
Annual Report

2025

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).

The aim of education should
be to activate the child's
own natural desire to learn.

— Maria Montessori, *The Absorbent Mind* (1949)



Our Montessori Journey

Our Philosophy

We believe that each child is individual, unique and important, and has the right to develop holistically to their full potential.

We believe that parents and families are a child's first teachers.

We believe teachers to be our school's most valuable resource.

We believe that our school is a valuable community resource.

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.



Handwritten notes in a notebook, including the name "Keesha" and other illegible text.



Handwritten math problems on a grid notebook page:

92	49	01
23	72	31
12	63	31

11	58	94
13	89	4
32	67	0

2	5	89
13	89	4
32	67	0

Numbers 1

LETTER FROM

The Board Chair

As we reflect on another year at Canberra Montessori School, it is important to recognise that the strength of our school lies in its people. I would like to acknowledge and thank our Principal, Halima Khurram, and the leadership team, along with our dedicated educators, support staff, families, and volunteers who contribute so much to the life of our school. Most importantly, we thank our students, whose curiosity, enthusiasm, and growth remind us every day of the importance of the work we do.

The Board continues to focus on supporting a strong culture across the school community — one where children are able to learn and thrive, staff feel supported in their work, and families feel welcomed and connected to the life of the school. Over the past year we have continued working closely with the leadership team to support the long-term vision for Canberra Montessori School, including progress toward the school's Master Plan and the development of additional Cycle 3 learning spaces. These initiatives help ensure that the school remains well positioned to grow sustainably while continuing to deliver authentic Montessori education for future generations.

After five years of service as Board Chair, I will be stepping down from this role. It has been an honour to serve the Canberra Montessori School community in this capacity and to work alongside such committed staff, families, and fellow Board members. I am pleased to remain involved as a member of the Board and look forward to continuing to support the school in this capacity. I am also delighted to welcome Katarina March as the new Board Chair. Katarina has been a valued member of the Board and I am confident that her leadership will guide the school strongly into its next chapter.

On behalf of the Board, I thank everyone who contributes to the Canberra Montessori School community. Your ongoing support ensures that the school remains a place where children are nurtured, challenged, and inspired. We look forward with optimism to the continued growth and success of the school in the years ahead.

Tim Bourke

Board Chair, Canberra Montessori Society

LETTER FROM

The Principal

As I reflect on the past year at Canberra Montessori School, I feel a deep sense of gratitude for the strength of our community and the continued commitment of our educators, families, and Board. Each year presents new opportunities to grow, refine our practice, and strengthen the Montessori environment we provide for children. Throughout 2025, our focus has remained on creating a learning environment where children feel confident, capable, and inspired to take ownership of their learning. It is always a joy to witness the independence, curiosity, and pride children experience when they realise, often with great excitement, “I did it!” Moments like these continue to remind us why the Montessori approach is so powerful.

Across all cycles, our students have engaged in rich learning experiences that extend beyond the classroom. Cultural celebrations, hands-on projects, cooking and gardening activities, and cross-cycle collaborations have strengthened both learning and community connections within the school. These experiences help children develop not only academic understanding, but also important life skills such as collaboration, responsibility, creativity, and respect for others. At the heart of everything we do is our commitment to nurturing a calm and joyful learning environment — a place where children feel safe, valued, and empowered to explore the world around them.

This year has also marked encouraging progress toward implementing our long-term Master Plan. Work has begun around the development of additional Cycle 3 classrooms, an important step in supporting the growing needs of our upper primary students and ensuring they can continue their Montessori journey in a thoughtfully prepared environment. Expanding our Cycle 3 learning spaces will allow us to further support older students as they build independence, leadership, and deeper academic engagement.

Family partnerships remain a cornerstone of the work we do at Canberra Montessori School. The warmth, openness, and shared commitment of our community continue to strengthen the learning experience for our children. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our educators, staff, families, and the CMS Board for their ongoing support and dedication. Together we continue to shape a school where children thrive, kindness matters, and every step forward — big or small — is celebrated.

Halima Khurram

Principal, Canberra Montessori School



Achievements for 2025

In 2025, Canberra Montessori School continued to build on the strong foundations established in previous years, strengthening both the physical learning environment and the professional capacity of our staff. Through careful planning, ongoing investment in resources, and the continued support of the School Board and our community, several important initiatives were successfully implemented to enhance the Montessori experience for our children and families.

A Vision for the Future: Strategic and Master Planning

This year marked an important step in implementing the school's long-term Master Plan. Construction commenced on the new Cycle 3 classroom, expanding opportunities for upper primary students to continue their Montessori education within a thoughtfully prepared environment that supports independence, leadership, and deeper academic engagement.

In addition, the school successfully secured further grant funding to support the development of additional Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 classrooms. These developments will ensure that Canberra Montessori School can continue to meet the growing demand for authentic Montessori education while supporting the long-term sustainability of the school.

A Learning Environment that Inspires

Significant improvements were made to the school's physical learning environment during 2025. The Toddler Community playground was upgraded and redesigned to better support the developmental needs of our youngest learners, creating a safer and more engaging outdoor learning space.

The school also upgraded the parent bathroom facilities, including the installation of a fully accessible bathroom to ensure our facilities are inclusive and welcoming for all members of our community.

Within classrooms, kitchen facilities were upgraded across the environments, allowing children and educators greater opportunities to engage in practical life activities such as food preparation and cooking. These experiences form an important part of Montessori education, supporting the development of independence, coordination, and life skills.

To further improve comfort and sustainability across the school, new heating and cooling systems were installed in every classroom environment, allowing the school to transition away from gas-based systems. This upgrade provides a more efficient and environmentally responsible solution while ensuring children and staff can work comfortably throughout the year.

The school also invested significantly in expanding and refreshing Montessori learning materials across the classrooms, ensuring children continue to have access to high-quality hands-on materials that support exploration, concentration, and deeper learning.

Investing in Our Staff

Our staff remain one of the greatest strengths of Canberra Montessori School. In 2025, two staff members successfully completed their AMI Montessori Diplomas, further strengthening the depth of Montessori expertise within our school community. An additional four staff members commenced their Montessori Diploma training, reflecting the school's ongoing commitment to professional development and authentic Montessori practice.

The school also maintained a strong staff retention rate of approximately 92%, with only three staff members leaving from a team of thirty-eight. This stability supports continuity for children and families and contributes to the strong collaborative culture within the school.

In recognition of her long-standing contribution to Montessori education, our Principal was nominated for the Montessori Living Legend Recognition Award 2025, a national acknowledgement celebrating individuals who have made significant contributions to Montessori education across Australasia.

Enhancing Safety and Compliance

Throughout the year, the school continued to strengthen operational systems and procedures to ensure a safe and well-managed environment for children and staff. Infrastructure improvements, ongoing policy reviews, and professional development supported the school in maintaining strong compliance with regulatory requirements.

The school also undertook significant preparation in anticipation of the upcoming Assessment and Rating visit, ensuring documentation, policies, and practices continue to align with the National Quality Framework and best practice standards in early childhood education.

Community and Connection

Maintaining strong partnerships with families continues to be central to the Montessori philosophy. In 2025, Canberra Montessori School strengthened community engagement through school events, parent education opportunities, and collaborative initiatives that bring families together.

A parent satisfaction survey conducted during the year reflected very positive feedback, with 97% of families reporting satisfaction with the school's overall performance. This strong level of satisfaction reflects the dedication of our educators and the supportive relationships that exist between the school and families.

The school also experienced continued enrolment growth, demonstrating the strong demand for authentic Montessori education within the Canberra community. Several community working bees and campus improvement initiatives were held throughout the year, with parents and staff working together to enhance the school environment.

Across classrooms, children benefited from cross-cycle collaborations and leadership opportunities, where older students supported younger peers and engaged in shared projects. These experiences strengthen the sense of community within the school and foster responsibility, cooperation, and mentorship among students.

Sustainability and Innovation

The school continues to explore ways to operate responsibly and sustainably while maintaining beautiful and functional learning environments. The transition away from gas heating toward more energy-efficient heating and cooling systems, alongside ongoing investments in infrastructure and materials, reflects the school's commitment to environmental responsibility and long-term sustainability.

Each of these achievements reflects the collective effort of our educators, staff, families, and Board members. As we look ahead, Canberra Montessori School remains committed to nurturing independence, fostering curiosity, and ensuring that every child has access to an authentic Montessori education within a supportive and inspiring environment.





CANBERRA
MONTESSORI
SCHOOL

School Team

Staff Head Count	
<i>(Full-time and part-time staff)</i>	
<i>Staff figures at 2025 Commonwealth Census Date</i>	
Teaching staff	9
Childcare & Classroom support	25
Administration staff	5
Total	39

Staff Retention	
Average years of service:	4 Years, 7 Months
Maximum years of service:	31 Years, 6 months

Staff Qualifications			
PhD:	0	Bachelor's Degree:	8
Master's Degree:	4	Diplomas and Others:	23
Graduate Diplomas:	2		

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

- Positive Discipline for Educators (TQI Accreditation)
- Building Effective Habits for Wellbeing with Dr Jann Carroll
- “You Are Your Habits” with Dr Jann Carroll
- MSCA Grassroots Conference 2025
- Positive Partnerships - Supporting autistic students (TQI Accreditation)
- Child Safety in the ACT (2025)
- Disability Standards for Education for early childhood
- Child Safety Fundamentals (2025)
- HR | WHS | OHS: Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying - Schools (2025)
- Student Duty of Care for Educators (2025)
- Student Duty of Care Fundamentals (2025)
- CPR & First Aid in an education and care setting
- Engaging with Principles of Active Supervision
- I’M ALERT – Food Safety
- ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culturally Inclusive and Responsive Early Childhood Educational Practice
- Play-based Learning and Intentionality
- Beyond Blue Be You – Partner Family Partnerships
- TiPS Supporting Transition from Under3s to 3-6 environment
- Musica Viva: Moon Hour Radio
- Engaging with the Principles of Active Supervision by CELA
- SunSmart for Educators ECEC certificate



Student Profile

	Attendance Rate	Student Numbers*
Infant Community		39
Early Learning	90.7%	34
Preschool	88.7%	24
Kindergarten	92.5%	26
Year 1	92.9%	18
Year 2	93.7%	17
Year 3	90.1%	16
Year 4	96.7%	8
Year 5	95.5%	9
Year 6	92.5%	2
Overall	93.6%	193

**Enrolment figures at 2025 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.



$$\begin{array}{r} 958,632 \\ - 232,301 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 568,678 \\ + 563,289 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 465 \\ - 1 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 932,654 \\ + 369,586 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

Allegra
Arlo
Amelie
Audrey
Bella
Dashi
Ellis
Lucas
Isaline
Jude

Magnus
Max
Mila
Neo
Oscar
Rosemary
Stella
Sophie
Sterling
Uma

Freda
Liam

Parent Satisfaction Survey

The 2025 Parent Satisfaction Survey reflects a high level of satisfaction and strong community engagement at Canberra Montessori School. Families consistently recognised the school's commitment to authentic Montessori education, supportive relationships, and a positive learning environment.

Over 90% of families reported that the Montessori philosophy is clearly visible in their child's experience, with children demonstrating independence, curiosity, and respect. Similarly, around 90% of families indicated that their children feel valued, supported, and enjoy their time at school.

Educators were identified as a key strength, with 90–95% of responses highlighting the care and respect shown to students. Families also described the school as welcoming and inclusive, contributing to a strong sense of community.

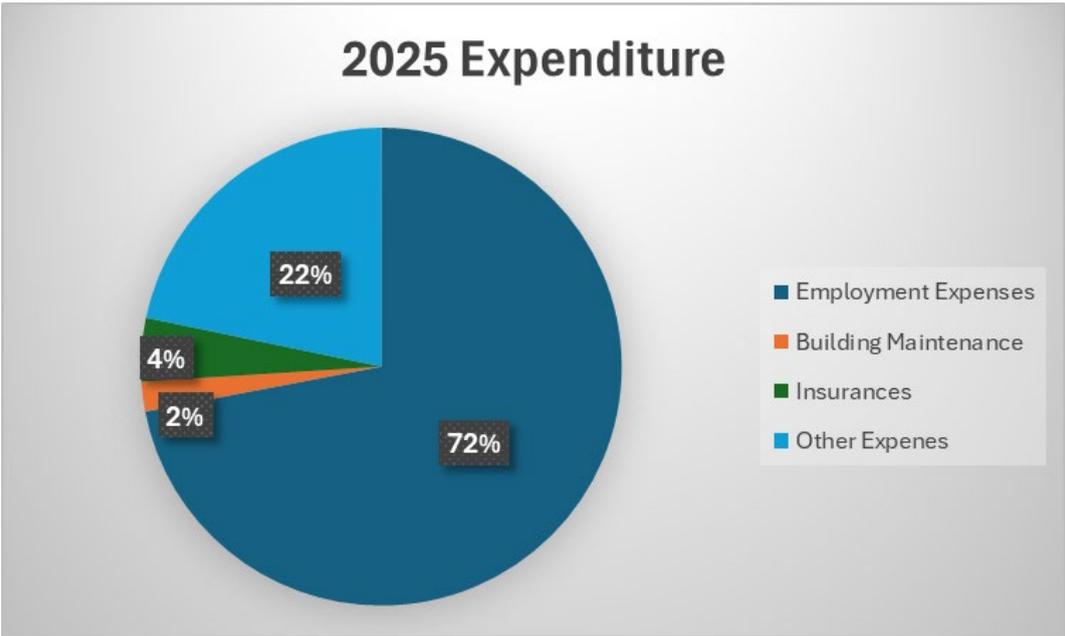
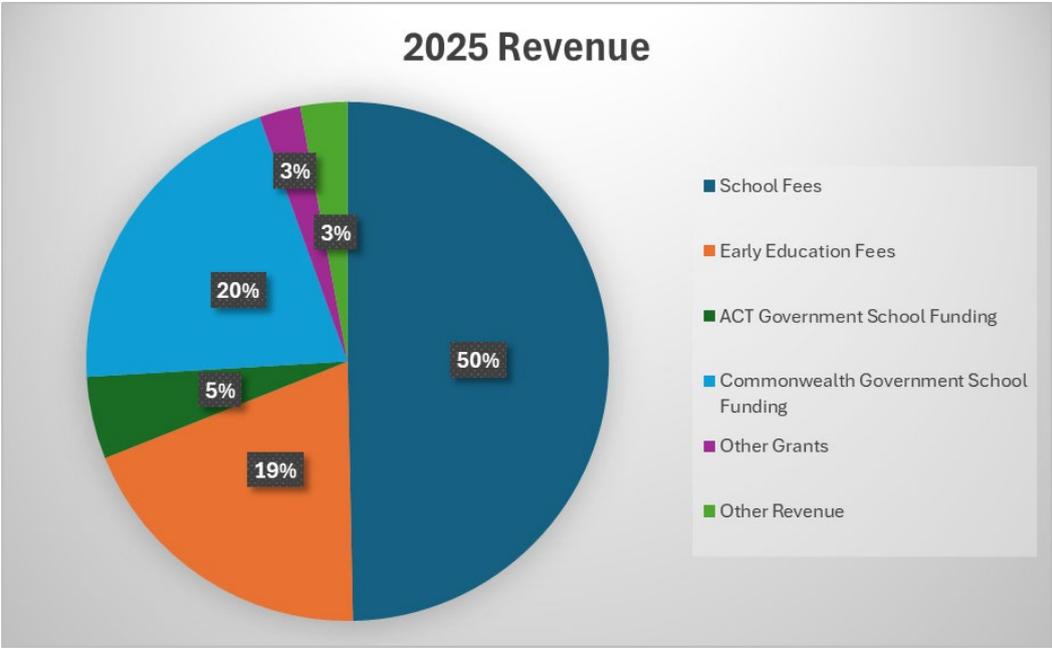
These positive experiences are reflected in high levels of trust and commitment, with 85–90% of families intending to continue their child's education at CMS and 80–90% willing to recommend the school to others.

The survey also provided valuable insights to support ongoing improvement. Opportunities were identified to further strengthen communication, enhance leadership visibility, expand extracurricular and sporting opportunities, and continue to build consistency across programs and community engagement.

Overall, the results affirm Canberra Montessori School's strong foundations and support its ongoing focus on continuous improvement and future growth.



Financial Information



Canberra

Montessori

School

2025
