



MONTESSORI
sydney pre • primary • long day school

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

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Sydney Montessori School

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SMS

A MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

REPORTING AREA 1

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

It is with pleasure that I present the 2019 Sydney Montessori School Board Annual Report and reflect on the activities of the Board over the last twelve months.

In 2019 the Board underwent several changes, Liza Arney and Dean Ally left the board after many long years of service. I would like to thank both Liza and Dean for the contribution and dedication during their tenure they have helped shape the school to what is a well-functioning and financial stable organisation.



George Mifsud
Board Chair

In May 2019 Mick Attridge voluntarily stood aside as Chairman of the Board and am I pleased to say that Mick continues to play a very active role as a director. We are extremely fortunate to have had such a committed director chairing our board for the last 6 years and on behalf of the Board I would like to express my gratitude to Mick for his leadership.

We now have a refreshed, professional, well balanced and committed board who work well together to manage the governance and set the strategy of the school.

As we all know there is a significant amount of work that goes into the running of a school and the School Board is only a small but important component. Our role is primarily to set the strategic direction and manage good governance of the school and to act as a sounding board for the Principal and Executive on matters of a financial and commercial nature. This includes a range of functions, including but not limited to:

- Ensuring enduring value is created
- Improving the performance of the school through strategy formulation and policy making
- Monitoring the organisation's performance, ensuring that performance is in communities' interests and meets agreed goals and objectives (this includes complying with all relevant legal requirements and appropriately managing risk)
- Recruiting and overseeing the Principal.

A MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

REPORTING AREA 1

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

These functions are interrelated, with many issues facing the board having both compliance and performance outcomes. The board appoints management to carry out the day-to-day functions of the school within a framework of policies and strategic guidelines established by the board. The board has the roles of both coach and supporter - asking searching and demanding questions, but at the same time encouraging and giving management freedom to perform. The board controls and supports management to achieve high levels of compliance and performance. As Directors and parents, we balance performance and compliance responsibilities always putting the needs of the school first before any personal conflict.

As you will read in Peter's Principal's report there have been many highlights and we are making good progress in implementing our strategic plan and goals which we continually revisit and update. As I write this report in a changing world, in the midst of the impacts of COVID -19, I assure you that we as a Board are regularly reviewing the changing situation and implementing plans accordingly.

I thank the School Board, the Executive team and staff for their support this year. The school is currently in a strong financial position and we look forward to implementing new projects and initiatives in the future.

George Mifsud

Board Chair

2nd May 2020

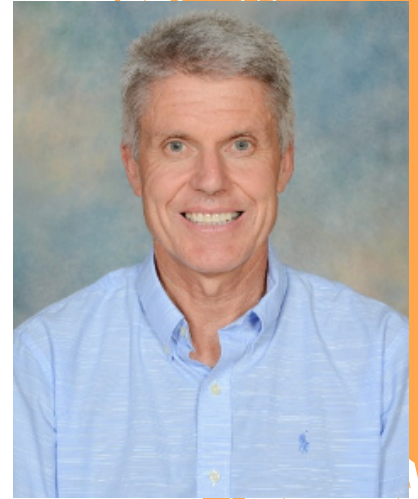
A MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

REPORTING AREA 1

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

2019 was a great year for Sydney Montessori School!

There were many highlights for us in 2019 however I would first like to acknowledge the commitment and efforts of all our staff. We pride ourselves on the fact that Sydney Montessori School is an authentic Montessori School. This drives our teaching and actions on a daily basis as we strive to create and enhance a learning environment that cares for and nurtures every child; one that creates opportunity for student self-discovery and independence whilst creating a love of learning as students grow and work with their peers and are guided by their teachers.



Peter MacLean
Principal

The collective staff efforts create and reinforce the environment for this to occur.

One of the great assets of the school is our teachers. They are all trained teachers first, but all have done additional training as Montessori Educators and guides. Their commitment to the students and the philosophies of the Montessori movement are to be commended. Our teachers aspire that each child can think for themselves and act for themselves as they gain the skills and knowledge to contribute to make their community and world a better place. Our teacher's role is not to merely impart facts and knowledge but to guide each child's development, this is an area in which they have excelled. In 2019 we welcomed teacher Emma who made a wonderful commitment to the school and children of Stage 2. We wish her well with the birth of her new child.

2019 was also a year for financial consolidation as outlined in the Treasurer's report. With the efforts of the Board and admin team we are now in a stronger financial position and accordingly the School has commenced a series of renewal projects. Minor grounds improvement, in the order of \$300 000, have included repairs to kitchen areas / laundry, painting class areas, electrical, plumbing and air conditioning, repair of pathways / driveways, new classroom equipment, replacement of air conditioners, refurbishment of green spaces, water tanks, student/school gardens and turf replacement. These works are planned to continue into 2020 and will then form a sound basis to springboard to further major capital works in the near future.

All schools are registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for up to 5 years.

A MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

REPORTING AREA 1

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

2019 was our registration renewal year; this is a significant undertaking for any school which requires hundreds of hours of work by staff to review our curriculum, our policies and our general operations in preparation for inspection by NESAs. I am pleased to say that we achieved the maximum 5 year renewal period (2020 - 2024). When adding additional years of operation, there is a further process which must be undertaken. As part of planning for High School, we undertook this process and pleasingly also gained registration to reopen the First Years of High School.

Planning for student growth was a major priority for us in 2019. The school's Primary enrolment K-6 years has typically varied between 61-101 students over the last 5 years. We had predicted that school enrolment could have been in the low 80's this year. With a renewed focus on community engagement and celebration of the good work that is done within our classrooms, our enrolment grew to 116. This is a great outcome. Add to this increase in pre-school and long day care and our site is at 'record enrolment' levels. This is due to the efforts of all staff and of course the positive feedback within the community from our parents. Thank You all!

Planning for High School was a major focus for the administration team and Board in 2019. We surveyed parent interest (which enjoyed 87% positive interest), conducted public forums within our own community and commenced serious planning to review the viability of this undertaking.

We believe that there is enough interest from within our own families and the potential to increase enrolments from the wider local community to open High School. We have achieved the standards and curriculum planning to open a high school (NESAs registration), however as our site is almost full, we commenced the process of gaining Council planning approval. This is not a straightforward process and in 2020 we will complete a major traffic review, acoustic review and planning review as part of gaining Council approval for the High School. Further as part of the planning and High School registration process we undertook a review of our facilities. Whilst we can start a small cohort within existing facilities, we identified the need to enhance our facilities to fully undertake a High School program. We plan to undertake a major 'master planning' process in 2020. These are exciting developments for us as a school. Subject to gaining the final regulatory approvals and of course actual student enrolments we aspire to an opening in 2021 or 2022.

In 2019 we introduced a new focus on music and performing arts. We established a new team of wonderful instrumental teachers who, in addition to core classroom music provided lessons in

A MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

REPORTING AREA 1

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

keyboard, guitar, drums and percussion, voice and choir. Alongside this we introduced and refined various events such as book parades, music night, instrument lesson performances, end of year performance, Easter Hat Parade and school disco. All of these different types of events are opportunities for children to dress up, to perform, to 'be on show' in ways that they might not have believed they were capable of. This is both part of showcasing different talents and developing new skills and self-beliefs in children. My thanks to the many helpers: staff and parents, who planned, helped or became an audience and made these events the great success that they were.

Throughout the year there were so many other events that contributed to our rich curriculum. Major camps to the Dubbo, Canberra and the snow fields; local excursions near and far (Wollongong to Hazelhurst) and a myriad of incursions around different events, such as in Science week: Fizzics Chemistry Show, African Drummers, Traffic Safety, Push the Limits and The Fire Brigade.

We also learnt in our classroom! Students enjoyed sharing their work with parents at the various parent classroom 'visit and share' days including our Mother's Day and Father's Day class celebrations. These were another great highlight.

Our teachers do a wonderful job, however I would also like to thank and acknowledge the efforts of the Parents and Friends (P&F), our classroom liaisons and the many parents who assist in the classroom and school. From feedback on new or potential school initiatives, to running and assisting at 'Busy Bees' and school events; fundraisers that have bought musical instruments and reading books; assistance in the classroom to the teacher or to students (from cooking to reading groups), helping in the office and at open days - your efforts make a great difference. We all collectively benefit through your efforts and this is part of building our great learning community.

I would like to give my personal thanks to the Board, the P&F parents and staff for their support and efforts. You have all made it a wonderful year at Sydney Montessori School in 2019. Thank you.

We are in a great place to move forward and I am excited for the year ahead.

Peter MacLean

Principal

2nd May, 2020

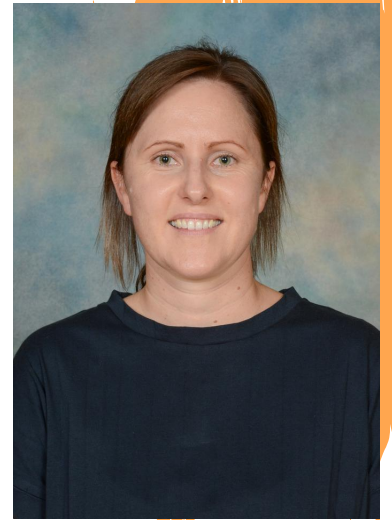
A MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

REPORTING AREA 1

A MESSAGE FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD

Things are thriving in all our Early childhood classrooms through growing enrolments, increasing of staff numbers as well as continual improvements in our surrounding environment.

Our 0-3 First Steps environment has increased significantly in numbers and we have been pleased to welcome many new families. We also increased our opening days to now be operational for 3 mornings in the week, which lead to us also welcoming Vicky Savellis from Primary to joining Karen in running this program.



Anna Firla
Early Childhood Coordinator

In our Tara classroom, we send our congratulations to Kelly who graduated from her 0-3 Montessori Diploma course. She has worked hard and with great enthusiasm to complete this course and implement quality Montessori practice into her classroom. There has been some extension made to the Tara classroom, through expanding their outside play space on the veranda, allowing the children more movement within the same learning space. This has been a great improvement and it is pleasing to see the children utilise this space.

In the Akasha classroom, we have welcomed Claudine Khoury to our team. Claudine brings with her extensive Montessori knowledge and practice from her 3.5 years of experience in running a long day care preschool room. The Akasha numbers are continually growing and we have seen a steady progression of children move from this space to our Stage 1 classrooms as they continue with their Montessori education.

In Stage 1 we have had the privilege of consistent staffing in each room, which has ensured for a smooth and productive year. Our classroom numbers in both rooms have grown, which has led to us welcoming a new staff member, Loreto Fredes to be a classroom assistant in Kiah. Loreto brings with her a strong understanding of the Montessori practice. It was with great sadness though that we said goodbye to Tiziana Oliveri, who has been a dedicated member of the Kiah/Stage 1 assistant team for over 18 years. We are grateful for the dedication she has brought to the school and we wish her all the best moving forward.

A MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

REPORTING AREA 1

A MESSAGE FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD

This year in all of our early years classrooms we have had continuous improvements in our physical environments through both the outside and inside spaces. We are always very grateful to our handyman Steve Gulliver and the work he does, through planting of new plants and vegetables, rebuilding our chicken coup as well as building new retainer walls in our playground to allow for more climbing/balancing spaces for our children to engage with. We replaced all of our tables and chairs in all our early childhood classrooms, as well as replenishing our Montessori materials to enhance our learning spaces. We are very thankful to our Principal for allowing this.

This year we have continued to improve and expand the incursion we have at school to enhance quality learning and our educational practice. We have had visits from the local Fire department as well as surf lifesaving club as they both teach us how to be safe in our surrounding environments. We welcomed families to our annual Easter Hat parade, which this year, may have been our biggest turn out! All of our families did a fantastic job creating hats for this special event, and it has turned into such a collaborative and fun event. We have continued to celebrate special days in the calendar in our all environments, inviting families in to join us. This has been from our Easter hat parade, Harmony Day, book week parade, Grandparents day and our end of year/Christmas celebrations.

We have had such a variety of incursions this year, it has been very pleasing to see the children have such positive learning experiences from all of them. We have had Shannon Bates come and teach each classroom about inclusion, particular from Shannon who is in a wheelchair and the abilities that he has. The children really enjoyed this experience and it was very pleasing to see such positive responses. We have had Vision eye screening coming to check on the health of all 4+ year old's, as well as a very interactive science week incursion and learning all things science. It was another busy and productive year.

Anna Firla

Early Childhood Coordinator



A MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

REPORTING AREA 1

A MESSAGE FROM PRIMARY

The Primary School component of Sydney Montessori School remains healthy and vibrant during 2019, with four classes operating at near capacity throughout the year. Junee, Jililan, Wingara and Samsara are proving to be fertile environments for inspiring children's interest and engaging them in guided, purposeful concentration for extended periods. We are fortunate to be benefitting from a high retention rate for children transitioning from stage 2 into stage 3, which eases the transition process due to the children's familiarity with the environment and connection with the inherent classroom cultures within them.



Cameron Richmond
Primary Coordinator

At the end of 2019 we wished farewell to seven graduates; Alicia, Cameron, Liam, Louis, Gaolin, Alex and Allegra. All of these graduates were completing the end of their Montessori journey after beginning the adventure way back in Stage 1 at the busy age of three. It is a privilege to be involved in their development as they go about the important task of building their own knowledge and understanding. It is especially wonderful to have observed our graduates face their developmental milestones along the way with persistence and originality; qualities that our Montessori education provides both within the environment and the provision of time for development. It is obvious to the audience on graduation evening how highly the students regard the contribution each class has made to preparing them for life after Montessori. The gratitude of their parents combined with the genuine pleasure and pride the staff feel towards the students is testament to the very real sense of community our Montessori school fosters throughout the child's experience. We look forward to hearing more tales of their adventures in high school as they continue their education.

They leave us after finalising their year 6 studies and responsibilities, culminating in a 3-day field trip to Canberra where they visited Parliament House, The National Gallery, hiked in Namadgi National Park and cycled around Lake Burley Griffin. They also participated as leaders in the school Peer Support program, an activity which requires them to host a group of younger children for 8 weeks through a learning program aimed at social awareness and peer to peer well-being. It is these experiences which bring our graduates closer together, as they share their thoughts and concerns, collaborate to solve challenging situations and build firmer bonds which often remain long after Montessori is left behind.

A MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

REPORTING AREA 1

A MESSAGE FROM PRIMARY

Stage 2 embarked on a journey to Orange this year for their annual school camp. During this experience they visited Dubbo Zoo, Dubbo gaol, The Three Sisters and went ten-pin bowling in the evening. Our venue for the Stage 3 camp this year is a highlight for many of our students because it consisted of 3 days of fun in the NSW snowfields. We enjoyed some cosy accommodation at Adaminaby and had perfect weather for our days on the snow at Mt Selwyn. The short runs and easy slopes allowed the children to thrive in this environment, many children reflected later on how much their skiing improved during this trip.

The Primary school cohort is actively involved in music education at SMS, both through programmed curriculum lessons with Simon as well as private tuition from our external tutors, Gabrielle, Bernie and David; giving instruction on a range of instruments. The annual musical evening entertained a large crowd with some stellar performances of vocal and instrumental works accompanied by singing and dancing. Having costumes and quality background music encouraged the children to deliver strong and confident performances in front of a large crowd, congratulations to all our performers for successful evening.

SMS provides a weekly sports program run by Damian who provides instruction for our students across a wide range of sports, focusing on developmental skills all the way through to advanced physical movement and coordination tasks. He brings an abundant amount of energy and fun to the lessons which are anticipated highly by our primary students and result in many satisfied children eager to display their new skills to teachers and friends alike. Our school athletics carnival proved to be a fun day out for children, parents and staff where children participated in a range of athletic events before finishing the day with the old favourite, the tug-of-war!

Our annual end of year concert demonstrated the pleasure and excitement children receive from group activities and rewarded both them and their parents with an entertaining morning of songs, drama and dance. The stage 2 children performed two drama pieces which involved them rehearsing consistently to learn lines as well as design and construct both sets and costumes for the affair. Stage 3 children performed a play written by the Year 6 graduating children as well as designing and constructing their own sets and costumes as well. This whole group process which encompasses all the aspects of preparing for a live performance is a fantastic method of developing the skills of planning and collaboration for our Primary children.

A MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

REPORTING AREA 1

A MESSAGE FROM PRIMARY

At the end of this year we farewelled Emma, our stage 2 teacher for Junee, who is beginning a new chapter of life with her family as they relocate to the Apple Isle, AKA Tasmania, to establish a new home and raise their ever growing family, we wish them all the very best for their new adventures. Junee will welcome a new teacher, Soula, in the new year, who will bring with her many years of quality Montessori experience in stage 2 environments, we look forward to benefitting from her skill and welcome her warmly.

As we reflect on the year that has been, we continue to be inspired by the children within our care, which makes the task of inspiring them all the more easier, because they respond to the task of learning with an innate sense of curiosity and responsibility towards ensuring their understanding is built on solid foundations. I am proud to be a part of this important work, and especially fond of working alongside the staff at SMS who I can testify view the education of children as a huge responsibility which can tolerate no short comings. We anticipate many more positive examples of the value of a Montessori education as we move into 2020, and will enjoy each moment with the children in Primary as we observe the pleasure they derive from building their own knowledge and realising the powers they have at their disposal to solve their own problems, share accomplishments with others and manage the environment around them to foster their growth across emotional and academic areas.

Cameron Richmond

Primary Coordinator



CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL AND THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENT BODY

REPORTING AREA 2

Sydney Montessori School is a community-based non-denominational, co-educational, independent school for children aged between 15 months and up to 12 years of age (Year 6). We facilitate a parent and baby/toddler education program (0-3), run a Long Day Care facility with a capacity to teach 15 month to 6 year olds (in the tradition of Maria Montessori's first Casa dei Bambini), which operates from 8am to 6pm, a 3-6 Preschool program and Primary School program. An Out of School Hours care program run by Primary OSHCare operates for our children on our site.

We are a **progressive** Montessori school, future-focused and aligned with evidence-based 21st century learning goals such as:

Customised learning - allowing each child to learn at their own pace, inspired by their own interests, and driven to achieve their personal best.

Availability of diverse knowledge sources - utilising technology, experiential methods, books, experts in the field, news and primary sources.

Collaborative group learning - each class is purposefully made up of multi-age, mixed gender groupings. Classrooms are carefully set up to encourage students to work in groups or individually, as best suits their needs. They are assisted to take responsibility for their learning, time management and the quality of their completed self-driven projects.

Integrated curriculum learning - subjects are not taught in isolation nor in set blocks. The Montessori curriculum is designed to work fluidly so that its contents can be studied in an endless variety of orders and each subject can be taught in relation to other subjects so as to best follow each child's needs and interests. It is also designed to help children see the connections and interconnectedness of all aspects in our universe: Geometry, Mathematics, Natural Science, History, Art, Music, Movement and Language.

Pedagogical guides - the role of the teacher has been consistently proven to be central to student outcomes. Our teachers are highly trained professionals. They hold State approved University teaching credentials in addition to Montessori teaching qualifications. They are experts in pedagogy. They know their subjects deeply and are specifically trained in running multi-aged, collaborative learning groups. They are adept at programming for this environment and customising their programming to perfectly meet the needs of each individual child.

Assessment for deeper understanding - we are committed to formative assessment which gives us a full understanding of a child's capabilities and performance. We do this using a variety of methods including observation notes, informal assessments, student feedback from regular student teacher conferences and student work samples.

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL AND THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENT BODY

REPORTING AREA 2

Montessori philosophy of education - Montessori theory is deeply tied to neuroscience and the natural developmental path of the child. It mirrors all of the major recommendations of 'best practice' education. Montessori education produces happy, social, confident, self-disciplined, independent young adults with a true love of learning.

Our staff body was made up of 7 full time teaching staff, 2 part time teaching staff, 16 Educators (early childhood and primary) and 5 non-teaching staff. We had 174 students across all areas (daily average), ending the year at 181 students. Our community is made up from a diverse range of children, representing the community which we serve. Whilst we treat each student as an individual, we consider that our students have a range of all talents, gifts and abilities. We are proud of our harmonious school environment.

VISION:

To guide each child, not just in the moment but for life.

MISSION:

To inspire our students to be lifelong independent learners, develop their sense of wonder and promote them as peacemakers and leaders.

VALUES:

At Sydney Montessori School, our Educational Philosophy and teaching practice are research- and evidence-based.

As Montessori educators, we are committed to educating the whole person.

We foster a love of learning and an understanding of the world and our interconnectedness with it.

WE VALUE:

1. Peer learning
2. Curiosity, independence and achieving your personal best.
3. Empathy and courtesy
4. Diversity and inclusivity
5. Partnerships with our families and community

STUDENT OUTCOMES IN STANDARDISED NATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY TESTING

REPORTING AREA 3

Sydney Montessori School uses a variety of assessment methods, in line with current research. We are dedicated to primarily using formative methods of assessment, rather than summative ones. This includes tools such as observations and the examination of work samples used to inform further planning for each student. Feedback on student progress is regularly provided with rich detail.

Sydney Montessori School parents often choose to apply for an exemption from NAPLAN tests, in line with the Montessori philosophy which does not encourage summative assessment. Therefore, there is a very small cohort of students who sit the NAPLAN tests each year, which makes our school data statistically difficult to interpret. However, analyses of combined data over several years shows that the school performs well in areas of Literacy and Numeracy.

For more information, see the My School website at www.myschool.edu.au

SENIOR SECONDARY OUTCOMES

REPORTING AREA 4

In 2019, Sydney Montessori School did not offer a secondary program for students enrolled in Years 7 - 12. However, the school Board is actively pursuing options with a view to reopening High School in the coming years.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

REPORTING AREA 5

Professional development for staff is an important part of the School program. Staff attended the following professional development sessions in 2019:

| Description of Professional Learning Activity 2019 | No. of Staff Participating |
|--|----------------------------|
| Principals Conference | 1 |
| Civica iWise Training | 2 |
| Courageous Principals Australia | 1 |
| First Aid, Asthma & Anaphylaxis Course | 7 |
| Autism Teaching Strategies | 1 |
| QIP training | 1 |
| Environment Conference | 1 |
| Sydney Montessori Training Centre-AMI Montessori 0-3 assistants certificate | 1 |
| Montessori World | 1 |
| Workshop "How to talk so kids will listen" | 1 |
| Montessori Institute - Diploma of Early Childhood and Primary education 0-3yrs | 1 |
| Child Protection & Mandatory Report | 15 |
| Autism Training | 17 |
| Anaphylaxis & EpiPen Refresher | 15 |

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

REPORTING AREA 5

As at December 2019, Sydney Montessori School employed 7 full-time and 2 part time teachers who are responsible for delivering the curriculum. The following is a breakdown of their qualifications:

| | |
|--|---|
| a) Have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition guidelines. | 9 |
| b) Have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition guidelines. | |
| c) Do not have qualifications as described in a) or b) above but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context. | |
| d) No qualifications or teaching experience | |

WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

REPORTING AREA 6

| | |
|--|------|
| Teaching Staff | 9 |
| Full Time Equivalent Teaching Staff | 8.2 |
| Educators/Assistants (in all early childhood rooms-not including teachers) | 15.7 |
| Full time Equivalent Educators/Assistants | 12.7 |
| Non-Teaching Staff | 4.57 |
| Full time Equivalent Non-Teaching Staff | 3.4 |

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

REPORTING AREA 7

| | |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Kindergarden | 93.7% |
| Year 1 | 90.6% |
| Year 2 | 94.8% |
| Year 3 | 93.5% |
| Year 4 | 92.8% |
| Year 5 | 91.1% |
| Year 6 | 95.4% |
| Total School Attendance | 93.1% |

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

REPORTING AREA 7

Attendance Policy

- The School maintains a register of enrolments.
- The School Register of Students will be kept by the Enrolments Registrar. On enrolment at the School or departure from the School, records will be updated on the School Register. This includes which school the student has come from (if they are over 6 years of age) and which school they are going to on departure.
- Should the School not be able to gather information on a student's destination, for a student under the age of 17, the HSLO at the DET will be informed by the Principal of the student's name, age and last known address.
- Should a student be absent for more than 30 days, the Principal will access Keep Them Safe website (www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au) and determine whether a report is required.
- The School Register will be kept for a minimum of 7 years.
- The School will monitor the daily attendance and absence of students in the School by maintaining a daily roll for each class of students.
- Students' absences from classes or from the school will be identified and recorded in a consistent manner by the staff member responsible, as per the guidelines at the front of the roll.
- Unexplained absences from classes of the School will be followed up in an appropriate manner with parents or guardians.
- Where unsatisfactory class or School attendance is identified, the attendance issue and any action taken will be recorded, as appropriate, on the student file.
- Rolls will be archived for a minimum of 7 years.
- Withdrawals from Sydney Montessori School: when a child ceases to attend School on a regular basis, the child must be officially withdrawn from the rolls. This withdrawal includes the following:
 - a) A letter from the parent or guardian requesting withdrawal. This needs to be on full term's notice.
 - b) A declaration made by the parent or guardian stating a destination of the student (specific school/education program)
 - c) Destination to be recorded on the School Enrolments Register.

ENROLMENT

REPORTING AREA 8

Enrolment

Sydney Montessori School (SMS) is a small school with composite classes. Class sizes are limited and variable. In order to create a successful learning environment at SMS, it is essential that the school and family are compatible.

The Montessori Educational Program based on the discoveries of Dr Maria Montessori is child-centred, teacher facilitated and suitable across all socio-economic and cultural boundaries, adhering to the Montessori maxim "follow the child". The main aim is the development of the person socially, intellectually, emotionally and physically so that each child has the opportunity to achieve his or her potential.

SMS operates within the policies of NESA (NSW Education Standards Authority) and ensures it achieves or exceeds all Curriculum Outcomes.

SMS has multiple entry points for families to begin their children's education:

in the Montessori First Steps Playgroup (0-3 years), through to Long Day Montessori (15 months-3 years, 3-6 years) or enrol in the School for Stage 1 (3&4 years Preschool and 5 years Kindergarten), Stage 2 and Stage 3 (Primary Years 1-6).

In an effort to achieve a compatible result and to ensure equity for all applicants, SMS has developed the following criteria for Enrolment Applications:

- All applications will be processed in order of receipt of Enrolment Application form and payment of Application Fee.
- Families who already have siblings enrolled at SMS and do not have outstanding school fees.
- Families committed to a Montessori education, whose child/ren have been educated at a Montessori school other than SMS.
- Families who have shown commitment to SMS's education through Playgroup or Long Day Care.
- For children with Additional Needs - Related to Disability, Health, Mental Health & Other Areas Requiring Support, SMS will gather information about a student's disability and need for adjustments before an enrolment is confirmed in order for the school to appropriately plan to include the student. Parents may have numerous reports which could be of assistance. Of these, the following current reports would be particularly helpful:
 - Previous school reports and current school achievements.
 - Psychologist report documenting functional skills and IQ test results.
 - Speech pathologist reports documenting receptive and expressive language skills and
 - any recommendations for programs or technology in the classroom, if relevant.
 - Occupational therapy reports documenting self-help skills and mobility, if relevant.
 - Medical specialist reports, if relevant.
 - Vision and hearing reports, if relevant.

ENROLMENT

REPORTING AREA 8

If an enrolment is not accepted, SMS reserves the right not to enter into discussion as to the reasons that the enrolment was not accepted or is terminated in line with the policies of the school.

Offer of Placement

A formal offer of placement at SMS will be made and should be accepted in writing within 2 weeks. If the offer is not accepted, the child's name may be returned to the Waitlist.

Conditions of Acceptance

On acceptance of the offer of a position, the parents will agree to abide by the policies and ethos of the School as described in the Parent Contract. From time to time these policies and conditions may change as the needs of the School change.

For Enrolment into the School (Stages 1, 2 & 3) payment of the Enrolment Fee must be received at the time of Acceptance.

Orientation Visit for Stage 1

Where possible the Enrolment Registrar will arrange a meeting with the Class Teacher, parents and their child prior to commencement date to familiarise the family with the classroom environment and to allow parents to discuss child's health, interests, prior experiences, family background etc with the Teacher.

School Register

The School Register maintained by the Enrolments Registrar, includes details required by relevant Government regulations. The Register is maintained to ensure that it is current and compliant.

Sydney Montessori School does not discriminate in its enrolment policies or procedures on the basis of gender, race, religion or disability.

OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

REPORTING AREA 9

As part of preparation for the school's periodic review and audit (2019) by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for registration all school policies have been reviewed and approved by the Board. Policies may be shared via email with the school community, selected and published on the school's website or are available for viewing in hard copy from the School reception.

The School has a Code of Conduct for all staff. This has been provided to and accepted by current staff and is included as part of the induction process for new staff on their appointment. This sets the tone for the appropriate behaviour and professional conduct of staff in supporting our students and in creating a nurturing school environment. This is accompanied by the School's Duty of Care policy for staff.

The School also has a Code of Conduct for parents, which is available at the point of enrolment or on request.

Our student welfare framework is guided by our Safe and Supportive Environment Policy. In this policy we outline the importance of providing our staff and students with a mutually supportive environment, in keeping with the gentle, peace-loving and harmonious nature of the Montessori philosophy.

We have policies around the safety of all students in the School. This encompasses appropriate levels of supervision as well as the assessment of risks, WHS and emergency responses. We have carefully crafted policies and procedures to ensure that there is procedural fairness around complaints and grievances between staff, parents and students.

Our Safe and Secure Environment policy has sections on the pastoral care of our students, as is naturally built in to the design of our programs, including emphasising the close relationships between staff and students that develops over a potentially three-year period. We also do everything within our capacity to support children who may have identified special needs.

Sydney Montessori School aims to eliminate bullying of any person at the School by developing a school environment which promotes tolerance and respect and accepts differences in others. The School does not tolerate bullying or harassment. All staff are firmly committed to seeking an end to acts of bullying. We believe that it is the responsibility of students, staff, families and the community as a whole to contribute to the development of a happy and safe school.

The School has an extensive Behaviour Management and Discipline Policy and Procedures. It outlines a positive approach to behaviour management and the processes to be implemented around minor misbehaviour, repetitive misbehaviour and serious misbehaviour.

OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

REPORTING AREA 9

Our third strategic pillar is 'Improved student conduct and social wellbeing'. As such, based on the earlier work with consultants from the Association of Independent Schools, we have created a framework for student conduct and discipline and a structured intensive program for student wellbeing across all our developmental groups.

In line with legislative requirements, the School has a comprehensive Privacy Policy. The policy is available to all current parents, staff and contractors. This Privacy Policy, which has been uploaded to the school's website, sets out how the School manages personal information provided to or collected by it.

SCHOOL-DETERMINED PRIORITY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

REPORTING AREA 10

In 2016 Sydney Montessori School released its ten year 2016–2026 Strategic Plan. The school continues to work towards its key objectives and has achieved key milestones as is reported to the Annual General Meeting and is summarised periodically in the newsletter each year.



Our Vision

To guide each child,
not just in the moment
but for life.

Mission

To inspire our students
to be lifelong independent learners,
develop their sense of wonder
and promote them as
peacemakers and leaders.

Values

At Sydney Montessori School
our Educational philosophy
and teaching practices are
research and evidence based.

As Montessori educators, we
are committed to educating the
whole person.

We foster a love of learning
and an understanding of
the world and our
interconnectedness with it.

We value:

1. Peer learning
2. Curiosity, independence and achieving your personal best.
3. Empathy and courtesy
4. Diversity and inclusivity
5. Partnerships with our families and community.

SYDNEY MONTESSORI SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN 2016 - 2026

2016 - 2021

1. Education

By 2019, the school will incorporate specifically designed **specialist language, music and sports programs** into its curriculum.

The High School will, following the Montessori philosophy, use the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Program framework as mapped to the NSW Board of Studies (BOSTES) syllabuses. The High School will apply to become an IB candidate school with the aim of **becoming an IB (Middle Years Program) World School (Stages 4 & 5: ages 12 to 15 years) within 5 years.**

3. Facilities

We will design and build **state of the art Primary and Early Childhood playgrounds.**

The school will build a **new High School building** with a state of the art science laboratory, music room and art facilities.

The school will develop a **contingency plan** in the event that the **F6 extension** proceeds.

4. Brand & Community

The school will become an **employer of choice** by providing staff with ongoing professional development and opportunities for career advancement. Staff are key stakeholders in the community and their opinions are valued and their voices **heard.**

The school will develop a **formal relationship with a 'sister school'**, enabling opportunities for student, staff and information exchange.

The school will engage in **charitable works.** In particular, the school will make a **formal connection with Montessori Children's Foundation (MCF), supporting Indigenous Australian children in MCF's**

INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

REPORTING AREA 11

Respect and responsibility is woven into the very fabric of the Montessori philosophy and education method. In almost every presentation, workshop or lesson offered to students, the notion of respect for self, others and the environment is implicit. The structures embedded in Montessori education exist to promote respect and responsibility. These structures include, but are not limited to:

Lessons in Grace and Courtesy: These are specific, targeted lessons in appropriate, kind, graceful and peaceful behaviour towards others and the environment.

The Prepared Environment: The environment is specially prepared to engender student individuality and responsibility for their own learning. Students, with guidance from their teacher, design their own work cycle, choose their work and take responsibility for their own learning. This is assisted by an environment which is prepared with learning materials accessible to students. This environment also requires students to learn to act respectfully of one another so that each child respects the independent learning of their peers by not disturbing them and by allowing them the space to conduct their learning.

Student Diaries: In Primary School, students are taught how to use diaries to record the work that they are doing. They bring their work and work diaries to conferences with their teachers, during which time they are able to showcase the work that they have done and the responsibility that they have taken for their own learning.

Class Meetings: There are regular class meetings during which any issues can be raised and discussed. These are excellent opportunities for teachers to model conflict resolution strategies to the class community. Students learn to have the confidence to stand up for what they believe in, how to respectfully take a stance and how to negotiate with their peers.

Multi-Age Groupings: Our classes are comprised of multi-age groupings. This allows older children to take on the role of the 'elder' in the class community and take on the responsibility of acting as a role model to their peers. At the same time, younger students look up to their older peers and naturally learn appropriate behaviours by mirroring them. In addition to this, the older children, supported by their teachers, often assist the younger ones when they are unsure of appropriate behaviour strategies. This engenders an environment whereby students are respectful of one another.

One of the School's strategic pillars is student behaviour and wellbeing. The School is working through a process of selecting, fine-tuning and implementing a new behaviour management and whole-school wellbeing framework.

PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

REPORTING AREA 12

We periodically survey parents and staff in our school community to ensure that we seek feedback on our performance and include feedback as part of making evidence based decisions. Recent surveys have measured satisfaction growth across 9 areas.

The following is a brief summary of the findings.

Parents:

- An explicit improvement agenda - increase of 28%
- Analysis and discussion of data - increase of 22.6%
- A culture that promotes learning - increase of 32.5%
- Targeted use of School resources - increase of 21.5%
- An expert teaching team - increase of 18.8%
- Systematic curriculum delivery - increase of 23.6%
- Differentiated teaching and learning - increase of 19.6%
- Effective pedagogical practices - increase of 23.8%
- School community partnerships - increase of 17.3%

Staff:

- An explicit improvement agenda - increase of approx. 18%
- Analysis and discussion of data - overall positive growth of 22%
- A culture that promotes learning - increase of 24.4%
- Targeted use of School resources - increase of 14%
- An expert teaching team - increase of 18.5%
- Systematic curriculum delivery - increase of 21.2%
- Differentiated teaching and learning - increase of 18.3%
- Effective pedagogical practices - increase of 16.2%
- School community partnerships - increase of 1.7%

Students:

Enrolment growth as well as the parent satisfaction evident in the figures above suggests that the children enjoy coming to school and that our parents value and support the learning at Sydney Montessori School.

Parents often report that their children don't like school holidays because they prefer to be at school! Informal discussions with students and graduating speeches reflect the high level of satisfaction amongst the students. Primary students have regular conferences with their teacher during each term and the Principal welcomes feedback and discussion with teachers and students at any time through an open door policy.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

REPORTING AREA 13

RECURRENT / CAPITAL INCOME

| | | |
|--|-------------|--------|
| Trading Activities - including LDM & preschool | \$1,311,902 | 30.82% |
| Other Capital Income | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Commonwealth Recurrent Grants | \$1,115,642 | 26.21% |
| Fees and Private Income | \$1,398,548 | 32.86% |
| State Recurrent Grants | \$430,454 | 10.11% |

63%

RECURRENT / CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

| | | |
|--|-------------|--------|
| Salaries, Allowances, Related Expenditure (Note: Partially funded by State & Commonwealth recurrent grants) | \$1,230,447 | 37.64% |
| Trading Activities - including LDM & preschool | \$983,567 | 30.07% |
| Capital Expenditure | \$0 | 00.0% |
| Non-salary Expenses | \$1,056,271 | 32.29% |

88%

