

NORTHSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

ANNUAL REPORT

2022



northside

MONTESSORI SCHOOL

EARLY LEARNING PRIMARY SECONDARY



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THEME 1

MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

Dear Members,

I am pleased to report on the progress of our school over the past year. Despite the challenges posed by the Covid restrictions, we were able to reconnect with our community and launch a successful Adolescent program with a range of wonderful learning opportunities and experiences.

As a result, we have seen a consistent increase in the attractiveness of the program, both among our school community and external families, which is reflected in the growing number of enrolments across different age groups. This year, we are excited to welcome our first Year 8 cohort, with preparations underway for Year 9 and the initial investigations towards setting up the IB program for Year 11 and Year 12.

Our financial results remain strong, with enrolments steadily growing and the school nearing capacity. Our Pre-Primary program continues to operate at near full occupancy, while Lower Primary and Upper Primary are approaching that level too. As a result, the Board and Executive are progressing applications with the council to extend allocated limits and planning infrastructure works to address the growing demands.

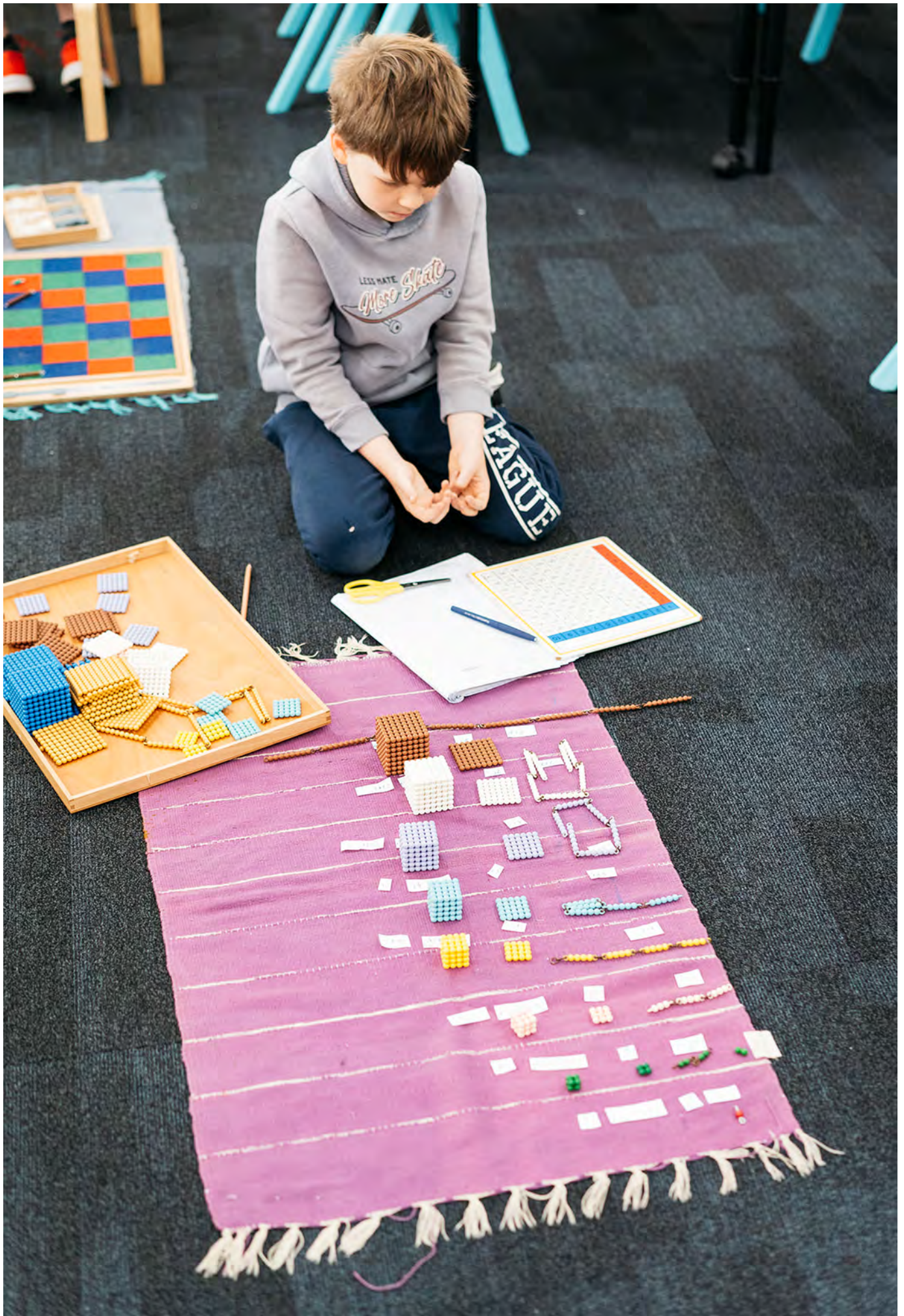
While we made the difficult decision to close the Early Learning Centre after careful review and deliberation, this has enabled us to realign the school's strategic direction towards the Adolescent program, providing quality Montessori education through trained staff and carefully designed programs that meet the NESA curriculum.

I would like to extend special thanks to our Principal, Adam Scotney, and his Executive team for their remarkable management of the school through another year, while also delivering key initiatives. I also express my gratitude to our educators who provided a high standard of education and learning opportunities to our students throughout the year, and our administrative staff who ensure the smooth operation of the school.

As my first year as Chair of the Board, I thank my fellow directors for their commitment, support, and hard work in making this a fantastic year. We look forward to the year ahead and continuing to develop and grow our Adolescent program.

Sincerely,
Felipe Garcia

Board Chair



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL



2022 was a wonderful year at Northside. Following from a year of disruptions and periods of lock down in 2021, we have been very blessed to be able to return to normal life at the school with many of the exciting events that we have previously enjoyed being put back onto the 2022 Northside calendar.

Music Events

Throughout the year we were entertained and amazed by the many musical talents of our students at Northside. These talents are certainly supported by our extensive Music program which provides opportunities not just for practice but also performance. During the year we had a number of Soirees', with students across the whole school performing at these event. It has been especially pleasing to see the performances of our Year 7 students playing both Guitar and also Piano during these events.

Our end of year Music Concert featured the whole school from pre-primary to Year 7. It was lovely to hear performances from all these sections of our school and share in the theme of Peace. This event was very well attended by all our parents

Production

After many months of rehearsal and preparation our 6-9 and 9-12 production was held in Term 4. Both presentations were held in our Multi-Purpose Hall and it was certainly a full house. Our 6-9 brought to us a performance written by the students which featured some wonderful dances and story telling about their 'Jungle Expedition'.

Our 9-12 students from the Amaroo and Orana class presented a Northside version of 'The Wizard of Oz'. This version featured all our Year 6 students in key roles, with characters beyond the Dorothy, Tin Man, Scarecrow, and Lion. Our students created a range of other characters to supplement the story and provide opportunities for all to be involved. The additional characters were suited to the students and very creative in their creation and also costumes.

The Production Night is always a wonderful time, and our 2022 production was no different.

Kids Giving Back

This year many of our 9-12 students participated in the Kids Giving Back program which involves food preparation and cooking for the homeless. Our students travelled to Paddington where they made vegetable pasta, fruit kebabs, and rice paper rolls. The group made over 200 items which were given to Oz Harvest who will transport them to Martin Place for distribution. It was a very enjoyable experience for the students and they learnt the importance of community and giving back to those who are less fortunate. This is certainly an activity that we would look to continue in 2023.

Planet Pens

Throughout the first year of our Adolescent program, our Year 7 students as part of their Micro Economies work embarked on a plan to produce pens from recycled HDPE plastics. These plastics are found in milk bottles, bottle lids and a number of other common packaging and are relatively easy to recycle and reuses. The Planet Pens project was born in 2022 and the students planned the design and production of these pens and learnt the skills to recycle these plastics and machine them in the workshop to produce a high-quality writing pen which is 100% unique and beautifully finished.

The students received recognition of this project by receiving two sustainability grants, one from NGS Super and another from Ku-ring-gai Council. The project also won a Keep Australia Beautiful – Young Legends Award and featured in Ku-ring-gai council's sustainability publications.

Weave ~ Giving Tree

Another opportunity for our families to contribute to the wider community at Christmas time was the Christmas Giving Tree event with the proceeds going to the organisation Weave. Weave is a Youth and Community Service organisation who run the Kool Kids program. The Kool Kids program works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are facing complex social issues such as poverty, family breakdown or systemic disadvantage. Throughout the last few weeks of Term, many of our school families contributed gifts to the Giving Tree and on Tuesday in our final week it was great to have a representative from Weave come and collect the gifts and also speak to our students about the Kool Kids program and where the gifts would be going. Thank you so much to all our students and families who contributed to this program.

Year 6 Celebration

On the last Friday of Term 4 we were able to celebrate with our Year 6 students and their families in their end of year assembly and also their celebration Dinner. We are so happy for all our Year 6 students, many of whom have been at Northside since commencing at the age of three.

We wish all our Year 6 students all the very best as they make the transition to high school, for many continuing at Northside for our Secondary School Adolescent program.

Retiring Staff

A significant event at the end of 2022 was that two of our long serving staff members retired. After many years of service to Northside, Edna Salvador our Kookaburra Directress, and Mary Abolins our PE teacher have decided that it is time for them to take a break and enter retirement.

Edna, the Kookaburra 3-6 class teacher, commenced at Northside in 2007 and served our community and countless number of students and families for 16 years. Being part of a school community for this period of time is certainly very valuable and demonstrates her commitment to both Montessori education and the Northside community.

Mary, who taught Physical Education to our students each week, commenced at Northside in 2004. Mary served our community for 19 years and has always sought to encourage our students to be active and enjoy sport and physical activity. Mary has made a significant contribution to the lives of many, many students during this time and has shown a great commitment to Northside.

As a community we will miss Edna and Mary. They are highly valued staff members, and their departure will be felt by many.

Garden Party

The culmination for 2022 was our end of year Garden Party. This was a lovely way for our whole school community to come together and celebrate the year that we have had at Northside in 2022.

At this time of the year it is always good to reflect on the past year and all the many events and activities that have occurred. We are certainly very fortunate to have such a wonderful community at Northside and we look forward to another exciting year in 2023.

Adam Scotney
Principal

THEME 2

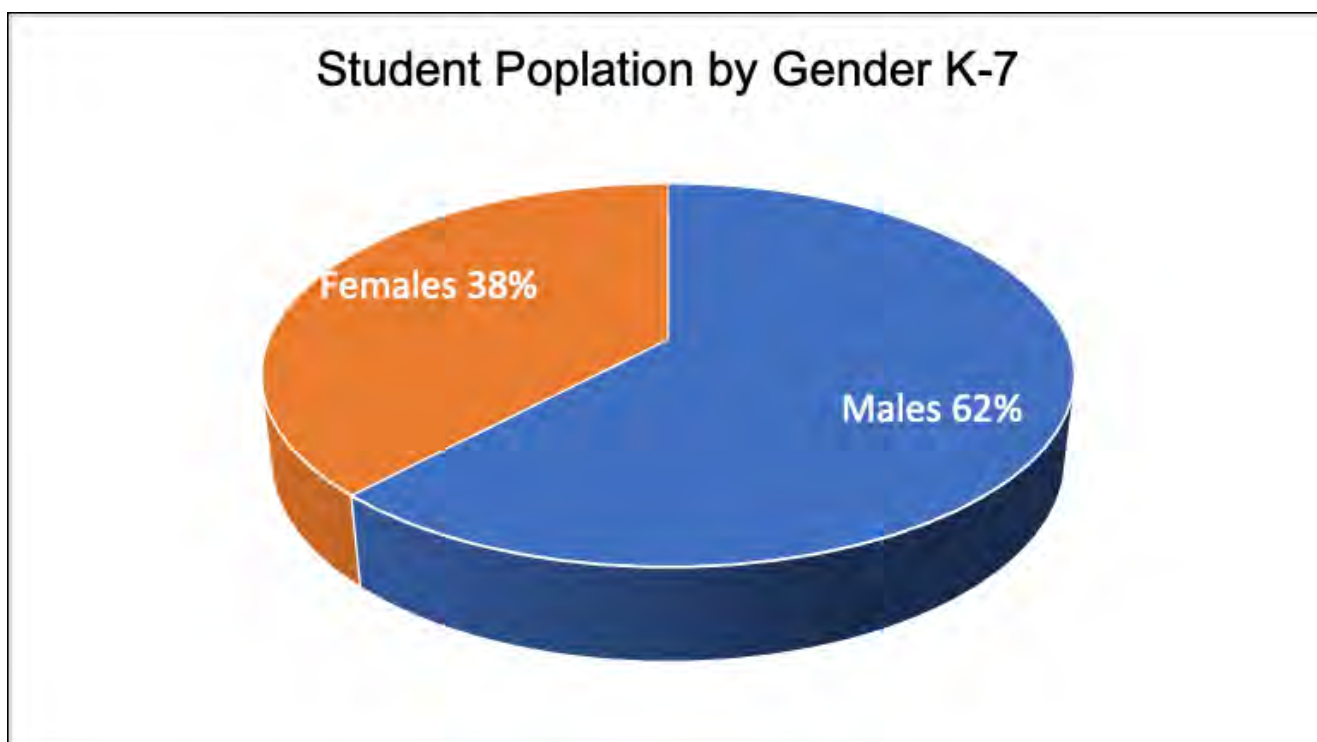
CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL & CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENT BODY

Northside Montessori School is a co-education Pre School, Primary School (K-6) and commenced Secondary School (Year 7) in 2022. Our school provides education underpinned by the philosophy of Dr Maria Montessori. Northside also fulfils the educational requirements of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA), and is Registered and Accredited for the RoSA.

All applications are processed in order of receipt and consideration is given to the applicants' support for the values and philosophy of the School, siblings already attending the School and other criteria determined by the School. Northside offers a 3-6 aged Pre-Primary / Kindergarten program 5 days per week. Which is preparation for the Montessori Primary program, split into 6-9 and 9-12 age group classes. Commencement at Primary (Cycle 2) is roughly equivalent to commencement in Year 1 of a traditional School.

Students entering our newly formed Secondary School program need to have completed their Primary schooling at either Northside, or a similar Montessori Primary School program.

In 2022 the total enrolments across the school were 127 students in primary and secondary K-7.



Boys 62 % (79)

Girls 38% (48)

Full-time equivalent enrolments: 127

THEME 3

STUDENT OUTCOMES IN STANDARDISED NATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY TESTING


In the Montessori School setting regular formal assessments of students such as written tests are not common place. Despite this, Northside Montessori students still participate in the national testing in Literacy and Numeracy that is available through NAPLAN. Our school has been undertaking NAPLAN Online since it commenced.

As a school we see that NAPLAN tests are one assessment tool which provides a snapshot of a child's ability in literacy and numeracy which can help us identify individual student's strengths and weaknesses; and in part serve to inform our teaching practices.

The small number of students sitting for the NAPLAN tests in Years 3, 5 and 7 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 significantly alter the statistical data which might lead to assumptions about either high or low performance that may not be a true reflection of the cohort.

While our school community recognises the need to undertake NAPLAN and uses the results to inform teaching practice, we also acknowledge that there are many other values in Montessori Education that are not measured by this tool. Attributes highly valued in Montessori Education such as creativity, critical thinking, resilience, motivation, persistence, curiosity, questioning, humour, endurance, reliability, enthusiasm, self-awareness, self-discipline, leadership, compassion, courage, sense of wonder, resourcefulness, spontaneity, humility or civic mindedness cannot be measured in this way. These qualities are globally valued and can be equally important to a child's future success. In the 2022 NAPLAN Assessment Northside had 88% participation.

The table identified the results for Year 3 and Year 5 students across the 5 areas of assessment. (Graph taken from <https://www.myschool.edu.au/>)

Compare to ☒ Students with similar background ☐ All Australian students 

	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Year 3	517	415	475	503	494
Year 5	562	502	559	581	540
Year 7	-	-	-	-	-

Interpreting the table

Selected school's average when compared to students with a similar background

- ☒ Well above
- ☐ Above
- ☐ Close to
- ☐ Below
- ☐ Well below
- ☐ No comparison available

THEME 5

TEACHER/STAFF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING, ACCREDITATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

During the 2022 school year, Northside continued to provide quality professional learning opportunities for staff in order to maintain continued improvement in the quality of teaching and learning standards across the school. Staff attend staff meetings, as well as undertook curriculum and pedagogically based Professional Development sessions.

Individual Professional Development was undertaken by staff with the aim of enhancing the teaching and learning outcomes and for their own 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 Teacher Accreditation.

Summary of conferences, workshops, seminars and training attended in 2022 by Northside Montessori Teaching and non-teaching staff, and Board Directors.

Description of Professional Learning Activity	No of Staff Participating
Allen's First Aid Refresher and CPR HLTAID001	25
AIS Governance Symposium	5
School Database Training	3
AIS Teachers MEA Workshop Part 1	3
AIS Teachers MEA Workshop Part 2	3
Montessori Governance Workshop	11
Montessori Schools and Centres Australia – Summit	4
Wormald Fire Training	25
Indigenous Cultural Training	22
AHISA Meeting / Forum	1
NSW Dept Of Education – Life Education Training	2
AIS The Art of the Possible Conference	1
Workshop – The Nature of the Adolescent	3
Montessori Combined Staff PD Day	22
Montessori Australia Conference – Thinking Differently	2
Youth Mental Health First Aid for Staff	24
Montessori Schools and Centres Australia – Grassroots Conference – Adelaide	1
Association of Montessori Internationale – Sydney Montessori Training centre – 3-6 Orientation	1
NESA Governance Workshop	1
Association of Montessori Internationale – Sydney Montessori Training centre – 12 – 18 Diploma	2

Description of Professional Learning Activity	No of Staff Participating
AIS SAO MEA Workshop Part 1	3
AIS SAO MEA Workshop Part 2	3
AIS Virtual Privacy Briefing	1
AIS Business Managers Forum	1
AIS School Governance Module Executive Supervision	1
AIS School Governance Module Risk Management	2
AIS Human Resources Breakfast Briefing	2
AIS Annual Briefing	2
AIS Supporting students with challenging behaviour	1

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

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.	16
Teachers having a bachelor's degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI- NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications.	0

TEACHER ACCREDITATION

Level of Accreditation	Number of Teachers
Conditional	0
Provisional	2
Proficient	13
Highly Accomplished Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
Lead Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
Total number of teachers	15



THEME 6

WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

SCHOOL STAFF

Teaching staff 15

Full-time equivalent teaching staff 12.1

Non-teaching staff 19

Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff 15.1



THEME 7

STUDENT ATTENDANCE, AND RETENTION RATES

Overall 87.5%

Boys 87.7

Girls 87.3%

Year K 89.6%

Year 1 87%

Year 2 89.9%

Year 3 88.2%

Year 4 87.8%

Year 5 91.1%

Year 6 88.9%

Year 7 89.9%

The attendance rates provided above cover each cohort for the entire school year. While our attendance rates are generally good, it is important to note that given our small cohort sizes, one or two students absent for a prolonged period can significantly impact how these rates appear.



MANAGEMENT OF NON-ATTENDANCE

At Northside Montessori School the regular attendance at school is considered to be vital in achieving the best possible learning outcomes. The School has developed the Student Attendance Policy and Guidelines which manages recording attendance and the manner in which non-attendance is dealt with.

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.

THEME 8

ENROLMENT POLICY

It is the policy of Northside Montessori School ("NMS") to have a fair and transparent Enrolment Process capable of attracting enrolments from families that support the Montessori Method in sufficient number for the viable and quality operation of the School. The School provides clear guidelines for the administrative staff in this area and the School Board delegates ultimate responsibility to the Principal for this process.

PURPOSE

Enrolment and orientation is an exciting and emotional time for children and families. It is important to manage this time with sensitivity and support, building partnerships between families and the School. Such partnerships enable the School and families to work toward the common goal of promoting consistent quality outcomes for individual children and the Service.

EQUIRED BY: Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Centre / School.

IMPLEMENTATION

Child Safety School statement

Northside Montessori School seeks to provide a child safe environment. Our school actively promotes the safety and wellbeing of our students, and our school staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in accordance with their legal and ethical obligations. Northside's policies and procedures around Safe and Supportive School Environments, and our staff code of conduct form part of this commitment.

Procedures

- Process all applications are processed within the School's enrolment policy.
- Consider each applicant's supporting statement/interview responses regarding their ability and willingness to support the School ethos.
- Consider each applicant's educational needs. To do this the School will gather information and consult with the parents/family and other relevant persons.
- Identify any strategies which need to be put in place to accommodate the applicant before a decision regarding the enrolment is made.
- Inform the applicant of the outcome.

Subject to availability, offers of place will be made according to whether there are siblings of the students already at the School, the order of application, and the suitability of the applicant.

Continuing enrolment is subject to the student and parent's adherence to school guidelines, policies and procedures. Detail can be found in the student's enrolment contract, the School's pastoral care and behavioral guidance policy & guidelines. The withdrawal of a student's enrolment will be considered if a family does not adhere to their instalment plan or fall behind in the payment of the tuition fees.

The above policies are presented to parents upon the letter of offer of enrolment and can then be found in the School's policy manuals available at each campus and the School office. This policy is publicly disclosed on the School's website.

Pre-primary - 3-6 program

To apply for admission to the School and to have the child considered for a current or future position at the school, a parent must complete an application and pay a non-refundable application fee. A parent would either prior to or soon after attend a school tour.

Selection criteria

The Principal offers places based on the following selection criteria:

- Sibling status (with conditions as set out further in the document).
- Indigenous or Torres Strait Islander children, at risk, or disability (preprimary).
- Currently enrolled at Northside Early Learning Centre
- Position on the waitlist.
- The age of the child when entered on the waitlist.
- Commitment to the 3-6 pre-primary program, 6-9, 9-12 primary educational programs and Adolescent Program 7-12
- Montessori overseas or interstate school transfer.
- Northside's Montessori Under 3s attendance
- Commitment of parents to the Montessori ethos.
- School must also comply with current regulations in regard to immunisation standards.

When all other factors are equal, the date of registration determines priority. However, the School retains the right to consider specific enrolments on an individual basis. Offers for older children are subject to availability and dependent on a successful interview and orientation period.

Once an offer of place is accepted parents are required to pay the Placement Fee as determined by the Board. This fee is refundable only upon completion of Year 6 at the school.

Primary 6-12

It is expected that all children in the 3-6 program will continue through to primary at Northside.

To apply for admission to the School in Primary or to have the child considered for a current or future position at the school, a parent must complete an application and pay a non-refundable application fee. A parent would either, prior to or soon after attend a school tour.

There is no application or fee required for children who are already enrolled in pre primary program at the School.

The School follows the standards as determined by the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Standards).

Selection criteria:

An offer of place is made based on the following criteria:

- Northside Montessori School pre-primary student priority.
- The child's readiness, both academically and psychologically.
- Sibling priority (please note that generally priority is only given if a sibling has completed pre-primary).
- Montessori overseas or interstate school transfer.
- Commitment of parents to the Montessori ethos.

Offers of place

Offers are made throughout the year prior to student commencing. Parents of children on the waitlist are required to attend an interview with the Principal before an offer of place is made. During the year places may become available and are offered to the next child on the waitlist.

Once an offer of place is accepted parents are required to pay the Placement Fee as determined by the Board. This fee is non-refundable, unless the child has commenced in the 3-6 section of the school.

Students from pre-primary transitioning to primary will be given a transition experience which involves three full day visits at the end of the term prior to commencing in primary.

Conditions of Acceptance:

First child entering the school

Offers of place must be accepted within 14 days by returning the Letter of Offer which lists the following conditions:

- A non-refundable placement fee* is payable on acceptance of the offer.

(*refundable is the child completes Year 6 and has commenced in 3-6)

- It is expected that the child will attend the School for the entire three-year pre-primary program OR entire nine-year program (pre-primary to primary). Withdrawing a child before the completion of the program may upset the child's educational development and disturb the balance in the class, creating a gap which is often impossible to fill.
- Parents agree to observe the School's policies and procedures.
- If parents have concerns about their child's readiness or the parents wish to change the start date the Enrolment Registrar must be notified at least 4 weeks prior to the start date.
- All students who are attending pre-primary and Kindergarten are to provide proof of immunisation before enrolment by submitting an approved immunisation form that shows that the student is:
 - fully immunised for their age, or
 - Has a medical reason to not be vaccinated, or
 - Is on a recognised catch-up schedule if the child has fallen behind with their immunisation.

- All students who are attending Primary school are to provide proof of immunisation before enrolment by submitting an approved immunisation form that shows that the student is:
 - Is fully immunised for their age;
 - Not fully immunised for their age; or
 - Has a medical reason to not be vaccinated, or
 - Is on a recognised catch-up schedule.
- There is a probationary period of one school term for the child and the School. If either the parents or the School considers that at the end of one term that the child should not continue at the School, the placement fee will be refunded.
- Parents intending to withdraw their child from the School are required to provide one full term's notice, in writing, to the Principal. Where one full term's notice is not provided, the parents will be charged a full-term fee in lieu of notice.
- In the event that circumstances change after acceptance of a place and the payment of the placement fee the School requires written notice of four full weeks excluding school holidays, of intention to relinquish the place. In this case the placement fee less, an administration fee of 50% of the total placement fee will be returned. If this notice is not received within this period, then the placement fee will not be returned. This provision provides some protection to the School against financial loss from non-starters and the subsequent revision of the class plan.
- Northside Montessori Society membership must be kept current for the duration of the child's attendance at the School. Non-compliance to membership could mean withdrawal of enrolment. Membership ensure voting at the School's AGM as per the School's constitution.
- Parents are requested to support and participate in the school community in a variety of ways and are encouraged to attend parent education evenings to deepen their knowledge of Montessori education at Northside Montessori School.

Siblings

Conditions of acceptance for siblings are similar to those for the first child. Siblings are given priority on enrolment.

Priority of Access

All preprimary enrolments endeavour to comply with the Priority of Access Guidelines issued by the NSW State Government for state funded preschools to ensure equity and consistency for the community. In no particular order, these are:

- Children who are at risk of harm
- Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander children
- Children from low income families
- Children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Children with disabilities
- Children in their year before school (with highest priority given to children closest to school entry).

Timing of Entry - Pre-Primary

The School follows the Montessori principle of staggered entry to enable maximum attention to be given to each new child in the class and to assist each child in adjusting to their new environment. Commencement dates in any one term are determined and notified by the Enrolment Registrar after places have been offered in collaboration with the Principal.

Timing of Entry - Primary

The child may transition to Primary by attending transition visits of the term prior to the term they commence, typically in Weeks 6,7 & 8. Primary families are encouraged to attend a meeting with the Primary teacher in addition to the Principal's interview.

Transfers

There is no automatic right to transfer between Montessori schools, but every attempt is made to offer a place to a transfer, subject to the enrolment criteria being met.

Once children have commenced in a class at the School, they will not be transferred to another class except in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Principal.

Confidentiality and Privacy

The School respects the privacy of the families and staff who make up the School community. It is the School policy to ensure that all information obtained by the School in relation to personal circumstances of children and their families will be kept confidential unless:

- The family concerned authorises disclosure of the information; or
- The School is obliged to disclose the information pursuant to health regulations or other Commonwealth, State or Local Government laws or regulations.

Fee Policy

Payment of Fees

Tuition fees are set annually for all children in the School, with discounts available for younger siblings.

Payment of fees is typically by direct debit in 10, monthly payments.

Invoices are sent to families in relation to fees.

Fees determined by School Board

School Fees are determined by the School Board, considering:

- Northside Montessori School's status as a non-profit organisation.
- Compliance with government funding and other regulatory requirements.
- The financial needs of the School.
- Application and enrolment levels.
- Other relevant criteria.

Notification of fees and conditions

School fees are reviewed annually and are subject to change.

The fees are all inclusive for excursions and camps. Occasionally additional payment is required for 'Going-Out's in the primary section of the school.

Bursary and Fee relief

The School Board have provided provisions for Bursaries and some financial assistance to families with Primary aged children.

Bursaries applications are sought at the end of each year, with determination of applications being made by the Bursary Committee prior to the end of the school year. Families are notified of their bursary status before the end of the year.

The Board have allocated additional funds to be used for short term financial support. Families who have concerns about fees should approach the Principal and the Principal will meet with the family to ascertain the family's financial situation. The Principal will consider the appropriateness of fee relief having regard to:

- The length and nature of the family's involvement with the School, including the degree to which the family participates in and supports the School community.
- The financial affairs of the family.
- The availability of funds remaining from the fee relief allocation
- Other relevant criteria.

Bursary arrangements are made for periods of 12 months only. Families are required to re-apply each year for bursary support.

All fee relief arrangements must be documented by way of a letter signed by the Principal. Fee relief can only be granted by the principal for a period of no more than 6 months.



THEME 9

OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

Student Welfare and Child protection

Northside Montessori School takes the welfare of students very seriously and as such have policies and procedures that guide the school in meeting its obligations in the area of Child protection.

Our child protection policy states that:

The safety, protection and well-being of all students are of fundamental importance to the Northside Montessori School.

All staff and the School have a range of different obligations relating to the safety, protection and welfare of students including:

- a) a duty of care to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent harm to students;
- b) obligations under child protection legislation; and
- c) obligations under work health and safety legislation.

The purpose of this Policy is to summarise the obligations imposed by child protection legislation on the School and on employees, contractors and volunteers (collectively referred to in this Policy as employees unless the context requires otherwise) at the School and to provide guidelines as to how the School will deal with certain matters.

Child protection is a community responsibility.

The School's policy on Child Protection clearly details the responsibility that the school has in the areas of Mandatory reporting obligations, The identification and reporting of reportable conduct and the requirements for all employees to have clearance in the area of Working With Children Checks.

Complete copies of this policy is available for download at northsidemontessori.nsw.edu.au or from the School Office.



THEME 9

OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying is anti-social behaviour that can affect anyone. It is unacceptable at Northside Montessori School because every student has the right to a safe, caring and supportive school environment.

The aim of the Policy is to ensure that Northside Montessori School is a supportive and safe environment. Every member of the Northside Montessori Community has the right to feel safe and protected. They also have the right to experience positive and respectful relationships between all members of the school community. The promotion of this environment is the responsibility of all members of the Northside community. Adults in this community need to be especially aware of their behaviour, as they are the role models for our children. By empowering members of our community, we hope to achieve a safe learning environment that respects and values individual differences.

This policy applies to interactions between:

- Child to child
- Parent to parent
- Parents to child
- Staff member to parent
- Parent to staff member
- Board to parent etc.

Details of the full Policy are available from the School Office



THEME 9

OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

Discipline Policy

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 precept of the supportive triangle, an integral part of the school's Montessori philosophy.

The School prohibits the use of corporal punishment in disciplining students attending the school. Such punishment has no place in the consequences for negative behaviours or breaches of the School's behaviour expectations of children.

Details of the full Policy are available from the School Office

Complaints Management Policy

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 to participate, if required, in the Appeals Process.

Details of the full Policy are available from the School Office

THEME 1 0

SCHOOL DETERMINED PRIORITY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

In 2020 the school commenced implementation of the 2020 - 2024 Northside Montessori Society Strategic Plan. The structure of this Strategic Plan follows five Strategic Pillars which form the basis of the plan. Since this time these pillars have shaped the determined priority areas for improvement within our school. The five pillars are as follows:

- **School Environment** - To ensure that we continue to develop the environment of the school and early learning centre in a planned and sustainable way which meets the needs of the community and provide for growth.
- **Student Wellbeing** - To ensure that the child is at the centre of what we do and to promote the physical and mental well-being of all students in our care.
- **Teaching and Learning** - To maintain a Montessori approach to teaching and learning that provides authentic opportunities for students and supports staff in their ongoing professional development.
- **Leadership & Governance** - To promote engagement with the school community to ensure a healthy and active Board, and to maintain and support quality school leadership with a focus on ensuring the ethos and vision of the school and early learning centre are maintained.
- **Community** - To ensure a high level of engagement with parents and the community to promote growth and active participation and support at the school and early learning centre; promoting the value of Montessori education.

Reporting on identified priorities for 2022

Throughout 2022 we continued to work at addressing the key objectives within our school strategic plan. Progress has been achieved in the following areas:

School Environment	
To ensure that we continue to develop the environment of the school and early learning centre in a planned and sustainable way which meets the needs of the community and provides for growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of the Adolescent Space and high school program. This includes the completion of Science and technology facilities. - DA planning and submission for 3 additional classrooms and increased student numbers.

Student Wellbeing	
To ensure that the child is at the centre of what we do and to promote the physical and mental well-being of all students in our care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff undertaking Mental Health first Aid training to equip staff to better assist students. - Maintain educational programs for student's well-being e.g., Health Harold, Protective Behaviours, Interrelate - Provide a diverse range of co-curricular opportunities.

Teaching and Learning	
To maintain a Montessori approach to teaching and learning that provides authentic opportunities for students and supports staff in their ongoing professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to employ Montessori qualified staff. - Support all existing staff, at both NMS and NMELC, to undertake Montessori training at a range of levels. - Financially support High School educators in undertaking AMI 12-18 Montessori training. - Continue to provide staff with PD opportunities for NESA and other requirements. - Actively promoting and celebrate our students learning and opportunities within the Community e.g., via Chronicle, Newsletters, end of year productions - Initiate and host Professional Development for Montessori Educators in Sydney. - Access to training opportunities through membership with MSCA, AISNSW and MA. - Continue to assist staff with their NESA maintenance of accreditation.

Leadership & Governance	
To promote engagement with the school community to ensure a healthy and active Board, and to maintain and support quality school leadership with a focus on ensuring the ethos and vision of the school and early learning centre are maintained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote opportunity on the Board based on the skills of current parent community. - Ensure Executives are up to date on all governance, compliance, and procedures in accordance with regulations, guidelines, best practices. - Ensure Board member maintain their required PD. - Adhering to Society delegation authority, financial management practices and be held accountable. - Provide and host Governance PD workshop for Montessori Boards across Sydney.

Community	
To ensure a high level of engagement with parents and the community to promote growth and active participation and support at the school and early learning centre; promoting the value of Montessori education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Further strengthen the operation of the P&C, Class Parents, School Support Hours program. - Continue providing Parent Education events across all sections of the community. - Continue to promote Montessori education in the local community. - Provide students with community engagement via planned events and going outs e.g. debating, MMUN, excursions, incursions, etc. - Provide parents with opportunities to participate in classroom life. - Promote strong collaboration with other Montessori schools.



THEME 1 1

INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

Northside Montessori School desires that all students recognise that they are valuable and important 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, and the uniqueness of every individual are actively encouraged and promoted through the day to day interactions and activities across the school.

Students from the age of 3 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.

Respect and Responsibility are promoted in various ways, both directly and indirectly across the Montessori Environment.

Multi-age grouping

All classes are made up of three ages, 0-3, 3-6, 6-9 and 9-12. The latter two encompassing the majority of Primary school. In this setting the younger students look up to the older students, older students help the younger students. This can take the form of helping with work, navigating the school environment or assisting with the expectations or goals.

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 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

THEME 1 2

PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

Parent Satisfaction

A key feature of Northside Montessori School is to involve families in the education of their children. Across the school parent involvement across a range of areas is strong and the nature of Montessori education suggests that parents desire to have a significant level of involvement in their child's education and nurture. Parents participate in the life in a variety of ways :

- Class Parents
- Education Events
- Mother's Day and Father's Day breakfasts
- Parent and Community Committee
- Working Bees
- Tuckshop Day
- Excursions and Incursions
- Gardening and Premises projects
- Caring for animals (and babysitting them in holidays)
- School Board Membership
- Cooking or Craft workshops with children

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

The school has ongoing communication with parents and invites parents to regularly observe within the classroom during class time. Other forms of communication are through parent teacher interviews which are held regularly throughout the year. Parents are a key feature of our school's focus on community engagement and staff communicate via, letters, phone calls, emails and an open door policy encourages parent involvement in the school. Staff are frequently available for regular conversations with parents.

Student Satisfaction

Positive attendance levels and engagement within the classroom suggest that the children enjoy coming to school and that our parents value and support learning at Northside Montessori School. Our students generally would rather be at school than on extended holiday periods.

The school operates a number of programs 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. These programs also allow children with the opportunity to voice their opinions and a strong sense of satisfaction and happiness are obvious responses by the children.

Staff Satisfaction

Within the Montessori community there is a strong connection which exists between staff which is based on the commitment to this method of education. Northside staff are extremely dedicated providing a wealth of positive learning experiences for the students in a supportive and nurturing environment. The classroom assistants provide a vital support to the classroom operations. Consistently over the past 5 years the school has grown and staffing has increased over this period with high retention of existing staff. In 2022, we had two long standing staff members retire after more than 15 years service each. Other staff who left the school in 2022, one member of the teaching staff and one support staff member. Staff feel supported and participate actively in the life of the school as part of the Northside Community.

THEME 1 3

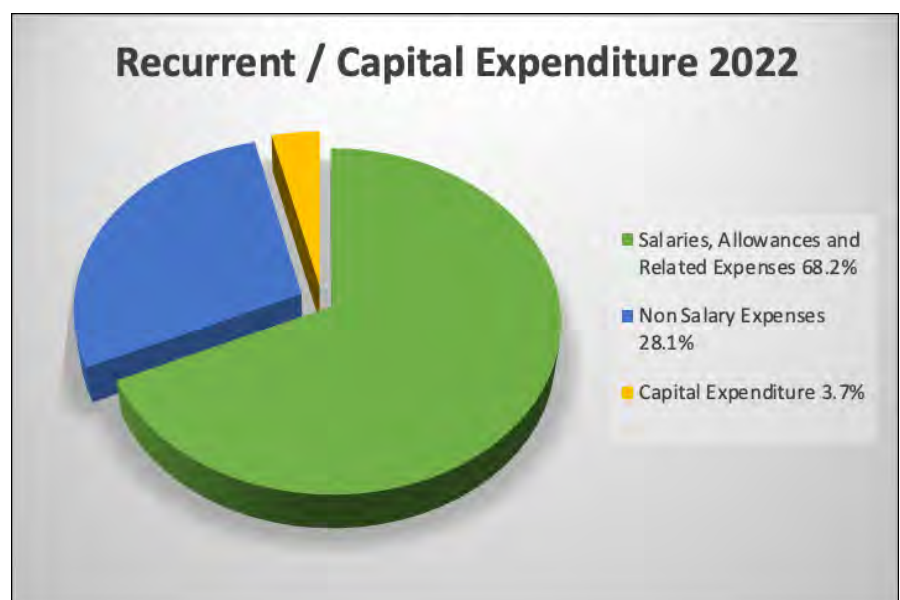
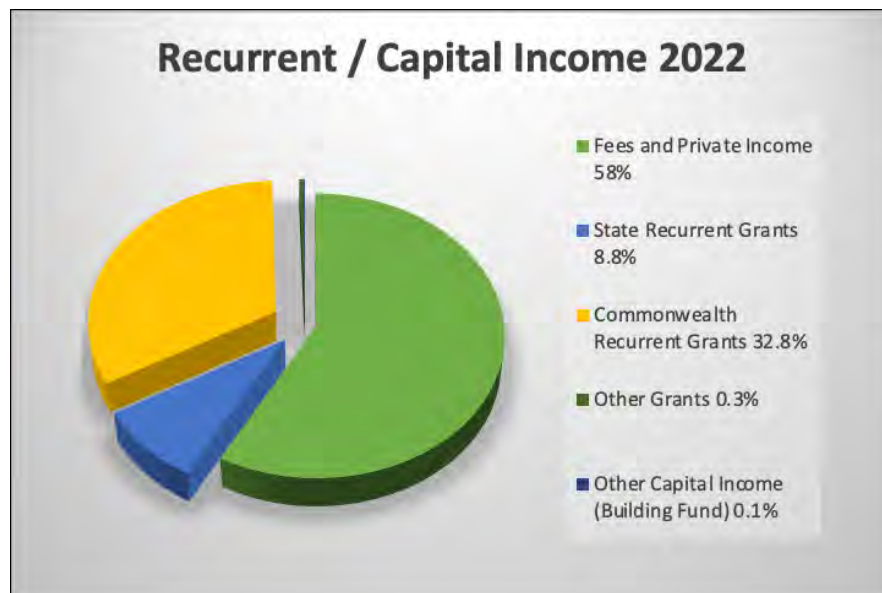
SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

In 2022, our income streams remained strong, reflective of our growth in student numbers at the School campus in Pymble.

Funding received for the year, from the Commonwealth Government and State Government, totaled \$1.108 million, representing 41% of total income. This is based on the Federal Government's new funding model and the schools Capacity to Contribute score of 115.

Our most significant expenditure is employee expenses representing 55% of total expenditure (including capital expenditure). Increases in salary and on-costs were in accordance with the applicable Multi-Enterprise Agreements 2021. Overhead costs remained within budget and overall working capital was strong.

The major capital projects and improvements completed during 2022 included the continued LED lighting replacement program, much needed installation of flood minimisation drainage works, upgrade of primary classroom furniture, continued investment in the infrastructure for the Adolescent Program, replacement of desktop student computers and upgrade to the schools security system.





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