



2023 Annual Report

Northside Montessori Society
acknowledges Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander peoples as
the traditional custodians of our
land – Australia.

The School acknowledges the
Durrumurragal People as the
traditional custodians of this place
we now call the Ku-ring-gai area.

Northside Montessori School

42-46 Bobbin Head Road,

Pymble, NSW, 2073

Phone 9144 2835

admin@northsidemontessori.nsw.edu.au



Theme 1 - Context

Northside Montessori Society has been established for over 45 years and operates Northside Montessori School in Pymble. The Northside School operates Toddler (age 18 mths – 2 ½ yrs), Transition (age 2-3yrs), Pre-primary (age 3-6, Pre School & Kindergarten), Primary (Years 1-6) and a growing Secondary (Years 7-12) school (in 2023 Years 7 & 8).

Our school is very community orientated and we seek to partner with families to provide a safe and nurturing environment where children can be supported as lifelong learners guided using Montessori approaches.

Our school delivers the NSW Educational Standards Authority (NESA) K-10 Curriculum, and is a candidate school for the IB Diploma in Years 11 & 12. In our pre school we also deliver the outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework. We also offer before and after school (OOSH) services as well as Vacation Care.

At Northside opportunities for students and high-quality education go well beyond the mainstream curriculum.

Montessori education is highly sought after and is implemented in thousands of schools and pre-schools in more than 110 countries for over 100 years.

Montessori is a revolutionary method of education that captivates and entices children to be engaged in their learning.

Northside Montessori

Message from our Board Chair

Dear Members of the School Community,

It is with great pleasure that I present to you an update on the progress of our school over the course of the past year.

Throughout this period, our school has remained focused in its pursuit of excellence, particularly in laying the groundwork for the establishment of the high school program. Our endeavours last year have been primarily directed towards the establishment of the year 9 & 10 curriculum, while concurrently laying the necessary foundations for the implementation of the International Baccalaureate (IB) program.

Last year significant strides were made with the approval from the Council to expand our student capacity and embark on capital improvement projects aimed at enhancing our infrastructure. The Board has taken decisive action to initiate these projects, with construction planned to commence imminently and anticipated to span a duration of approximately 16 to 18 months.

Financially, our school remains in a robust position, with enrolments showing a steady and healthy increase across various age groups. This growth is a testament to the appeal of our authentic Montessori pedagogy, both within our immediate school community and to families outside our school. Furthermore, the divestment of the property situated at 196 Bobbin Head Road has bolstered our financial standing.

In this regard, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to our Principal, Adam Scotney, and his Executive team for their exemplary stewardship of the school, coupled with their instrumental role in implementing key initiatives. Additionally, I extend gratitude to our dedicated educators whose commitment to providing high-quality education and learning opportunities has been consistent, as well as our administrative staff whose diligence ensures the seamless operation of our school.

I would also like to acknowledge the unwavering commitment, support, and diligence demonstrated by my esteemed fellow directors throughout the year. As we reflect on the past year, it is with a sense of gratitude that we bid farewell to director Vince Scappatura, whose eight years of dedicated service have greatly contributed to the advancement of our school.

Looking ahead, we remain resolute in our commitment to pursuing our strategic objectives and anticipate another year of progress and achievement.

Felipe Garcia Garcia
Board Chair

Message from School Principal

Northside Montessori School had another busy and exciting year in 2023. Our active and vibrant Montessori learning community continued to thrive during the past 12 months. As always our year began with our Parent Welcome Event in Term 1 and the theme for the event was 'Disco'. This event was attended by the whole school community and was a great way to begin the year and welcome many new families to our school community.

Across the many areas of our school students participated in a range of events and activities along with their many regular classroom activities. As part of the desire to work collaboratively with the number of other authentic Montessori Schools in the Sydney area, a highlight of Term 2 was the combined 'North of the Bridge Montessori Athletics Carnival'. On this occasion, students from Barrenjoey Montessori, Central Coast Montessori, Farmhouse Montessori, Forestville Montessori and Northside Montessori schools participated in this wonderful event at Bannockburn Oval in Pymble. The cooperation and participation of students and parents throughout the day was exceptional, and this was an excellent day of fun and physical activity for all involved.

Another exciting development in the life of Northside has been the establishment of our Montessori Secondary School program. In 2023 we had the second year of this newly established High School Adolescent Program, and we are so pleased to have Year 7 and Year 8 students in the program. We had 16 students, 6 Year 8 and 10 Year 7 students in the program in 2023 and we are looking forward to the continued growth of the program in the coming years. During the year our year 7 and 8 students participated in a variety of significant and exciting activities some of which included a camp to Crookwell, near Goulburn, and also in Term 3 a combined Year 7 & 8 trip to New Zealand where students explored the interactions between colonisers and indigenous people of New Zealand, the many and varied geographical landforms in this country and also made connections with the staff and students of Wa Ora Montessori School in Lower Hutt, North of Wellington.



Throughout 2023 we continued with our planning for the needs of our growing school in the coming years. We have seen continued steady growth across the school with good retention of students from our Pre-Primary programs into the Primary School. We have also seen a growing interest in the development of our Secondary School program which will be limited to students who have completed a Montessori primary school education. As part of our planning the school had submitted and received DA Approval for a first floor addition to an existing building providing 3 new classrooms, bathrooms, larger library space, refurbished play spaces and additional car parking. This work is set to commence in 2024.

In preparation for these works, in 2023 the school made improvements to the north side of our school premises, with the addition of covered walkways between buildings, new outdoor play spaces with shade covering and enhanced garden areas.

The school ended 2023 with very strong enrolments and significant interest in our Adolescent program. The school's firm commitment to Montessori education continues to be a hallmark of Northside Montessori School. With AMI trained educators across the school, and a commitment to continue providing training to staff across the school ensures that we have staff with the school's vision in mind. As part of this commitment, we are excited that two of our Secondary staff completed their 12-18 AMI Training at the end of 2023.

We thank our whole school community for such a wonderful year in 2023. We value greatly the continued partnership that exists between the school and parents to ensuring that Northside Montessori School continues to be able to provide the best Montessori education for our students.

Adam Scotney
Principal





Characteristics of the Student Body

In 2023 Northside offered a 3-6 aged Pre-Primary kindergarten program 5 days per week, Montessori Primary program, split into 6-99 (Years 1,2 & 3) and 99-12 (Years 4,5 & 6) age group classes. In the second year of our Adolescent High School program we offered courses in Year 7 & 8. In 2023 the total enrolments across the school were 144 students. There were 73 Students in Pre-Primary (Pre School - 51, kindergarten - 22), 106 students in Primary Years 1-6 and 16 students in Secondary, Years 7 & 8.

Enrolments K-8 :- 144

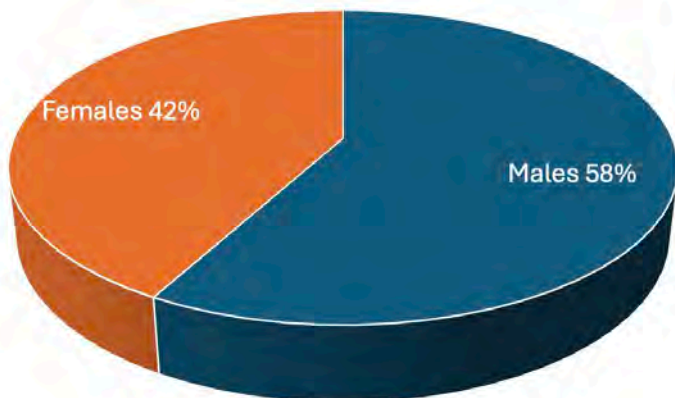


"The child gives us a beautiful lesson – that in order to form and maintain our intelligence, we must use our hands. "

(Maria Montessori,
The 1946 London Lectures)

Enrolments K-8 :- 144

Student Population by Gender K-8



Boys 58% (84)

Girls 42% (60)

Full-time equivalent enrolments: 144

"An education capable of saving humanity is no small undertaking; it involves the spiritual development of humankind, the enhancement of their value as an individual, and the preparation of young people to understand the times in which they live."

(Maria Montessori Education and Peace))



Theme 2 – Outcomes and Results

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.

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.

For a detailed overview of the results for students in NAPLAN at Northside you view that on the MySchool website www.myschool.edu.au/school/43856/naplan/results





Theme 3 - Staffing

Teacher Accreditation

Level of Accreditation	Number of Teachers
Conditional	2
Provisional	2
Proficient	12
Highly Accomplished Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
Lead Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
Total number of teachers	16

Workforce Composition

School Staff

NESA Accredited Teaching staff - 16

Early Childhood Educators (Cert III or Diploma) - 55

Non-teaching Classroom Support - 4

Administration Staff - 10

Full-time equivalent NESA Accredited Teaching staff - 12.7

Full-time equivalent all non-teaching staff including

Administration - 16.5

At Northside we embrace all faiths and backgrounds for all our staff and students. None of our staff members have identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, however, we strongly encourage applications from First Nations teacher and other staff.

Theme 4 - Attendance

Overall average attendance 990.6%%

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. The 2023 overall attendance rate of 990.6% is an increase from the 2022 attendance rate of 87.5%. Average attendance over the past years has been 91.8%. %

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 deal with.

Summary

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.

UUnexplained 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.

Overall	90.6%
Boys	90.6%
Girls	90.6%
Year K	92.7%
Year 1	91.3%
Year 2	92%
Year 3	93.2%
Year 4	92%
Year 5	87.1%
Year 6	90.4%
Year 7	90.4%
Year 8	90.8%

Where unsatisfactory school attendance is identified, the attendance issue and any action taken are recorded, as appropriate.

UUnexplained 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. UUnexplained absence notifications are communicated 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.



Theme 5 – School Policies

The following school policies are publicly available on the school website or via the links below.

- Child Protection Policy
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Discipline Policy
- Complaints and Grievances Policy
- Enrolment Policy



"We shall walk together on this path of life, for all things are a part of the universe, and are connected with each other to form one whole unity. "

(Maria Montessori, To Educate the Human Potential)

Theme 6 - Stakeholder 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. Parents who choose Montessori education for their children typically desire to have a significant level of involvement in their child's education and nurture. Ways in which parents participate in the life of the school are through engagement or involvement in:

- Class Parents
- Education Events
- Mother's Day and Father's Day breakfasts
- Fundraising events
- Working Bees
- Parent and Community Committee
- Tuckshop
- Excursions and Incursions
- Gardening and garden projects
- Caring for animals (and babysitting them in holidays)
- Board membership
- Cooking or Craft workshops with children
- Many other events.

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

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 across the school encourages parent involvement in the school. Staff are frequently available for quick conversations with parents. Parents are regularly invited to do observations in their children's classroom which is a point of difference for Montessori education.



Theme 6 - Stakeholder Satisfaction

Student Satisfaction

Positive 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!

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 provides students with the opportunity to voice their opinions and their strong sense of satisfaction and happiness are obvious through the responses by the students.

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 to the Montessori method of education and have expertise in facilitating the learning experiences of the children in a supportive and nurturing environment. 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.

Northside has a very low turnover of staff, with no staff leaving throughout 2023. At the end of 2022 we had two long serving staff members who had both been with the school for 10-20 years retire. We have also recruited 2 new staff members for the commencement of 2024 in our growing High School program.

The stability of staff at the school is a strong indicator of a high level of satisfaction with the school and the method of education being delivered across the school.



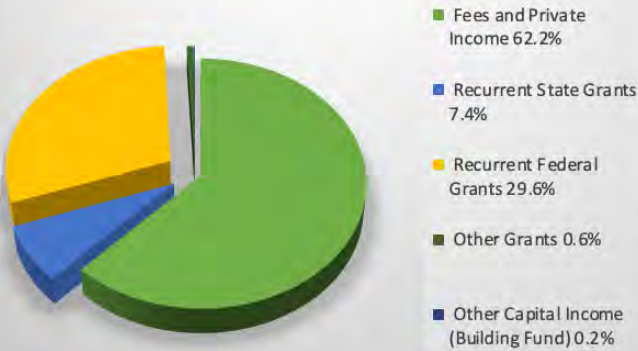
Theme 7 – Summary Financial Information

In 2023, our income streams remained strong, reflective of our growth in student numbers at the School. Funding received for the year from both the Commonwealth Government and State Government, totalled \$1.44 million, representing 37% of total income. This is based on the Federal Government’s funding model and the schools Capacity to Contribute score of 117.

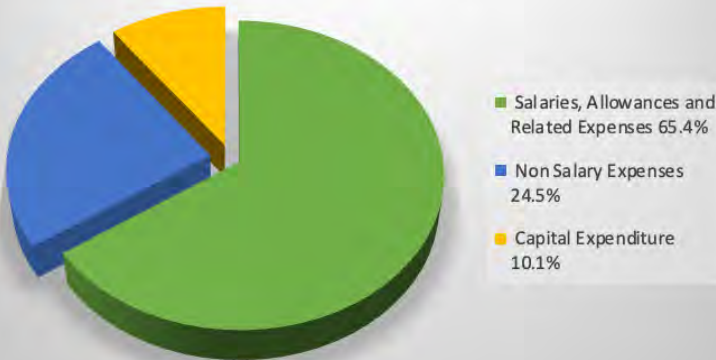
Our most significant expenditure is employee expenses representing 65% of total expenditure (including capital expenditure). Increases in salary and on-costs were in accordance with the applicable Multi-Enterprise Agreements 2021. Overhead costs remained within budget and overall working capital was strong.

The major capital projects and improvements completed during 2023 included the continued LED lights replacement program, the installation of two new chilled water fountains, upgrade of a primary classroom and the construction of covered walkways at the front of the school allowing children and families to move more easily around the campus in all weather conditions.

Recurrent / Capital Income 2023



Recurrent / Capital Expenditure 2023





northside

MONTESSORI SCHOOL

EARLY LEARNING PRIMARY SECONDARY

Contact us

Northside Montessori School

42-46 Bobbin Head Road,

Pymble, NSW, 2073

Phone 9144 2835

admin@northsidemontessori.nsw.edu.au

