
Annual Report

2024

Canberra Montessori School

Canberra Montessori Society

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Canberra Montessori School is a member of the Association of Independent Schools of ACT (AISACT) and NSW (AISNSW), Montessori Australia, Montessori Schools and Centres Australia (MSCA) and accredited by Montessori Quality Assurance Program (MQAP).

*It is not that man must
develop in order to work,
but that man must work in
order to develop.*

Maria Montessori.



Our Montessori Journey

Our Philosophy

At Canberra Montessori, we follow Maria Montessori's principles—respect for the child, a prepared environment, and hands-on learning. Our classrooms balance structure and freedom, allowing children to explore at their own pace while guided by thoughtful educators. This approach fosters independence, confidence, and a lifelong love of learning.

Our Vision

We empower children to become self-directed learners, compassionate individuals, and engaged members of their community. Through a nurturing environment and Montessori principles, we inspire curiosity, responsibility, and a deep connection to learning—preparing children to shape a better future.

Our Values and Their Montessori Foundations

At the heart of our school community are the values of **Respect**, **Curiosity**, and **Connectedness**. These were thoughtfully chosen because they reflect both who we are and what we aspire to nurture in every child, family, and staff member. Each value aligns deeply with the Montessori philosophy, which guides our approach to education and personal growth.

Respect

Rooted in the Montessori principle of honouring the individuality and potential of each child, we embrace respect as a cornerstone of our community. We foster an environment where kindness, empathy, and a sense of responsibility for others and the environment are lived daily—reflecting Maria Montessori's belief in peace education and the dignity of the child.

Curiosity

Montessori education is built on the idea that children are naturally curious and capable learners. We value curiosity because it fuels the intrinsic motivation to explore, discover, and think creatively. In our classrooms, we provide rich, hands-on experiences that allow children to follow their interests and develop a lifelong love of learning.

Connectedness

Dr. Montessori believed education must not only prepare the child for school, but for life. We cultivate connectedness by encouraging meaningful relationships—with oneself, with others, and with the broader world. Through this, children gain a strong sense of belonging, purpose, and social responsibility.



LETTER FROM

The Board Chair

It has been another gratifying year to represent the Canberra Montessori Society on the Board of the school and to have served as the Board Chair.

Maria Montessori once said, “These sensitive periods are of great importance and education must facilitate this opportunity which is inherent in the child. Education must prepare an environment that will aid the development of life.” This guiding principle has been at the heart of our Society since its inception. As we look ahead, we are more committed than ever to providing an environment where every child has the opportunity to grow, learn, and explore their potential.

It is both an honour and a privilege to witness the society and school continue to flourish, built on the foundation of Dr Montessori's vision, and designed to cultivate the promise and hope that each child represents. Our journey is far from over, and we remain focused on building and expanding this legacy for future generations, ensuring that every child can achieve their fullest potential.

Thank you to Halima Khurram and the team for working with the board to develop a 10-year Master Plan to set out this future path. Members may have seen some of the preparatory work during 2024 and this will continue through 2025 and beyond.

Thank you to Halima and all of the Directors, Assistants and other support staff across the school, in their attention to educational outcomes of the students. This coupled with a strong financial performance places us in a strong position to sustainably and purposefully grow.

To all of the volunteers on the Parents & Friends Association, led by Anastasia Money West, thank you for your time and support bringing people together.

In relation to Board Members, I would like to thank the efforts and support of Sean West Money, Katrina March, Marion Mcewin, Michael Skinner and Ziad Zakout. Thank you to each of these individuals for the time, consideration, thoughtfulness in their contributions on the society's board.

It continues to be gratifying to see the society go from strength to strength in all areas and a deeper focus continuing on process improvement and investing in better practice and outcomes. As we continue to build on the legacy of Maria Montessori, we remain steadfast in our commitment to nurturing the potential of every child, ensuring that our society thrives and flourishes for generations to come.

Tim Bourke

Board Chair

LETTER FROM

The Principal

As I enter my third year as Principal at Canberra Montessori School and reflect on my 23-year journey in Montessori education, I am deeply appreciative of how our school continues to evolve. Every year brings new challenges and opportunities, and I am constantly inspired by the passion and commitment of our educators, staff, and families. Together, we create an environment where children develop confidence, independence, and a love for learning.

In 2024, we laid the foundation for our Strategic Plan for 2024-2029, setting a clear direction for our school's future. As we take steps toward these goals, I reflect on all that has already been achieved, even in the face of challenges. But I also find myself asking, "Are we there yet?" Growth is never a final destination—it is a continuous journey of reflection, adaptation, and refinement. While we have made great strides, we remain committed to evolving our approach to best serve the needs of our children.

2023 was about stability, ensuring that we had strong foundations in place. 2024 has been about strength—building on those foundations, seeing the impact of our collective efforts, and reaffirming our commitment to authentic Montessori education. Challenges are inevitable, but the true success of our work is seen in the joy and confidence of the children, as they explore, discover, and take ownership of their learning.

Our Infant Community and Cycle 1 children continue to amaze us with their independence and problem-solving skills. Their excitement when they proudly exclaim, "I did it!" is a reminder of how a prepared environment nurtures confidence from the very beginning. In Cycle 2 and Cycle 3, students demonstrated leadership and creativity by running Montessori Market stalls, showcasing their entrepreneurial mindset. These hands-on experiences not only reinforce key life skills—financial literacy, teamwork, and creative thinking—but also empower children to become active contributors within their community.

A key highlight of this year has been our commitment to professional development. In Montessori education, we believe learning is a lifelong journey—not just for students, but for educators as well. This year, our team actively participated in training programs, with some educators stepping into leadership roles by sharing their knowledge with national and global audiences. Their dedication to growth ensures that Canberra Montessori School remains a leader in delivering high-quality Montessori education. To all our educators—thank you. Your passion and commitment continue to shape the future of our school and the children in our care.

As we look to the future, I am excited for the journey ahead. Our vision for the next five years is clear, and I look forward to working alongside our staff, students, and families to continue building a strong, connected, and thriving Montessori community.

With gratitude and enthusiasm for what's to come,

Halima
Principal, Canberra Montessori School



Achievements for 2024

In 2024, Canberra Montessori School continued to grow, evolve, and strengthen its commitment to delivering high-quality Montessori education. Through thoughtful planning, collaboration, and a shared vision for the future, we successfully implemented several key initiatives that will benefit our children, staff, and broader community.

A Vision for the Future: Strategic and Master Planning

In collaboration with the School Board, CMS community, and stakeholders, we successfully developed a five-year strategic plan that reflects our school's commitment to excellence in Montessori education.

We secured a grant to develop a ten-year master plan, aligning with our strategic vision. This master plan envisions more classrooms, the introduction of a high school, an extension of the administration building, a Montessori training room, and a multi-purpose hall.

To begin implementing this master plan, we successfully applied for funding to build a new Cycle 3 classroom, ensuring that Montessori education remains accessible to families committed to this philosophy.

A Learning Environment that Inspires

We refurbished all classrooms, installing new wooden floors, fresh paint, and new Montessori materials. The learning environment now reflects an even greater sense of beauty, order, and harmony.

In the true spirit of Montessori generosity, we sent our older Montessori materials to the Montessori Australia Foundation, where they were refurbished and donated to communities in need, supporting Montessori education globally.

Investing in Our Staff

Two staff members embarked on further professional development by joining the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) training in Sydney.

All Infant Community Assistants completed the AMI Assistant Orientation Course, ensuring a strong foundation in supporting the youngest members of our community.

Enhancing Safety and Compliance

We installed electric blinds in every environment, improving compliance and safety for children, particularly in emergency or lockdown situations.

All staff received new Apple laptops and iPads with data privacy and compliance measures in place.

We transitioned from old server-based systems to a secure cloud-based platform managed by ALLIT, using Microsoft iCloud for greater efficiency, security, and futureproofing. This shift has significantly enhanced teachers' ability to maintain records, conduct observations, and streamline administrative tasks.

Community and Connection

We hosted 15 successful whole-school events, with a notable increase in attendance, strengthening our school community.

We reopened our Parent-Toddler Program, now led by a trained Montessori Director. This Saturday program has been met with enthusiasm, with a strong waiting list reflecting its success and demand.

Sustainability and Innovation

Building upon our solar panel installation in 2023, we upgraded all indoor and outdoor lighting to energy-saving options, further committing to environmental responsibility and sustainability.

Each of these achievements reflects our dedication to nurturing independence, fostering curiosity, and preparing children for a future of lifelong learning. We are grateful to our community—students, staff, and families—who make this journey possible. As we move forward, we remain committed to upholding the Montessori philosophy, evolving our learning spaces, and ensuring every child has access to an authentic Montessori experience.



School Team

Staff Head Count (Full-time and part-time staff) <i>Staff figures at 2024 Commonwealth Census Date</i>	
Teaching staff	9
Childcare & Classroom support	23
Administration staff	6
Total	38

Staff Retention

Average years of service:	4 Years
Maximum years of service:	20 years

Staff Qualifications

PhD:	1	Bachelor's Degree:	5
Master's Degree:	3	Diplomas and Others:	20
Graduate	3		

All teachers are registered with the Teacher Quality Institute ACT

All assistants are either Montessori qualified or participating in Montessori professional development.

All staff members hold a Working With Vulnerable Persons registration



Professional Development

First Aid

Child Safe Program (ACT)

Work Health & Safety

Privacy Program – Schools

Student Duty of Care: General Principals

I'm Alert Food Safety Training

Linking EYLF To Montessori

Musica Aviva – Game Day

Montessori Movement in a Preschool Classroom

Montessori Art in a Preschool Classroom

MMPI – Understanding Interventions in a Montessori setting

Navigating Autism in Early Years

Be You – Emotional Regulation

Biodiversity – The Ripple Effect

MSL Introduction and Implementation in the classroom

Tricky conversation with parents with additional needs

Physical Education for Body and Brain

Positive Discipline

Champion Oral Language in Schools Using Science of Learning

Planning for Well-Being: Mine, Yours, Ours

AMI Montessori 0-3 Diploma

AMI Montessori Adolescent course



Student Profile

	Attendance Rate	Student Numbers*
Infant Community		55
Early Learning	86.8%	29
Preschool	90.4%	29
Kindergarten	90.6%	17
Year 1	89.4%	17
Year 2	90.0%	17
Year 3	94.0%	11
Year 4	88.9%	9
Year 5	96.5%	5
Year 6	87.3%	10
Overall	89.5%	199

**Enrolment figures at 2024 Commonwealth Census Date*

Attendance and Absence Management

Canberra Montessori School maintains a digital attendance register in line with legislative requirements under the Education Act and National Quality Standards. Attendance is recorded by teachers each morning via our school management system.

Late arrivals (after 8:45 AM) must be signed in at Reception. A pink slip is issued and provided to the teacher to ensure accurate record keeping and minimal classroom disruption.

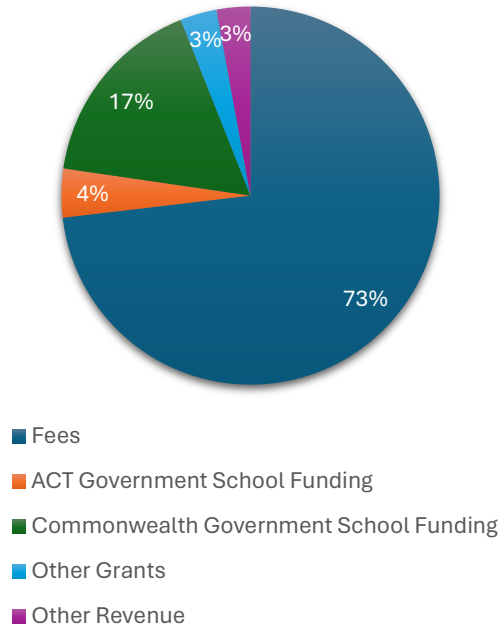
Parents and carers are required to notify the School of all absences, providing the date, time, and reason. If an explanation is not received, the School sends an SMS to confirm the child's safety and the reason for absence.

Regular attendance is critical for student wellbeing and learning. Patterns of frequent lateness or absence are discussed with families and referred to the Principal when necessary. Where appropriate, the School may recommend additional support services to promote consistent attendance.

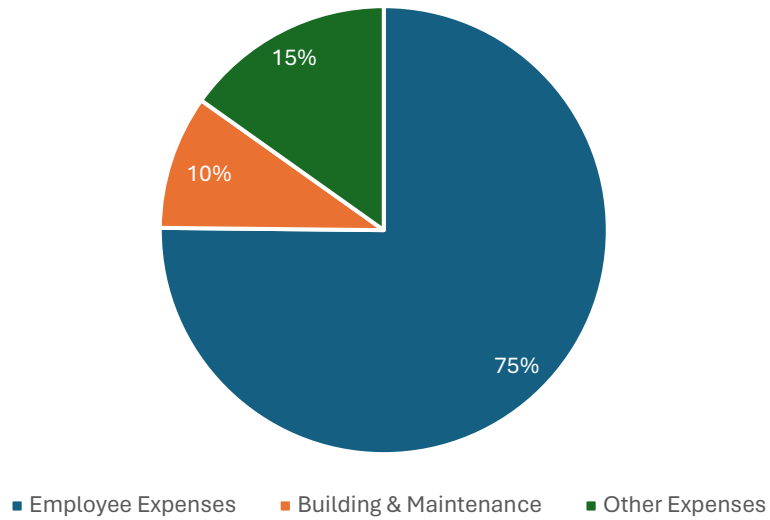


Financial Information

2024 Revenue



2024 Expenditure



Canberra

Montessori

School

2025
