



Is Orana Steiner School *The Right Fit* for my Child & Family?





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Orana Steiner School is an accredited independent school with a vibrant and community-oriented learning environment guided by the educational philosophy of Rudolf Steiner. We offer a balanced approach that integrates academic learning, creativity, and personal development in a holistic and structured setting.

This guide outlines key aspects of our program, expectations, and how families can support this educational journey and community.

1. Our Educational Framework

Orana provides a structured, sequential, and age-appropriate curriculum, aligned with accredited educational standards, and Steiner educational principles.

Core learning areas from years 1 - 12 include:

- English / Literacy
- Mathematics / Numeracy
- Science and Humanities
- Arts, Music, and Movement
- Practical and Specialist subjects

While creativity and artistic expression are visible features of Steiner education, they are integrated with strong academic foundations. Our approach is child centred but not child-led; rather, it is intentionally designed to support intellectual, emotional, and social development over time. In Early Childhood and Kindergarten, learning emphasises oral language, play, and imagination as a foundation for later literacy. Formal reading and writing instruction begin in Year 1, supporting readiness and long-term comprehension.

Positive expectation: Your child will experience both academic rigour and creative depth through a thoughtfully designed and developmentally appropriate program.

2. Participation and Engagement

All students are required to participate in the full range of school experiences. These are essential elements of our curriculum:

- Structured classroom learning
- Physical Education
- Seasonal festivals and school concert programs
- Camps, excursions, and projects
- Music education such as singing, recorder and string instruments

These experiences are an important and purposeful part of the curriculum. While some traditions such as festivals, music, and storytelling may be unfamiliar at first; they are educational in nature and support memory, rhythm, cultural awareness, and community connection.

Positive expectation: Active participation supports confidence, resilience, teamwork, and a strong sense of belonging within the school community.

3. Digital Technology and Learning

Orana Steiner School takes a considered and developmentally appropriate approach to technology.

- Technology is introduced slowly and progressively, typically in the later primary years and into high school. Our Early Childhood and Primary are strictly screen free environments.
- Mobile digital devices (such as phones/smart watches) are not used during the school day.
- Computers and digital tools are provided by the school when required.
- High School and College students have access to computers for appropriate academic and digital learning.

This approach reflects research indicating that excessive screen time in younger children can impact attention, memory, sleep, and social development. Studies in neuroscience and education suggest that hands-on, face-to-face, and movement-based learning supports stronger neural pathways, deeper understanding, and improved long-term retention. Our intention is not to avoid digital technology, but to use it purposefully and at the right developmental stage, ensuring students build strong foundational skills before engaging more extensively with digital tools. The school expects this to be reflected in the home environment.

Positive expectation: Students develop focus, creativity, and strong learning habits, while gaining the digital skills they need at an appropriate stage of their education.

4. Special Educational Needs and Support

Orana Steiner School welcomes students with diverse strengths and learning profiles. However, we are not a special education setting.

Our teaching is designed for group-based learning, and while teachers provide support within this context, students requiring intensive one-on-one assistance may need additional external support. We encourage open communication during the enrolment process to ensure that the school can appropriately support each child while maintaining a balanced classroom environment.

Positive expectation: Clear and collaborative communication supports positive outcomes for your child and the wider class community.

5. Preparing Students for the Future

A common question for families is how Steiner education prepares students for the wider world. Orana's approach focuses on building strong academic foundations, critical thinking, creativity, and adaptability.

As students progress, they engage with increasingly complex academic content, technology, and independent learning. Graduates are equipped with the skills and confidence to transition successfully into tertiary education, training, or employment pathways.

Positive expectation: Students develop the skills, resilience, and independence needed to navigate an evolving and complex world.

6. Holistic Development and Respect for Nature

Orana's approach supports the development of the whole child: head, heart, hands. Learning is connected to nature, seasonal cycles, and real-world experiences, helping students develop observation skills, creativity, and environmental awareness.

The use of natural materials, artistic activities, and time outdoors reflects a commitment to experiential learning. While this can sometimes be misunderstood as informal or unconventional, it is grounded in a clear educational intention to support engagement, wellbeing, and deep learning.

Positive expectation: Through a balance of academic, creative, and outdoor experiences, children develop independence, empathy, and a meaningful connection to the world around them.

7. Community Participation and Contribution

Orana is a community-focused school, and families are encouraged to be actively involved through:

- Volunteering at events and activities
- Participating in committees and initiatives
- Supporting school programs and celebrations

This partnership between school and home strengthens relationships and enhances the overall learning environment.

Positive expectation: Family involvement enriches your child's experience and helps foster a connected, supportive school culture.

8. Summary: What Makes Orana Unique

Orana Steiner School offers:

- Early Childhood to Year 12
- Structured, developmentally appropriate curriculum
- Balanced integration of academics, arts, movement, and Nature
- Developmentally informed technology use
- Strong, inclusive community
- 32-acre nature-filled campus
- Extensive play equipment and facilities for sporting, musical, academic, laboratory, and hands-on workshop learning

Families who understand and embrace this educational approach are well positioned to support their child in developing curiosity, confidence, resilience, and a lifelong love of learning.

