning is a deep experience of literature that allows a slow awakening to the construction of words. By class 3, most students are ready to ‘fly’ with their reading.

We have a clear early referral system for those requiring extra support in primary school and use a letters-and-sounds approach that is phonics based until middle primary classes. We have home reading programs in classes 2–4, with parent-supported reading practice three times for each text to attain fluency. Guided reading is used in some classes.

Learning support continues through high school. Students with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia are assisted to build basic phonological awareness skills, phonics, and regular reading instruction. Adjustments are applied and activities used for word sorts, phrase matching, sight word practice and repeat reading. We work closely with educational psychologists and parents to find the most meaningful support for each child.

We do not study for PAT tests or NAPLAN so we can stay focused on tasks for learning, not exams. The school environment is relaxed but purposeful as we believe an unstressed child is a receptive child, for all aspects of learning, including literacy.

### Our profile

ENROLMENTS **211** LBOTE **13%** INDIGENOUS **2%** ICSEA **1117**