In a world of infinite possibility we create a thoughtfully prepared environment to nurture a child’s natural love of learning

Montessori East
(Eastern Suburbs Montessori Association)
8 Wellington Street, Bondi NSW
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INTRODUCTION

Montessori East is a non-denominational and co-educational Montessori school catering for children aged from 3 to 12 years, which follows the educational methods and principles developed by Dr Maria Montessori (1870-1952).

The school is an approved Centre-based preschool and registered primary school. The preschool accreditation is under the NSW Community Services, the regulatory authority for ACECQA, and our registration for school age children is under the NSW Board of Studies. Montessori East is also a member of the Montessori Australia Foundation and a member of the Association of Independent Schools.

Montessori East is a registered non-government school.

In accordance with the Registered and Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual, this annual report contains a summary of the following documentation on Montessori East:

- A message from key school bodies
- Information about the school
- School performance in national and statewide tests and examinations
- Professional learning and teacher standards
- Workforce composition
- Student attendance
- Post-school destinations
- Enrolment policies and profiles
- School policies
- School determined improvement targets
- Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility
- Parent, student and teacher satisfaction
- Summary financial information
REPORTING AREA ONE

MESSAGES FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

Report from principal

I am delighted to share this brief synopsis of 2013 – a year which has seen a strong school community becoming more cohesive and active. All schools must focus on the core purpose for their existence – which is obviously learning, however the realm of learning must extend beyond our classrooms and envelop our entire community in order to create a true ‘culture of learning’. The activities of 2013 demonstrate Montessori East’s commitment to this wider view of learning and our desire to build a cohesive united school community.

Beginning with a look inside our classrooms, we see that our commitment to maintaining quality education continues. We have well-equipped classrooms with the most beautiful materials, with high standards requiring continual care, repair and replacement as the needs arise. This year we have purchased over $12,000 worth of new Montessori materials for our classrooms. Curriculum continues to be reviewed and improvements have been implemented especially in the areas of Spelling and Writing.

Stepping outside the classrooms, yet still supporting student learning, we have built a new library, turned our sports program over to our very own Phil Macken, performed the most amazing musical poking fun at fairy tales, and expanded our collection of animals to include some lovely furry guinea pigs and a bearded dragon! Students continued learning beyond the school grounds through Going Out journeys, class excursions, and our first “Journey of Service” for our students in their last year at ME. The Journey of Service involved our 6 graduates flying to Melbourne and helping out on a working farm and with a wetlands project.

Our school also enjoys a close relationship with its parent community and has always endeavoured to make everyone feel welcome. Our wonderful Class Parent Representatives dutifully assist us in keeping parents informed and involved in the school through welcomes, reminders, and socials. Parent education opportunities have expanded to include a new option in the afternoons where parents can participate in a discussion on a set topic just prior to picking up their children at 3PM. Our evening programs continue to be very popular with attendance continually growing. We have also connected to the wider community which includes our past students and families. Our new Alumni Coordinator, Felicity Jensen, has led the way in reconnecting with many hundreds of families from the school’s past 35 years.

Services to the school community expanded in 2013 with the launching of our Under 3’s program, another dream come true for Raji Sivapalan, and a new After School Care program providing care between 3-6PM each school day. I also started Breakfasts with Bill as a means to connect informally with parents. The Friday morning breakfasts have brought parents together from different classes where we enjoy the most interesting conversations on a variety of topics.

I am constantly in admiration of our talented staff at Montessori East and we enjoyed a relatively stable year in 2013, except for several maternity leaves which brought some new faces into the community – some of whom are still here! We employed a new librarian last year who has enhanced tremendously the library experience for our students and parents. Three staff members attended the
international AMI World Congress in Portland USA in August and returned with excitement and determination to focus more attention on nature.

Finally, I am pleased to see the school more formally recognised for its high standard of Montessori education. We recently went through a process of self-evaluation which culminated in a visit by a ‘mentor’ from the Montessori Quality Assurance Program and finally resulting in being a ‘recognised quality Montessori school’ under this program. We are one of only a handful achieving this status nationally.

Our school would not be what it is without the support of our parent community. The appreciation from the students, parents and the ESMA Council provide us the energy to sustain a hard working staff as they carry out their crucial role in providing the culture of learning that is the school’s core purpose. We look forward to a continuation of our growth and attention to making Montessori East the finest Montessori school around.

Bill Conway
Principal
Montessori East
Report from the President

In the Principal’s report you will find an overview of some of our achievements for 2013. The council works closely with our Principal, Bill Conway, on implementing many aspects of our Strategic Plan. In addition to the achievements in the Principal’s report some areas of focus have been:

Maintain financial stability for the long term viability of ME while managing fee levels

Our financial position continues to be strong, providing us with a buffer in case of unexpected external events, but also a platform for growth. We are currently exploring ways to raise further funds from outside our current school community in order to make a substantial investment in the schools’ premises.

Strengthen the engagement of ME alumni with the school

In association with the ME Foundation, the ME alumni community has grown and we have found more ways to build strong connections between the school and our alumni students and families, as well as between alumni. The annual alumni event was another great success this year, focused on celebrating the impact of previous council presidents who are now alumni families. The stories we heard painted a wonderful picture of the growth of the school, showing how far we have come, and reinforcing the stability and high quality that the school now enjoys.

Our role as council is to provide effective governance, and to look to the long term horizons for the school. We engage in an annual strategic review and this year we developed a number of ‘hot topics’ to debate and focus on throughout the year. These have included the market position of the school, parent communication and future growth.

We are always mindful of our own internal processes, in particular succession planning for the council with the aim of bringing fresh perspectives into the governing body. This year we welcomed 4 new members to our council, Daniel Birch (Treasurer), Barbara Merz, Simon Johnston (Secretary), and Barry Hilson. We also farewelled Peter Shorthouse, our outgoing Treasurer, who stood on council for 6 years, and we wonder if this is a record!

On behalf of the school council I would like to thank all our staff, teaching and administration, for their amazing contributions to our wonderful school. A school like ours also relies on the skills and goodwill of its parent body. Thank you to those who have kindly donated their time and expertise to our school over the last year. I would also like to publicly thank Bill Conway, our Principal, for the enormous contribution he makes to the school.

Rose Trevelyan
President

Rose Trevelyan with Sasha and Jake
Montessori East is a non-denominational and co-educational Montessori primary and pre-school for children aged 3–12 years, which follows the educational methods and principles developed by Dr Maria Montessori. The school is registered with the NSW Board of Studies and approved as a centre-based preschool. Montessori East is a member of the Montessori Australia Foundation and the NSW Association of Independent Schools.

Montessori East is an independent school and primarily funded through student fees and the support of the parent body and community.

Montessori Education

The Montessori approach to education is based on the work of the inspirational educator, Dr Maria Montessori, who over a hundred years ago, developed and fine-tuned an approach to education that puts the child in the forefront of the learning process. The method nurtures a life-long love of learning while following the child’s natural development and interests.

History

Founded in 1978 originally as a pre-school, the school has grown over time to where it now offers a Montessori education to over 100 children in ages ranging from 3 to 12 years old and is expected to grow to more than 150 in the near future. Since 2001, Montessori East has been located in Wellington Street, Bondi.

Our Goal

At Montessori East, our goal is to prepare each child with the skills and attitudes they need to become life-long learners as they reach their individual potential. Our school is committed to providing a supportive environment where children are able to continue the natural process of their growth and development.

Our Principal and Teachers

Our principal, Bill Conway, has spent the past 30 years in education as a teacher and principal. His background has included experience in a vast array of education environments around the world. In seeking a better alternative to the way society educates children, he was drawn to Montessori and is committed to the philosophy.

Each classroom has at least one AMI (Association Montessori Internationale) trained teacher who also holds a university degree in education. Our teachers represent a wide range of cultural, educational, and experiential backgrounds, providing the students with a rich environment in which to learn.

Our Students

Students are drawn from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, with 8% living in homes where English is not the primary language. Most live in the Eastern Suburbs of Sydney. Financial assistance is provided to a small number of families through our Scholarship Fund and Fee Assistance programs. Six students are identified with a “disability” and receive special assistance to access our learning program.
**ADDING VALUE TO THE PROGRAM**

The Montessori program inherently includes many ‘value-added’ features in its holistic view of the child’s development. The basic academic program is met through a child’s interaction with a carefully prepared environment. Within this environment children choose their activities and are encouraged to follow their individual interests. When a child shows a particular interest in a topic area, such as insects, the environment and the teachers encourage a full exploration, which stimulates excitement and thirst for knowledge beyond any limits of a standard curriculum. This could include a special presentation, projects, or even visits to a museum or study field in a natural environment. It is in this way value is added to their program on a daily basis.

Additionally, the school organized programs in 2013 to further enhance the child’s learning and experience at Montessori East. Among those programs are:

**Sports programs:**
Our preschool children experience a weekly sports program delivered by a trained teacher from Playball. Primary children receive weekly sports in a program that varies through the year to offer blocks of activities delivered by specialist teachers. These activities include gymnastics, athletics, team sports, ball skills, aerobic exercise, swimming lessons, surfing lessons and yoga.

**Music:** A small school band ensemble and vocal groups have been organized for students. They perform from time to time at school events.

**Supporting needy causes:** The school regularly supports charities and we have participated in a number of programs in 2013. These have included support for World Vision, Anglicare Women’s Refuge, and various programs serving the needy through the Our Big Kitchen projects.

Service projects have become a part of our final year students with the Journey of Service launched in 2013. This program involves students participating in a project outside the local area and this year saw our Year 6 students travelling to Victoria to work on a farm and support a wetlands project.

**Co-op:** A vegetable co-op runs fortnightly to provide students and parents with fresh organic fruit and vegetables. Students assist with preparing boxes for parents who wish to purchase.

**Under 3’s:** This year we started a program for children under the age of 3. The Under 3’s come with their parents on Wednesday, Thursday or Friday each week. Their sessions are led by a Montessori trained teacher who guides the children and parent on ways in which they can assist the child towards learning and independence.

**After School Programs:** We embarked on a new service to provide care to students from the age of 4 after school hours Monday through Friday. The program has proven popular. We also continue to provide After School Clubs for a large number of primary students.
ETHOS STATEMENT –

Our ethos in regards to:

The Child
- We aim to nurture in each child:
  - a natural love of learning
  - intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development as whole human beings.
- We cater to children’s individual needs.
- We support children’s education for life.
- We place children in the unique position of making choices and taking responsibility for their own learning.

The Adult
- We believe that the adult (staff and parent) recognises and respects the dignity of the child.
  - Our task is to:
    - respect the child’s individuality
    - inspire and guide the child to realise their potential
    - observe and guide the child according to the sensitive periods of development
    - be positive in our communication
    - be flexible and responsive to the needs of the child
    - be open to learning by taking part in ongoing personal and professional development
    - embrace the humility Maria Montessori felt towards the child.

The Environment
- We believe that learning:
  - is a joyous and spontaneous experience that happens within the child
  - allows the child to follow his natural pace and rhythm
  - occurs within an ordered environment, allowing the child to exercise freedom with responsibility
  - provides a concrete foundation leading towards abstraction.
- We believe that the environment, which is prepared and organised according to Montessori ideals:
  - inspires wonder and admiration for the world in which we live
  - is a microcosm of society, where children learn to work together.
- We believe that the curriculum must:
  - reflect our commitment to Montessori philosophy
  - integrate the NSW Board of Studies Syllabus
  - be presented over three year cycles
  - prepare the children for schooling and life after Montessori East.

- We believe that the Montessori Materials and activities:
  - help develop and foster concentration
  - allow children to discover concepts independently
  - have a sequence and order and build on a child’s previous knowledge
  - are tailored to the individual rather than the class.
Being a Primary school, Montessori East participated in the NAPLAN test. Due to the limited numbers of students enrolled, our NAPLAN results are not always indicative of general basic skill performance as a group, however we have included a cumulative result covering the years 2009-2013.

**NAPLAN Results**

In May 2013 the following number of students sat these tests:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nation - wide examination</th>
<th>Number of students who undertook examination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAPLAN – Year 3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAPLAN – Year 5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments on NAPLAN Results**

- Last year we were concerned about a consistently below-average result in Spelling. It was pleasing to see the results significantly improved this year for our Year 5 students.
- It has been noted that our Reading results are consistently strong, performing at a level significantly above the averages for state and independent schools.
- Analysis of growth from Year 3 to Year 5 is consistently higher than average, which reflects the way in which children consolidate their learning in Cycle 3.

All students in Year 3 and Year 5 are meeting the National Benchmarks.

NAPLAN results are available on the My School website: [www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au)

The following graphs summarise the overall performance of students sitting the NAPLAN or Basic Skills Test between 2009 and 2013. The school’s results are compared against State results (NSW) and all Independent Schools (NSW).
NAPLAN: Year 3 Results 2009-2013 (5 year average)
Numeracy and Reading

NAPLAN: Year 5 Results 2009-2013 (5 year average)
Numeracy and Reading
REPORTING AREA FIVE

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND TEACHER STANDARDS

Professional Learning:
Professional development for staff is an important part of the School program. Staff attended the following workshops and seminars in 2013:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of the Professional Leaning Activity</th>
<th>No of Staff participating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asthma Training</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaphylaxis Training</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood Conference</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Difficulties (SPELD)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cert III Nutrition/Dietic Assist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MultiLit/MiniLit Training</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Management</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy Calkins Writing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy Calkins Reading</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centenary Conference (Montessori)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NQF/ACEQA Conference</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Montessori Congress</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid Training</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion of Special Needs Students</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cert III in Children's Services</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher Standards:
As at December 2013, Montessori East employed 7 teachers who are responsible for delivering the curriculum. There are additional teachers serving as assistants who also hold qualifications, but are not included in this total.

The following table provides a breakdown of the qualifications and experience of Montessori East teaching staff responsible for delivering the curriculum:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of qualification</th>
<th>Number of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition guidelines</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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 but lack formal teacher education qualifications</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. No qualifications or teaching experience</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Montessori qualifications:
All teachers hold the internationally-recognised Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) teaching qualifications in addition to their mainstream university qualifications. Two assistant teachers also hold this dual qualification.
REPORTING AREA SIX

WORKFORCE

The teaching staff at Montessori East is comprised of well-qualified Montessori teachers. In the Montessori classroom teachers and assistants work together to guide the children’s learning. Our assistants who have the Montessori teacher training provide lessons presentations and work closely with the teachers assisting in delivering the curriculum.

Our academic staff of 17 teachers and assistant teachers are comprised of individuals from a wide range of educational and cultural backgrounds, including 12 cultural groups. There are no Indigenous teachers currently employed.

Reporting area Seven

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kinder</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On average our school-age students attended school 93.3% of the school days in 2013.

(REPORTING AREA EIGHT – POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS (SECONDARY):

This reporting area is for secondary schools only, so there is no data.)
REPORTING AREA NINE

ENROLMENT POLICIES AND PROFILES

9.1 ENROLMENT POLICY AND PROCESS

Montessori East School offers a three-year Pre-Primary Montessori programme commencing at age 3 years. The Pre-Primary programme (including Year K) progresses towards the Primary programme which is divided into 6-9 year and 9-12 year age group classes. Commencement at the Primary level at age 6 years is similar to commencement in Year 1 of a mainstream school.

Being a non-denominational and co-educational school, Montessori East welcomes enrolment applications for both sexes and all denominations.

The school Enrolment Officer processes all enrolments in consultation with the Principal. Applications are processed in order of receipt, with the exception of current siblings and transfers from other Montessori schools. Further considerations are given to the applicant’s support for the ethos of the school, the applicant’s desire to enrol in both pre-primary and primary and other criteria such as the sex and age balance of the classrooms, alumni families, and children with additional needs. Children with additional needs are considered on an individual basis keeping in mind the standards of the Disability Standards for Education Act 2005.

The process of enrolment is outlined in Appendix 1 and a full Enrolment Policy is contained within the school’s Policy Manual.

Once enrolled students and parents are expected to support the school’s ethos, comply with the school rules and pay fees regularly to remain enrolled. A copy of the Policy Manual is available by contacting the school. Montessori East regularly reviews its policies.

9.2 ENROLMENT PROFILE

9.2.1 Enrolment movements

Retention of students is a unique challenge in our school. While we are not short of applications and enquiries, our teaching methodology requires students to have a solid preparation from at least the age of 3 in regards to independent learning with the Montessori materials. New students cannot join the program easily after the age of 3, so any loss of students in later years cannot easily be replaced. Overall retention of students between Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 has improved significantly, however we still experienced a more significant loss of students between Cycle 2 and 3.

An exit survey was conducted in 2013 and 2014 to ascertain the opinions and reasons for withdrawal of all families who left the school in 2013. Results indicated a variety of reasons for withdrawing and the school has addressed certain complaints from individuals. A survey of our graduating students assures us that we are meeting the primary goals both academically as well as socio-emotionally. There is a high level of satisfaction expressed by parents with the education their children received.

Our 2013 graduating class of 6 students moved on to the following secondary schools: International Grammar School, St Claire’s College, Trinity College, Elonera Montessori School, and Moriah College.
SCHOOL POLICIES
At Montessori East, the aim is to nurture in children their natural love of learning and their desire to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially and spiritually. The school is committed to providing a nurturing and supportive environment where children are able to continue the natural process of their growth and development.

10.1 POLICIES FOR STUDENT WELFARE:
To protect the welfare of the students, Montessori East has developed a series of comprehensive policies in relation to:
- Student Welfare
- Child Protection
- Health and Safety

Policies are reviewed regularly and updated as required. The following updates/changes have been made to policies in 2013:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Changes in 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Protection including:</td>
<td>Adjustments made in the Working with Children Check procedures for employees and volunteers, reflecting new government procedures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment Policy:</td>
<td>Clarifications made on enrolment preferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptable Use of Technology</td>
<td>Parents provided with the policy and asked to sign acceptance in conjunction with their child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lock Down Procedure</td>
<td>Updated to reflect new library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evacuation Procedure</td>
<td>Updated to reflect new library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun Protection Policy</td>
<td>Reviewed an clarified staff responsibility with applying sunscreen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.2 POLICIES FOR STUDENT DISCIPLINE:
Montessori East’s goal is to foster the development of self-discipline in students. This is achieved through the Montessori philosophy and pedagogy, which includes the prepared environment, Montessori trained teachers and practicing an education for peace. Guidance on good behavior is given to students by teachers and peers. Lessons on virtues/values were part of our weekly Skills for Life meeting, led by both teachers and older students. Peer group activities also provide a practical application of self-discipline within group settings, a feature of our school that has seen very positive results and few behavior issues. Students gain skills in self-discipline and conflict resolution. The three-year mixed age range in each class provides the opportunity for the older child to display leadership by setting good behaviour models which in turn encourages younger children to emulate the more mature behaviour of the older student.

The Discipline Policy is included in the Appendix and is made available to parents each year through our Parent Handbook as well as on the website.

10.3 Policies for Complaints and Grievances Resolution
The school’s current Complaints and Grievances policy, which is contained in the school’s Policy Manual, provides set procedures for all community members to follow in the case of a grievance or complaint. The Grievance Policy is included in the Appendix.
### REPORTING AREA ELEVEN

#### SCHOOL DETERMINED IMPROVEMENT TARGETS

Below is a summary of the goals established from the beginning of 2013. These goals represent a portion of what we set out to accomplish this year and does not include specific goals for individuals or factions of the school community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Areas for 2013</th>
<th>Sub-category</th>
<th>Goals for 2013</th>
<th>Achievement - end of 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Flow through from Cycle to Cycle</td>
<td>Establish continuity in the curriculum flow from cycle to cycle</td>
<td>Work has commenced but has not been completed. We have had 4 meetings this year to establish clarity on our scope and sequence, focusing on Maths and Language. We hope to finalise this in January 2014.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAF Quality Assurance / National Curriculum</td>
<td>Identify ME’s response to MAF Quality Assurance indicators and the National Curriculum</td>
<td>A revised report was submitted in June, followed by an inspection in October. With staff collaboration we have a quality improvement plan for 2014. A full mentor report was received by MAF. We have successfully completed the QAP requirements and have been recognized for this achievement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>Expand the Reading and Writing Project strategies in Cycle 2 and 3</td>
<td>The Literacy focus received a boost after our continued participation in the Reading and Writing Project from Columbia University in NY. Workshops on teaching writing have been conducted and a scope and sequence written to guide our writing through the cycles.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record Keeping</td>
<td>Thorough utilisation of the features of MRX for tracking</td>
<td>Implementation of MRX successful and used throughout the school. Work continues to better utilize the tool for reporting to parents.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>0-3 programme</td>
<td>Expand the program to include all stages of the 0-3 spectrum.</td>
<td>The 0-3 program has expanded to two days serving 25 children. Plans continue to be developed for an even larger program spanning 3 days next year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Additional pre-primary class</td>
<td>Seek out possible sites for an additional class and conduct a feasibility study</td>
<td>The Property Search committee has made some progress and has created financial modeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student Retention</td>
<td>Maintain enrolments at critical transition points (between cycles, and into Year 5) Target families who may be undecided</td>
<td>Strategies implemented in 2013 included more parental opportunities, a more active class parent involvement with families, introduction of portfolios, Breakfast club and close monitoring of uncommitted families. A new Transition Handbook was published with new procedures that engage the parent more clearly in the process of moving from cycle to cycle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>Performance management strategies</td>
<td>Long range planning strategies</td>
<td>Staff Procedures and policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create a culture of excellence</td>
<td>Involve staff in setting long range goals and definitions for the school</td>
<td>All teachers to be familiar with the contents of the Staff handbook and school policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional development was encouraged and were aligned with goals set at the beginning of the year as part of the performance management review.</td>
<td>All staff participated in a strategic planning session in January to define further the school's ethos and provide input into long range goals.</td>
<td>Certain areas of the Staff Handbook were reviewed at staff meetings to familiarize staff with its contents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REPORTING AREA TWELVE

INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

The entire Montessori philosophy and pedagogy is founded on promoting respect and responsibility amongst students, staff and parents. Respect and responsibility are inherent in all daily activities whether they are classroom teaching and learning activities, staff interactions, student and parent interactions or expected student, staff and parent behaviours.

Respect and Responsibility are promoted and nurtured through specific strategies, such as Grace and Courtesy lessons, the Prepared Environment, Values Education sessions, Multi-age grouping, Peer group activities and Class Meetings.

Grace and Courtesy:
Lessons in Grace and Courtesy begin with the earliest years (3-6 year olds) and continue throughout all classes. These lessons address the intricacies of everyday living, where we are required to work together, share, and care for self and others. There is a courteous, gentle and careful manner in which a teacher considers the needs of an individual student and interacts with the students, demonstrating not only complete respect for the student, but also honouring the dignity of the child.

The Prepared Environment:
A unique characteristic of Montessori Education is the tremendous emphasis on preparing the learning environment for the child. We uphold a high standard of cleanliness, beauty, and quality of the teaching materials. When such care is taken (e.g., flowers in vases on the students’ work tables, carefully placed material on shelves, cultural artifacts displayed, etc.) the child immediately feels the respect from the school and in turn expresses a respectful attitude, appreciation, and ultimately a deep sense of responsibility to maintain their environment.

Class Meetings:
At both the preprimary and primary level students have significant involvement in the decision-making regarding their learning, hence giving them a respectful control over their own learning. At the preprimary level teachers formulate ground rules for appropriate behaviour to ensure the welfare of all students, who subsequently are responsible for adhering to these rules. At the primary level the students participate with teachers in making the class rules at the beginning of each year and are responsible for seeing that they are adhered to. Weekly class meetings enable students to raise issues for redress, air grievances and if necessary rewrite a rule that is not working. These meetings are conducted by the students themselves under teacher supervision. All Primary (6-12) students are involved.

Skills for Life:
Values lessons are held weekly, with a value/virtue a week taught both in the individual classrooms and as part of our weekly whole group gathering. The lessons are presented by older students or staff members, and explore through discussion the features of a particular virtue that students practice. Reflections are recorded or discussed by each student during the week to see how the characteristics have been practiced. Resources such as the Virtues Guide are used.

Multi-age grouping and peer groups:
The three-year age range in each class promotes respect and responsibility. Older students take responsibility for assisting younger students and model appropriate respectful behaviour. Younger children respect their student ‘elders’ and feel secure in an environment where their needs are respected and supported so well by other students as well as staff. Peer groups
were established involving all Primary students. Each week the peer groups work on an activity and are led by the oldest students. This has proven to be extremely successful.

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New Under 3’s Program
REPORTING AREA THIRTEEN

PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

It is in the best interest of the school and its future success to constantly monitor the level of satisfaction amongst the major stakeholders. Strong communication networks, which exist between each community body, assure an honest and concise flow of information and opinions.

Parent satisfaction:
An excellent school is based on a solid pedagogy, excellent staff, the right environment, and happy stakeholders. At Montessori East we consistently aspire towards excellence, drawing on the sound principles and pedagogy of Dr Maria Montessori. We reflect constantly on the good practice found in other schools, the curriculum standards set by the government, and, of course, the wishes and expectations of our own community. It is this openness to our community and desire to improve which has prompted the distribution of parent satisfaction surveys.

A comprehensive Parent Survey was distributed by email to all current parents in November 2012. The survey contained 22 questions covering four topic areas: communication, reporting, curriculum and staff, and school environment. The questions were designed internally to address our unique structure and methodology, rather than utilising generic parent surveys. The results were carefully studied by management and shared with staff at the end of 2012. Action was taken immediately on some of the issues that came out of the survey, which was reported in a subsequent report to parents, with the opportunity for discussion at a Parent Forum in May 2013.

We also conduct surveys when children leave the school to gain important views on the family’s experience at the school as well as the experience at the child’s new school. This information is used to ascertain our effectiveness at meeting the needs of not only our satisfied families, but also those who chose another school in the event we were not meeting the needs of their child or the family.

The exit surveys we conducted between the years 2009-2012 were examined in 2013 to see if we could identify any common issues.

The survey responses indicated a variety of reasons as to why parents may have chosen to remove a child from the school, however we also know from experience that their reasons can be more complicated. The comments naturally site personal experience and situations with either a particular child or family circumstances.

There is possibly some common information that can be drawn from the results. Concerns around the academic performance and challenge often come up, however when questioned further about their satisfaction levels, these concerns appear to be more perceived or fear based rather than actual. This is also relative to their preparedness for high school. Certainly, when asked how their child is performing at their new school, almost 100% reported that they are well prepared. The fear or lack of confidence seems to stem from a need for more individual feedback on their child. The school could also possibly do more on building confidence around academic quality.

Peer group size does come up and occasionally it is a deciding factor in leaving the school, but more often than not it is an associated factor. Peer group size would nonetheless support retention.

Being offered a place at another school which is also their high school choice was a
recurring reason for leaving and did not generally relate to dissatisfaction with ME, often the contrary.

Surveying our graduates is also done each year, and a look at our most recent graduating class revealed that 100% of the students transitioned very well, were well prepared academically and socioemotionally, not behind, did not have any obvious gaps in their learning, and benefited from learning in a non-competitive environment. The survey asked questions on how well they have coped with certain changes in the high school environment and we learned that there were some who were challenged with planning, meeting homework deadlines, and public speaking experiences.

**Student satisfaction:**
Integrated into our program are strategies for eliciting student levels of satisfaction, especially through our class meetings. Students are also invited to take suggestions and concerns to these class meetings and, if this proves inappropriate, directly to the principal.

**Teacher Satisfaction:**
There are two structured forums for determining teacher satisfaction. One is through the annual review meetings with the principal, where the staff member has the opportunity to air any concerns as well as express their level of satisfaction with their employment. Regular staff meetings include an opportunity to raise concerns in a professional and productive manner.

**Indicators of Community Satisfaction:**
- Participation in Parent education evenings has grown significantly, averaging 47 parents per event.
- Our Parent Forum held in May 2013 focused on many of the school’s strengths, however concerns were raised about families leaving the school before completing Year 6.
- Enrolment enquiries continue to increase and are at a level where we could easily fill an additional pre-primary classroom. This has caused us to search for new premises to expand our Cycle 1 potential.
- Our annual Open Day has seen record numbers of visitors and parents coming in to the school to learn more about what we do. The feedback from the participants has been completely positive.
SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The Company reports the financials at an aggregate level across the Pre-Primary and Primary classes. The Pre-Primary program include children in a parent/child program for aged 0-3, and classes for children aged 3-6 years. The Primary classes are for children aged 6-9 years and 9-12 years.

The financial year operates from 1 January to 31 December inclusive.

The following data has been extracted from the Australian Government Financial Questionnaire for the year ended 31 December 2013. The Financial Questionnaire was prepared on the basis of the Company’s audited 2013 financial statements.

For the year ended 31 December 2013, Eastern Suburbs Montessori Association Limited generated total revenue of $2,267,538 which, after total expenditure of $2,496,690 created a deficit of $239,152. The total expenditure includes expenditure of a Capital nature of $102,724 which, if excluded, leaves us with an operating deficit of $126,428.
Review of expenditure

Total expenditure in 2013 was $2,496,690. Non salary expenditure totalled $782,011. Capital expenditure was $102,724.
APPENDIX 1: ENROLMENT POLICY:

Montessori East offers an education program for children from the age of 3 through the age of 12, or Year 6 in Primary schooling. There is a three-year (twelve terms) pre-primary Montessori program with a full day component for children 4 years old and up. This progresses towards the Montessori Primary program, split into 6-9 and 9-12 age group classes. Commencement at Primary is roughly equivalent to commencement in Year 1 of a traditional school.

The school’s enrolment officer processes all enrolments. The Principal has the responsibility of reviewing applications for enrolment in line with the principles expressed in policies and procedures. The procedure to enrol a child at Montessori is complex and lengthy, resulting in the need to assess the individual application carefully.

When considering the acceptance of a child to our school we consider a number of factors to make sure the experience for the child and the family is a positive one. Decisions on enrolment are primarily made in consideration of the date an application was completed and submitted, however there are other factors that weigh in at the time of an enrolment decision, with the school reserving the right to consider the needs of the school as a whole. For example, the school may favour one application over another in order to achieve reasonable age or gender balance.

The procedures below are in constant review and subject to change from time to time.

**Key Roles in the Application procedure**

**Role of the Enrolment Officer**

- Provide accurate information about the school
- Arrange for school tours and/or class observations
- Make no promises of accepting a child until enrolment procedures have been followed.
- Disperse printed information and forms

**Role of the Teaching Staff**

- Discuss philosophy and functioning of the classroom with family
- Accommodate observers when required

**For Prospective Families**

- Apply to be included on the Enrolment Wait List
- Attend a general information session
- Observe or tour the classroom
- Complete an enrolment application
- Attend an interview with the Principal
For Primary enrolments, the child is invited to visit the classroom for 1-3 days

Role of Principal

- Conduct interviews with all prospective families being considered for enrolment
- Cover the following points in the interview:
  - Understanding of Montessori
  - Intentions for primary schooling
  - Fee schedule
  - Parental involvement in the school
  - Qualities and characteristics of the child

Role of the Class Parent

- The enrolment officer will inform the class parents of new families starting school.
- The class parent will contact the new family the week the child commences school to see if they have any questions.
- Organise a coffee morning early in the term, to which all parents are invited. New families are invited personally by the class parent as this is an opportunity to get to know other families.
- Follow up from time to time.
The role of the Class Parent is to assist the new families to become part of the school community.

Application Procedures (non-transfer)

Enrolment Procedure – Stage 1: Enrolment Enquiry
The first stage in the procedure shows the steps involved in placing a child on our active wait list.

1. **Parent enquiry** - At the time of initial enquiry parents are instructed of the enrolment procedure and limitations, then invited to complete an application form. An **Enrolment Pack** containing enrolment instructions, a fee schedule and enrolment form is sent to the parent.

2. Parents attend an **Information Session**. These must be done before progressing to the next stage.

Enrolment Procedure – Stage 2: Enrolment Application Form

1. Parents return the completed **Enrolment Application form**, which must be accompanied by 2 letters of reference and the application fee.

2. Upon receipt of the form the child’s place on the waitlist becomes ‘active’ and ready for consideration if and when a place becomes available. Parents are
informed in writing that their form has been received and they are now on our active wait list.

3. Information from the enrolment form is entered into the school’s database.

**Enrolment Procedure – Stage 3: Assessment for places**

At this stage an applicant from the active wait list is being considered for enrolment into available places

1. The active wait list is consulted to choose applications for possible placement. Priority is given to applications received earliest, activated earliest or siblings of current students. Consideration is given to families in our 0-3 program and alumni families.

2. Parents are contacted and asked to meet for an interview with the principal and asked to observe in the classrooms before the interview.

3. Following the interview a recommendation is made by the principal to the enrolment officer whether to accept or reject the application.

4. If the application is accepted, consideration of other criteria is weighed against other applications in order to achieve age/gender balance.

5. A final decision on the application is made by the principal in consultation with the enrolment officer.

6. At this point the family will receive invitations to school events such as parent education evenings.

**Enrolment procedure – Stage 4: Enrolment Contract and Orientation**

At this stage, the application is successful and preparation is made for the child to start school.

1. The parents of the successful applicant are sent an enrolment contract and Parent Handbook.

2. The parents must sign and return the contract along with the payment of the Placement Fee.

3. Upon receipt of the contract the child is entered into the database as a Placed Enrolment.

4. The parents are invited to an orientation information session, usually held at the beginning of each semester.

5. The teachers are given information on the child 6 weeks before the child starts school. The teachers contact the family to welcome them to their class. At this point the parents should start to receive our weekly bulletin.

6. The child is oriented to the class by the teacher on the day before they officially start school.

7. The child starts school. The office updates the database, informs class parent representatives to welcome the family, and informs the rest of the parents/staff through the bulletin and email.
**Note:** For unsuccessful applications a letter is sent informing them that they have been unsuccessful. Parents are offered to have their child waitlisted should a place become available. Parents must complete an attached waitlist form and send back to school. If a parent considers they have been unfairly or improperly treated in the enrolment process, they have a right to lodge a grievance with the Principal as outlined in the school’s Grievance Policy.

**Transfers from other schools**

Montessori East may consider enrolments of children who are attending other schools. The procedure for a student transfer follows a similar procedure as above, with the additional considerations of the individual child’s ‘fit’ with the Montessori classroom. Prior to a transfer application being considered, a report regarding TRANSFER CHILDREN from their current school (both preprimary and primary) is required and is to be viewed by a directress.

A child is accepted on a three month probationary basis (both preprimary and primary).

**Transfer Enrolment Procedure:**

Applications from other Montessori schools or non-Montessori schools are only considered in accordance with procedures outlined below.

**Transfer procedure Stage 1 – Parent Enquiry**

At the initial stage of this procedure, the family is advised of the limitations inherent in accepting children from other schools. Places are limited in every age group and generally the school does not accept children in the 2nd or 3rd year of each cycle. Enquirers must be informed of our policy on accepting students from a non-Montessori school (see below) and, in the case of transfers from other Montessori schools, the need to assess the standard of the other school’s Montessori program. While we don’t intend to discourage transfer applications, we must be up front about these limitations.

1. An application for enrolment is requested after the initial enquiry and if it seems the above requirements can be met.
2. A report from the previous school must be submitted.
3. Parents must observe classes in all 3 cycles.
4. Parents must attend an interview with the principal. The child may be interviewed at this time at the discretion of the principal.

**Transfer Procedure Stage 2 – Trial**

1. If there is an agreement by the Principal and the family that there is a reasonable chance the child will experience success at Montessori East, the child will attend school for 1-3 days on a trial basis. Exceptions to this step may be appropriate, such as in the case of overseas transfers from Montessori schools.
2. Following the trial a decision on enrolment is made after discussion with the teacher about the child’s experience.
3. The decision about enrolling a transfer student is made by the principal in collaboration with the coordinator.
Transfer Procedure Stage 3 – Enrolment Contract

Parents meet with the principal and coordinator to learn of the school’s decision. A 3 month conditional enrolment contract is offered. The conditions of this contract allow the school or the family to terminate the enrolment within the prescribed time.

Policy on accepting students from a non-Montessori school

Generally we do not accept students from a non-Montessori school to enter any other age level other than 3 year olds. Exceptions may be considered based on the following guidelines:

1. There is a space and need for students in a particular age group (to achieve social and gender equity)
2. The number of students from non Montessori backgrounds must not exceed a maximum of 10% of the group.
3. The child must demonstrate a general fit with the Montessori methods of learning, such as independent learning skills
4. The school must review reports from the other school(s)
5. In most cases, the child must have a 1 - 3 day trial in the classroom prior to being accepted
6. All transfers are given a 3 month probationary enrolment period

Priority for enrolment

The following list is the order in which an application is considered

1. Applicant is a sibling of a current Montessori East student
2. Family have indicated a commitment to the Primary program and Montessori education
3. Application Date
4. Age and sex (see “Class Balance”*)
5. Suitability (fit into the class community)

The transition of students from Cycle to cycle does not require a new application process. Contracts are carried over to the next cycle.

Class Balance

The multi-age Montessori classroom environment is created and maintained for the benefit of all students in the class. Class balance is achieved through careful consideration at the time of enrolment. The school may limit enrolments based on this need to create an optimum learning environment by:

- Favouring an application based on gender, when required
- Limiting an age group to 40% of the total class population (in a typical 3 year cycle group)
- No more than 10% of primary students from a non-Montessori pre-school.
Classroom Observations and Open Morning Visits

Classroom Observations and parents visiting their child’s classroom form an important part of understanding the student and Montessori education. It provides prospective and current parents with a glimpse at Montessori education as part of their decision to enrol and when teachers observe it provides teachers with an opportunity to assess a child. Children also observe each other as part of their process of learning. Observation guidelines exist for prospective parents and current parents. These guidelines are kept at reception and given to parents prior to their observation. Observations must be booked through the office and occur at the agreed-upon times only. Observers are asked to adhere to the rules on the guideline document, including:

- Observations should not exceed 30 minutes
- Observer must remain in the observer’s chair while observing
- Observer must not engage in conversation with children unless the child approaches the observer
- Photos or recordings (video/audio) are not permitted

Enrolling Special Needs Children

Special Needs include:

- intellectual disabilities
- learning disabilities
- giftedness
- behaviour disorders
- multiple disabilities
- physical disabilities
- blindness
- deafness/hard of hearing
- autism
- families at risk
- Other, as defined by the Special Needs funding criteria

1. Parent follows the enrolment process up to the interview stage.
2. At the interview the parent is asked to provide details of the child’s characteristics that may warrant additional attention or resource, as well as any assessment reports from other involved professionals. These are viewed by the Principal and possibly by the teacher.
3. The Principal and the Teacher discuss the child’s application.
4. The Principal and Teacher observe the child in their present placement if possible. If the child is not in a school the teacher visits the child at home.
5. When the child starts at the school all relevant staff members collaborate to draw up an Individual Education Plan.
6. The school can recommend Educational and/or Health Professionals if required.

Meeting the Needs of a Child with Special Needs

1. When a child with Special Needs enrols at the school, it is undertaken with the full understanding that the school believes the Montessori environment will be of benefit to the child.
2. It is recommended by the school that parents and staff work collaboratively. We have established a Student Services Program to structure the services we deliver to students with special needs. A description of this program exists in a separate document.

3. The child will be observed by all relevant staff members upon entry. When planning and evaluating an Individual Education Plan (IEP) all relevant parties will be included in meetings to discuss the outcomes of the program and follow up plans. Parents will be kept informed at all times.

4. We welcome Educational and/or Health Professionals to continue their program with the child at school.

5. A child who has special needs is an integral part of the school community. Therefore, we encourage involvement in extra curricula activities.

6. Our aim is to assist the child with reaching their full potential.

Note: if a child is observed and appears to be having difficulties of any kind following the initial enrolment, the teacher will inform parents as soon as possible.

Regarding TRANSFER CHILDREN both pre-primary and primary directresses require a report from the previous school before the child is accepted.

A child is accepted on a three month probationary basis (both pre-primary and primary).

Integration of new families

Role of Principal & Enrolment Officer

The Principal/Enrolment Officer is responsible for:

- Informing the parents of the child’s acceptance
- Sending contract and receiving deposit
- Sending Parent Handbook (classroom rules and policies)
- Advising start date
- Answering any questions regarding fees
- Informing the teacher of the start date
- Informing the Class Parents

Orientation Day

Parents are asked to bring their child in on the afternoon of the day prior to their start date to enjoy an hour or so in their prospective classroom, allowing the child to meet their teacher and to familiarise themselves with their classroom.

Role of the Directress/Teacher

- Meet with parents and child on the day prior to the child starting. Go through the parent handbook
- Find out about the parents’ talents/interests and display openness towards them sharing them
- Give Class Parent details of the new family and ensure they are linked to a support person (for one term)
• Inform the new parents who their support person will be

• Connect the child with other children

• Tell new and established parents about the new child (encourage reciprocal invitations)

All questions regarding the Montessori education and philosophy should be directed to the teachers.

Role of the Class Parent

• The enrolment officer will inform the class parents of new families starting school.

• Arrange for a support parent for each family and give them the new family’s telephone number. This lasts for the period of one term

• Organise a coffee morning early in the term, to which all parents are invited. The date should be checked with the Directress and Administrator to ensure no double bookings.

• Follow up that all is fine with the support parent.

The role of the Class Parent is to assist the new families to become part of the group.

Link to other policies

Complaints & Grievances, Anti-bias

Student Services

Sourcing

Anti Discrimination Legislation

REVIEWED: JUNE 2014
APPENDIX 2 DISCIPLINE POLICY

Self-discipline
The ultimate goal of the Montessori East education is the development of inner or self-discipline in the child. Unique characteristics such as: a) the prepared environment, b) appropriate preparation of the teacher, and c) clear class procedures, help to foster self-discipline and positive behaviour in children. Guidance is given when appropriate and children learn that their behaviour has consequences. This approach alleviates many disciplinary problems by helping the child to gain skills in self-discipline and mediation within the school environment. Practical application of these skills is enhanced by the mixed-age grouping, which allows the younger children to emulate the mature behaviour in the environment and older children accept their responsible role within the class.

General Policies

- Students are required to abide by the School's Rules and to follow the directions of teachers and other people with authority delegated by the School.

- Where a student disregards rules, disobeys instructions or otherwise engages in conduct which causes or may cause harm, inconvenience or embarrassment to the School, staff members or other students, the students may be subject to disciplinary action.

- The disciplinary procedures undertaken by the school will vary according to the seriousness of the alleged offence; however will always be based on principles of procedural fairness. (Procedural fairness is defined by the NSW Department of Education Board of Studies to include a right of review of the decision made in response to allegations.) When advised of the allegation the student and parents will be informed of the procedural steps to be followed in dealing with this matter. In relation to all matters to be investigated, students will be informed of the nature of the allegation and given an opportunity to respond to the allegations.

- The disciplinary consequences will vary according to the behaviour and the prior record of the student. At the lower end of the scale, an admonition or detention may be appropriate. At the upper end of the scale, the behaviour could result in suspension or expulsion. Corporal Punishment is not permitted.

- Montessori East does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.

‘Practice Society’ in the Primary Classroom
There is a time in their development when children given the opportunity, form a mini Practice Society in which they choose the rules and elect leaders. Dr Montessori stated: the child likes to mix with others in a group wherein each has a different status. A leader is chosen, and is obeyed, and a strong group is formed. (1986 p6)
Primary aged children are capable of making the ‘ground rules’ for their class particularly if they have had a Montessori preprimary background. They also discuss the breaking of the rules and the consequences. The rules are modified if they are found to be not working well. In the preprimary classes the rules are established by the teachers and are minimal to ensure they can be carried out by the children. Grace and Courtesy lessons are given and practiced to give the children the skills to obey the rules.
The Montessori disciplinary model encourages self-discipline and positive approaches to inappropriate behaviour, including redirection of behaviour and natural consequences rather than punishment. Misbehaviour is managed in a variety of ways:

- Discussion about the behaviour and its inappropriateness
- Grace and Courtesy lessons to provide the skills to behave correctly
- Peer group influence to follow the class rules established by the class as a whole
- Respect for the children and opportunity for them to express and define their feelings
- Age appropriate conflict resolution techniques as relevant to manage student to student conflict
- The negative behaviour of the student is referred to but not the personality of the student
- Teachers set the tone by avoiding harsh words and sudden reprimands
- Careful physical restraint (bear hugs) may be used if a student is out of control. Corporal punishment is not permitted.

**Minor Misbehaviour**

This is a behaviour that interferes with the orderly educational process within the school and infringes on others rights to partake in this educational process. Examples include interfering with the work of other students, disturbing concentration, inappropriate social interactions, minor deliberate damage to class materials/books. Disciplinary procedures for minor misbehaviour may include:

- Diversion of the student to work which challenges and engages interest
- Discussion with the student to work out an acceptable solution to prevent the misbehaviour recurring
- Application of conflict resolution techniques
- Grace and Courtesy lessons and practice
- Recording of misbehaviour and seeking advice from a colleague
- Contacting parents in the case of repeated misbehaviour
- Student taking responsibility for the consequences of his actions and repairing any damage for example
- A management plan to direct the student towards positive behaviour

**Serious Misbehaviour**

This is behaviour which can result in property destruction, willful defiance or injury to others. Examples include refusal to work, hitting and kicking, temper tantrums, throwing dangerous objects, damaging property, stealing, using abusive language.
The Disciplinary Procedure may include:

- Immediate intervention by staff member to stop the behaviour and student is given appropriate consequences
- A meeting with the class teacher and Principal if the behaviour recurs and appropriate consequences decided
- Written notification to parents detailing behaviour and a meeting with the parents, teacher and Principal
- Parents may be directed to seek professional assessment and counselling for the student
- Management plan developed which may involve moving the student to another class or providing them with a fixed place of work.
- Suspension from school until behaviour improves
- In the most severe case, expulsion from the school.

Procedural Fairness

Procedural fairness is a basic right of all when dealing with authorities. Procedural fairness, as defined in the Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual, refers to what is sometimes described as the 'hearing rule' and the 'right to an unbiased decision'. Where the offending behaviour is of such a nature that it may result in suspension, expulsion, or exclusion (see Manual, page 33, for definitions) the student will be:

- Informed of the alleged infringement
- Informed as to who will make the decision on the penalty
- Informed of the procedures to be followed which will include an opportunity to have a parent or guardian present when responding to the allegation; and
- Afforded a right of review or appeal.

Montessori East will not act to prevent a student’s admission to any other school, however in extreme circumstances the principal may make a submission to an appropriate authority recommending exclusion from other schools. (refer to Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual, Section 3.7.1)

Review Procedure

The Principal will reach a preliminary decision in relation to the allegation and any penalty to be imposed and advise the student (and parent/s) of the view. The student (and parents) would be advised that if they wish this preliminary decision to be reviewed they may make application for a review to the Principal and submit any information they want to be considered during the review process. The Principal will then either confirm the preliminary decision as final or amend the preliminary decision based on the additional information provided.

Community Awareness

The Discipline Policy is distributed to parents annually and is included in the Parent Handbook. Parents are asked to review its contents regularly.
APPENDIX 3 COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES POLICY

Grievances or complaints may arise from time to time and it is important that they are not ignored. An unexpressed or unresolved grievance can often escalate unnecessarily. Montessori East has in place procedures designed to support parents, teachers and students in having issues dealt with in a professional manner to the best advantage of the child and school. Grievance will be handled in an unbiased manner, taking into account the principles of procedural fairness.

Communication Structure for parents to follow (prior to following the Complaints and Grievances Procedure that follows)

Where to go if you have questions about your child and ME:

Education
- Your child’s experiences in the classroom
- Your child’s progress, including transition to the next cycle
- Classroom procedures, materials and activities

Class Teacher

Administration
- Canteen, After School clubs and Co-op
- Fees
- Parent Participation Scheme
- Book an observation in your class or another class

School Office

Understanding the school
- Social activities
- Fundraising activities
- Class activities or clarifications from Parent Handbook

Class Parent

Concerns
Questions or concerns that haven’t been answered or addressed by your first contact

Principal

President of School Council

Other resources: The parent handbook and our school website are also full of useful information so please have a look there to see if your questions can be answered

The following procedures are designed to achieve the best possible outcome for the party who is most likely to lose out in any disagreement: the child.

Procedures

In the following procedures wherever it says that a summary of the meeting is made, the summary should at least contain the following:

- A brief description of the disagreement.
• The decisions that are made at the meeting.
• Any further actions expected to be taken.
• If the disagreement is satisfactorily resolved the summary should clearly state this.
• If the disagreement was not resolved an expected time in which to follow-up is set.
• The date of the meeting.
• The signatures of the people involved confirming that the summary is a true.
• Representation of the meeting.

This summary is then kept in the file of the child concerned and a copy is kept in the file of the Principal.

**Procedural Fairness**

Grievance will be handled in an unbiased manner and taking into account the principles of procedural fairness

**Disagreement between a Parent and a Teacher/Assistant in Pre Primary**

1. The parent should discuss the disagreement with the Teacher in a meeting held specifically for that purpose. If the disagreement involves a Class Assistant then he/she should attend this meeting as well. The Teacher makes a summary of the meeting.

2. If either the parent or the Teacher is unhappy with the outcome of the first meeting, the Teacher or the parent asks the Principal to sit in on a second meeting. The role of the Principal will be to try to resolve the disagreement in the child’s and the School’s best interest. The Principal will make a summary of the meeting.

3. In the event that the parent is still unhappy with the state of affairs, they should raise the matter in writing addressed to the Principal. The Principal will request the School Council President along with the parents to help resolve the matter. Copies of the letter and any comments from the principal will be filed in the file of the child and the Principal.

4. If the matter is resolved the President will report that a grievance was addressed and resolved. If the matter is not resolved then the President will bring the matter to the Council’s attention and the Council will need to decide how to resolve the matter and record this at the next meeting. The minutes of this Council meeting will be filed in the file of the child and the file of the Principal. The President will notify the parent(s) of the decision of the Council.

5. If the decision from the Council is not acceptable to the parent(s) at the final meeting, the parent can raise the issue with their Children’s Services Advisor at the Department of Community Services (CS). Any correspondence with CS should be filed in duplicate, as well in the file of the child as in the file of the Principal. Any meetings that the Principal or members of the Council have with CS should be summarised and filed in duplicate.
6. If the matter cannot be resolved at this level the Children’s Services Advisor will proceed to the Community Services Commission.

**Disagreement between a Parent and a Teacher/Assistant in Primary**

1. The parent should discuss the disagreement with the Teacher in a meeting held specifically for that purpose. If the disagreement involves a Class Assistant then he/she should attend this meeting as well. The Teacher makes a summary of the meeting.

2. If either the parent or the Class Teacher is unhappy with the outcome of the first meeting, the Teacher or the parent asks the Principal to sit in on a second meeting. The role of the Principal will be to try to resolve the disagreement in the child’s and the school’s best interest. The Principal will make a summary of the meeting.

3. In the event that the parent is still unhappy with the state of affairs, they should raise the matter in writing addressed to the Principal. The Principal will request the School Council President and/or the Human Resource councillor along with the parents to help her resolve the matter. Copies of the letter and any comments from the Principal will be filed in the file of the child and the Principal.

4. If the matter is resolved the President will report that a grievance was addressed and resolved. If the matter is not resolved then the President will bring the matter to the Council's attention and the Council will need to decide how to resolve the matter and record this at the next meeting. The minutes of this Council meeting will be filed in the file of the child and the file of the Principal. The President will notify the parent(s) of the decision of the Council.

5. The decision of the Council is final and the contractual agreements between the parent(s) and the School are honoured.

**Disagreement between a Parent and a Member of the Administration Staff**

1. The parent should discuss the disagreement with the staff member in a meeting held specifically for that purpose. The staff member makes a summary of the meeting.

2. If either the parent or the staff member is unhappy with the outcome of the first meeting, the staff member or the parent requests that the Principal attends a second meeting. The role of the principal will be to try to resolve the disagreement in the best interest of both parties. The principal will make a summary of the meeting.

3. In the event that the parent is still unhappy with the state of affairs, they should raise the matter in writing addressed to the Principal. The Principal will request for a school council member or mediator attend the next meeting to assist in resolving the matter. Copies of the letter and any comments from the principal will be filed in the file of the child and the principal.

4. If the matter is resolved the President will report that a grievance was addressed and resolved. If the matter is not resolved then the President will
bring the matter to the Council's attention and the Council will need to
decide how to resolve the matter and record this at the next meeting. The
minutes of this Council meeting will be filed in the file of the child and the file
of the Principal. The President will notify the parent(s) of the decision of the
Council.

5. The decision of the Council is final and the contractual agreements between
the Parent(s) and the School are honoured.

Disagreement between staff members

1. The staff members should discuss the issue in a meeting held specifically for that
purpose. A staff member makes a summary of meeting.

2. If either staff member is unhappy with the outcome of the first meeting, they will
ask the Principal to sit in on a second meeting. The role of the Principal will be to
try to resolve the disagreement in the parties' best interest. The Principal will make
a summary of the meeting.

3. In the event that either staff member is still unhappy with the state of affairs, they
should raise the matter in writing addressed to the Principal. The Principal will
request that a school council member or mediator attend along with the staff
members to assist in resolving the matter. Copies of the letter and any comments
from the principal will be filed in staff files and with the Principal.

4. If the matter is resolved the Principal will report that a grievance was addressed
and resolved. If the matter is not resolved then the Principal will bring the matter
to the Council's attention and the Council will assist in finding a solution. The
minutes of this Council meeting will be filed in the file of the staff members and
the file of the Principal. The President and Principal will notify the staff members of
the decision of the Council.

5. The decision of the Council is final and the contractual agreements between the
staff and the School are honoured.

Considerations

All the documentation that is produced while resolving a disagreement is kept in the file
of the child/staff member as well as in the file of the Principal. Because these documents
can contain confidential material these files should not be accessible to everyone.
The child's file may only be accessed by:

- The Principal
- The Class Teacher of the class the child currently attends can get access after
  asking the Principal.
- The parents of the child can get access after asking the Principal.
- The Principal and the parents together can give someone else permission to look
  in the file.

The file of the Principal may only be accessed by:

- The Principal
- The staff member who the file concerns after asking the Principal.
• The Principal and the staff member together can give someone else permission to look in the file concerning the staff member.

It is important to keep good documentation for the following reasons:

• People often have different recollections of discussions and meetings.

• If there is a change of staff, the new staff member must be able to see the history of an unresolved dispute.
APPENDIX 4
ANTI-BULLYING / HARASSMENT POLICY

Aim
To ensure that all families [children, parents and carers] and staff attending Montessori East understand that any type of conduct or action that is not asked for and not wanted; and that might be reasonably expected to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation is harassment.

Rationale
Montessori East endeavours to provide a safe and caring environment for all members of the school community - an environment where learning, working, personal growth and the development of positive self-esteem can be maximized. Harassment, which can include bullying in any form or combination of physical, verbal, visual, social or psychological, interferes with this environment and will not be tolerated.

Procedure
Clear Definitions
- Bullying: Intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure on individuals.
- Physical: Fighting, pushing, shoving, hitting, gestures, touching
- Verbal: Name calling, teasing, offensive language
- Visual: offensive notes, pictures or drawings
- Social: excluding from groups, racism and sexism
- Psychological: making someone feel sad, belittled or alone, spreading of rumours

School responsibilities
- Montessori East will take all reports of bullying and harassment seriously
- Montessori East Staff will initially promote a positive resolution for all children involved
- Montessori East staff will contact all those involved if further resolution is required

Procedural Fairness Statement
Procedural fairness must be observed in all aspects of grievance handling process. In practice procedural fairness involves:
- Ensuring that there is proper investigation of the facts;
- Informing relevant parties of any allegations made against them, as appropriate;
- Ensuring that all parties are informed of the procedures under which the grievance is being handled and are given a copy of the relevant policy and guidelines;
• Ensuring that all parties are heard and those who have had complaints made against them are given an opportunity to respond;

• Ensuring that all relevant submissions and any mitigating factors are given due and proper consideration before any conclusions are reached or any action is taken;

• Advising all parties that if the grievance is of such a serious nature that disciplinary action may result, then the facts revealed during an investigation into the grievance may be used in any subsequent disciplinary proceedings;

• Impartiality on the part of the investigator and/or decision, which means the investigator/decision maker, must exclude themselves if there is any bias or conflict of interest.

These procedures usually require that the person raising a grievance must be willing to be identified, unless the facts of the matter are not in dispute, or the matter involves allegations of corruption, mal-administration or serious waste or child abuse. If in doubt about the requirements of procedural fairness, advice should be sought from the Principal.

School Operations

On any occasion when the grievance is to be discussed, staff (both grievant and/or respondent) may choose to be accompanied by a colleague from the School. If the allegations have been made in writing, a copy will be given to the parties against whom the allegations have been made.

REVIEWED JUNE 2014
CONTACT DETAILS
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