



Montessori East Primary & Preschool

Annual Report

2022

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REPORTING AREA 1 - Messages from Key School Bodies

From the Principal and Chair of the School Board

The 2022 year can be summarised as one of capturing renewed energy and vision for the future of Montessori East.

In August, I was appointed Acting Principal after the departure of Bruce Russell who had been with the school since 2020, and in 2023 I accepted the appointment to the position of Principal. I am humbled and honoured by the support the Board and staff have shown me in this role, and excited by the future possibilities of working with the talented team we have at Montessori East to continue to grow and strengthen the school.

Creating a new strategic plan for 2023-25 with input from our community including all staff, parents and the significant contribution of the Board has brought focus and a sense of purpose. The vision articulated in the plan is to *Focus on attracting and retaining committed Montessori East community members—children, their families and staff—by continuing to provide an authentic whole-child Montessori learning experience and supporting a uniquely connected community.*

The following strategic imperatives were identified as high-impact goals that will enable us to realise the stated vision.

- I. *Understand and meet the evolving needs of the whole child in today's dynamic environment.*
- II. *Improve retention across all cycles.*
- III. *Continue to make ME a rewarding, supportive and sought-after workplace.*
- IV. *Uphold a cohesive ME community with enhanced community engagement.*

We are confident that our goals can be achieved thanks to the strong sense of team and shared values we have amongst the whole staff at Montessori East. We all share a passion for the Montessori philosophy, the success of our school and the all-important meaning in the work of guiding children in their growth. We take this opportunity to thank everyone for the commitment and tenacity through the year. In the period ahead supporting our teachers in their growth and extension will be a priority.

During the year, we successfully secured the indicative renewal of our lease for the premises at 8 Wellington Street, Bondi. This was significant in providing certainty for the future and we will now be in the position to invest in campus improvements over the next couple of years. We continue to search for property that we could purchase to expand the services and facilities of the school.

Montessori East continues to benefit from the stable stewardship of the ESMA Board and especially its President, Sara Hofman. The Board is highly competent and focused on the future sustainability and growth of our school.

Our philosophy at Montessori East is steeped in the importance of the contribution of every individual towards creating a nurturing, caring and friendly community atmosphere at Montessori East. Whilst we hope that after reading this report you have a clearer and broader picture of the life of the School, no report can fully capture the spirit of a school, so we encourage you to visit Montessori East and experience a learning environment like no other.

Yours sincerely



Kathryn Wyer
Principal



Sara Hofman
President

1. REPORTING AREA 2.

Contextual Information about the School & Student Body

About Montessori East

Montessori East is a non-denominational and co-educational primary and pre-school for children aged 3–12 years plus a program for children under 3 with their parent/carer. Montessori East follows the educational methods and principles developed by Dr Maria Montessori. We believe each child should have the opportunity to learn in a beautiful, creative, compassionate setting. Montessori East provides an environment with flexibility to explore, boundaries to work within, and the guidance of highly skilled teachers attuned to the unique abilities of every student.

The school is registered with the National Education Standards Authority (NESA) and approved as a centre-based preschool. Montessori East is a member of the Montessori Schools and Centres Australia (MSCA), Montessori Australia (MA) and the NSW Association of Independent Schools (AIS).

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

Our Goal

We put the child at the heart of everything we do

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 Values

A deep regard for the whole human being

Our values are enduring, shape the school's culture and reflect the Montessori philosophy that underpins all that we do. The values permeate our holistic approach to education.

Discovery & Curiosity	A place where curiosity and exploration are given time and space, enabling natural and purposeful discovery.
Independence	Independence grows and sustains by offering appropriate choices within an environment of freedom and responsibility.
Choice	Through choice, with appropriate limits, comes self-determination, motivation and responsibility.
Care & Service	We respect the innate capability of each child to be themselves; to develop in such a way that is true to their character, respectful of themselves, others and the world around them.
Balance	Equal weight is given to the importance of academic learning, and the skills of thinking, creativity, communication and social and emotional development.



Our People

We are fortunate to have a team of long standing and talented staff who share in our vision and values for the school. Our class teachers are highly qualified with AMI (Association Montessori Internationale) and university degree qualifications.

Our teachers and assistant teachers represent a wide range of cultural, educational, and experiential backgrounds, providing the students with a rich environment in which to learn.

In August 2022 Kathryn Wyer, the then Director of Operations at ME, was appointed Principal of the School. Kathryn has worked at ME for more than a decade holding various senior management roles prior to her appointment, including as Acting Principal. Kathryn is a highly effective and collaborative Principal and the school is flourishing under her leadership. She partners with staff, parents and the Board and holds the ME values and Montessori pedagogy close to her heart in everything she does.

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.

Two students are identified with a significant “disability” and receive special assistance to access our learning program.

Our Families

Montessori East is very much a community school. It’s a place where parents, children and the staff feel a part of a community network drawn together by a shared belief in the values of the school. There are plenty of formal and informal ways in which we connect with each other and parents in school life. We believe when a child joins the school this includes the whole family. Our Class Parents do an amazing job ensuring new families who join us are welcomed and included. Examples include bush walks, cooking and aromatherapy workshops and numerous play dates!

Every year we program a variety of **parent education events** that cover a range of topics from parenting support to curriculum understanding, Montessori philosophy and child development. The School runs ‘parent circles’ where a teacher guides discussion on a topic that parents either need help with or are interested in. Other formats include ‘short talks’ of 45 minutes on weekday mornings, or longer evening sessions each term. Topics covered include various curriculum areas, child development, ideas for supporting children, project updates and learning at home.



Formal **Parent-Teacher** or **Child-Parent-Teacher** interviews are organised twice a year for all children. **Semester reports** are issued in June and December each year for children 5 years and older. **Open mornings** provide for parents to spend some time as their child’s “invited guest” during the morning work cycle. And importantly, open two-way communication between the school and home is encouraged by phone, email or by arranging a face to face meeting.

Services such as after school clubs and care are provided for the enjoyment of the children and convenience of parents.

ME Alumni



Maintaining connections with our families after they leave Montessori East has enriched our community by following the journeys of our students through high school and into adulthood. We frequently have students return to visit school and alumni parents are involved in the ME Foundation, for example.

We are proud to have an Alumni serving as a Foundation Board member. The bi-annual alumni newsletter and social media keep the community informed and connected with each other.

We've had many wonderful stories of people reconnecting with friends they made 20 years ago as preschoolers, and some are now returning to our 0-3 program as parents themselves.

It makes our project to expand the school even more urgent so that we can have enrolment places for this next generation of Montessori children.

Our Wider Community

Although Bondi is a very busy urban location, it still has a strong sense of community, and we are conscious of being actively visible and a participant in the community. Our students frequently visit local businesses to research projects, or to purchase cooking or art supplies for examples. This is a process in Montessori that we call 'going out', ie. the children go out into society, broadening the walls of the classroom. This is a different concept to an excursion, many of which also take place throughout the year. We also like to participate in various activities promoted by Waverley Council such as Clean Up Australia Day or Ride to School Day.

Beyond our immediate community, we support charities and other worthwhile causes, often initiated by the interests of the primary school students. Some years ago students initiated a fruit and vegetable co-op business (Green Grads) to raise money for an orphanage in Thailand. and now we have moved back onshore to support a Kempsey based Indigenous community, Dalaigur Preschool. This year the Graduates will be spending a week working with this community as part of Our Journey of Service programme (JOS).

The Classrooms

The primary and pre-school provides children with a fluid, responsive and relevant education. Children learn best when they feel secure and happy in their environment, without stress, and with independence. To achieve this, there are key differences in our classrooms and approach.

- Children are grouped in **multi-age** classes of three years with the same teachers for the duration of each three-year stage. The teacher gains a deep understanding of each child and their needs. This provides a very stable environment where balance across emotional, social and academic development can be achieved.
- The mixed age groups provide a **life-like social model**. The children lead by example and learn from each other. Mentoring is an enjoyable part of each child's classroom experience.
- Children are given many opportunities to make **choices** in their day and they are expected to show appropriate independence. They explore topics that interest them within the curriculum. This teaches them to be self-disciplined and self-directed with their schoolwork.
- **Teachers guide learning.** Lessons are given individually or in small groups and according to the progress of each child. To illustrate this, the classroom is like a collaborative workplace with people working on different things at the same time, and the teacher moving from group to group.
- The daily routine provides blocks of **uninterrupted work time** of two to three hours each, giving children the opportunity to spend time delving into subjects and promoting concentration skills.

Through the unique Montessori environment, the children receive a rich academic experience, and the program can be extended to meet the needs of each individual child.

Our Programs & Curriculum



We're proud to be a small school where everybody knows your name – more like a big extended family than traditional school. Demand for enrolment places at the school outstrips capacity and hence our intention to expand the school.

Enrolment Profile (as at December 2022)

Cycle 1 (3 – 6 years)	58
Cycle 2 (6 – 9 years)	36
Cycle 3 (9 – 12 years)	30
Total	124

The Montessori curriculum is recognised internationally and by the Australian government. It is approved as an alternative national curriculum framework by ACARA (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority).

The preschool is approved and accredited under the NSW Department of Education and Community, the regulatory body of ACECQA. The rich and comprehensive Montessori curriculum incorporates all outcomes from the National Education Standards Authority (NESA). We are recognised as a Registered Independent Primary School by NESA.

0-3 program

More than 100 families have served each term in this incredibly successful program, which combines an education program for parents and an environment for their children to learn and enjoy.

Co-Curricular Activities

Our location in Bondi provides so many great opportunities for getting outdoors and extending learning outside the classroom. Our co-curricular activities and extra-curricular activities give the children exposure to a broad range of activities as well as the opportunity to get involved in community orientated activities.

Sports programs

The primary school children enjoy a different PE focus each term including ball sports at the local Margaret Whitlam Recreation Centre and swimming, beach volleyball and surfing in Term 4. Other activities include gymnastics, athletics, team sports, ball skills, aerobic exercises and dance.

Our preschool children have a weekly sports program delivered by a trained teacher from Playball.

Music

Music lessons are a part of the Montessori curriculum delivered by the classroom teachers and partners. This comprehensive curriculum has received more attention this year and will be the focus of further development.

After School Programs

After School Clubs provide opportunities for activities, such as drama, chess, sewing and sport; and the after-school care program provides an important service to the community between 3-6pm.



Journey of Service

Montessori East's Journey of Service project is an opportunity for students in their last year of primary school to make a significant and real connection to the world they have been learning about.

The Journey of Service project was established by Montessori East in 2013, recognising that pre-adolescent children naturally seek to understand their place in society and seek opportunities to contribute in real ways.

The children prepare for this journey during the year by learning how they can be of service to others. In 2021, we made a connection with the Dalaigur preschool in Kempsey through one of our alumni families. The children have been meeting with the elders and the children through zoom meetings.

In 2022, fourteen graduates were chaperoned by Raji Sivapalan (Education Leader), Amelia Cobb (Class teacher) and Philip Macken (assistant teacher) to travel to Kempsey and work with the children and teachers in the pre-school. They stayed at retreat style cottages, prepared their meals and enjoyed time together.



2. REPORTING AREA 3

Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy & Numeracy

Performance in Statewide/ National Tests

Montessori East's students in Years 3 and 5 participate in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). This Government program assesses the literacy and numeracy learning of students in all Australian schools. It's important to note that the Montessori method provides individualised and self-directed learning programs and progress is measured in a number of ways, however standardised testing is not a significant form of assessment.

NAPLAN Results

Montessori East uses NAPLAN results as one of many sources to inform teaching and learning. NAPLAN results are viewed to give us general insights on how our students perform on a national standardised test. Although our participation numbers are low, due to being a small school, we are pleased to see a trend in consistently strong results in NAPLAN. Nonetheless, we recommend to our parents to not use individual student results as a point of comparison with other students nor to draw sweeping conclusions from their child's results.

2022	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Year 3	539	490	467	526	473
Similar	511	470	467	507	457
Nation	438	422	418	433	400

2022	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Year 5	565	529	554	585	540
Similar	558	523	547	549	536
Nation	510	484	505	499	488

NAPLAN results are available on the My School website: www.myschool.edu.au

3. REPORTING AREAS 5 & 6

Teacher Professional Learning, Accreditation & Qualifications

Professional Learning

Our staff are outstanding educators and we encourage them to undertake professional development courses in areas of interest to improve skills and widen knowledge. In 2022, staff were involved in a wide range of courses, conferences and activities which covered a range of topics from assisting students with learning needs, pastoral care and leadership development. Some examples of courses attended in 2022 are listed below:

Description of the Professional Learning Activity
Elephant Ed
CPR Course
Grow your Mind - Program for wellbeing
Composting and worm farming workshop
TiPS by SMTC : the 3 Rs for the future plus one
Music Workshop
E-learning modules of the Quality Support Program- ACECQA
The Conscious Parent- Dr Shefali Tsabary
Consolidating and extending Teaching during COVID19
Embedding Visual Supports in Inclusive Preschools
Sociology of Motherhood
Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives part 1
Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives part 2
First Aid Course
MSCA Grassroots Conference
Music Workshop
MSCA Combined Montessori Schools PD day
MSCA Workshop: embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in the 3 - 6
MSCA Workshop: embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in the 6 - 12 classroom
Leadership mentoring with Stephen Hewson Coaching
Assistants AMI training
Grow your Mind - Developing well being programs for staff and students
Conscious Parenting with Dr Shefali

Fundraising Institute Australia
CELA - Child Protection
AMI 0-3 Refresher course
Governance Symposium
The Peninsular Montessori Association- NESA Governance
Teaching STEM in early childhood.

Teacher Standards

As of December 2022, Montessori East employed 6 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:

Level of qualification	Number of staff
a. Have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition guidelines	6
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	0
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	0
d. No qualifications or teaching experience	0

Montessori Qualifications

Most teachers hold the internationally recognised Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) teaching qualifications in addition to their mainstream university qualifications. Three assistant teachers also hold this dual qualification.

Composition Of Staff

The teaching staff at Montessori East is composed 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 lesson presentations and work closely with the teachers assisting in delivering the curriculum.

Our academic staff of 17 teachers and assistant teachers are individuals from a wide range of educational and cultural backgrounds, including 12 cultural groups.

Staff Retention

We have a loyal and committed team of people and as a result, staff retention is high. Three teachers have completed more than 20 years service and a further 8 have 10 year service.

4. REPORTING AREA 7.

Student Attendance & Management of Non-attendance

Student Attendance

In 2022 our overall yearly attendance rate across the school was 90%. (calculated on the student attendance collection data as of end Term 3). The yearly attendance rate for the school by year group was:

Year	% Attendance
K	86
1	92
2	89
3	87
4	93
5	93
6	87
Total	90

Non-Attendance procedures:

Montessori East adheres to the requirements for recording attendance data as set by the NSW Minister of Education and ACARA's National Standards for Student Attendance Data Reporting.

Parents report planned absences to the school in advance. Classroom attendance roles are recorded online and an automatic text message from the school is sent to parents for any unexplained or unplanned absences. This process is an embedded practice and works well to keep track of the children's presence at school and safety of the children. The school's clear procedure for late and non-attendance is periodically featured in our weekly bulletin to remind parents of the importance of children being at school and on time.

Student Retention

Our retention rates are healthy and reflect general parent satisfaction with the education provided. The school is near capacity and we have long waiting lists, particularly for the preschool program. Retention rates in 2022 were over 90%, a marked improvement from previous years.

Regular feedback from current parents and the families of children who complete Year 6 and move onto high school, helps to ensure that we are meeting the academic and other development needs of the children. Generally there is a high level of satisfaction expressed by parents with the education their children received at Montessori East. Our 2022 graduating class of 14 students moved on to the following secondary schools: **Cranbrook, Steiner, Reddam and Rose Bay Secondary College.**

5. REPORTING AREAS 8 & 9.

Enrolment Policy & Process

Enrolment & Other Policies

Montessori East School offers a three-year Pre-Primary Montessori program commencing at age 3 years. The pre-primary program (including Year K) progresses towards the primary program 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.

We also offer Under 3 programs for parents and children aged 0-3 years. The groups meet each week to learn about the child's growing and changing needs. Enrolments into the program are on a first come first served basis and are done online, however priority is given to current participants.

Montessori East is a non-denominational and co-educational school.

The school Enrolment Officer processes all enrolments for the primary and pre school 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, participation in our Nido and Toddler Programme, 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 2 and a full Enrolment Policy is contained within the school's Policy Manual. A copy of the Policy Manual is available by contacting the school. Montessori East regularly reviews its policies.

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.

Safe & Supportive Environment

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.

Policies for Student Welfare

To protect the welfare of the students, Montessori East has a series of comprehensive policies in relation to:

- Student Welfare
- Child Protection
- Health and Safety
- Anti Bullying & Harassment

Policies are reviewed regularly and updated as required. All policies were updated in 2022:

Student Discipline

Our goal is to develop in students self-discipline and an understanding that each individual carries a responsibility to their class community and the school, to assure it is an environment

where all feel safe and secure.

This is achieved through the Montessori philosophy and pedagogy, which includes the prepared environment, Montessori trained teachers and practicing an education approach supporting grace, courtesy and peace. Guidance on good behaviour is given to students by teachers and peers. Lessons are regularly given to establish an understanding of the virtues which form the foundation of a harmonious community. 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 behaviour 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.

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 and the parent handbook illustrates the line of communication to follow in the event a parent has a question or grievance.



6. REPORTING AREA 10.

School determined priority areas for improvement

Below is a summary of the *goals* established in the 2022-25 strategic plan. The plan is used to guide initiatives for the year and is created in collaboration with staff, the principal and board.

The key initiatives of the plan include commitments to;

- Campus improvements to playground spaces and entrance areas
- Supporting diverse learning needs for students and professional skill development for teachers
- Create community based learning experiences for exploring innovative curriculum additions.
- Staff Development to further teaching and learning practices and also facilitate opportunities for staff to share in the broader professional community.
- Community engagement
- Support the KIN 0-3 program with a view to transitioning children from KIN to Cycle 1.
- Community engagement is a priority and continue to provide a range of opportunities for participation.

7. REPORTING AREA 11

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Our Ethos states that ‘we believe that the adult (staff and parent) recognises and respects the dignity of the child’ and it is from this position of respect that the culture of the school stems. See Appendix 1 for the Ethos Statement.

The 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.

Activities that promote respect and responsibility include

- **Grace and Courtesy** lessons which model the intricacies of everyday community living, where we are required to work together, share, and care for self and others.
- **Values and Virtues Education** to build character by understanding and practicing our moral behaviours.
- **The Prepared Environment** of the Montessori classroom emphasises how we care for the space and environment around us.
- **Multi-age grouping and peer groups** emulate society and the home with younger and older children learning from and with each other.
- **The three-year age range** in each class promotes respect and responsibility. Older students
- **Events** such as Mother’s Day, Harmony Day and Reconciliation Week celebrate our culture, family and interconnectedness.

Student Leadership

At both the preprimary and primary level students have significant involvement in the decision-making regarding their learning and classroom code of conduct. For example, at the primary level, children aged 6-12 years 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.

Students also have many opportunities to develop their understanding of the world and their ability to impact it in a positive way. The integrated Montessori curriculum and ‘Great Lessons’ show our interdependency and many children become impassioned by particular causes such as

- Save the Reef Foundation
- Taronga Zoo Conservation
- WWF – Australia
- ‘Say No to Plastic’ campaign

A culture of service is fostered through the programs such as the Journey of Service program described on Page 10 where the Year 6 children raise money and provide service for the Dalaigur indigenous community of Kempsey NSW.

8. REPORTING AREA 12

Parent, Teacher & Student Satisfaction

Our school has a relaxed, family atmosphere which we encourage so that parents, students and teachers feel that they can easily share their opinions and concerns. We foster a variety of different opportunities and avenues for our community to provide feedback to the school and to be involved.

Parent satisfaction:

Parents were invited to provide feedback in 2022 via a series of town hall meetings to gain their view on priorities and input for the strategic plan. Parent meeting, direct phone call contact and email communication are some examples of the options available to parents to provide feedback. In 2023 we will create short satisfaction surveys.

Student satisfaction:

Students at Montessori East enjoy many opportunities to be a part of the decision making in their classrooms and the school. Regular "Primary Parliament" meetings (involving students Year 1-6) provide a forum for students to discuss issues and seek solutions to problems that may arise from time to time. Students lead these meetings with minimal adult intervention. Some outcomes of these meetings have included playground activities, acquisition of animals, standards of cleanliness, fundraising for charities, gardening and dealing with conflicts. The principal attends all meetings.

Teacher Satisfaction:

Teachers have regular opportunities to provide feedback via staff meetings and annual review meetings with the principal. In addition to this we have commenced a more formal feedback process via the AMI Global accreditation process and we expect this to continue and develop further.

Indicators of Community Satisfaction:

- Direct feedback
- Strong participation in Parent Education events.
- Parents regularly initiate events and or volunteer to assist
- Enrolment demand is very strong, with a healthy waitlist and significant interest from the community.

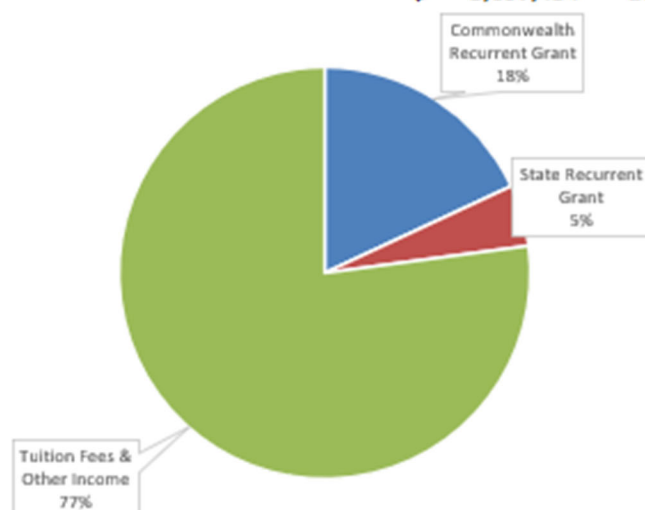
9. REPORTING AREA 13.

Summary Financial Information

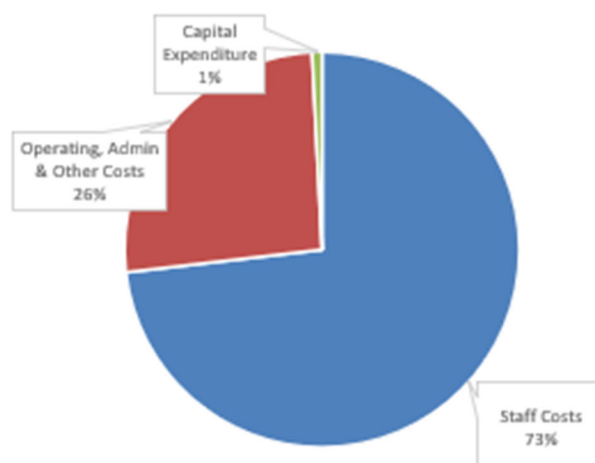
For the year ended 31 December 2022, Eastern Suburbs Montessori Association Limited generated total revenue of \$3,697,434 which after total expenditure of \$3,601,939 resulted in a surplus of \$95,495. The financial year operates from 1 January to 31 December inclusive.

Summary Financial Information

<u>2022 Recurrent & Capital Income</u>	\$	%
Commonwealth Recurrent Grant	668,317	18%
State Recurrent Grant	178,228	5%
Tuition Fees & Other Income	2,850,889	77%
Capital Income		
Total	\$ 3,697,434	100%



<u>2020 Recurrent & Capital Expenditure</u>	\$	%
Staff Costs	2,656,956	73%
Operating, Admin & Other Costs	944,983	26%
Capital Expenditure	29,298	1%
Total	\$ 3,631,237	100%



APPENDIX 1: *Our Ethos*

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.

10. Appendix 2: 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.

Once a child is enrolled, records are kept in a secure place within the school's office. Parents may view their own child's records by requesting permission from the principal.

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 the family's understanding and attitude to the Montessori philosophy and the criteria we set for enrolment. 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 an 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. We endeavour to present the most common scenario tracking an enrolment application from start to finish.

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

- Complete an enrolment application
- Observe the classroom
- Attend an interview with the Principal
- Attend a general information session
- 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)

Step 1: Enrolment Application Form

The initial step is to complete an Enrolment Application Form which puts the family in our database. Parents are informed in writing that their form has been received and they are now on our active wait list.

Step 2: Assessment of Places

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

- 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.
- Parents are contacted and asked to meet for an **interview** with the principal and asked to observe in the classrooms before the interview.
- Following the interview a **recommendation** is made by the principal to the enrolment officer whether to accept or reject the application.
- If the application is accepted, consideration of other criteria is weighed against other applications in order to achieve age/gender balance.
- A **final decision** on the application is made by the principal in consultation with the enrolment officer.
- At this point the family will receive invitations to school events such as parent education evenings.

Stage 4 : Enrolment Contract and Orientation

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

- The parents of the successful applicant are sent an **enrolment contract** and **Parent Handbook**.
- The parents must sign and return the contract along with the payment of the Placement Fee.
- Upon receipt of the contract the child is entered into the **database** as a Placed Enrolment.

- The parents are invited to an **orientation information session**, usually held at the beginning of each semester.
- The teachers are given access to the file of information on the child **6 weeks or more before** the child starts school. The **teachers meet with the family** between 2-6 weeks before the start date and welcome them to their class. At this point the parents should start to receive our weekly bulletin.
- The child is oriented to the class by the teacher on the **day before** they officially start school.
- 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 second or third 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.

- An application for enrolment is requested after the initial enquiry and if it seems the above requirements can be met.
- A report from the previous school must be submitted.
- Parents must observe classes in all three cycles.
- 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

- 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.

- Following the trial a decision on enrolment is made after discussion with the teacher about the child's experience.
- 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:

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

- Applicant is a sibling of a current Montessori East student
- Family have indicated a commitment to the Primary program and Montessori education
- Application Date
- Age and sex (see "Class Balance"*)
- 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

Classroom Observations form an important part of understanding the student and Montessori education. It provides prospective parents with a glimpse at Montessori education as part of their decision to enrol and 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/emotional 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 resources, 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 enrolls 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 extracurricular 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 to School

- Parents are invited to a general information session about the school. These sessions occur twice a year at the beginning of a semester.
- Once the child is placed, the teacher contacts the family for an initial meeting without the child present to go over pertinent information about the classroom and to learn about the family.
- Parents are asked to bring their child in on the afternoon of the day prior to their start date to enjoy time 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 prior to the child starting (see above). Check to see if the parents have any questions after having read the parent handbook.
- Find out if the parent may have anything they may offer the class, such as talents or abilities that may be relevant to the class.
- Make sure the Class Parent Representative has the relevant information about the new family
- Connect the child with other children
- Tell new and established parents about the new child (encourage reciprocal invitations) through class newsletter and class parent meetings

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.

Storing and Maintaining Records

Records are stored on each currently enrolled student and maintained after the child leaves Montessori East for a period of seven years. Student records are stored in two distinct formats: digital and hard copy. The Permanent Record File (PRF) contains the child's enrolment information and other pertinent information in hard copy. The digital record contains records that require constant updating, such as attendance information. Below is a summary of the records stored and maintained at Montessori East:

Permanent Record File:

- Enrolment application
- Medical information form
- Personal information form
- Authorisations (excursion, permissions, etc.)
- Vaccination record
- Semester Reports
- Letters of significance
- Reports from professional

practitioners Digital Record (Engage)

- Attendance record
- Authorisation to collect
- Family data
- Medical information
- Incident, Injury, trauma and illness reports
- Destination school/education program after withdrawal/graduation.

Records are kept securely under lock and key or password protected. Staff members may not remove the PRF from the office, however copies may be made of specific documents with the understanding of the confidential nature of a student's record. Parents may access their child's record only after receiving the express permission from the principal. Parents may view at any time their child's digital record through the parent portal. This information is password protected for each child.

11. Appendix 3: Discipline Policy

General expectations of student behaviour in the Montessori school

The ultimate goal of Montessori East education is the development of inner or self-discipline in the child. Achieving this goal requires several fundamental characteristics which support the child's ability to achieve this goal. They include; a) the prepared learning environment, b) appropriate preparation of the teacher, and c) clear class procedures, all of which help to foster self-discipline and positive behaviour in children. One must consider the day to day practices which empower the child and allow for the development of responsible behaviour within a degree of freedom. Educators give guidance to the child where appropriate and children learn that their behaviour always carries consequences. Fortunately this occurs as part of the child's learning methodology in the classroom; where the child may make choices, is given responsibility to monitor many aspects of her/his own learning, and teachers support the learning model. The result is that disciplinary matters are rare and infrequent, procedures are clear in the event a student's behaviour falls outside the boundaries of expected community practice, and the child is always expected to assume responsibility for the initial steps to correct behaviour.

Parents are drawn into any matters where a student regularly struggles with their behaviour or commits a serious offense.

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 Board of Studies and Teacher Education Commission and includes a right of review of a 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 a disciplinary 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 under any circumstance.
- 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.”*

Primary aged children are capable of making the ‘ground rules’ for their class particularly if they have had a Montessori pre primary 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 pre primary 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 repeating or serious 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, 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

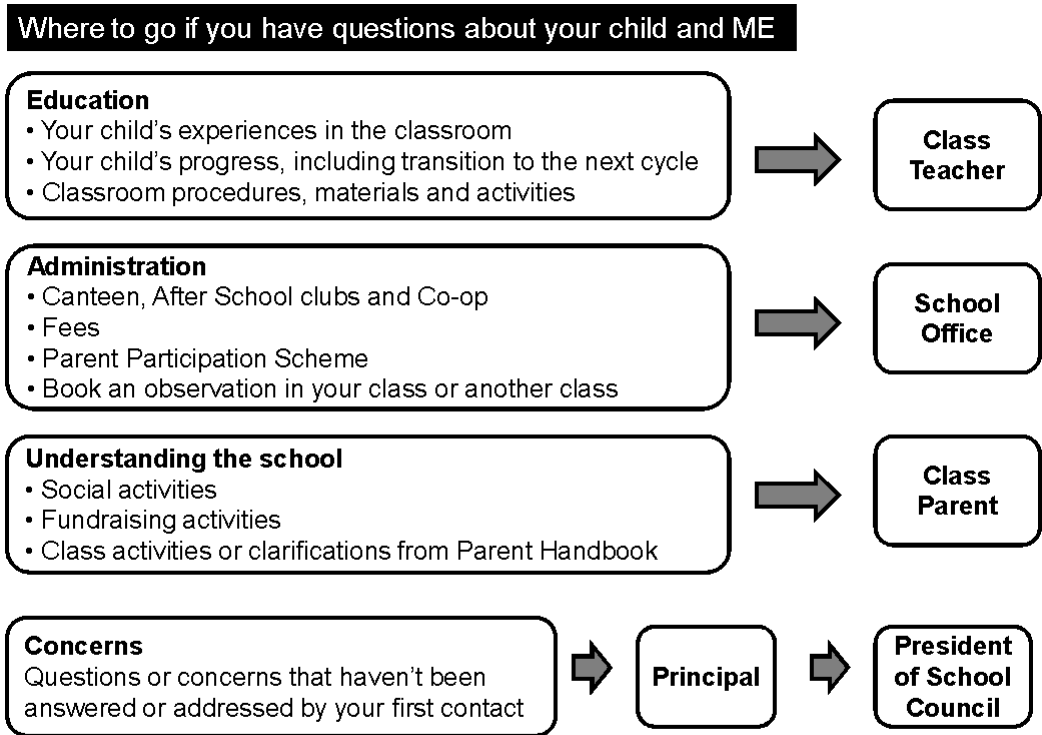
The Discipline Policy is distributed to parents annually and is included in the Parent Handbook. Parents are asked to review its contents regularly.



12. Appendix 4: 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)



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 Board 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. The school keeps a record of all grievances for a period of 7 years. If the matter is not resolved then the President will bring the matter to the Board's attention and the Board will need to decide how to resolve the matter and record this at the next meeting. The minutes of this Board 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 Board. The decision is also recorded in the record of grievances.
5. If the decision from the Board is not acceptable to the parent(s) at the final meeting, the parent can raise the issue with the Department of Education and Communities (if preschool), and with NSW Board of Studies and Teacher Education Standards (if school age). Any correspondence with DEC or BOSTES should be filed in duplicate, as well as in the file of the child and the Principal. Any meetings that the Principal or members of the Board have with DEC or BOSTES should be summarised and filed in duplicate.
6. If the matter cannot be resolved at this level, the DEC Advisor will proceed to the Department of Education and Community Services Commission.
(preschool)

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 Board 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 Board's attention and the Board will need to decide how to resolve the matter and record this at the next meeting. The minutes of this Board 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 Board.
5. The decision of the Board 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 board member or mediator to 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 Board's attention and the Board will need to decide how to resolve the matter and record this at the next meeting. The minutes of this

Board 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 Board. The details of this decision are filed in the Grievances file and maintained for 7 years.

5. The decision of the Board 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 the 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 board 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 Board's attention and the Board will assist in finding a solution. The minutes of this Board 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 Board.
5. The decision of the Board 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. It is now a requirement to maintain a school grievance record, which will be filed and maintained for 7 years. 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.

Grievances Records are kept by the school and accessed by:

- The Principal
- The Board President
- NESA

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.

13. Appendix 5: Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policy Extract

Policy Statement

Montessori East bases its pedagogical approach on the principles initially developed by Dr Maria Montessori. We believe the principles and standards are responsive to the varied and changing needs of the child. Here they develop an appreciation and commitment to serve the needs of a rapidly changing world where real environmental threats and opportunities are present. The high regard for the individual child is reflected in our practices and policies, with special focus on the inclusion of children with additional needs. As an authentic Montessori setting, we are committed to providing 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 maximised.

Rationale

We ensure all families and staff attending our school 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. 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.

We all share a responsibility to foster, promote and restore right relationships. This policy builds on various other policies of the school to provide clear procedures and strategies to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying. The school rejects all forms of bullying behaviour, including online or cyberbullying. To improve student attendance, learning and behaviour, the school encourages parent and community involvement. Montessori schools establish relationships which are grounded in love, compassion, reconciliation and justice. In witnessing these values, we reject ideas, beliefs and behaviours which marginalise or victimise people.

Procedure

Preventing bullying

We believe that prevention strategies through education that involve the whole school community (students, staff and parents) are more likely to reduce bullying. Therefore, we recognise that we all share the responsibility to prevent bullying.

Bullying warning signs or signs of bullying include:

- Not wanting to go to school
- Anger and tears
- Low self-esteem and depression
- Complaining of headaches and stomach aches

Strategies to prevent bullying:

- Grace and courtesy lessons – giving children the vocabulary, actions and steps required for them to build awareness and responsiveness of those around them
- Montessori peace educational program which contains the children's study of peoples of the world, through to learning about the fundamental needs of humans. Emphasis is placed on the family of humankind and the interrelationship of all life. Montessori children begin to realise that they are not separate from the rest of the world but are an integral part of creating a harmonious world.

- Practical life curriculum develops the children's care of the person and their immediate environment.
- Cooperation is a key component of Montessori philosophy. There is no focus on competition or focus on comparison by teachers on students.
- Regular whole school training of staff and routine staff development initiatives
- Explicit teaching of positive behaviours embedded within the curriculum addressing positive relationships, conflict resolution, resilience, bystander action etc.
- Regularly recognising and acknowledging students who demonstrate appropriate behaviours that promote and restore encouraging positive relationships within each class by the staff
- Open classrooms to attract and encourage parent's involvement and direct observation of classroom interactions
- Prompt and efficient supervision before school, at times of lunch and after school interactions, by staff members
- Multi-age classrooms where social interactions are the basis and are fundamental to student's relationships.

Students are encouraged to:

- Take some positive action to stop bullying if they observe an incident, to speak up and influence the behaviour of peers
- Report the bullying incident to a staff member as soon as possible
- Make it clear to their peers that bullying is not accepted

Staff are expected to:

- Take some positive action to stop the bullying when they observe an incident
- Pass on information about any reported or observed bullying behaviours to the principal or coordinator

Parents are encouraged to:

- Listen to their child and encourage their child to speak to their teacher
- Organise a meeting with their child's teacher to discuss their concerns

Responding to bullying

Bullying is viewed as a major breach of the school rules and behavioural expectations and therefore follow up action will align with our school policies that relate to quality relationships.

Any reports of bullying will be investigated, and appropriate action will be taken promptly. The response to bullying will include:

14. where appropriate informing parents and involving them in any action and follow up
15. guidance and other support for the recipient of the bullying (e.g., as appropriate re-skilling and re-teaching of strategies, resilience and social skills, counselling, conflict management skills, social networking etc)
16. guidance and support for 'bystanders', 'supporters' and witnesses of the bullying (e.g., intervention strategies etc)
17. age appropriate and consistent sanctions for the student who is the bully (e.g., counselling, parent contact)
18. interventions and support for the student who bullied included in a Behaviour Guidance Plan (e.g., specific interventions developed to reduce the bullying behaviour, teaching of replacement behaviours, reinforcers etc).

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