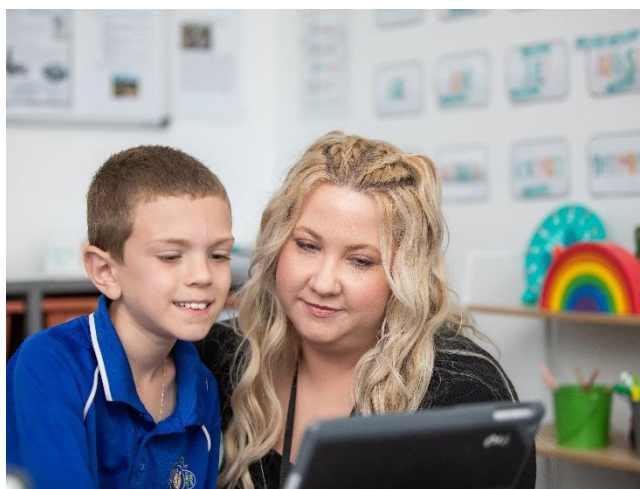


A PLACE IN THE HEART



# Toogoolawa

SCHOOL



## School Annual Report

2024 (Based on 2023 data)

"The most precious gift of education is character."

## The Heart of Toogoolawa

# “A place in the Heart”

At Toogoolawa School, we empower students with knowledge, character, and values, setting the foundation for a successful and fulfilling life. Our educational philosophy, known as Educare, is centered on nurturing the innate goodness within each student, guiding them through a holistic journey of self-discovery and ethical growth.

The concept of Educare profoundly influences our approach to education. Derived from the Latin word meaning ‘to draw forth from within,’ Educare embodies the belief that every child is inherently wise, loving, and possesses a natural ability to learn. Our role as educators is to create an environment where these innate qualities can flourish, drawing upon the treasure-house that lies within each student.

Educare emphasises holistic development, nurturing the physical, emotional, intellectual, and ethical dimensions of each individual. It prioritises character education, instilling values and virtues that guide students to lead balanced and fulfilling lives. This value-centered learning encourages students to reflect on and live by universal human values, integrating these principles into their daily lives and interactions. Mindfulness and self-awareness are integral to Educare. We incorporate practices that promote self-awareness and mindfulness, helping students understand their emotions and thoughts, and develop self-control and emotional intelligence. These practices enable students to navigate life's challenges with resilience and empathy.

Our Values-based Education (VbE) approach is a practical application of Educare, often referred to as Human Values Education. This method aims to bring forth the five universal human values of Love, Truth, Peace, Right Conduct, and Non-violence from within both teachers and students. These values permeate all aspects of our educational process, including the learning of curriculum material. By fostering an environment where these values are actively practiced, we create a supportive and harmonious community that inspires and guides students in their personal and academic journeys.

Active role modelling is another key aspect of our philosophy. Teachers, parents, and mentors at Toogoolawa serve as exemplars of the values and virtues we aim to instil in our students. By demonstrating these qualities in their own lives, they inspire and guide young individuals, fostering a supportive and values-rich community.

In essence, the Toogoolawa Heart is about drawing forth the inherent goodness and potential within each student. Through our holistic and values-based approach, we strive to cultivate individuals who are not only knowledgeable and skilled but also compassionate, mindful, and ethically grounded. This journey of self-discovery and ethical growth ensures that our students are well-prepared to lead successful and fulfilling lives, contributing positively to the world around them.

# Toogoolawa Annual Report 2024 (Based on 2023 data)

## Contextual Information

### School Sector:

Independent

### Year Levels Offered:

4- 10

### Co-educational or Single Sex:

Boys Only

### Characteristics of the Student Body:

Toogoolawa is an Aboriginal word meaning “A place in the heart” and has been adopted to continually affirm the loving principles on which we base our teaching practice.

Toogoolawa School is a spiritually inclined, inter-denominational Special Assistance School (SAS) for boys. As a SAS school we cater for a diverse range of learning, emotional, psychological, and physical needs, to give our students, the best opportunity to lead useful, meaningful and happy lives.

Students who attend Toogoolawa School have a variety of complex, individual needs and circumstances that have led to difficulties with participating in mainstream school. Students of Toogoolawa are accepted based on the criteria that they are at significant risk of or have disengaged from other formal educational avenues. Toogoolawa identifies and provides individualised pathways and opportunities that cater to the needs, interest, and abilities of our students. Some of the students who attend Toogoolawa are anxious while others are no longer welcome in mainstream schools for adverse behaviour choices, while others have simply fallen through the academic cracks of the education system. Some students also prefer the therapeutic benefit of a small school setting.

In 2023 we had 12% of students who identified as Indigenous while 75% of students receive substantial to extensive adjustments to access the school’s curriculum. Many of our students are diagnosed with ASD, Trauma, ADHD, ODD and Anxiety.

At Toogoolawa, we aim to develop good character and enhance academic skills to prepare our boys for the work force, TAFE, other alternative settings or where appropriate integrate them back into the general education system. We believe “*The end of education is character*” and explicitly teach our students values, virtues, and social emotional learning (SEL) to help build positive relationships, confidence, and a sense of meaningful purpose. We inspire our students to live the values of love, peace, truth, right conduct, and non-violence.

### Total Enrolments: \* [Schools might wish to include comparative data from previous year\(s\) here](#)

2014 84

2015 105

2016	101
2017	115
2018	126
2019	136
2020	118
2021	119
2022	115
2023	121

## Workforce Information

### Staff Composition, Including Indigenous Staff: \*<sup>1</sup>

Toogoolawa School is a values-based educational institution that emphasizes the five human values Love, Truth, Peace, Right Conduct and Non-violence. These principles are integral to all school activities, creating a thriving community where disengaged young men can learn in a safe and supportive environment.

By the end of 2023, Toogoolawa School had eight classrooms, each staffed by a permanent teacher following a primary model of classroom support. Additionally, each classroom benefited from the assistance of 2 permanent support staff, who provided both academic and behavioural/emotional support to the students.

Throughout 2023, the teaching staff included 11 teachers working full time, one part-time teacher. The school also employed 16 part-time classroom support workers and three specialist support staff members. The administrative team included four part-time staff members and one part-time building maintenance officer.

Toogoolawa School is committed to the ongoing professional development of all staff, offering opportunities for individualised study and professional learning throughout the year. Staff are encouraged to attend ISQ workshops, and all staff members receive annual first aid training. Additionally, a values-based education retreat, which serves as a two-day professional development event, is available to all staff.

Toogoolawa School is an equal opportunity employer, embracing staff from diverse faiths and ethnicities, including First Nations people.

Toogoolawa School is committed to the ongoing professional development of all staff, offering opportunities for individualised study and professional learning throughout the year. Staff are encouraged to attend ISQ workshops, and all staff members receive annual first aid training. Additionally, all staff attended *Education with the Heart Conference: Teacher and Student Wellbeing* with Keynote Speaker Emeritus Professor Ron Toomey at Mercure Gold Coast Resort. Dr Anette Renneflott a Clinical Psychologist also conducted a full day workshop on understanding and working with student with ASD and Trauma.

Toogoolawa school is an equal opportunity employer. we have staff from many faiths and ethnicities including first nations people.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Education Regulation 2013 s60 (1)(c)

## Qualifications of all Teachers: \*<sup>2</sup>

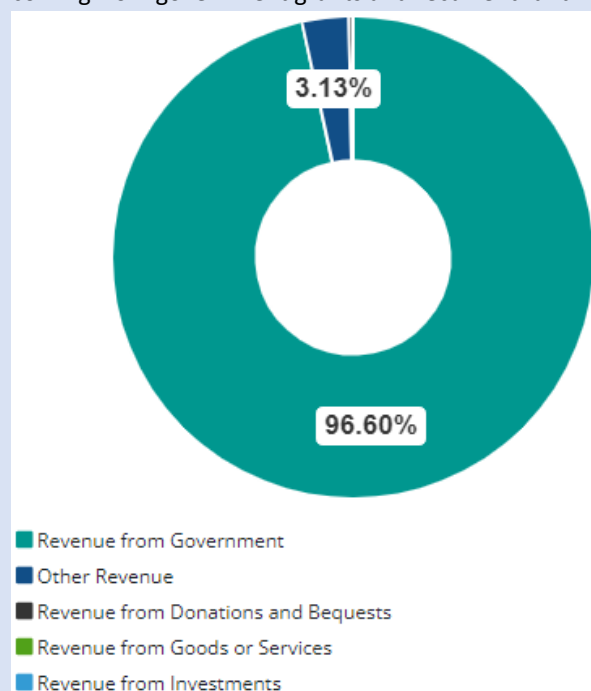
Qualification	Detail the number and/or the percentage of classroom teachers and school leaders at the school who hold this qualification
Doctorate or higher	1 or 8%
Masters	1 or 8%
Bachelor	11 or 84%
Diploma	N/A
Certificate	N/A

## Funding Information

### School Income Broken Down by Funding Source \*<sup>[3]</sup>

#### School Income:

The school derives the majority of its income from government sources, with over 96% of total revenue coming from government grants and recurrent funding.



Refer to the My School website <http://www.myschool.edu.au/> for a full break down.

<sup>2</sup> Australian Education Regulation 2013 s60 (1)(b)

## Social Climate

### Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction with the School \*<sup>3</sup>

In 2023 Toogoolawa School conducted our annual Parent, Teacher, and Student satisfaction survey using Microsoft Forms. Parents were asked to rate the school using a 5- point scale. A summary of the results is seen below:

#### Parents:

- 90% reported "My child feels safe at this school."
- 93 % reported "Teachers at this school are interested in my child's wellbeing".
- 93 % reported "Teachers at this school motivate my child to learn."
- 83% reported "My child likes being at this school."
- 93 % reported "Student behaviour is well managed at this school."
- 89 % reported "My child is making good progress at this school."
- 90 % reported "My child's learning needs are being met at this school."
- 97 % reported "This school fosters respectful relationships among all students."
- 96 % reported "I can talk to my child's teachers about my concerns
- 97 % reported "Teachers at this school expect my child to do his best."
- 93 % reported "This is a good school."

#### Staff

- 100 % reported "Students are treated fairly at this school."
- 100 % reported "This school fosters respectful relationships among all students."
- 100 % reported "I enjoy working at this school."
- 95 % reported "This school has an inclusive culture where diversity is valued and respected."
- 100 % reported "Our class team focusses on building good character in our students."
- 90 % reported "Students with a disability are well supported at this school."
- 90 % reported "This school encourages parents / carers to be active partners in educating their child."
- 100 % reported "This is a good school."

#### Student:

- 92 % reported "I feel safe at my school
- 96 % reported "My teachers are interested in my wellbeing."
- 96 % reported "The expectations and rules are clear at this school."

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<sup>3</sup> Australian Education Regulation 2013 s60 (1)(f)

- 89 % reported “My school encourages students to live the values of love, peace, right conduct, truth and non-violence.”
- 96 % reported “I can talk to my teachers about my concerns.”
- 91 % reported “I like being at my school.”
- 98 % reported “My school work challenges me to think.”
- 100 % reported “My teachers help me with my schoolwork when I need it.”
- 97% reported “My teachers expect me to do my best.”
- 95 % reported “This is a good school.”

### Social Climate:

Toogoolawa is founded upon the Educare model which embraces the five universal Human Values of Truth, Love, Peace, Right Conduct and Non-violence. The commitment of each teacher to become an ideal role model of the five Human Values is integral to the effectiveness of the Toogoolawa model. Practicing 'Mindfulness and Meditation' daily is central to the beliefs of the Toogoolawa School.

Toogoolawa interprets the national curriculum in ways that accommodate the special needs of its students. It takes a holistic approach to educating its students so that emphasis is given equally to their the social, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and physical wellbeing. This year we have chosen to integrate **one** sustainable development goal (SDG) per term in all aspects of our teaching and learning to encourage our students to live sustainably and recognise our shared responsibility in creating a better world.

Student, parent and staff surveys were undertaken in 2023 for the purpose of school improvement using targeted questions to gather evidence and ideas to focus on areas for improvements. Overall students, parents and staff positively as evidenced by the survey results published in this report.

Throughout the year staff are in constant communication with parents via texts, phone calls, meetings, emails, letters and student parent interviews (twice a year) to ensure open communication and a partnered approached in meeting the holistic and developmental needs of our students.

## Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

### Distinctive Curriculum Offerings:

The major academic focus for both our Primary and Secondary cohorts is literacy and numeracy. In 2023, we offered a themed-based approach to curriculum using the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which allowed integrated approach to developing a sustainable and service-oriented world. Human Values and Virtues are also integrated into the curriculum through storytelling and classroom lessons.

Students were offered a remedial literacy and numeracy program for students in need – to be delivered predominantly one on one support.

With the support of the Youth Support Initiative, which is funded by the Queensland Government, Year 10 students participated in Toogoolawa’s LAUNCH program which helped students develop a senior education and training plan, obtain work experience in an industry of their choice, and develop soft that enable students to fit in at a workplace such as positive attitude, flexibility, initiative, and manners.

In 2023 the school received a grant from the Queensland Government for Engaging Science Grant Program which enabled us to partner with the rangers of Watergum Community for the Environment (<https://watergum.org/>) for a citizen science and STEM education learning experience where students



continues to monitor nest occupancy and helped plant habitat on local property to attract wildlife and add biodiversity of the area in Lamington National Park.

Students continued to participate in Youth Wellbeing Project to address the impact of media on Identity and Relationships. Students in Grades 7 – 10 were also mentored on the key ingredients for a healthy relationship including consent.

Students in Year 10 had the opportunity to complete FSK20119 Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways. All students in Year 10 successfully completed this certification in 2023.

Students continue to participate in daily Mindfulness practices. These practices are evolving all the time. Set periods of meditation are matched with impromptu opportunities to call students to be in the present moment e.g., a chime rings out that students respond by concentrating on the breath for perhaps a minute or two. Our boys also run their own meditation sessions called 'Silent Sitting.'

Integrative Restoration (iRest) is used regularly to de-stress students before classes. iRest is designed for PTSD and anxiety disorders. Two staff have been trained in its use.

In 2023 the school continued with its Zones of Regulation and Mind Up programs as part of its curriculum and values integration for HPE and its Values Based Educational program. Both these programs aim to develop students' awareness and understanding of:

- ✓ The school's values (love, peace, truth, right conduct, and non-violence)
- ✓ Neuroscience (The study of the brain and how it functions),
- ✓ Mindful Awareness (Techniques to improve awareness and focus),
- ✓ Social and Emotional Learning (SEL – Sequenced skill building that helps to develop awareness of self and others, self-regulation, and improved social skills) and
- ✓ Positive Psychology (Activating the capacity for greater happiness and sense of well-being)

which we firmly believe nurtures the heart of the whole student.

Toogoolawa continued to have its nature based and outdoor program with its fortnightly Nature School and Outing days. The priority for our nature-based programs is for students to engage in relationship and team building activities which include body boarding, surfing, swimming, rock climbing, abseiling, and hiking. Students are also given the opportunity to go on a class camp twice a year as we understand that nature offers a unique environment that promotes emotional well-being and reduces stress. Spending time in nature has been associated with lower levels of anxiety, depression, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms in children. Nature-based activities encourage self-regulation, resilience, and positive social interactions, which contribute to improved mental health outcomes.

Our students are also using a range of IT equipment including, iPads, desk top computers and laptops.

Students also attended targeted programs such as Rules and Relationships and our Warrior Program to develop self-awareness and self-regulation.

### **Extra-curricular Activities:**

Students participate in Community Service activities. This could involve beautifying parklands, the Pimpama River or helping to clean up the areas the boys visit on outings.

In our partnership with Watergum- Community for the Environment, Toogoolawa students planted 1000 trees in Lamington National Park, monitored 32 nest boxes for the wildlife where five sugar gliders plus a family nesting was monitored on the cameras, several birds' nests were seen in boxes. Students found wildlife was most active in spring – Sept/Oct and they installed one barn owl box and monitoring camera installed.



In 2023 Toogoolawa also partnered with Set Free Care Community Hub for 6 students to help with service of their Free Lunch program.

Students also participated in a Student Leadership Program in which student leaders (Student Representative Council) participated in leadership meetings and excursions (hiking and group meetings) to develop leadership skills while encouraging peer mentoring with buddy classes.

Students in Year 10 were provided with the opportunity for a one-on-one interview with School Leavers Information Service (SLES), participate in TAFE Trade Taster Program, visits to other Flexi schools to continue their senior school education.

The school continued with its Work Experience Program with 14 - Year 9 & 10 students successfully completing work experience in 2023.

Boys also participated in school camps once a semester which test their socialising skills and relationship building.

Another program Toogoolawa was very pleased to participate in was the Horse Whispering Youth Program where 18 students attended a 10-week program that taught students an introductory level of natural horsemanship ground skills where they learn to create healthy safe boundaries; build foundational personal skills and learn to use calm assertive energy.

Our Scout Group continues to meet every Wednesday afternoon. Many thanks to our Scout Master Michael (Raven).

Boys also compete against the JLF Corporation with regular cricket and touch football matches.

Sporting Schools funded golf equipment, swimming lessons for our primary school students and various opportunities that included Basketball and AFL. In 2023, Toogoolawa also started their first basketball team and had after school practices at Coomera Sports Centre.

As part of our on-going mission to appreciate and learn more of the Australian Heritage we invited an indigenous troupe to perform for a special school assembly. During Nature School we are aware of the significance of sacred sites to our Indigenous locals, and we aim to honour the land and respect the land we walk on. Students also visited to Jellurgal Aboriginal Cultural Centre to deepen their understanding and appreciation of Indigenous culture.

### **Parental Involvement:**

Parent / Carer / Guardian / Student interviews are held at the start of each semester to discuss IEPs (Individual Education Programs) for every student. Goals are discussed, set, and monitored.

Parent mornings were held on the last Wednesday of each month facilitated by Michelle Hilliary for parents to connect with others experiencing similar situations to increase community connections and reduce social isolation whilst being supported to share support options and assist with referrals for additional support as necessary.

## Student Outcomes

### Average student attendance rate (%) for the whole school: \*4

Total number of students	Number of possible attendance days	Total number of days absent	Total attendance days
124	5317	1627	3699

The average student attendance rate for the whole school in 2023 was 70%

### Average student attendance rate for each year level: \*5

Year Level data for Student Attendance: All Students (Including Indigenous Students)					
Year Level	Number of students in each Year Level	Number of possible attendance days for year level	Total number of days Absent for Year Level	Total attendance days for each year level	Average Attendance Rate (%) for each year level
Year 4	12	518		385.00	74.32%
Year 5	9	396		272.00	68.69%
Year 6	10	409		319.00	78.00%
Year 7	22	910		650.00	71.43%
Year 8	27	1172		822.00	70.14%
Year 9	24	1056		776.00	73.48%
Year 10	20	856		475.00	55.49%

### A description of how non-attendance is managed by the school: \*6

At Toogoolawa we are trying to “engage the disengaged” and Toogoolawa is committed to supporting students and their parents/caregivers in maintaining attendance rates above 80%. Daily management of absences see students marked as absent ‘unexplained’, which produces a list that administrative staff send through and ‘Absent’ text to parents.

Student attendance is marked twice a day 9:00am and 11:30am. Support staff remain with the class throughout the day and student attendance is checked at multiple checkpoints as per the classes (Master/Apprentice/Student) points checklist i.e. after Quiet Time, each Learning Session, Silent Sitting and Acknowledgements.

The list of ‘explained absences’ is checked by administrative staff to filter excused absences such as suspension, medical reasons etc. before absent messages are sent.

It is important that students, staff, and parents/caregivers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. To ensure this Toogoolawa School implements the following:

- Implementation of Attendance Policy and Attendance Plan
- School transport to and from Ormeau train station as well as a Beenleigh school pick up to school.

<sup>4</sup> Australian Education Regulation 2013 s60 (1)(d)(i)

<sup>5</sup> Australian Education Regulation 2013 s60 (1)(d)(i)

<sup>6</sup> Australian Education Regulation 2013 s60 (1)(d)(ii)

- Help students and parents/caregivers' access to Non-State Schools Transport Assistance Scheme (<https://schooltransport.com.au>) if eligible.
- Dedicated Youth Worker Roles focussing on Attendance, Engagement and Communities
- Monitoring school attendance data to identify absenteeism trends and repeated absences.
- Daily Check-ins for students with a flagged attendance concern
- Early intervention strategies to support students with attendance problems involving contacting parents/guardians to discuss concerns, offering counseling or support services, or involving outside agencies e.g., YSS, CHYMES
- Implementing Individual Attendance Plans where a student's attendance issues persist. These plans outline specific strategies, goals, and interventions tailored to the student's needs which may involve regular meetings with the student, parents, and school staff to monitor progress and provide support.
- Home Visit program
- Access to Flexible Arrangement Options to support students' individual needs
- Students who require extra support can apply for short-term school transport. This is assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- Develop a culture of love, safety, and inclusion to ensure students feel safe while at school through the school's Values based Education program.
- Reward System for students achieving above 80% attendance rates.
- Failure to Attend process implemented as per Government Legislation.

### **NAPLAN results for Years 3, 5 and 7 and 9 in 2023 <sup>\*7</sup>**

Benchmark Data for year 2023 – Note: This data represents a small cohort sample size and therefore is not a true indication of means scores across cohorts). In addition, multiple students were withdrawn or exempt from participation in NAPLAN for 2023.

Please refer to School website <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>

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<sup>7</sup> Australian Education Regulation 2013 s60 (1)(e)