



**CANBERRA
MONTESSORI**
SCHOOL

2020 **ANNUAL REPORT**





Contents

04	School Context, Vision,	05	Message from School Board	06	Message from Principal
08	Student Information	10	Staff Information	12	School Satisfaction
13	Learning & Assessment	15	Financial Information		



“The first aim of the prepared environment is, as far as it is possible, to render the growing child independent of the adult.”

~ Maria Montessori





SCHOOL CONTEXT

The Canberra Montessori Society Inc (CMS) was formed in 1980 by a group of parents interested in providing Montessori education in Canberra. In 1981, the society established the Canberra Montessori School, to meet the immediate demands for Montessori education. The Canberra Montessori School now operates five Cycle 1 classrooms, for children aged 3 to 6 years.

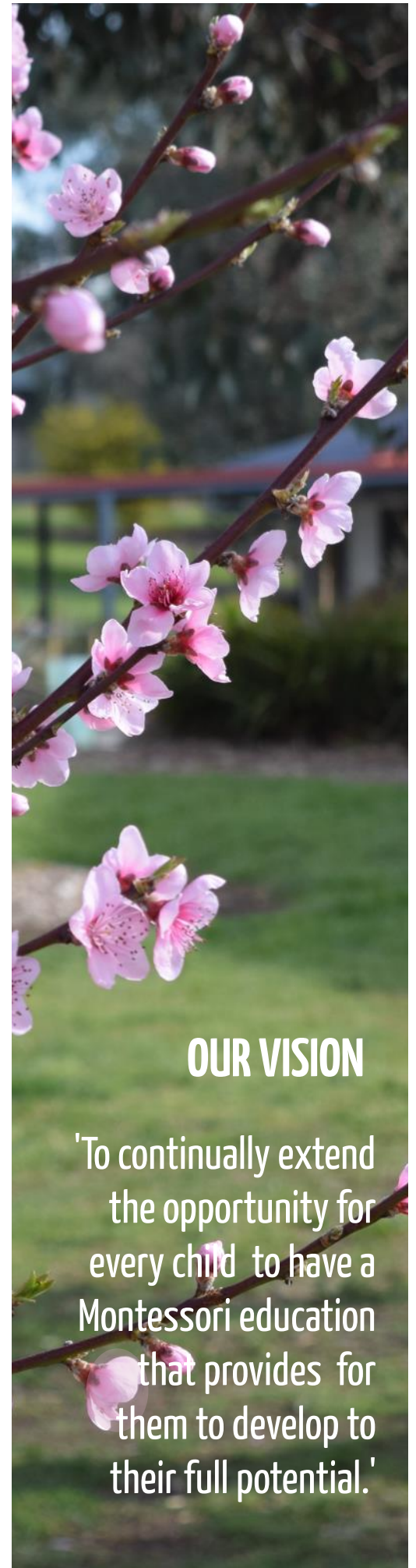
In 1995, it was decided that the time was right to begin work on the development of a Montessori Primary School in Canberra. A Primary School Subcommittee consisting of CMS parents, representatives from the Yarralumla Government Montessori Preschool and from the Independent Montessori Association was created. In 1996, a Primary class for children aged 6-9 began at the School's Yarralumla campus.

In 2003 the school built its own premises at Holder and now operates an additional two Cycle 2 (6-9 years) classrooms and one Cycle 3 (9-12 years) classroom.

CMS also runs a Parent Toddler Program, under 3s sessions for children aged 18 months to 3 years. Led by a trained Montessori Director, the under 3s environment was established for parents to attend with their child and learn about the Montessori philosophy first hand. In addition, in 2019, CMS opened a Montessori Long Day Care Centre, which currently has 6 month waiting list.

OUR VISION

'To continually extend the opportunity for every child to have a Montessori education that provides for them to develop to their full potential.'





MESSAGE FROM SCHOOL BOARD

Dear Members

It would be remiss of the Board not to recognise that 2020 was a year like no other in the history of the School and that the world has collectively run out of adjectives to describe it. I want to pay tribute to the work undertaken by all the School's staff throughout the year, and highlight their resilience in responding to the unique challenges of delivering an authentic Montessori learning experience remotely. The collaboration of parents in ensuring that their children were supported in the home environment was also key to the individual and collective success of the School's students. The Principal provides further background on those activities throughout this Annual Report. The Board thanks Rael for his leadership throughout 2020, and his clear articulation of the School's growth trajectory in 2021 and beyond.

The Board is pleased to see a renewed sense of community with parents continuing to feel confident in choosing Canberra Montessori School as a safe and enriching learning environment for their children, as evidenced by enrolments and the results of the School Satisfaction Survey. The ongoing commitment of families to the School, despite challenging personal circumstances in many cases, is a testament to the School's achievements over the last year.

Martin Drinkwater
CMS Board Chair
Canberra Montessori Society





MESSAGE FROM PRINCIPAL

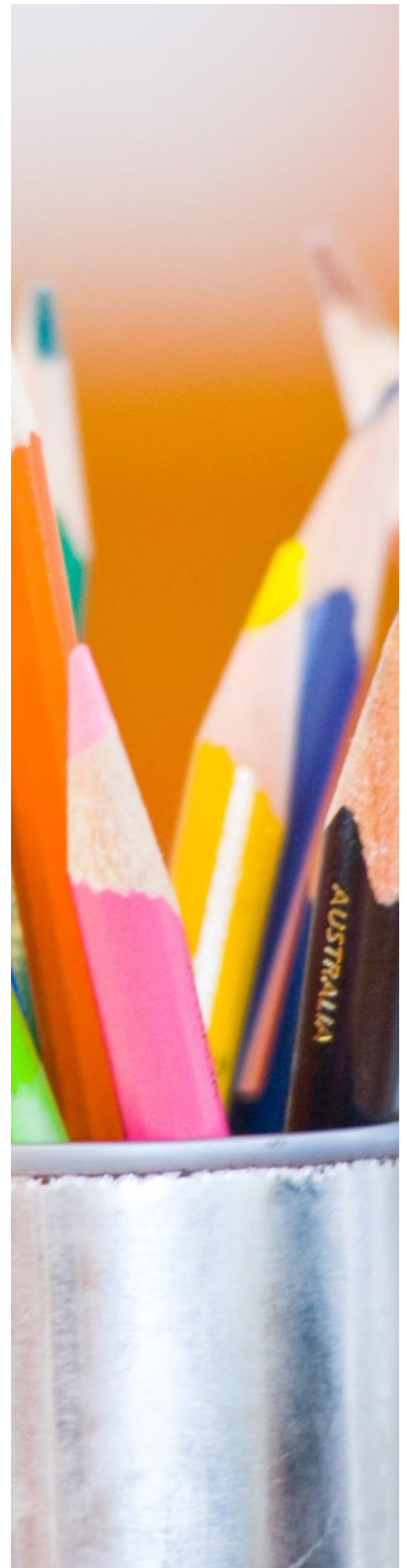
This time last year, I began by writing about the ability to handle challenges as a measure of strength of character; little did we know about what the future had in store...

2020 presented us with uncertainty and challenges that we could almost never have imagined. After navigating a summer of smoke and a bushfire on our doorstep, it was then required that we search our reserves of resilience to levels we'd maybe not previously needed. Seemingly continuous scenario planning and adjustments for an ever-changing situation tested us all. Despite all of this, as a community, I am immensely proud of how we came together (whilst remaining apart!) and supported each other in caring for one another, and in providing the best for our children.

We perceived and developed a platform and materials for learning at home, we adjusted and responded to the regular advice and directives, and we modified the school environment to ensure that all were safe and well once we were back. Our entire staff worked tirelessly in adjusting endlessly to an ever changing situation in conditions that could never be expected. I commend them all for their professionalism, adaptability, and for their immense efforts for our children and families throughout the year.

We continue the work of ensuring long term financial stability for the school, and 2020 provided another test on that journey. Whilst being mindful with our expenditure, investment in the improvement and sustainability of our outdoor environment and grounds will see it best meet the needs of our children into the future, with ongoing work through 2021 and beyond. It goes without saying that the consistent quality of our teaching and learning is our absolute priority in maximising outcomes for every child. Increased, ongoing, targeted professional development for all staff is imperative, alongside some undertaking new, or additional, Montessori training with an eye on staffing sustainability into the future.

It has been pleasing to see our Cycle 2 student numbers grow, leading to an increased Cycle 3 class size in the next 12 months all being well. This growth brings with it the possibility of also increasing staff numbers in these areas, assisting us in meeting the needs of all children. Snowgum provides a steady flow of children into Cycle 1, and with a healthy influx





MESSAGE FROM PRINCIPAL cont/...

and waitlist, alongside PTP, we can now consider ourselves a school from 18 months to 12 years.

The growth of an active and nurturing school community is so important for CMS. Ongoing parent education and information is one element vital to that, and to have seen the development of our Parents and Friends' Association in supporting this, through such challenging times, is nothing short of incredible, and is so healthy for our school and community. The P&F committee have worked diligently in supporting us all, and I will be eternally thankful for their efforts.

I would just like to end by saying thank you, and acknowledging every single member of our school community, for supporting each other through the past year.

Rael Matthews
Principal, CMS

“We must help the child to act for himself, will for himself, think for himself; this is the art of those who aspire to serve the spirit.”

~ Maria Montessori



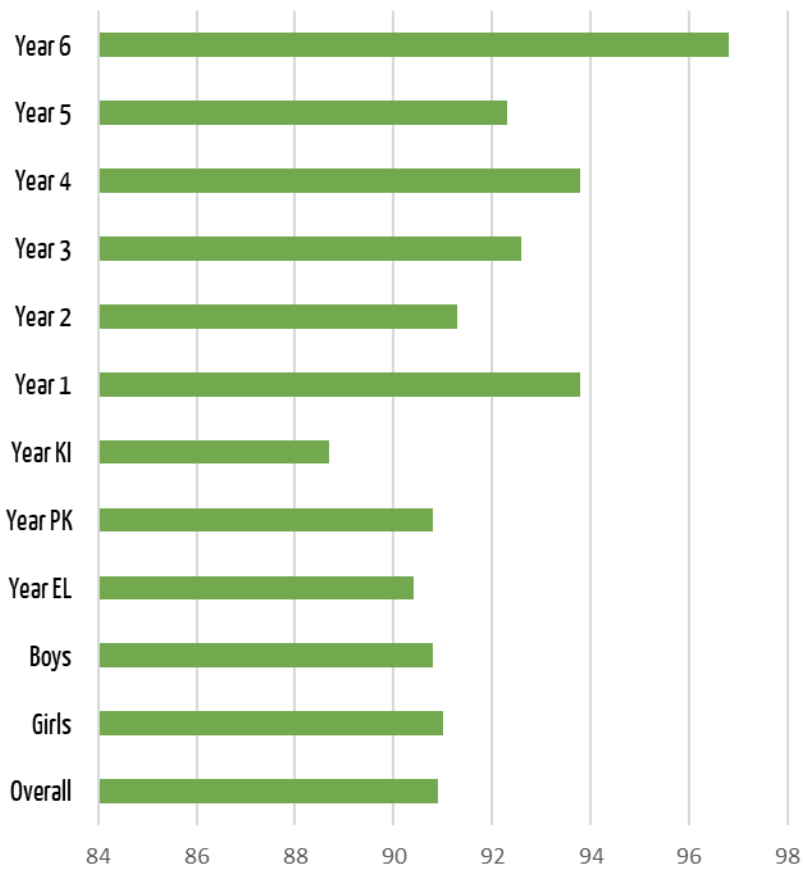
STUDENT INFORMATION

Student Type	Number of Students
Male	73
Female	65
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	1
LBOTE*	20

Data collected at the point of annual Census

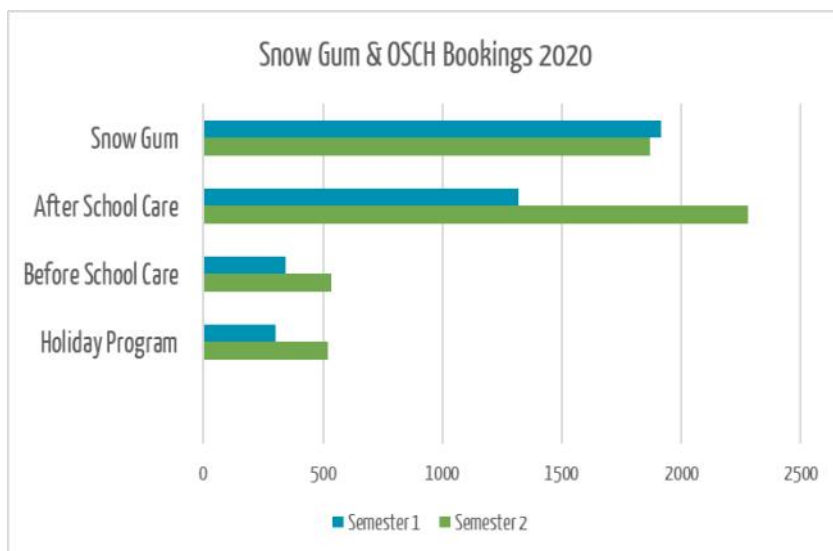
* Language Background Other Than English

% Attendance Summary by Year





STUDENT INFORMATION cont/...



“Free the child’s
potential, and you
will transform him
into the world.”
~ Maria Montessori



STAFF INFORMATION

Teacher qualifications

As well as their Montessori Qualifications, all Classroom Directors at CMS meet the professional requirements for teaching in an ACT school. The ACT Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) specifies two main types of provision for teachers at different stages of their career, these are detailed below:

Full registration - teachers with experience working in a registered school in Australia or New Zealand who have been assessed as meeting the Proficient level of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.
Provisional registration - newly qualified teachers or teachers who do not have recent experience teaching in a school in Australia and New Zealand.

All staff working directly with children at CMS possess the required legal qualifications and either possess or are working towards recognised Montessori qualifications, or have participated in Montessori professional development. All CMS educators receive ongoing professional development within school, and from external providers.

Workforce composition

Workforce composition for the reporting period is provided in the table below. The data is taken from the school's verified staffing report for the August Census. For reporting purposes, it incorporates all school staff including, staff absent for a period of less than four consecutive weeks and staff replacing staff absent for more than four consecutive weeks. It does not include any casual staff or staff absent for a period of four consecutive weeks or longer.

Type	Gender	ALL STAFF		Indigenous	
		Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE
Principal	Male	1	1	-	-
Directors	Male	2	2	-	-
	Female	9	8.3	-	-
Snow Gum	Female	8		-	-
OSHC	Female	3		-	-
Building Operations	Female	1	0.3	-	-
Assistants & Administrative	Female	11	7.9	-	-
TOTAL		35	19.5	-	-



"We teachers can only help the work going on, as servants wait upon a master."

~ Maria Montessori



STAFF INFORMATION cont/...

Professional Development completed by staff in 2020

Christine Lowry workshop - teaching students with additional needs

Montessori Principles to Practice

AMI 6-12 Orientation Course

Internal observation and professional development

Australian Institute of Management workshops

Music Viva professional development

Montessori Maths workshop - Montessori Institute

AIS ACT Learning Support Workshops

Child Protection Training

Internal Pedagogy Workshops

Handcraft - Work of Wool Workshop

Musically Montessori

Dealing with Difficult Behaviours

Teaching Dyslexic Children

AMI 6-12 Montessori Training

AMI Montessori Sports Course

Leading Coaching and Mentoring Workshop

Leading with Emotional Intelligence

Be You workshops

AIS ACT Wellbeing Ambassador Training

“With man, the life
of the body depends
on the life of the
spirit.”

~ Maria Montessori



SCHOOL SATISFACTION

Schools use a range of evidence to gain an understanding of the satisfaction levels of their community. Annually in August/September, we undertake a survey to gain an understanding of school satisfaction at that time. This information is collected from parents through an online survey.

Overall Satisfaction

In this reporting period, 92% of parents and carers indicated their overall satisfaction with Canberra Montessori School. The following table shows the percentage of parents and carers who agreed with each of these opinion items at this school. A total of 36 parents and carers responded to the survey. Please note that not all responders answered every question.

Satisfaction Survey Opinion Item	%*
My child/ren enjoy(s) going to school	97
My child/ren feel(s) safe at school	97
My child is making good progress at this school	91
The school meets the educational needs of the students	89
The school meets the social needs of the students	94
The school helps my child/ren deal with anxious emotions	89
Student behaviour is well managed at this school	75
Staff know and appreciate my child/ren's qualities	97
Staff show courtesy and respect for the students	100
The school expects high quality work of the students	72
I am informed about my child's progress	89
I can talk to my child's teachers about my concerns	94
I trust the staff at this school to make the right decisions for my child	94
The school works with me to support my child's learning	94
The school is an excellent learning environment	97
The school has a positive public image	67
The school looks for ways to improve	89

Data derived from annual CMS School Satisfaction Survey

*percentage of parent respondents





LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

A school's primary purpose is education. It is important to know concretely, where children are achieving, where their strengths lie and areas where there is room for future development. As a Montessori school, we are in a unique position compared to others, as we do not regularly record grades in tests, homework, or daily work. This doesn't mean, however, that we don't assess children's learning on a daily basis. Canberra Montessori School uses several methods of assessing student learning. These include Transparent Classroom, observations, semi-annual reporting, and from 2020, annual diagnostic testing.

Transparent Classroom

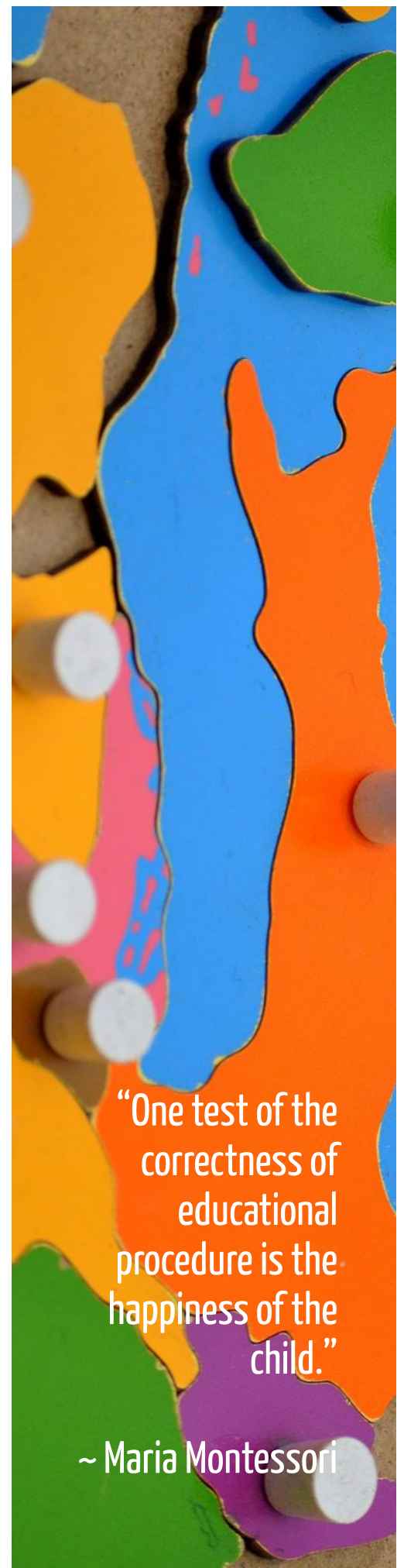
Transparent Classroom is the electronic planning and record keeping platform that we have been using school-wide since the beginning of 2020. It allows teachers to plan lessons across the whole range of Montessori Curriculum, for all children, quickly and easily. It includes a range of reporting features which demonstrate, for example, how many presentations and observations each student has completed over a period of time. Transparent Classroom has simplified report writing, giving parents an overview of exactly what work their children are doing as well as commentary on a child's work habits and social development.

Observation

As a scientific pedagogy, Montessori education requires prolonged observation of the children by the director. Director's observations include work practiced and completed, the quality of the work, social interactions, and children's interests. Observation informs the pace and sequence of lesson progression and is critical in planning interventions relating to social interactions and other deviations. After lessons and other modifications are delivered to the children, directors reflect and evaluate their effectiveness and use these reflections to inform subsequent development.

Diagnostic Testing

The second half of 2020 has seen CMS commence literacy and numeracy diagnostic testing of all school-aged children, using the ACER Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT). This allows us to analyse data, and to understand exactly where children are achieving, and in which areas they might require additional focus, assistance, or possible intervention. It also serves as a mechanism to be used by the school to measure student progress and growth over time. This data is evaluated at an individual, year grade, and



“One test of the correctness of educational procedure is the happiness of the child.”

~ Maria Montessori



LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT cont/...

whole school level to inform judgements about student outcomes, and to inform practice and areas for professional growth.

Support for Additional Needs

In addition, it is important that we ensure that children with additional needs are fully supported. Over the course of 2020, we further developed our student welfare and learning support processes to ensure all children are supported in their learning, that we are meeting their individual needs and working to maximise outcomes.

For some children, a part of this process will be the development of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). An ILP is a working document that includes agreed, specific goals for a child and the interventions and adjustments to be put in place to support the achievement of those goals. Sometimes an ILP will be brief and the adjustments minor. In other cases, depending on need, an ILP and level of intervention may need to be more extensive to appropriately support a child. We feel very strongly that this should be an ongoing, working partnership between families, the school, and any external support agencies as necessary.

We have teachers who are undertaking Professional Development in assisting children with Dyslexia and we have been working closely with external providers to assist children in maximising their outcomes.

NAPLAN

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, NAPLAN testing across Australia was cancelled this year. However, past scores can be found here: <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/49991>

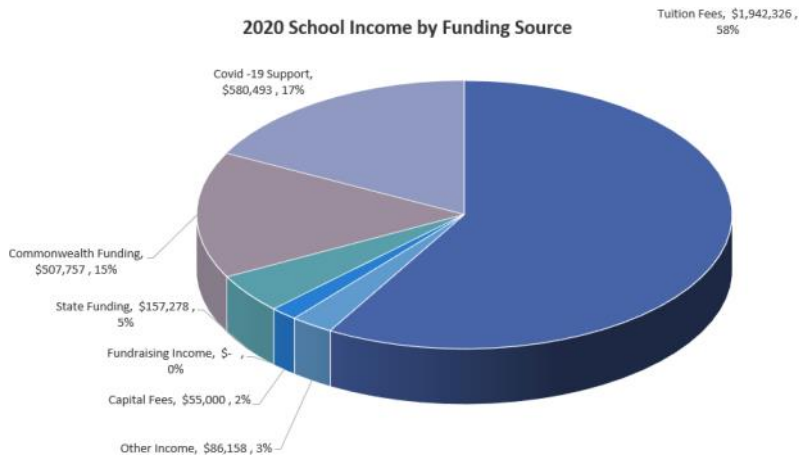
“The best instruction is that which uses the least words sufficient for the task.”

~ Maria Montessori



FINANCIAL INFORMATION

2020 School Income by Funding Source



2020 Recurrent/Capital Expenditure

