

ANNUAL REPORT 2016

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Introduction:



I welcome readers to Northside Montessori School through its 2016 Annual Report.

Northside Montessori is a member of the NSW Association of Independent Schools and a School Subscriber to the Montessori Australia Foundation (MAF). The Pre-Primary classes deliver an education based on the Early Years Learning Framework and complies with ACECQA. The school also delivers the NSW Educational Standards Authority (NESA) Curriculum to primary age students, and as the new National Curriculum is introduced over time this too will be delivered. This is done so whilst maintaining the Montessori methodology and curriculum which goes beyond the confines of the traditional school curriculum. The School meets all requirements in order to be registered with the NESA and simultaneously prides itself on its Montessori educational delivery which surpasses the restricted standards of other schools. Development of self-esteem, creativity, acceptance, mutual respect and concern for others are traits that are nurtured in the Montessori environment.

Northside Montessori is a two-campus School in a beautiful, leafy region of northern Sydney. The Stepping Stones Campus of Northside operates as a Montessori Long Day Care service and is situated at North Turramurra. The main Northside Campus at Pymble is where the main office and the school operates. At this campus, there are several classes for 3 – 6 year-old children along with classes for 6 – 9 and for 9 – 12 year olds. There is also a Montessori class for the parents of Infant and Toddler children at the Northside Campus.

Northside Montessori enjoys its strong links to families and their active involvement at the School demonstrates how much they value education, and particularly that of a Montessori education.

Barbara Maxfield – M Ed, Dip Religion, B Ed (Mathematics), Dip Performance, Dip Business: School Compliance, AMI Montessori Certificate, AMI Montessori 3-6 Diploma Audit, Justice of Peace

Principal

Education and Financial Reporting

Annual Education and Financial Reporting Policy for Northside Montessori School

In accordance with the reporting requirements of the NSW Minister for Education and the Australian Government Department of Education, Northside Montessori School will maintain relevant and current data and will comply with reporting requirements. This reporting will include public disclosure of the educational and financial performance measures and policies of the School as required from time to time.

Procedures for implementing the policy include:

- Identifying relevant staff to co-ordinate input into the annual report (Finance Officer, Business Manager, Principal)
- Providing requests to staff for input in their reporting areas
- Staff members listed collect, analyse and present data for inclusion in the report
- All documentation collated by a central person (Principal)
- Determination of the content and ensuring compliance and relevance
- Preparation and distribution of the annual report to the School Board for final approval
- Further editing, preparation and publication of the report in an appropriate format to send to the NSW Teaching & Educational Standards Authority (NESA), and to the School community.

The Northside Montessori Annual Report will be provided in an on-line or appropriate electronic format to the NESA and the Annual Report will relate to each school year and be provided no later than 30 June in the year following the report.

Requests for additional data from the NSW Minister for Education and Training

To ensure that any requests from the Minister for additional data are dealt with appropriately, the School appoints the Principal to the role of co-ordinating the School's response. The Principal is responsible for the collection of the relevant data and for ensuring it is provided to the NESA in an appropriate electronic form.

Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire

The School appoints the Business Manager as responsible for completing the questionnaire. This person is responsible for the collection of the relevant data and for ensuring it is provided to Department of Education in an appropriate form.



Reporting Area 1: A Message from Key School Bodies

From the Chair of the Board

Northside Montessori School continues to deliver an authentic Montessori and high quality educational experience to our students almost 40 years after its founding.

We provide a rigorous, caring and holistic Montessori education, delivered by highly qualified and professional staff in an outstanding learning environment that supports the needs of the whole child. We strive to keep alive the love of learning in every child and equip them with the skills they will need to meet the challenges of life, and of tomorrow. While learning occurs in a Montessori environment, each student can meet or exceed the educational requirements of the NSW Educational Standards Authority.

Working together the Board and Executive have moved our school into a very strong financial position over the last 4 years and have now also begun to see sustained growth in student enrolments.

During 2016 the Board reviewed our Strategic Plan with input from the School's Executive. Our focus for 2016 -2019 is in three key areas:

Learning – delivering excellent student outcomes through a quality Montessori education where our focus is on building teacher capability and measuring and communicating outcomes

Community – fostering positive relationships with all members of our community, leading to an increase in engagement with and regard for the school

Sustainability – maintaining the existing strong management, governance, financial and environmental base of the school, with a clear focus on attracting and retaining families

This ongoing review is very valuable and allows us to work towards a vision for 2019 with a clear plan to guide our decision-making. A key focus continues to be the re-building of student numbers which, in a Montessori school, must be built from the ground up.

I wish to acknowledge my fellow Directors on the Board. We are very fortunate to have access to their deep and varied professional experience, coupled with an unwavering commitment to both the Montessori method and our school.

Our thanks also go to Barbara Maxfield for her commitment and service to the school. Over five years she has managed to juggle the competing demands of the Board driven by the Strategic Plan and an increasingly complex education environment, as well as staff and parent needs and expectations, with grace and professionalism. This is no easy role, and in Barbara we have had a Principal who is an exemplary educational leader with the foresight and determination to make a difference and drive results. I would also like to thank the staff and parents who have contributed in so many ways to sustain Northside throughout the year. It is only with the cooperation and contribution of many that we can continue to provide an exceptional education for our children.

Samantha Baker
Chair

From the Principal

The 2016 Annual Report provides a snapshot of the School which is based on the Montessori philosophy. This is an approach to education that acknowledges the child's natural love of learning. That love is also obvious in the way children, teachers, parents, carers and the broader Montessori community interact with each other, in the care they show for the child, and for the passion they have for their school and learning.

The School delivers the Curriculum of NSW Education Standards Authority (formerly known as Board of Studies, Teaching & Educational Standards) to primary age students, and has introduced the National Curriculum in a timely manner over recent years. The School meets all requirements to be registered with NESA and simultaneously prides itself on the Montessori educational delivery which surpasses the restricted standards of other schools.

The delivery of our curriculum continues to be compliant with NESA with the inclusion of the new Australian curriculum. This is achieved whilst maintaining the true essence of Montessori methodology.

2016 saw the continued delivery of the co-curricular programs at the school, allowing for the individual talents and interests of our students. Mandarin, Japanese, French, Choir, Orchestra, Origami, Tae Kwon Do, Computer Coding, Sport, camps and other activities which supplement the regular NESA and Montessori outcomes at the School were well attended by children during 2016. The introduction of Montessori Model United Nations (MMUN) in 2016 provided a further opportunity for our children to learn about significant global issues and for them to have a voice and commitment which promotes peace and harmony in the world. The attendance of Level 6 children at the MMUN conference in New York in 2016 will no doubt be the start of an annual presence at such events in the school's future.

Community events, including parent education events were again popular with parents in 2016. Many of the Northside parents rely on our school community for their friendships and networking.

It is refreshing to see the acceptance and respect for difference that exists at Northside. Self-esteem, creativity, mutual respect and concern for others are important traits nurtured in the school environment at Northside Montessori. Positive relationships with peers, staff and the wider community are important features witnessed daily at the School.

I have been fortunate to be part of this wonderful school for over five years now. I have recognised that the school provides a very special and powerful education, enriching and inspiring children in their learning, growth and development. Following many years in a range of schools I have felt privileged to be part of a learning environment that is based on the Montessori philosophy. This is an approach to education that acknowledges the child's natural love of learning. For me, it is a compelling and convincing educational method. The children at Northside are very fortunate to be part of a Montessori school where the learning approach promotes independence, self-direction and self-discipline.

Toward the end of 2016 I provided notice of my intention to leave Northside, and indeed to cease work as a Principal, so that I could pursue other professional and personal goals in the future. As I contemplate my imminent departure during 2017, I leave with wonderful memories and a conviction that Dr Maria Montessori got it right! The Montessori method is unwavering at our school and whilst staff and, indeed, the management of the school may change, what remains for children is a powerful education that will benefit them for many years to come.

I take this opportunity to thank the 2016 Chair and Board Directors for their support and guidance. I wish all the school community the very best for its future and welcome the Interim Principal, Dr Georgina Reinhout, as I pass the baton to her during 2017.

Barbara Maxfield – M Ed, Dip Religion, B Ed (Mathematics), Dip Performance, Dip Business: School Compliance, AMI Montessori Certificate, AMI Montessori 3-6 Diploma Audit, Justice of Peace

Principal

Reporting Area 2: *Contextual Information about the School*

The Northside Montessori Society is the governing body of Northside Montessori School. It was established in 1978 by a small group of parents who wanted a high quality of education for their children. Since then the School has developed to become one of the largest schools of its type in Australia.

Northside Montessori School offers Montessori education in its Early Childhood Education and Care Services licensed premises as well as a full NSW Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards Authority (NESA) registered program for older children. The NESA programs are delivered to children in the final year of the 3 – 6 Pre-Primary Program which is the Kindergarten equivalent and in programs for 6-9 and 9-12 year olds which are the Year 1 to Year 6 equivalent. The School also provides a Nido and Toddler Montessori education for children aged between 18 months and 3 years old and their parents and carers.

Northside Montessori School is situated at two sites called "Stepping Stones" and "Northside", both in Bobbin Head Road and respectively in the suburbs of Turramurra and Pymble. Each site has extensive outdoor play areas where children can play and explore using creative play equipment. Separate areas cater for the educational needs of the children grouped from 6 months to 5 years at Stepping Stones Montessori Long Day Care and for the classes of 3-6 year olds, 6-9 year olds and 9-12 year olds. Spacious open-plan learning areas are furnished with Montessori materials and equipment. The specialised classroom equipment and materials are carefully designed to support the educational programs and the needs of the children according to their level of development. The activities are planned in a detailed and deliberate manner to help each child in developing their sensory-motor skills, discrimination and judgement, socialisation, creative intelligence and their imagination.

The teaching methods and curriculum, whilst based firmly on the methods, insights, materials and discoveries of Maria Montessori, meet the NESA guidelines and requirements in all key learning areas. The educational approach differs significantly from more traditional methods, and particularly in the way that it stresses the individuality of the child.

The School is committed to providing a holistic, caring and nurturing educational environment. It aims to develop in each child the self-confidence and inner security to learn independently, cultivate a habit of concentration, initiative and perseverance and foster curiosity and sense of order.

The Montessori motto is "Help me to help myself."

Further, and in line with the natural inclination, children at Northside Montessori School have a genuine interest and appetite for learning, and it is a truly rewarding experience for teachers to see the response of their students as they gain confidence and enthusiasm for learning and in their own ability.

Please refer to the My School Website for further information including the ACARA statement.

<http://www.myschool.edu.au>



Reporting Area 3: Student Performance in National and Statewide Tests and Examinations

Northside Montessori School did not have students sitting for the School Certificate or Higher School Certificate in 2016. Performance on NAPLAN is documented on the My School website:

<http://www.myschool.edu.au>

Whilst Montessori schools do not carry out routine tests like most other schools Northside Montessori School still takes part in, and values, the national testing in Literacy and Numeracy that is available through NAPLAN.

We acknowledge that NAPLAN tests are but one assessment tool which provides a small snapshot of a child's ability in literacy and numeracy but we utilize the NAPLAN test results thoroughly as they provide a detailed analysis for the school's use, which can help us identify individual student's strengths and weaknesses; and that the analysis can also inform our teaching practices.

The very small student numbers sitting for the NAPLAN tests in Years 3 and 5 at our school can mean that making assumptions about the overarching performance trends of the school is limited. The individual performance of just one or two students can skew the statistical data which can lead to assumptions about either high or low performance that may not be a true reflection of the group.

Regardless, NAPLAN testing provides important information related to literacy and numeracy that is helpful to the school and to our families. Further NAPLAN testing does not measure: creativity, critical thinking, resilience, motivation, persistence, curiosity, questioning, humour, endurance, reliability, enthusiasm, self-awareness, self-discipline, leadership, compassion, courage, sense of beauty, sense of wonder, resourcefulness, spontaneity, humility or civic mindedness. These qualities can be equally important to a child's future success and they are central to everyday practice at Northside Montessori School.



Reporting Area 5: Professional Learning and Teacher Standards

Professional Learning

As part of the school's commitment to improve the quality of teaching and learning standards across both campuses at the Northside Montessori School, staff were expected to attend regular staff meetings, as well as curriculum and pedagogically based Professional Development sessions, including that of Montessori methodology. Administration personnel also took part in training to ensure that all facilities, human resources and operational services are current and effective.

In addition to staff meetings, teachers also attended whole-school and individual Professional Development conferences with the aim of enhancing the teaching and learning outcomes and for developing pedagogical practices. Staff participated in a range of Professional Development conferences held by the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) and other independent providers in an aim to target whole school initiatives, including focus on the educational needs and outcomes, child protection regulations and discipline. Considerable in-house Professional Development took place using the experience and skills of presenters from the AIS, and utilising the School's senior staff, particularly when they had taken part in externally delivered Professional Development. Using the School's own staff on such occasions made the Professional Development more 'real' to others, knowing that their peers were applying what they had learned in our own school environment.

Summary of conferences, workshops, seminars and training attended in 2016 by Northside Montessori teaching and non-teaching staff, and Board Directors.

| Subject | Course Provider/Details | In Attendance |
|---|---|---------------|
| The AIS Governance Symposium | NSW Association of Independent Schools | 9 |
| Montessori Leadership Network meeting | Montessori Australia Foundation Limited | 3 |
| 1.75 hours training PCSCHOOL | Com-Assist Solutions Pty Ltd | 2 |
| Exploding the Myths of School Reform | ACEL | 1 |
| Registration Fee - Educate Plus Membership | Educate Plus | 1 |
| Enhancing your Child Protection Course 25/7 | NSW Association of Independent Schools | 1 |
| Obligations in responding to young people at risk | NSW Association of Independent Schools | 1 |
| Qikkids Training | QK Technologies | 3 |
| 1hr Payroll overview training PCSCHOOL | Com-Assist Solutions Pty Ltd | 1 |
| Identify and respond to the children and young people at risk | Atkinson | 1 |
| CPR Course | Hills First Aid Training | 20 |
| First Aid Course | Hills First Aid Training | 3 |
| Measuring Student Reading Progress | MultiLit | 1 |
| Communication for Enhanced Relationships | NSW Association of Independent Schools | 12 |
| Workshop 0-3: Sara Brady PD for PP Staff | Montessori Australia Foundation Limited | 3 |
| Child Protection Online Course | Atkinson | 2 |
| Fire training | | All staff |
| Montessori Whole School Refresher | Montessori Australia Foundation Limited | 3 |
| Training in Maths | EB Rewire Series | 1 |

| | | |
|---|---|-----------|
| Assessment that leads to learning | NSW Association of Independent Schools | 1 |
| Writing K-6: Teaching Beyond Text Types | NSW Association of Independent Schools | 1 |
| Protective Behaviour Program lessons | JBW Services | 4 |
| Child Protection Training- Workshop | NSW Association of Independent Schools | All staff |
| Child Protection online module | NSW Association of Independent Schools | 28 |
| Trillium Montessori Course | | 1 |
| Hewson's Coaching Program | Hewson's Executive Development Pty Ltd | 1 |
| AMI Montessori Assistants Certificate 0-3 Sydney 2016 | AMI - Association Montessori Internationale | 3 |

Further opportunities are afforded to staff to develop their professional knowledge and expertise. This included:

- Peer observations within the School
- Peer observations across schools
- Consultation and collaboration with other schools
- Trialling methods and reporting back to staff meetings.

Staff are encouraged to make full use of the budget allocated for professional development. In 2016 the average spent on Professional Development was approximately \$2,500 per full-time person.

Teaching Standards

| Category | Number of Teachers |
|---|--------------------|
| Teachers having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEINOOSR) guidelines | 8 |
| Teachers having a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI- NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications | 0 |
| Teachers not having qualifications as described in (i) and (ii) but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context. Such teachers must have been employed to 'teach' in NSW before 1 October 2004 (either on a permanent, casual or temporary basis) and worked as a 'teacher' during the last five (5) years in a permanent, casual or temporary capacity. | 0 |

Reporting Area 6: *Workforce Composition*

Refer to the My Schools website for Northside Montessori School Workforce:

<http://www.myschool.edu.au>

In 2016 the workforce composition of the School was as follows:

| | |
|---|------|
| 2016 | |
| Teaching Staff | 8 |
| Full-time equivalent teaching staff | 6.4 |
| Non-teaching staff | 18 |
| Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff | 11.3 |

There were no Indigenous Staff employed at the school in 2016.



Reporting Area 7: *Student Attendance and Management of Non-Attendance*

For whole-school student attendance rates please refer to the My Schools website:

<http://www.myschool.edu.au>

| Year level | Semester 1 | Semester 2 | % Attendance rate |
|------------|------------|------------|-------------------|
| K | 94.92 | 95.51 | 95.22 |
| 1 | 97.46 | 92.25 | 94.86 |
| 2 | 95.07 | 92.37 | 93.72 |
| 3 | 94.41 | 91.89 | 93.15 |
| 4 | 93.01 | 92.46 | 92.74 |
| 5 | 93.09 | 94.44 | 93.77 |
| 6 | 91.40 | 92.11 | 91.76 |

In 2016, the average attendance of children from K-6 for the whole year was 93.6%. This rate is slightly lower than the average attendance for the whole year in 2015 (95.5%).

Management of Non-Attendance

Regular attendance at school is considered to be vital in achieving the best possible learning outcomes. The Northside Montessori School has developed the Student Attendance Policy and Guidelines which manages Non-Attendance.

POLICY

- Northside Montessori School maintains a register of enrolments.
- Northside Montessori School monitors the daily attendance and absence of students in the School by maintaining a daily register for each class
- Student absences from the School are identified and recorded in a consistent manner by the staff member responsible for each class.
- Unexplained absences from school are followed up in an appropriate manner with the child's parent or carer.
- Northside Montessori School notifies parents and/or carers in an appropriate and timely manner where a student has a poor record of school attendance. This is initially done by the classroom teacher.
- Where unsatisfactory school attendance is identified, the attendance issue and any action taken are recorded, as appropriate, on the child's file.

Unexplained absences that cause concern are followed up in an appropriate manner with the parent or carer by:

1. Class teacher or administration staff telephones the parent of an absent child to confirm that the child is absent from school
2. Teachers report to the Principal (or delegate) the names and number of days absent of children with unexplained absences
3. Unexplained absence letters are sent home by the administration staff to parents stating date/s of absence and requesting a written or verbal explanation
4. Where necessary, parent meetings will be held to investigate reasons of non-attendance and referrals to appropriate support services implemented.

Results of unsatisfactory attendance are recorded by the Principal or delegate and collected and filed in the child's record file. For prolonged absences and if the parents remain unreachable, the School then sends a registered letter to the address as shown in the student's records. If no response is forthcoming, the matter is referred to the relevant authority.

Reporting Area 9: Enrolment Policies and Characteristics of Student Body

Enrolment Policy

Northside Montessori School is open to enrol girls and boys and there is no reason in principle that children with disabilities cannot be eligible to enrol. The School is committed to fulfilling its obligations under the law and, as such, adheres to the Legislative Framework that applies to the school. This includes:

- *Disability Discrimination Act*
- *Disability Standards for Education*
- *Race Discrimination Act*
- *Anti Discrimination Act*
- *Privacy Act 1988 & Privacy Amendment Act 2012*

All applications are processed in order of receipt and consideration is given to the applicant's support for the ethos of the School, siblings already attending the School, and other criteria determined by the School from time to time.

Applications for enrolment to Northside Montessori School can be made at any time and should be submitted for all levels of entry whenever families are considering enrolment at the School. Applications are processed promptly and prospective parents are offered a class observation and interview. These usually occur during terms two and three of the school year. The whole observation and interview process is a very valuable and informative one and takes approximately one hour. Both parents should attend if possible.

Waiting Lists

Waiting lists are maintained for all levels of entry into the School once all places have been offered. Due to the international make-up of our School Community, children occasionally leave the School unexpectedly when their parents are transferred overseas. To take advantage of these opportunities, it is worthwhile placing a child's name on the waiting list even after offers of place have closed for any particular year.

A child's name can only be placed on the waiting list after an enrolment application has been received and processed and the required observation and interview have been completed.

Placement in Pre-Primary and Primary

Enrolments are considered throughout the school year. Transfers from interstate and overseas Montessori schools will always be considered for the primary classes

To secure a place, or to be placed on the waiting list, parents should phone the office and book in for an observation in a classroom and an interview with the Principal. Applications are considered as they are submitted.

Careful observation of the child is the most important tool in knowing how to help the child's development and serve the needs of the child, for both the Montessori teacher and parent. For this reason, parents must observe in a classroom before their enrolment can be processed and once each year, while their child is enrolled. The design of both the Montessori classroom and the Montessori educational philosophy are based firmly on observation of children.

The Enrolment Application Form and Package is available on the School's website or by phoning the School.

The Enrolment Process

The School shall adhere as closely as possible to the following process although the discretion of the Principal may be applied at any time. After an application form is submitted, all prospective parents *must attend a compulsory observation*, followed by an *interview with the Principal or a primary teacher* and followed by a tour of the school.

Parents observe the Montessori Method in action and observe how the Montessori lower primary school is process-oriented with a large proportion of hands-on work with the didactic materials. The

Method moves towards abstraction and product orientation in the later primary stage. As a non-denominational school that teaches evolutionary history, prospective families with strong religious beliefs can be informed about our educational philosophy in this area.

After the observation and interview, applications are processed and children are placed on the Enrolments Waitlist from which offers of place are made. Students are placed on the Enrolment Waitlist with the following priority order:

- a. Students who have siblings who have completed or still attending primary
- b. Students who are transferring from another Montessori school (from overseas or out of the area) who also commit to completing the current cycle where they are enrolled
- c. Students who are booked in to primary Montessori
- d. Students whose siblings completed the 3-6 cycle
- e. Students whose siblings have failed to complete the 3 - 6, 6 – 9 or 9 - 12 cycle

The Offer of Place is made and Accepted by a family with acknowledgement of the cycles of Montessori education. The school expects a minimum three-year commitment in pre-primary and a three year commitment in each of the 6 – 9 and 9 – 12 cycles of the primary school as detailed in the Enrolment Conditions.



Reporting Area 10: School Policies

A. POLICIES FOR STUDENT WELFARE

Northside Montessori School actively seeks to provide students with a stimulating learning environment that is safe. It is a fundamental right of everyone in our community to feel safe. We believe in developing the wonder of the child and the need to encourage opportunities for self-awareness and independence. We strive to provide a learning environment which promotes a love of learning, stimulates the imagination and encourages exploration of their world. The School aims to provide opportunities for students to discover and make connections with themselves, within a stimulating, engaging, safe and purposeful learning environment.

To ensure that all aspects of the school's mission for providing for a student's welfare are implemented, the following policies and procedures are in place:

| Policy | Changes in 2016 | Access to Full Text |
|--|---|--|
| Child Protection Policy encompassing : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions and concepts • Legislative requirements • Preventative strategies • Reporting and investigating reportable conduct | Updated | School Policies and Procedures Handbook Parents may request a copy by contacting the Office at 9144-2835 |
| Security Policy encompassing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedure for the security of the grounds and buildings • Use of grounds and facilities • Emergency procedures • Travel on school related activities | Updated Emergency Procedures Updated Staff Handbook | School Policies and Procedures Handbook Drawings of new fire exits posted in all classrooms Parents may request a copy by contacting the Office at 9144-2835 |
| Supervision Policy encompassing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duty of care and risk management • Levels of supervision for on –site and off-site activities • Guidelines for supervisors | Updated Excursions Policy and Procedures | Parents may request a copy by contacting the Office at 9144-2835 |
| Codes of Conduct Policy encompassing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of conduct for staff and students • Behaviour management | Updated | School Policies and Procedures Handbook Parents may request a copy by contacting the Office at 9144 2835 |
| Pastoral Care Policy encompassing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health care procedures • Behaviour management • Bullying | Updated | School Policies and Procedures Handbook Parent and Staff Handbooks Parents may request a copy by contacting the Office at 9144 2835 |
| Pastoral Care Communication encompassing: Formal and informal mechanisms in place for facilitating | Website continued to be updated and upgraded. Correspondence to families and provision of workshops that pertain | School Policies and Procedures Handbook Also in Parent Handbook and Staff Handbook |

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| communication between the school and those with an interest in the student's educational well-being | to approaches in place in classrooms. | Parents may request a copy by contacting the Office at 9144 2835 |
| Attendance | Nil | School Policies and Procedures Handbook |
| Medication Policy | Nil | School Policies and Procedures Handbook Parents may request a copy by contacting the Office at 9144 2835 Policy document distributed to families of children with a Medical Action Plan |

B. POLICIES FOR STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Discipline Guidelines

Northside Montessori School supports the development of self-discipline as the true form of discipline that fosters self-control and self-knowledge. Northside Montessori School requires all students to abide by the School's rules and to follow the directions of teachers and other people with authority delegated by the School.

Where disciplinary action is required, penalties imposed vary according to the nature of the breach of discipline and a student's prior behaviour following meetings with the student and their parents. The School places the highest possible emphasis on the full co-operation of the parents during a breach of appropriate behaviour. Full co-operation in seeking solution with the parents, student and school working together is a basic principle of the supportive triangle, an integral part of the School's Montessori philosophy.

There are many and varied reasons why a student is disruptive in class and in order to help a student function as a responsible member of society, it is necessary to understand why this is happening. Firstly, it is of utmost importance to observe the student (using common sense) and intervene if the student is endangering himself or others:

- Look for a pattern of behaviour.
- Consider if there is a particular time or subject or group of students present when self-discipline breaks down
- Consider relationships with peers and whether the behaviour is a reaction to other students
- Consider whether this is a newly emerged behaviour and consider the triggers including outside factors
- Anticipate rather than react to situations.

If a student is involved in a minor incident, remove the student from the situation and ask him/her if he/she thinks his/her response was appropriate.

If a number of students were involved, ask each to state what has happened and encourage them to brainstorm a solution.

A violent response to any situation is unacceptable and the student should sit down beside an adult and when the student has calmed down then the incident can be discussed and a suitable resolution and/or consequence discussed.

Each student is expected to complete a minimum focused amount of work. If a student is not working, remind him/her that this is work time and if he/she chooses not to work then he/she will miss out on playtime. The student can then make a decision. However, it is important that if he/she does not return to work that he/she misses out on playtime.

If a student is disruptive during group time, he/she should be asked to move away from the group and can only return when he/she is able to co-operate with the group.

If a student is showing a pattern of disruptive behaviours or he/she is not responding to sitting out, the parents need to attend a meeting with the teacher. Depending on the age of the student, this meeting may or may not involve the student. At this meeting, possible reasons for this behaviour and ways of solving this problem can be discussed. The Principal is available to sit in on this meeting following request from the teacher or parents.

When a course of action has been agreed, with the parents and teacher monitoring, meetings will take place at four weeks intervals until both sides are satisfied that there is an improvement in behaviour.

In the event of an extreme behaviour problem, the teacher and/or Principal may ask for the child to undergo psychological assessment and/or attend an anger management or social behaviour classes. Should any student display an extremely violent reaction towards staff, or a student, the parents will be called and asked to remove their child from school until a meeting with the Principal, class teacher, parents and student can take place. The student returns to school once a course of action has been agreed.

The aim of the School is to work together with the parents to help the student develop self-discipline. If there is no co-operation on the part of the parents, the 'supportive triangle' is compromised and not working, therefore the Principal will approach the Board to ask the family permanently withdraw the student from the School.

At all times, the interviews and discussions are conducted with courtesy and diplomacy. Raised voices and abusive language have no place at interviews and in the unlikely event of this occurring; the meeting will be terminated and reconvened at a later date when everyone is calm.

All disciplinary action that may result in any sanction against the student including suspension or exclusion provides processes based on procedural fairness.

Northside Montessori School does not permit corporal punishment of students attending the School. "This does not include, however, the application of force only to prevent personal injury to, or damage to or the destruction of property of, any person (including the student)." [Education Reform Amendment Act (School Discipline), 1995]. Information regarding Student Discipline is available in Parent Handbook, and on site in the Staff Rooms. Parents may access this at the front office.

C. POLICIES FOR COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES RESOLUTION

Policy Statement

Northside Montessori School is committed to providing a safe and supportive work and learning environment for all employees and students. The principles of early intervention, procedural fairness, consistency, respect and confidentiality underpin the School's approach to complaints resolution at the School.

Complaints are managed by the Principal under the authority delegated from the Board to investigate and act in the resolution of complaints and other issues as they arise from time to time at the School. The Principal has the requisite experience and knowledge of the school and of the interpersonal relationships between parents, children and staff to manage the complaints resolution process.

The process for resolution of a complaint put in place by the Board shall be adhered to by all parties to the complaint. The role of the Board in this process is to ensure the Principal has the resources needed to implement this policy and participate, if required, in the Appeals Process.

Issues or complaints covered by this policy include:

- Learning and teaching
- Child protection
- "Reportable Conduct" by employee
- Child "at risk of harm"
- Student discipline procedures

- Bullying and harassment
- Work, health and safety
- Duty of care
- Employee conduct
- Parental conduct
- Facilities and equipment
- Any conduct which may bring the school into disrepute

Who can use this policy and its procedures to have an issue addressed?

- All employees
- Students attending the school
- Parents of students at the school
- Members of the wider community

Background

The Supportive Triangle

As a Montessori School, the essential element of all relationships at school is the Supportive Triangle between the child, the parent and the School. The Board and Principal place extremely high value on this relationship. The Principal and Staff clearly understand their role as part of the supportive triangle and are readily accessible to parents to discuss issues of concern. The parents of a child at the school agree to maintain this supportive triangle as a condition of a child's continued enrolment at the school.

Why have a complaint handling procedure?

We acknowledge that employees, students, parents and members of the wider community can sometimes feel aggrieved about something happening at the school from time to time and it is important that they are not ignored. An unexpressed or unresolved grievance can often escalate unnecessarily.

Parents are advised to utilise the processes in place for addressing complaints or issues. Parents are warned against approaching other families regarding a school-related complaint. This is often a sensitive area and to protect all the parties, it is advisable to work through the issue with the relevant teacher or the Principal. Discussing concerns in the car-park for instance may violate provisions in the Privacy Act protecting the rights of parties involved in a complaint. Further it does not resolve the issue and weakens the school community.

For a copy of the full text, please call the office so that a copy could be sent to you. A copy is available from the school's office.



Reporting Area 11: School Determined Improvement Targets

Achievement of priorities identified in the school's 2015 Annual Report for 2016 Annual Report

| Area | Priorities 2016 | Achievements |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| Teaching and Learning | Enhancing relationships of educators (ie teachers and their assistants) to ensure that the school is getting the best out of the staff Data analysis of NAPLAN to have more of a priority Tackling Literacy in Kindergarten to ensure that children are ready and reaching benchmarks for Stage 1 | Staff Professional Develop Day provided for Teachers and Assistants which resulted in more positive relations and subsequently a better learning environment for children. Data analysis of NAPLAN empowered teachers to work with the available strategies to target outcomes not being met by some children. 99% of children met Literacy benchmarks for Early Stage 1 by the end of 2016. |
| Governance | More effective Induction Program for newly appointed Board Directors. All new Directors to complete online modules with AIS so that they are well-educated about governance and their responsibilities. All other Directors to take part in Governance Symposium. Ensure better run meetings – reports in advance, reports read in advance and consider review of meeting at closed meeting times. | An effective and comprehensive Induction package and program was implemented for newly appointed Board Directors. This also proved to be an insightful venture for ongoing Directors, many of whom had gaps in the knowledge about the school's history, past governance and knowledge of the school. Engagement in Governance training has been thorough in 2016. The preparation of directors for meetings, especially in relation to reading reports prior to meetings, continues to be a challenge for some Directors with competing time priorities. |
| Leadership | Principal to continue serving on the Independent Schools Centre for Excellence (ISCE) with AIS as well as providing Coaching for newly appointed principals. Create a new role at the school to support current principal e.g., Deputy Principal role or similar. Still consider need for Pre-Primary leadership | Principal maintained professional representation and leadership support with the AIS (ISCE) and providing coaching and shadowing for newly appointed or aspiring principals. A part-time Operations Manager was appointed in 2016 but the appointment and part-time nature of the position did fulfil the needs of the school. Mid-way through 2016 a Pre-Primary Coordinator was appointed. This has been a successful appointment with this person taking on responsibilities for this area of the school. |
| Administration | Build skills and define roles of admin team. Develop manuals that include all role details of personnel in the admin team. Consider employing Grounds person to take on regular maintenance and facilities tasks in lieu of contracting works for tasks that do not require a qualified trades' person. | A Manual for each position in the Admin team was developed in 2016 and they have proved to be an invaluable resource to assist staff, particularly when there have been new appointments. Grounds person was appointed and this provided timely responses to daily needs of maintenance around the premises. |
| Enrolments | Pursuit of further enrolments from 'feeder' Montessori schools, bringing all Kindergarten children together every day to promote cohesion so that there is less likelihood of exiting at the end of the 3 year cycle, conducting more regular Open Tours with greater one-to-one opportunities for discussion, and promoting more opportunities for | Retention of enrolments at the end of 2016 was very positive resulting in growth for the Primary classes. The workshops and parent events, as well as cross-cycle events, provided parents with confidence about remaining at Northside through to |

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|---------------------------------|--|--|
| | parents to take part in Parent Education events. Retention continues to be a key priority and so promoting the links between cycles continues to be important Showcasing the learning and passion for it in the older children will be important. | Level 6. The Open Tours operated very smoothly and resulted in quality enrolments. |
| Professional Development | Ensuring educators keep abreast of significant teaching and learning initiatives is a priority for 2016 as is the important area of literacy. The relationships between educators is also vital and so emphasis will be placed on this. We aim to train newly appointed staff in the admin team to ensure they have the skills and knowledge suited to their roles. Ensure all directors complete 4 hours of mandatory training in governance. Develop skills and knowledge of Operations Manager across school management issues (IR, compliance, leadership) | The ongoing development and training of all staff (teaching and non-teaching) continued in 2016. Directors are meeting the mandatory training requirements for governance. Maintaining up to date knowledge in relation to Funding and the Multi-Enterprise Agreements was made available to senior management whilst teaching staff took up opportunities for refresher Montessori training. |
| Marketing | New School video to be produced for Website and Cinema Advertising. New Marketing Strategy to be developed. Ensuring that Facebook is reaching capacity will take place as will greater focus on media and marketing generally. Newly appointed Operations Manager to take carriage of marketing as part of role. Re-branding, or refreshing existing marketing tools, handbooks, fliers etc to take place. | A new school video was produced and the cinema advertising advertisement was updated. The 2016 Marketing Strategy was implemented. School also achieved the goal of having a completely new website which was concluded Term 4. |
| Community | The introduction of a School APP is designed to keep our community connected and informed about what is taking place. We anticipate that any complaints or concerns may be quickly raised and addressed through this communication. Regular meetings with Class Parents to ensure they are positive and well-informed conduits for communication between management, teachers and parents. Consideration for new social events for families as well as greater engagement of families in educational showcasing. | The school APP proved to be effective with most families using this as the main form of communication. Meetings with Class Parents took place as required. There were no new school-wide social events in 2016, but there were informal events, dinners, outings and picnics which brought families together. |
| Facilities | Review Consider employing Grounds person to take on regular maintenance and facilities tasks in lieu of contracting works for tasks that do not require a qualified trades' person. Extending the current Music Room so that it can facilitate larger audiences is a goal for 2016. The new Function Room will have a capacity for about 100 people and will be used for a range of activities including co-curricular, parent meetings and forums, soirees, indoor sport and so on. Depending on enrolments it is envisaged that one current Pre-Primary classroom will not reconfiguration so that it can accommodate more children (up to 40 rather than the current 30). | The Facilities Officer managed the work of the newly appointed Grounds person along with overseeing the contractors. The extension of the 'Music room' took place and this newly named 'Function Room' is now a popular venue for larger audiences. It was well-utilised during 2016. Adjustments to one of the Pre-Primary classrooms also took place to accommodate the emerging growth in our Pre Primary numbers during 2016. |
| Strategic Planning | Aimed to address the goals and targets within the Strategic Priorities: Learning, Community and Sustainability. This will be an ongoing task over the next four years. | <p>In 2016</p> <p><u>Learning Targets:</u></p> <p>Average across all KLA's</p> <p>K = 99.0% benchmarks reached</p> <p>Lvl 1 = 95.5% benchmarks reached</p> <p>Lvl 2 = 91.5% benchmarks reached</p> <p>Lvl 3 = 95.0% benchmarks reached</p> <p>Lvl 4 = 83.3% benchmarks reached</p> <p>Lvl 5 = 82.0 % benchmarks reached</p> <p>Lvl 6 = 91.8% benchmarks reached</p> <p><u>Community Targets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Hours commitment is high Many families commit over and above expectations |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 93% of parents responding to survey were positive about the school's services <p><u>Sustainability Targets:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2016, there were 33 new three year olds which exceeded expected capacity By end of 2016 there were no further vacancies for Level 2 and 3 In 2016, a 4th Pre Primary Class commenced Toddler Program – target enrolments not achieved Stepping Stones – target enrolments reached 88% by end 2016 Master Plan commencement during 2016 |
|--|--|---|

2017 Priority areas for improvement

| Area | Priorities |
|--|---|
| Teaching and Learning | Greater transparency and monitoring of educational planning including Scope & Sequence and Programs. Monitor achievement of benchmarks more closely. Recruit two ECTs at Stepping Stones. |
| Governance | Pursue a Director to serve on the Board, replacement for a retiring Director. Ensure all new Directors undertake an orientation. Undertake Governance training – four hours per Director per annum. |
| Leadership | Appoint new Principal and Assistant Principal and insure handover to new leadership is fluid and effective. |
| Administration/Non-teaching positions | Expand capacity for IT services. |
| Enrolments | Increase and retention of enrolments, particularly at entry to Pre-Primary. |
| Professional Development | Focus area to be on supporting children with additional needs for educational staff. Ensure relevant administration and management staff have sound knowledge of new Multi Enterprise Agreements. Assistant Principal to undertake Child Protection Investigation training. |
| Marketing and Communications | Appoint external marketing consultant to develop marketing and communication strategies. |
| Community | Develop community awareness of the school through school 40th anniversary celebrations. Build Northside Montessori Society community through alumni association. |
| Facilities | Modify Primary classrooms to facilitate additional children. Build toilet block for Pre-Primary child with access from outdoors. Refurbish Multi-Purpose Room so that it can be utilised for a range of education/cultural/administrative purposes. |
| Strategic Plan 2016 - 2019 | Work towards all target areas. |

Reporting Area 12: *Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility*

Northside Montessori School wants all students to recognise that they are valued and integral parts of the school community, with parents and staff providing care and support that engender self-esteem, mutual respect and responsibility.

Inherent in the Montessori environment is the promotion and development of respect amongst the students, staff and parents. Respect for the environment, values held by others and the uniqueness of every individual are actively encouraged and promoted through the day to day interactions and activities that the students, staff and parents experience and do.

The students as early as pre-primary are indirectly introduced to the concept of responsibility. They are able to select their own materials from the work they have been introduced to by the teacher. The free choice does not come “free” as the students realise that they are entrusted to use these materials properly and return them all ready for the next student to use.

Respect and Responsibility are promoted in various ways, both directly and indirectly.

Multi-age grouping

All classes are made up of three ages, 0-3 for Assistance to Infancy, 3-6 for pre-primary until kindergarten, 6-9 corresponding to years 1 to 3 and 9-12 corresponding to years 4 to 6. The younger students look up to the older students. The older students help the younger students to fit in and feel secure in their new environment. This can take the form of helping them in their work, finding their way around the school or knowing the expectations and goals. As they progress in grade and age, the mantle of responsibility is being taken in stages. While the older students pass this mantle to the younger ones, the older students themselves are taking on new responsibilities.

Group Decision Making

At the beginning of the year, classes, especially from year 1 onwards, meet and discuss the class rules and routines. Each child’s role in the decision-making process is emphasised. Class or small group meetings are conducted whenever needed to discuss and resolve concerns, issues or conflicts.

Grace and Courtesy

Lessons in grace and courtesy start in pre-primary and continue to be given, either indirectly or directly, throughout the students’ educational experience at Northside Montessori School. The mutual respect amongst the students, staff and parent body are manifested in the way they treat each other.

Respect is earned and responsibility learnt through deeds. Students are not told but are shown through examples the importance of respect and what it means to respect each other and responsibility is practised by doing the right thing irrespective of external rewards.

Students participated in raising money for their nominated charity (e.g., Monika’s Doggie Rescue, Cancer Research, Starlight Foundation). Recycling of paper was continued with the children in the older classes in charge of collection and sorting. The Peer Support Programme, with the years 5 and 6 students leading, continued to be a success. The students in the older groups take turns to coordinate bus list – list of students who would be taking the bus after school. Students take turns in taking care of class pets, worm farms, composting, recycling and cultivating the vegetable gardens.

In summary, respect and responsibility are fostered through the day to day activities and experiences of the students. The following are the areas of respect and responsibility the School encourages, nurtures, promotes and hopes to instil in our students:

- Respect for one-self
- Respect for others
- Respect and acceptance of the individuality and uniqueness of each person
- Respect for the environment
- Respect for the accomplishments of others (past and present)
- Respect and gratitude for the contributions of the people in the past
- Respect for the ideas and opinions of others
- Responsibility for oneself and one’s actions

- Responsibility as a member of a group, community and society
- Responsibility for the future (the important role that each person plays in the betterment of the future and the positive contributions each can make)



Reporting Area 13: Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

Parent Satisfaction

A significant aim of Northside Montessori School is to involve families in the education of our children. To be fair and true to that aim is to have an 'open-door' approach so that parent involvement is welcomed and encouraged. We have a pleasing level of parent volunteering who assist the School in a range of ways, including:

- ✓ Classroom Assistance
- ✓ Parent Education Events
- ✓ Montessori Training
- ✓ Mother's Day and Father's Day breakfasts
- ✓ Grandparents Open Morning
- ✓ Fundraising events (Pink Tower Trivia Night)
- ✓ Working Bees
- ✓ Sharing drop-offs and pick-ups with others
- ✓ Tuckshop Day
- ✓ Excursions and Incursions
- ✓ Library help
- ✓ Newsletter (Chronicle) editing and publishing
- ✓ Gardening and garden projects
- ✓ Caring for animals (and babysitting them in holidays)
- ✓ Administrative tasks
- ✓ Board membership
- ✓ Reading: including listening to students read
- ✓ Cooking or Craft workshops with children
- ✓ Open Mornings – tour guides
- ✓ Children's Discos
- ✓ Adult Only events (Welcome Event, etc)
- ✓ Other activities

This level of support, along with the attendance and activity of our various committees is a positive affirmation of our school.

Class Parents are allocated to each class and meetings of this group take place throughout the year. The regular Parent Education Forums and Classroom Open Events also provide ongoing opportunities for parents to provide the school with feedback.

Exit surveys are conducted with families leaving the school at the end of Year 6 or if they are moving to other schools before graduating at which time reasons are sought to ensure that any issues or conflicts are quickly addressed. The School App also provides parents with the opportunity to give us feedback in the "Compliments and Complaints" section. Any concerns are followed up in a timely fashion.

The school has ongoing communication with parents through parent teacher interviews which are held regularly throughout the year. In addition to this, letters, phone calls, emails and an open door policy encourages parent involvement in the school. Staff are frequently available for quick conversations with parents. Staff enjoy working at Northside Montessori and as such there is high interest in any vacant positions. Staff who left during 2016 left for varied reasons including promotion, relocation, retirement and new opportunities. Staff are always afforded the right to an exit interview if desired.

Student Satisfaction

The school operates a Peer Support Program which provides students with opportunities to develop skills for life, including those to coping with difficult situations, resilience, effective communication, risk taking and conflict resolution. This program also allows the children with the opportunity to voice their opinions and a strong sense of satisfaction and happiness are obvious responses by the children.

High attendance levels suggest that the children enjoy coming to school and that our parents value and support learning at Northside Montessori School. Parents often report that their children don't like school holidays because they prefer to be at school!

Student satisfaction is regularly measured through conversations with classroom teachers who also monitor any dissatisfaction.

Staff Satisfaction

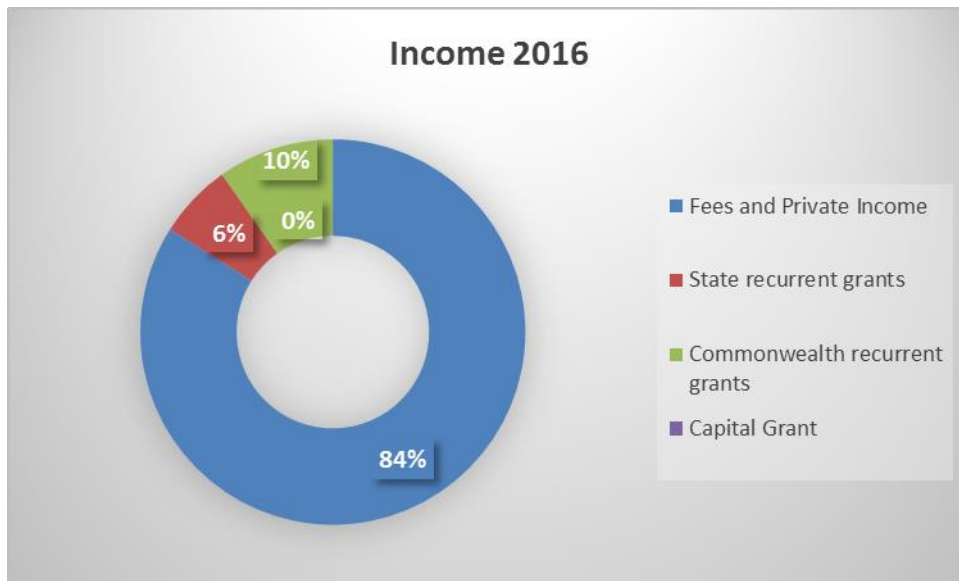
There is a special bond that exists amongst staff which is based on the commitment to Montessori education. They are a dedicated staff with great experiencing at facilitating the learning experiences of the children in a supportive and nurturing environment. To cater for increased student numbers, we had aa additional Pre-Primary teacher join us in Term 3 2016. We also welcomed a new Toddler Directress. There were minor adjustments made in relation to classroom assistants. The classroom assistants provide a vital support to the classroom operations both in relation to that of the classroom environment itself but also in assisting children in their learning through one-to-one and small group support. In 2016, we continued utilising the services of OSHClub to provide care for our children in our Afterschool Care program and Vacation Care programs until the end of Term 3. From Term 4, these services were delivered by the school.

We have a strong and cohesive office team who work collaboratively and productively to support the school's administrative operations. Teachers and staff are encouraged to further their training and to support each other in their professional development as well. Camaraderie amongst the teachers is based on respect, friendship and the common goal of providing the best Montessori practice they can for the children in their care.



Reporting Area 14: *Summary Financial Information*

Northside Montessori Recurrent and Capital Income for 2016



Northside Montessori Recurrent and Capital Expenditure for 2016

