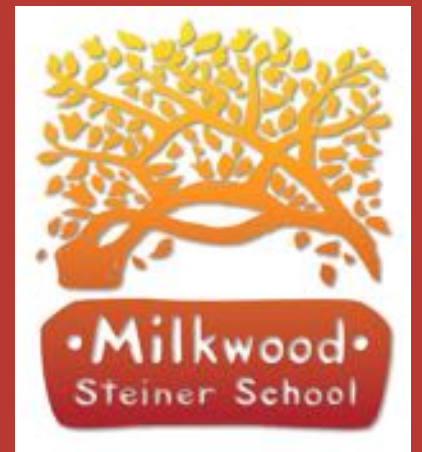


2022 SCHOOL SURVEY REPORT



MILKWOOD STEINER SCHOOL (DJANDJAG)
REPORT PREPARED MARCH, 2023



OVERVIEW

The Annual School Survey collects feedback from parents of Milkwood Steiner School students.

Quantitative and qualitative data is collected through the Survey. This data is analysed in this report. This analysis provides the school with insight into parent perceptions of Milkwood Steiner School's performance, culture and service in the year 2022.

2022 saw an increase in parent participation in the Survey, and I acknowledge the time and care parents took in completing it. This survey is an essential part of a bigger picture which guides our focus areas for improvement in 2023.

NETANELA MIZRAHI

Principal, Milkwood Steiner School
Larrakia Country, 2023

HOW DO PARENTS FEEL ABOUT MILKWOOD?

In 2022, all parents stated that their child likes, feels safe at, makes good progress at Milkwood, reflecting an improvement in parent perception since 2021. Almost all parents believed Milkwood supports their child to love learning, supports their child's learning needs, and works with parents to support the child. There was an overwhelming perception of strong skills amongst educators at Milkwood, by parents. Parents strongly believe behaviours are well-managed at Milkwood. Parents overwhelmingly believe that their child's culture and diversity are represented through curriculum at Milkwood and that the school acts with the best interests of their child. Parents commented on their children's enjoyment of school, describing an environment in which they feel welcomed, skilled and can thrive through the respect they experience from staff. The diversity and inclusivity of the community emerged as a theme, valued across several responses. One comment raised a concern that their child might not be adequately challenged, and another encouraged the school to consider opening up its site to the broader community for the benefits this would bring to community members who do not have children at the school.

Of all specialist programs at Milkwood, parents value the Music, Indonesian, Indigenous Knowledge, Outdoor Classroom, Festivals and Learning Enrichment programs. The survey revealed the potential for the school to increase its communication about these programs; a small but noteworthy number of parents answered "I don't know" to questions about the specialist programs.



WHAT DO PARENTS THINK ABOUT MILKWOOD'S MISSION AND VALUES?

There was an overall increase in parents' support for Milkwood's mission and values since 2021. By 2022, every parent stated their support for Milkwood's mission and values. All parents supported Milkwood's adaptation of the Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework to this Time and Place. Parents believe that sustainability and learning and growth are visible, and that the school looks for ways to improve. Every parent surveyed would recommend Milkwood to other families. One response included questions about the relationship between a traditional Steiner framework and current best practice, suggesting that the school can improve the ways it explains 'Adapting to Time and Place' with specific attention to Best Practice adaptations.



COMMUNICATION

There was an overall improvement in parents' experience of communication at Milkwood in 2022. The 2022 survey revealed similar trends in the most effective modes of communication about children to those of 2021, with the most relevant information received from Student Profiles (reports), informal conversations with teachers, parent-teacher interviews, class information sessions, educational adjustment plans, newsletters and emails from the teacher. However, overall, each of these communication modes attracted higher numbers of selection for relevant information than in 2021, showing improvement in each of these modes' efficacy and reach. When it comes to receiving relevant information about the school, parents found that the newsletter, written communication from the Principal, written communication from the Administration and Enrolment Officer and the school Website produced the highest results. Adult Education sessions, Milkwood's Facebook page, the Annual Report and AGM, school policies, school tours and written communication from the Board, talking to teachers and other parents, were also selected as sources of relevant information about the school. The majority of parents always or almost always read the school newsletter. A small number read it only sometimes. None stated that they never read the school newsletter. All parents stated they knew who to speak to when they had questions or concerns. The majority felt well informed about their child's progress, and about what's happening at Milkwood. Parents who communicated with the school in 2022 reported that they received a timely response, felt heard and were satisfied with the response. In 2022, there was an improvement in parents' experience of feeling heard and feeling satisfied in the response to their concerns raised. Parents felt comfortable bringing concerns to their child's teacher or the Principal. A significant percentage of parents did not know whether they would feel comfortable bringing their concerns to the Board, while others stated they felt comfortable.



ADULT EDUCATION & CONTRIBUTION

The top areas of adult learning that parents want to access at Milkwood in 2022 are:

1. Indigenous Knowledge
2. Child Development
3. Steiner Philosophy
4. The local environment
5. Parenting + Artistic/craft experiences (equal)
6. Steiner Education
7. Health & Nutrition + Anthroposophy (equal)
8. Lewis Deep Democracy

In 2022, parents contributed most of their volunteer time at festivals, fundraising and working bees. Volunteering in class and garden and contributing professional skills also featured highly in parent contributions in 2022. The greatest barriers to parent contribution at Milkwood in 2022 was conflicting schedules, paid work responsibilities and caring responsibilities. One parent commented that they would contribute more if opportunities were available in early mornings or late evenings.



WHY MILKWOOD?

Significant themes emerging from parent responses to why Milkwood is their school of choice, included

- Community
- Leadership
- Teaching and quality of educators
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Child's happiness and wellbeing
- Specialist Programs
- Values
- Management

YOUR REASONS!

My child is deeply respected by the teachers, his needs are carefully thought through and met.

It is a joy to be a part of the community.

Milkwood is such a great school and the community that supports and leads it is doing such a good job.

My child loves going to Milkwood and is keen to go to school everyday. My child enjoys the diversity and richness of learning at Milkwood.

My children love Milkwood and we fell so lucky to be part of the community.

Always happy to get up and get to school of a morning and has happy disposition at the end of a school day.

My son loves his first year at Milkwood; a great introduction into school-life for him. He has made friends easily and blended in well with his class, loves his teachers and the things he learns at school and has enjoyed making new friends and learning new skills.

Your newsletter is amazing, I love reading this every week. I hope you are thinking about community in your preparations for the future in a new site, as I believe there is a real need to offer space for our whole community to grow skills in sustainability, seasonal response, music making etc etc and that by hosting such initiatives on a weekly basis – All Milkwood children will benefit.

Best decision we made to move to Milkwood.

My children are thriving at Milkwood.

We are new to the school and have been welcomed so generously! I look forward to watching the children flourish as they settle in deeper over time.

It's been such a wonderful experience; we're so glad we sent our child to Milkwood

He loves being at milkwood and loves his teachers way of teaching them.

There has been a good attempt by the teacher to adapt to my child's individual learning needs but there is still some concern they are not being adequately challenged.

I especially love the magic of the festivals.

Milkwood's specialist programs are of an exceptionally high standard, especially the music program. They provide rich and meaningful experiences for the students. The school values a range of learning areas and promotes these to the students and families, creating authentic learning experiences across these programs. It would be good to see more camps each year in the older grades as the children love them!

I would like to see a mental health paraprofessional incorporated into the whole school specialist learning.

Overall we are very happy with the learning environments and what Steiner stands for

Mission and values seemed evident when attending drop offs / pick ups / helping around the classroom.

Well managed.

Great learning environment that nurtures my children's imagination and creativity.

They respect our decision not to vaccinate my child.

Values, philosophy.

Quality of educators and assistants.

Milkwood is our school of choice as it values the children as unique individual; the school has a deep respect for local place and culture and fosters this in the children; the learning is varied and rich, and the school creates a sense of community where families are welcome and part of the experience.

It is genuine and responsive and a smaller school.

Beautiful approach to education. Wonderful teachers. Like minded community. I can see significant difference in my kids.

Similar values as our family.

Steiner philosophy, common connections with people in the school or previously associated, impressed by the focus of involving and associating with indigenous culture, it's growing reputation, my child is simply thriving. I believe the Steiner approach is most appropriate for children's development and learning, and provide the building blocks to fully thrive and flourish.

The school has been a pivotal reason for deciding to stay in Darwin.

My child is relaxed and happy.

It's inclusiveness and nurturing way of teaching.

Values.

My children are seen and loved They are taught in creative and engaging ways They learn so much indigenous knowledge The music program is second to none.

Steiner curriculum, size, leadership.

The philosophy of Milkwood of educating the whole child.

Like its philosophy.

My child is extraordinary and I feel Milkwood is an environment which recognises and celebrates her strengths. The music program alone is worth the school fees! She LOVES going to school each day, and that gives me confidence she is learning to love learning.

It is the right space for my child at this time. I feel supported as a parent and an individual, and I love the community.

The board and principal are doing a great job and we really appreciate all their effort.

It is a nice environment for my child to learn and grow as an individual.

I have been impressed by the use of the code of conduct to make a more child centred and equitable positive culture within the school for all. There is a good balance between traditional Steiner philosophy integrated in to a modern and forward thinking approach to children's education that's still integrated within modern society. I'm excited to see what is happening for the schools future and my child's development and learning being enhanced by this. Thank you!

We were welcomed with such warmth by administration. This meant so much to us as a new family.

2023 IMPROVEMENT GOALS

The following actions will occur in 2023 based on the results of this survey:

1. An increase in communication about Milkwood's Specialist programs by creating dedicated Specialist Program pages on the school website and Newsletter contributions from Specialist Programs.
2. A focus on Board communication in the 2023-24 Business plan, including the development of a Board Communication Strategy to give the Board greater visibility.
3. The employment of a Grounds Person to facilitate volunteer parent working bees at times that are most convenient for parents.
4. The creation of the 2023 Adult Education calendar based on parent learning areas of interest.

