



Inner Sydney Montessori School

2018

ANNUAL REPORT



“ 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



Proudly Registered
by the Montessori
Australia Foundation
Quality Assurance
Council (MQAC)



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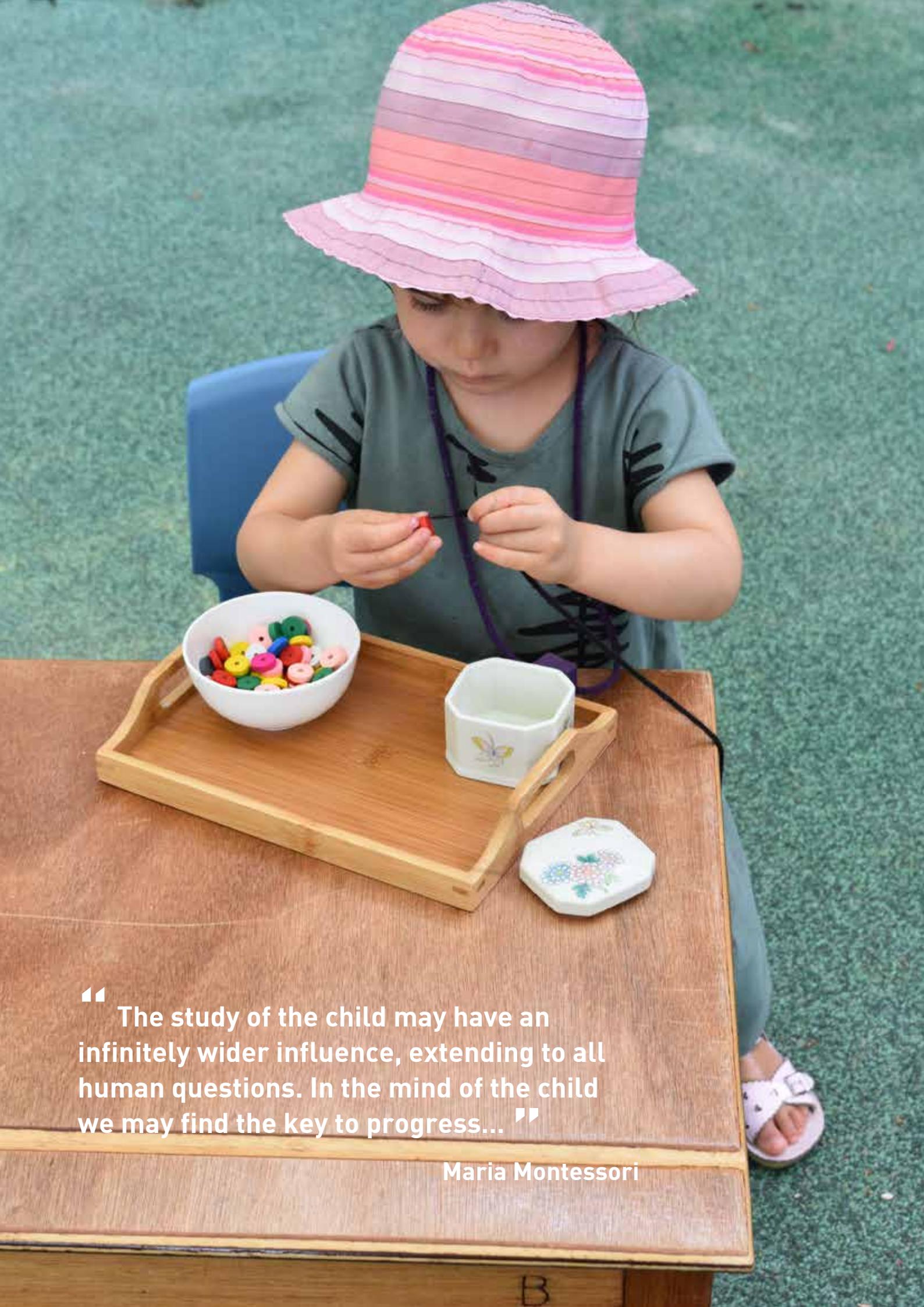
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“ The study of the child may have an infinitely wider influence, extending to all human questions. In the mind of the child we may find the key to progress... ”

Maria Montessori

INTRODUCTION

ISMS seeks to comply with expectations of the Australian Curriculum, NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA), the National Montessori Curriculum and the Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education. The Inner Sydney Montessori School (ISMS) maintains the relevant data and documentation and complies with reporting requirements of the Minister for Education.

School Registration was successfully renewed for the period 2016 - 2020. Also, in recent years, ISMS has successfully complied with Montessori Quality Assurance Programme (MQAP) expectations and more recently, with Australian Children's Education and Care Authority (ACECQA) requirements on the Balmain and Lilyfield campuses. Reporting includes regular disclosure of financial and enrolment information, as well as educational performance measures. ISMS students sit for NAPLAN tests each year.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE TO ENSURE PARTICIPATION IN ANNUAL REPORTING PROCESS

- The Principal is the staff member responsible for coordinating the final preparation and distribution of the Annual Report to NESA and other stakeholders as required;
- For each reporting area, one of the following: the Principal, Business Manager, Deputy Principal, and Enrolments Registrar is responsible for the collection, analysis and storage of the relevant data and for providing the relevant information to the coordinator and the Principal, for inclusion in the Report;
- Determination of the specific content to be included in each section of the Report and reviewing the year's progress, to ensure ongoing compliance, relevance and usefulness is the final responsibility of the Principal, after discussion with the staff involved;
- Preparation of the Report in an appropriate format to be sent to NESA occurs under the direction and final decision making of the Principal;
- The School operational calendar shows the annual schedule for how the 30 June deadline is met:
 - Delivery of information for each reporting area to the manager
 - Preparation and publication of the Report – office copy and electronic copy on internet and intranet
 - Distribution of the Report to NESA and other stakeholders.

“ Imagination does not become great until human beings, given the courage and the strength, use it to create. ”

Maria Montessori

REPORTING AREA 1.

Messages from Key School Bodies

SCHOOL COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2018 has again been a significant year, with ISMS taking a number of notable steps towards many of its long term objectives.

Mid-year, ISMS established an independently managed subsidiary, Sydney Montessori Training Centre (SMTCL), having reached an agreement with Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) to run its globally recognised 6-12 AMI Diploma training courses in Australia. SMTCL commenced its first course in the wonderful new Rozelle training centre in 2019 and has recently obtained support from AMI to run further courses in 2020 and beyond. This outcome required immense effort and dedication from the ISMS leadership team and the School Council who are focused on ensuring regular, high quality Montessori training is occurring in Sydney and Australia. This endeavour greatly contributes towards a long-term solution to the recurring shortage of qualified Montessori trained teachers which all Australian Montessori schools have experienced in recent decades.

In 2018, ISMS for the first time developed a full-time Deputy Principal role, which is split between the Operations Deputy and the Academic Deputy. We were delighted to welcome Chris Peach and long-serving staff member, Catherine Harding into these important roles respectively. In addition, we now have leadership roles across each of our 3 Stages, which has enabled greater collaboration and consistency across the classes within each Stage.

We also now have Pre-Primary and Primary Mentors responsible for supporting our newer Montessori teachers in their practice and classrooms. These initiatives have resulted in many positive outcomes for the children and staff with a particular focus on a staff culture of collaboration, continuing education, mentoring and support for one another. We have seen ISMS' new leaders tackle the new roles with enthusiasm and dedication.

2018 saw ISMS settle the purchase of our first property, at Camperdown. The goal is to



create a new campus and community featuring mainly Stage 1 classes, as well as a new Infant Community, all of which have long been a key part of our Strategic Plan. Whilst this planning work is underway, the property is fully occupied by commercial tenants with the rental returns sufficient to cover our borrowing and property holding costs. Once operational, the new campus will not only enable more children to benefit from a Montessori education, but will also provide substantial additional income and resource which will ultimately benefit all of our students, as well as more Stage 2 and Stage 3 students for our Smith Street campus.

The School Council is nearing completion of a new three year strategic plan and we look forward to rolling out and communicating that plan in 2019. All of this is centred around our number one priority of providing the highest quality Montessori learning environment for our children.

ISMS is one of Australia's leading Montessori schools and one of the few Montessori schools in Australia in a position to grow and prosper and be able to offer a Montessori education to a wider group of children, parents and carers. ISMS looks forward to continuing to take action to address the challenges that face our entire community in 2019 and beyond.

The School Council extend its sincere gratitude to Zoe and her leadership team, and all of ISMS' staff for their dedication, hard work and the wonderful support they provide to the School and the student's education.

Thank you to our School Council members who collectively bring, from a variety of skill set and professional backgrounds, the expertise and dedication necessary to provide comprehensive governance of the School. This is a role which includes a large time commitment on a volunteer basis and they execute their responsibilities with great competence, commitment and thoroughness to the great benefit of the School.

Finally, thank you also to the families, including the children, for your ongoing contributions and support of the School, which benefits the children's education, the School, community and all of us, thank you.

Tara Taylor

School Council President

Council Members 2018-2019 as of 1 May 2019

Council Title	Member	Professional Background	
President	Tara Taylor	Lawyer	ISMS Parent [2 children]
Vice President	Paul Marriott	Lawyer	ISMS Parent [2 children]
Treasurer	Andrew Duff	Chartered Accountant	Non ISMS Parent [3 graduates]
Director	Greg Anderson	Bursar, Independent School	Non ISMS Parent
Director	Mark Jordan	Technology and Accounting	Non ISMS Parent [2 graduates]
Director	Peta Gibson	AMI Trained 0 - 3 Director	ISMS Parent [2 children, 3 graduates]
Director	Dan Bleakman	Marketing and Communications	ISMS Parent [3 children]
Director	Leah Brown	Employee Relations and HR	Non ISMS Parent
Director	Rahul Goyal	Chartered Accountant	ISMS Parent [2 children]
Director	Dale Anthony	Retired Teacher	Non ISMS Parent

REPORTING AREA 1.

Messages from Key School Bodies

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

What a year 2018 has been for Inner Sydney Montessori School!

As one of the leading Montessori schools in Australia, it was great to see that Montessori received significant positive media interest during 2018 and is gradually being recognised as *the* relevant education of today. For all of us in education, we understand that academic attainment and progress is of course important and our duty to support our children's knowledge and understanding of the world is undeniable. However, our ISMS team also recognise that we are preparing our children for an undetermined world; for roles and jobs that don't even exist yet and opportunities and experiences that have yet to be imagined. This excites us and grounds us in the firm belief that our children need an education that empowers them with their own personal 'tool box' to navigate their world, whatever that may look like and wherever it may take them. At ISMS, together as a community, we are nurturing resilience, independence and healthy curiosity. Our ISMS children are developing as advocates of equality, agents of change... ambassadors of the future.

The ISMS community achieved a great many things in 2018, ensuring our focus remained on keeping the child at the centre of all we do.

We all know that one of the biggest factors determining the effectiveness of any school is the staff. Without the highly skilled, dedicated, passionate and enthusiastic people we are so lucky to be able to call our staff, Inner Sydney Montessori School would not be the wonderful place that it is and I couldn't be happier with what we are achieving. As a team, our strength and distinctiveness comes from our genuine drive to immerse the children in the most authentic Montessori experience possible and our team has gone from strength to strength, benefiting from such a varied range of skill sets and experience. Nine staff celebrated graduating from their Montessori Diplomas in 2018 (a record number) and a further four completed all of the content elements of their Diplomas. We have recruited high calibre teachers for both Director and Assistant roles across the School and they have brought

“
The environment must be rich in motives which lend interest to activity and invite the child to conduct his own experiences.”

Maria Montessori

new ideas and energy to our team. We have also strengthened our leadership team with the appointment of our Deputy of Academics and Deputy of Operations and also our Stage 3 Operations Leader and Stage 3 Academic Leader.

The ISMS community is only too familiar with the struggles Montessori schools face due to the international shortage of high quality Montessori trained staff. ISMS acknowledges our position as one of the largest and leading Montessori schools in Australia and tackled the issue head on by initiating the establishment of Sydney Montessori Training Centre to deliver training from 2019. The graduation of these trained educators at the end of 2019 and beyond will ensure Montessori classrooms across Australia are not just sustainable but can grow in strength and number.

We continued to work towards the opening of our third campus, located in Camperdown, throughout 2018 and look forward to 2019 bringing us closer to that achievement. In response to our community's needs and growing waitlist for our Infant Community, we finalised plans for a new Parent Toddler Program to take place on the same site as Sydney Montessori Training Centre in Rozelle. We also look forward to welcoming additional Stage 1 children to our Balmain Campus in 2019 through the relocation and expansion of our Kiah classroom.



We fully appreciate that our ISMS staff is just one element of the ISMS community that supports and nourishes our children's development – our parents are our children's key educators. We have therefore looked to further the ways we can aid our families through relevant and tailored Parent Education and believe our Parent Education calendar offers varied and comprehensive support empowering our parents with skills or simply providing a forum for advice. In response to resounding feedback from our families to have more support with behaviour management at home, our 2018 Parent Education calendar included an eight week course entitled 'Tuning into Kids' and was run by one of our well-respected and experienced colleagues. This course will continue to run in 2019.

Our School Council has continued to amaze me with their dedication and generosity of time in their successful efforts to contribute towards making Inner Sydney Montessori

School the best it can possibly be. Thanks to the exceptionally strong and varied skill set that our Council body represent, our School continues to flourish and I thank them wholeheartedly for their support.

We are really lucky to have such a supportive and active parent body at ISMS. The importance of working towards the mutual goal of our children having the best possible experience as they grow and learn is one that is so strong at ISMS. How lucky we are that our families chose Inner Sydney Montessori School for their children and place the trust in us to work alongside them in raising them. I offer my genuine and heartfelt thanks to all of our ISMS families.

Zoe Ezzard

Principal



REPORTING AREA 1.

Messages from Key School Bodies

PARENT LIAISON COORDINATOR'S COMMENT

Parent involvement directly benefits children of the School and we thank our Parent Liaison (PL) volunteers for their significant contribution to the community. This important role facilitates communication between the School, Class Director and the parent body.

PARENT LIAISON AND VOLUNTEER ROLES

The Parent Liaison team met regularly during 2018 and were fortunate to have Zoe present in her capacity as Principal, welcoming open discussion and in turn sharing developments within the School. This informed the PLs who are able to disseminate key messages and support the parent body.

Each PL is entrusted with the role of supporting class communication and the specific needs of the Director, fostering and coordinating volunteer efforts and welcoming new and transitioning families. In addition, there are responsibilities specific to the respective Stages. Stage 1 PLs play a critical role in supporting the induction of new families to the School and facilitating introductions. The transition to Primary is a key milestone in each

child's Montessori education with the Stage 2 PLs supporting families through this change. Much of the child's potential is realised within Stage 3 and they become active participants in a growing range of events – Play, Concert Evening and more – all of which the Stage 3 PLs helped orchestrate in 2018, culminating in Graduation.

The child most likely to benefit from a Montessori education and to contribute to the education of his or her fellow pupils is the child whose parent(s) take an active and consistent interest in the School, which is strongly supported by volunteer efforts of the parents. So whilst we recognise the formalised efforts of the PLs, we also applaud each and every parent who volunteers their time and resources over the course of each year. There were significant contributions made in formalised roles with Council, Band, Choir, Tour Guides to name a few; and on an as needed basis to support classroom resources, excursions, fundraising, events and more.

" We discovered that education is not something which the teacher does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being. "

Maria Montessori



FUNDRAISING AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Current and past parents of ISMS attribute much of their positive experiences at the School to the strength of our community. PLs facilitate a range of social events to bring people together, which are on a class, Stage or School basis, and were busy in 2018 coordinating family picnics, parent evenings out, Working Bees and more.

A parents' only evening event, 'OPA! Comedy Night', was a hugely successful and well attended highlight of the 2018 social calendar – attendees revelled in a night of laughs, great music, a Greek banquet, and importantly, the silent auction which featured beautiful collaborative artworks from each class.

In 2018, we renewed our annual sustainable living fair, and relaunched the event as Sustainability Saturday. Now in its fourth year, and with a focus on our School community, our families came together to socialise and reconnect with what's important to all and our environment. The committee, staff, students and their families put in a great deal of time and talent to bring all a fair that entertained, inspired and supported a sense of belonging.

Thank you again to the PL Team, who graciously contributed ideas, time and resources in 2018.

Amanda Reynolds

Parent Liaison Coordinator 2018 / Registrar and Community Relations Officer



REPORTING AREA 1.

Messages from Key School Bodies

EARLY CHILDHOOD COORDINATOR MESSAGE

An authentic Montessori curriculum was maintained at ISMS throughout 2018 and this was supported by a considerable amount of staff training in Montessori practices. The majority of Stage 1 staff attended the Montessori Refresher in June. The focus was on Mathematics in the 3 to 6 year old environment, and included Mathematic extensions. In addition to the Refresher, five Stage 1 staff completed their Association Montessori International (AMI), Montessori 3 to 6 Diploma. A direct outcome of the AMI training was realised by some staff restructuring throughout the year which included; one Assistant promoted to a Director position and a casual Assistant securing a full time Assistant position. There was further Montessori curriculum training later in the year as two staff members attended a professional development workshop on Geometry, titled, 'Montessori: Geometry through the Stages'. The outcome of this workshop was a benefit to all as the attending staff presented an internal training session to the entire team when they returned to School.

In addition to Montessori professional development and training, Teachers and Assistants continued to develop their capacity in the classroom through other governing bodies (such as ACECQA and NESA) workshops. Training included first aid, food safety and child protection training.

In order to accommodate a consistently increasing waitlist for potential ISMS students, our Kiah classroom was relocated to the previous Infant Community space. The extra floor area will ensure more children can experience the Montessori method in 2019.

Stage 1 introduced new phonetic early Literacy readers. Staff continued to work closely with families to link the home/school Literacy program. Literacy was celebrated with Book Week, an initiative brought about by the Children's Book Council of Australia, to encourage interest in early Literacy. During this week of celebration and recognition, the children brought their favourite book to School and dressed in the costume of their favourite character.

Throughout 2018, Stage 1 offered numerous Parent Education Evenings to which families were invited to work in the Montessori environment to gain insight into the Montessori curriculum, and very importantly, how to support their child at home. Due to overwhelming parent requests, a six-week behaviour management course was provided for families. The course was a huge success, and as a result another session in behaviour management will be offered in 2019 for new and existing families.

The year saw two Stage 1 incursions including an Aboriginal incursion where children attended a smoking ceremony, explored dot painting, created a large Aboriginal artwork and were introduced to the didgeridoo. The second incursion was held during Science Week, and brought much fun and excitement as children engaged in hands-on experiences to make slime, sherbet and bubbles.

Our team's reflection on the Aboriginal incursion brought discussions on how we can incorporate more Aboriginal culture into the program. Aboriginal pictures and painting were then introduced to the Continent Folders, Aboriginal stories were purchased (including 'How the Birds got their Colours' and 'When the Snake Bites the Sun', both written by Benjamin Mowaljarlai, and illustrated by the children of Derby School), and Aboriginal story symbols were also included into the art program.

“ These very children reveal to us the most vital need of their development, saying: ‘Help me to do it alone!’ ”

Maria Montessori



Harmony Day and Grandparents Day were celebrated together on the same day. Children were invited to wear traditional costume from their cultural backgrounds, which began an opportunity to take advantage of the diverse cultural backgrounds of Stage 1 families by starting an inclusion program. The inclusion program involved inviting parents to share their cultural backgrounds with the children. Parents were keen to take part in this initiative, joining the children during group time to share their family's cultural customs and experiences.

The Extended Day children took part in the Annual Athletics Carnival Day. The activities comprised of fundamental movement skills the children have practiced throughout the year each week during Sport.

As a School we ensure children's safety remains a priority and, as a result, additional gates were installed in all entries to Stage 1 to maintain our high safety standards.

We continued to maintain and uphold the high standards of our materials and furniture through purchasing new resources as required throughout 2018. We are grateful for the parents who are involved in maintaining resources and materials through allocated jobs (Working Bee) throughout the year, including general cleaning, making materials and helping with maintenance.

Niroshi Wanaguru

Pre-Primary Coordinator



REPORTING AREA 1.

Messages from Key School Bodies

PRIMARY COORDINATORS' MESSAGE

2018 was a wonderful year for Primary students at Inner Sydney Montessori School. Our staff continued to work with strong collaboration and on-going professional development whilst children continued to engage in meaningful, self-directed learning and inspiring activities. There were many events throughout the year aimed at supporting the development of our Primary students. Both Stage 2 and 3 worked independently and also had chances to come together and collaborate.

DAY OF PEACE

In each of the Stage 2 classrooms, the children reflected on what a peaceful world meant to them. We read books, wrote poems and created artworks to symbolise and express what peace looks like in our world. The School then came together to celebrate the International Day of Peace and share each classroom's reflections.

ART CLUB

ISMS began its first lunch time Art Club in 2018. A small group of children and a few staff members came together one lunch time per week to learn new skills, develop techniques and create an individual artwork for each child. This program was aimed at encouraging art within the School and providing further opportunities for interested children to engage in art-based activities.

STAGE 2 ZOO EXCURSION

In Term 4, all of the Primary School attended a day at Sydney's Taronga Zoo. On the day, each group had the opportunity to plan their schedule and decide on which animals they would visit. Each group also took part in a workshop focusing on native Australian animals and ecosystems. All the children enjoyed a wonderful day and gained new inspiration for their zoology research.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH - ALDERSGATE NURSING HOME

The children continued to partake in our School's community outreach program. A different group of children visited United Aldersgate Nursing Home in Lilyfield each week to engage with and build upon positive relationships with the elderly residents. The children brought games, sang songs, played musical instruments, drew pictures and engaged in conversation with the residents. Every week, the children greatly enjoyed their experience and built a deeper understanding of the value of forming connections and giving back to the community.

GREEN TEAM

In 2018, the School's first Green Team was established. The very popular program involved children who were interested and focused on gardening, composting and sustainability. Each week after lunch, the children met with the leading member of staff to discuss the initiative. Small groups were formed with each group focusing on a certain area of care for the School gardens. The children also helped to coordinate fundraising to support these projects. This ongoing program builds a deeper understanding of care for plants and practical skills for maintaining a healthy and happy garden.

“
He does it with his hands,
by experience, first in play
and then through work. The
hands are the instruments
of man’s intelligence.”

Maria Montessori



PEER SUPPORT

The mission of Peer Support Australia is to support wellbeing; led by students, owned by students. During the first term of the year, Year 6 children were trained in how to lead a group in order to teach them positive communication skills. Each week, children from both the Lilyfield and Balmain campuses came together to learn from each other. This is a wonderful way for our Graduates to practice their leadership skills and for all of the children to develop their social and emotional intelligence.

ISMS CAMP 2018

Our annual Primary Camp (Year 3 to Year 6) is always a highlight of the year, and one that the children really look forward to. In 2018, we went to The Great Aussie Bush Camp at Kincumber. The children learn so much from experiences like this. For instance, being away from home and the independence it brings, cooperation and teamwork, compassion when helping and supporting their friends, and much, much more. They took part in many activities such as raft building, giant swing, archery and high ropes.

GRADUATES TRIP TO CANBERRA

The Year 6 Graduate children made their annual excursion to Canberra to support their work on the history of Australia and democracy. It was a wonderfully busy, productive three days, with the children visiting Parliament, where they were lucky enough to meet their local MP and to sit in the House for Prime Minister's questions. The National War Memorial gave them a historical perspective, with two children having the honour of laying a wreath at the Last Post Ceremony. Students learnt how to vote at the Electoral Commission and had a science experience at Questacon.

GRADUATION 2018

The 'Jungle Theme' for the 2018 Graduation was a hit! The highlight of the Graduation Ceremony was each child having the opportunity to share their speech. Speeches highlighted experiences from their time at ISMS and things they will take with them into their High School years. The Year 5 children also enjoyed being able to serve dinner to all of the attendees. This event would not have been possible without all of the volunteer hours by so many of our parents - a huge thanks to them. To finish off the evening, the children took part in karaoke and a photo booth. Fun was had by all!

Rebecca Khoury

Stage 2 Coordinator

Laura Rasmussen

Stage 3 Academic Coordinator

Jenny Hall

Stage 3 Operations Coordinator



REPORTING AREA 2.

Contextual Information about the School and Characteristics of the Student Body

CORE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Montessori pedagogy used at ISMS adds great value to the education of each child by adhering to the educational philosophy and teaching method conceived over 100 years ago by Dr. Maria Montessori in Italy. Based on following the natural sequence of development of the child, this educational philosophy emphasises one-to-one teaching, concrete learning leading to the abstract, self-motivation and free choice within an agreed plan of daily work relating to the curriculum. The School also reflects the goals and outcomes set by the NSW Government as translated by NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA), thoroughly tested at ISMS in 2015.

ISMS is an authentic Montessori community where our children are inspired as learners to grow into peaceful, influential and self-reliant young people who create a better world.

Within the context of the Strategic Plan the School's formal Vision and Values are as outlined herewith.

OUR VALUES

The ISMS community cherishes our core values of acceptance, accountability, courtesy, excellence, fairness, grace, integrity and service.

- Acceptance - acknowledging and understanding others' differences
- Accountability - taking personal responsibility for actions
- Courtesy - valuing ourselves and treating others and the environment with consideration and respect
- Excellence - seeking to accomplish one's best
- Fairness - acting in a manner which is socially just and protects the rights and privileges of all
- Grace - conducting ourselves with dignity and sincerity
- Integrity - living in accordance with the principles of moral and ethical conduct
- Service - recognising and responding to the needs of others as an individual in a local and global community.

OUR VISION

Our vision for the future is to be known as a centre for excellence in teaching and learning; widely regarded as a leading Australian Montessori School; financially stable and secure for the long term; and a significant contributor to education in Australia and throughout the Montessori world.

OUR MOTTO



The School motto, 'Help me do it myself' reflects the Montessori ethos of providing guidance and an environment for children to form their own character and to reach their potential without impediment.

OUR LOGO



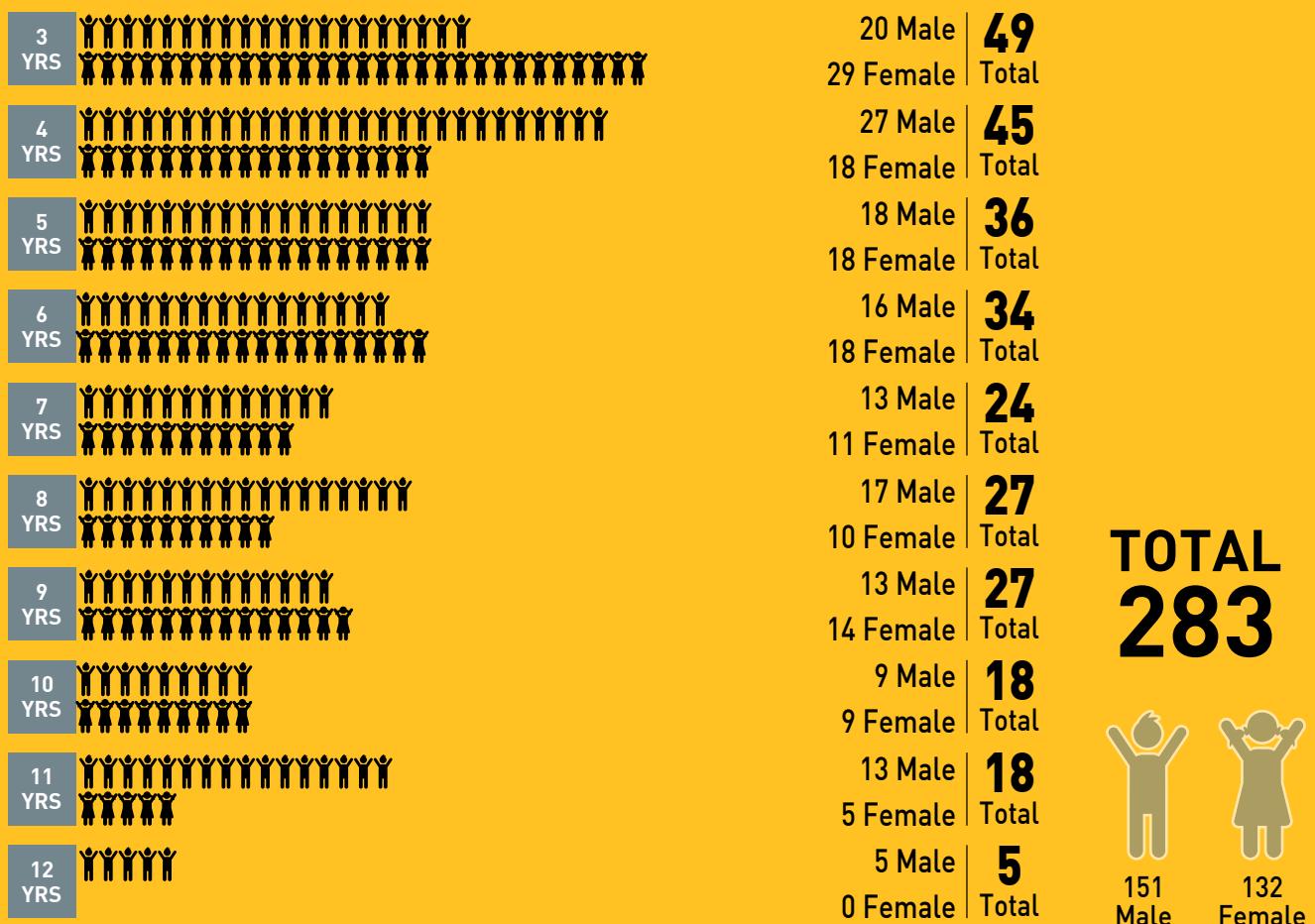
The ISMS logo represents a tree, which is a symbol for natural growth and the learning process. The colours of the leaves transform from green to red, with each leaf representing a new Stage in the child's development.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENT BODY

ISMS Enrolment Profile – Summary 2018

Term	Stage 1 (3 – 6 years)	Stage 2 (6 – 9 years)	Stage 3 (9 – 12 years)	Total
1	126	82	52	260
2	132	91	52	276
3	138	83	66	287
4	140	89	63	292

ISMS Enrolment Profile by Gender and Age as at 31st August 2018



REPORTING AREA 2.

Contextual Information about the School and Characteristics of the Student Body

Before and After School Care Facilities

Breakfast Club		Elouera	
TERM 1	69	TERM 1	189
TERM 2	49	TERM 2	143
TERM 3	63	TERM 3	125
TERM 4	50	TERM 4	136
2018 AVERAGE PER TERM	58	2018 AVERAGE PER TERM	148
2017 AVERAGE PER TERM	75	2017 AVERAGE PER TERM	137
Nangkita		Holiday Care (Total)	
TERM 1	141	LILYFIELD STAGE 1	186
TERM 2	124	BALMAIN STAGE 1	348
TERM 3	135	NANGKITA STAGE 2/3	313
TERM 4	134		
2018 AVERAGE PER TERM	133		
2017 AVERAGE PER TERM	139		





WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Dulwich High School of Visual Arts and Design (1) | Newington College (1)

Newtown High School of the Performing Arts (1) | Oxley College (2)

SCEGGS Darlinghurst (1) | St Andrew's Cathedral School (5)

Sydney Secondary College Balmain (2) | Trinity Grammar School (2)



REPORTING AREA 2.

Contextual Information about the School and Characteristics of the Student Body



LUKAS YEE

Hello, my name is Lukas Yee. I started Year 7 at Newington College in Stanmore this year.

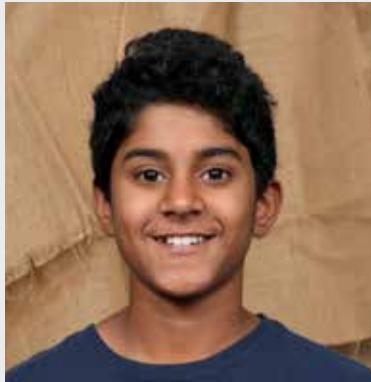
Before school started, Newington had a Year 7 orientation school camp. They held it the week before school started because it got us to talk to one another and got us to make friends before school started. I was extremely nervous for the camp as I didn't know many people going to Newington. I was homesick for the first night at camp because I didn't have anyone to hang out with. The cabins were assigned by Mentor groups (homeroom groups), to get to know people you'd be seeing every day. The second day, I still felt homesick, but I pushed out of my comfort zone and made an effort to talk to people I didn't know. I believe talking to people you don't know is a key role in making friends. It may sound easy talking to people you don't know but when you're in the situation, it's a bit more difficult. The thing you need to remember when you're transitioning into Year 7 is that everyone else is in the same boat as you. The biggest learning experience I got from this camp was that you must be the one to start the conversation. Once you engage in a conversation, the other person might find something in common with you and you could become best friends. I made one of my best friends at camp. I found that we both had a passion for video games, music, jokes, politics and so on. It just takes a little courage to be the first person to talk.

The start of the term was good, my week just zoomed to Saturday. I had so much fun because it was a completely new and enjoyable experience. Homework was new, but I have to say, it's not as bad as everyone says. It is a bit tiresome, and maybe boring as well, but it does make you learn faster. I got quite a bit of homework at the start of the term and somehow, I always managed to

leave it to the last minute. I've gotten better at it as the term has progressed and I have to say, leaving homework to the last minute is not fun. If you start it when you're given it, it's enjoyable to say the least. You have enough time to go through, take your time and check it, which is way more fun than rushing it super-fast, handing it in and then not getting the highest mark you could have gotten.

Getting around school was easy enough for me. I had been coming to Newington for swimming lessons when I was younger, and when my sister was having her lesson, I would wander around the school with my dad. At Newington, most of your lessons are in one class, but when you have music or science or some other lesson, you have to walk to the opposite side of the school which I find annoying. Navigating classrooms is easy because all the buildings are arranged by subject, so you know which building to get to, but the challenging part is trying to find what number the classroom is.

I think that Montessori prepares you really well for high school, because it teaches you to be independent and intelligent. At Montessori they teach you how to work independently and cope with situations well, while other primary schools don't teach you that. I find that at Newington, lots of students don't have that independence and curiosity to learn because they didn't go to Montessori. ISMS is an incredible school and it prepared me to my best abilities for high school. Even though I have left ISMS, it will still be a big part of my life and it will help me throughout my years at high school and into my life.



ARPAN DESAI

Hi my name is Arpan Desai and I recently started high school at St. Andrews Cathedral School. It's a big school compared to ISMS but small compared to my friends' high schools. It was pretty nerve-wracking for the first couple of days. When you're coming from a school where you only had 15 graduates in your year and that was being considered big going to SACS where the whole of year 7 has 169 kids in total is a big step and a big difference. There are a few things that you will have to adjust to including homework, assessments, uniforms, finding your way around, making sure you don't call the teacher by their first name and all of the very strict rules. Even though it may take time to adjust to those little things by the time you finish term 1 it will just be an everyday thing to you. Even though all of these assessments, homework and the uniforms sound bad it honestly isn't as bad as it seems.

Starting high school is hard at the beginning because it's hard to find all of your classrooms and remembering your teachers' names. Also the homework is hard when you first start to do it but it wasn't as bad as people were making it out to be and because of the Montessori program you have learnt most of the stuff they teach you for the first couple of terms. Especially in maths, music, Spanish (if you do that as a language) and PDHPE.

A con of high school is that unlike the Montessori program if you're finding the work too easy in one of your classes the teacher can't teach you separately to the class. You can however ask the teacher for more challenging work.

High school will never be as bad as you think and there are many positives to it including the freedom and independency. ISMS is an awesome school and it has prepared me very well for high school and has taught me skills and strategies that I will remember throughout my lifetime.

“The child seeks for independence by means of work; an independence of body and mind.”

Maria Montessori



REPORTING AREA 3.

Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy

In 2018, ISMS students in Years 3 and 5 sat the National Assessment Plan – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests. The Montessori pedagogy emphasises developing in children a love of learning and teaches independence and skills in seeking out learning experiences. Success is measured in terms of the progress made by the individual child, not in competitive terms measured against other children. Because of this educational philosophy, Montessori schools are not keen to submit children to situations that can be regarded as ranking them or putting them in a competitive situation. We also acknowledge there are many qualities that we value in Montessori Education; creativity, persistence, curiosity, collaboration, motivation, leadership,

self-discipline amongst others, which cannot be measured in this way. Nonetheless, we recognise the need to undertake NAPLAN and we use these results to inform our teaching practice. It should be emphasised that as children may be on individualised learning pathways, it is expected that not all will have completed the content and other learning assessed by NAPLAN at the particular date of examinations.

In 2018, ISMS students who were present on each day sat the NAPLAN tests. In reading the following statements about our results it is important to realise that our small numbers make variability from year to year more likely than in a larger school.

YEAR 3

ISMS had 25 students in Year 3 and the table below outlines ISMS' results in comparison to similar schools and all Australian schools:

	READING	WRITING	SPELLING	GRAMMAR	NUMERACY
ISMS	533	412	478	512	471
Similar	506	455	468	503	468
All	434	407	418	432	408

YEAR 5

ISMS had 19 students in Year 5 and the table below outlines ISMS' results in comparison to similar schools and all Australian schools:

	READING	WRITING	SPELLING	GRAMMAR	NUMERACY
ISMS	552	459	543	539	501
Similar	583	517	551	577	560
All	509	465	502	504	494



TRACKING THE STUDENTS

Students are tracked academically and socially from age three to twelve. Continuous and ongoing formative assessment processes that are appropriate in a Montessori school are used. These processes include TC (Transparent Classroom), which is a record keeping and online management system that includes progress reports, attendance tracking and lesson planning tools. This system is used across Primary and Pre-Primary.

Alongside this system, the teachers keep anecdotal records of observations of each child, their individual learning style, strengths / areas for development, areas of concern and work ethic. These observation notes include standards of performance with levels of flexibility on the child's readiness to progress at their own pace. These observations and the child's progress notes are handed to the next class teacher during the transition and hand-over meeting. A child's progression to the next Stage is based on their academic and social readiness.

Close routine communication with parents/caregivers is a feature of the School.



Reporting Area 5.

Teacher Professional Learning, Accreditation and Qualifications

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Professional development for staff is an important part of the School program. Staff attended the following workshops and seminars in 2018:

Professional Learning	Staff Participation
AIS – Creating Safer Independent Schools (all staff)	75
NSW Reportable Conduct and Allegations Against Employees – Online Module	75
Provide CPR	75
Provide First Aid	32
Montessori Australia Foundation - Teacher Refresher Conference	20
Music in the Classroom Workshop	20
Geometry for Montessori Students	20
CELA - Keeping the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) Alive	18
Aboriginal Art and Symbols	12
Making it a Success – Teaching and Behaviour Support Strategies for Students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, featuring Tony Attwood	5
Montessori Australia Foundation - People Skills Workshop	5
Montessori Australia Foundation – Montessori Leadership Network Forum	3
Montessori Innovation Summit	3
Montessori Curriculum Workshop	2
NAPLAN Online School Readiness Test Training 2018	2
Head to Head Forum (Montessori Principals)	1
New Horizons Biennial National Conference of the Kodaly Music Education Institute of Australia	1
CELA – Changes to the NQF	1
Child Protection Course	1
Identify and Respond to children and young people at risk	1

The School has also supported nine staff members during 2018 in completing studies in Montessori Diploma teaching and Assistants Certificates. The School is supporting this training to ensure sustainability for the future.



TEACHER ACCREDITATION

Level of Accreditation	Number of teachers
Conditional	0
Provisional	6
Proficient Teacher	16
Highly Accomplished Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
Lead Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
Total number of teachers	22

Details of teaching staff (as defined by the Institute of Teachers Act 2004) who are responsible for delivering the curriculum in accordance with the following categories:

Category	Number of teachers
i. Having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines, or	 22
ii. Having a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teaching education qualifications.	 0

The ISMS workforce consists of Teachers, support and administration staff with both traditional tertiary and Montessori qualifications.

Refer to My Schools website: <https://www.myschool.edu.au/>



REPORTING AREA 6. Workforce Composition



ISMS had a staff retention rate of 88% in 2018 compared to 91% in 2017.

The ISMS workforce consists of teachers, support and administration staff, with both traditional tertiary and Montessori qualifications. ISMS has no indigenous or Torres Strait Islander staff members.

“The greatest sign of success for a teacher is to be able to say, “The children are now working as if I did not exist.””

Maria Montessori

School Staff	
Teaching staff	 22
Full-time equivalent teaching staff	 12.3
Non-teaching staff	 45
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	 22.7

REPORTING AREA 7.

Student Attendance and Management of Non-attendance

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Extended or repeated absence is usually due to illness. The rare exception to this is managed by pastoral processes initially through the classroom teacher and then by the Principal, if required.

Parents and caregivers report planned absences to the Principal in advance. Classroom attendance rolls are electronically submitted to Reception by 9:00am each morning (30 minutes after the start of the day) where any planned or unplanned absences are recorded. Parents report any unplanned absences by phone or via the ISMS School app. An automated text message from the School messaging system is sent to parents of children still absent at 9:10am. Responses are monitored and families are called by phone should further information be required. These prompts allow us to track absences and support the safety of children.

Partial absences are also monitored through the School roll. Absences of children arriving late (after 8:45am) or departing early, or for part of the day for various reasons, are recorded at Reception where parents are required to sign children in and out. These partial absences are managed by pastoral processes initially through the classroom teacher and then by the Principal, if required.

**“ My vision of the future
is no longer of people taking
exams and proceeding from
secondary school to University
but of passing from one stage
of independence to a higher,
by means of their own activity
and effort of will.”**

Maria Montessori

ATTENDANCE RATE

KINDERGARTEN



YEAR ONE



YEAR TWO



YEAR THREE



YEAR FOUR



YEAR FIVE



YEAR SIX



WHOLE SCHOOL



In 2018 our overall yearly attendance rate across the School was 92%.



REPORTING AREA 8.

Enrolment Policy

1. ENROLMENT POLICY

The Inner Sydney Montessori School is a co-education Pre and K-6 School providing an education underpinned by the philosophy of Dr Maria Montessori and fulfilling the educational requirements of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). 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.

ISMS offers a three year (twelve terms) Pre-Primary Montessori program with a full Extended Day component (from around 4.5 to 5 years of age, child dependent). This progresses towards the Montessori Primary program, split into 6-9 and 9-12 age group classes. Commencement at Primary (Stage 2) is roughly equivalent to commencement in Year 1 of a traditional school.

STUDENT POPULATION

ISMS started 2018 with 260 students and finished the year at 292, of whom 140 are Pre-Primary [Stage 1] and 152 are enrolled in the Primary School. There are approximately equal numbers of boys and girls throughout the School.

The School follows a specific philosophy of education and as such attracts parents/guardians desirous of educating their child within this philosophy.

PROCEDURES OVERVIEW

The Enrolment Registrar processes all enrolments. The Registrar has the responsibility of reviewing applications for enrolment in line with the principles expressed in this policy:

1. Process all applications within the School enrolment policy
2. Consider each applicant's supporting statement/interview responses regarding their ability and willingness to support the School ethos

3. Consider each applicant's educational needs. To do this the School will gather information and consult with the student's parents/guardians and other relevant persons
4. Identify any strategies which need to be put in place to accommodate the applicant before a decision regarding the enrolment is made
5. Inform the applicant of the outcome.

Of particular importance when considering the acceptance of the child as a pupil at the School is the commitment of the child's parent(s) to the Montessori philosophy and to the running of the School.

The child most likely to benefit from a Montessori education and to contribute to the education of his or her fellow pupils is the child whose parent(s) take an active and consistent interest in the School, which is strongly supported by volunteer efforts of the parents.

ISMS welcomes children of all backgrounds and abilities and in the spirit of Maria Montessori, provides child relevant programs to meet diversity, needs and stage of development.

Enrolment is accepted on the assumption that the parent(s) will be supportive of the School management team and the philosophical foundations of the School and will follow appropriate pathways when following up on concerns relating to their child.

2. ADMISSIONS POLICY

The enrolment process and selection criteria for our various programs is outlined below.

All enrolments are processed through the office of the Registrar.

INFANT COMMUNITY PROGRAMS AND BOOKING PROCESS

Enrolment in the Infant Community program is separate to wait listing for the Stage 1 – 3 (3 to 12 years) program. To wait list a child for Pre and Primary, attendance at a tour is required along with the corresponding application fee.



Infant Community programs are offered on a term-by-term basis. There is no wait list; offers and bookings are made in accordance with the following steps.

Students currently enrolled in the Infant Community Programs are given preference to enrol in the following term. Offers are made via email to the nominated parent and include a direct booking link to pay and confirm a place. Current family re-enrolment offers in the same age group level are made on the Monday of Week 5 of each academic term. Families are provided one week to re-enrol before the next round of offers are made.

After that, offers are made to families who are already enrolled in the Infant Community who are moving up an age group. These offers are made on the Monday of Week 6 of each academic term. Families are provided one week to re-enrol before the next round of offers are made.

Once this process is complete for current families, any remaining vacancies are opened to the public, on the Monday of Week 7 of each academic term. A direct booking link for each program with vacancies is posted on the School website.

PLACEMENT PRIORITY

We encourage families to start an Infant Community program early in their child's life if considering placement for Pre and Primary.

First time bookings are accepted for children under 2.5 years of age as a minimum of six months of the program is necessary to optimise outcomes. First time bookings for children over 2.5 years of age may be refunded if demand exceeds places for the younger age group.

On occasion, a Transition to Stage 1 place (term prior to starting Stage 1) is offered to children over 2.5 years if they've been offered a Stage 1 place but have not attended the Infant Community previously.

Places are limited and we are often unable to meet demand for the Infant Community for children wishing to join after 18 months of age. Joining the Toddler program at pregnancy or before 15 months (Toddler Transition start age) provides priority entry to the 18 month to three-year course – the Parent Toddler Program (PTP).

ATTENDANCE DATES

The Parent Toddler Program runs for the duration of the term and the Nido and Toddler Transition program runs from the second to second-to-last week of term. Specific dates are published in the booking links once released.

Participants attend one session per week at the same day and time. PTP classes are two hours in duration and Nido and Toddler Transition are one-and-a-half hours. Make-up classes are not available as all classes are usually booked at capacity.

STAGE 1 (PRE-SCHOOL, AGES 3-6)

Many children start at ISMS when they turn three and join a Pre-Primary (Stage 1) class. Participation in the Infant Community Programs can help children prepare for Stage 1, but this is not a prerequisite and doesn't carry any waitlist advantage.

As demand for Stage 1 places often exceeds supply, the School unfortunately has to decline some applications. For this reason, ISMS maintains a waitlist and advises that the earlier the application process is completed, the better the chances of achieving a placement.

STEPS TO ENROLMENT IN STAGE 1

1. Attend an observation tour of the Balmain campus
2. Submit application forms, together with applicable fees
3. Meet with the Principal or delegate
4. Acceptance of a place.

ATTEND A SCHOOL TOUR

School tours are conducted regularly throughout each term. They take approximately one hour and are usually conducted by a School parent. The tour is followed by a 30 minute session with the Enrolments Registrar, and Principal, when available.



REPORTING AREA 8.

Enrolment Policy

APPLICATION FORMS

Application forms are included in an information pack handed out during the School tours.

Once an application form is submitted to the Enrolments Registrar, together with payment of the applicable fees, a child can be placed on the waitlist. This does not guarantee a placement, but it is a critical step towards one.

The form allows the candidate's family to nominate a preferred campus, Balmain or Lilyfield. If a place can only be offered at the non-preferred campus (where the family has a preference) then it will be up to the family as to whether they wish to proceed.

Waitlist families are welcome to contact the Enrolments Registrar at any time with queries about the process or if they wish to make changes to the details they have on file.

MEET WITH THE PRINCIPAL

Parents or carers are invited to meet with the Principal prior to any formal offer of place. This is a good opportunity to address any questions the family may have about Montessori education and ISMS, as well as providing a forum to discuss any special needs the child may have to ensure there is a good fit with the School.

ACCEPTANCE OF PLACE

Places are offered from June/July for all children who would be eligible to start in the following year and a response is generally sought within 14 calendar days of the offer being made.

Children join Stage 1 in the term in which they turn three, but not before they turn three, and transition to Stage 2 around the time they turn six. To ensure this transition happens at the best time for each child based on his or her academic, social and emotional development, the Stage 1 Director consults with parents about this when the time comes.

STAGES 2 AND 3 (PRIMARY, AGES 6-12)

Most children in the ISMS Stage 1 program go on to Stages 2 and 3 at our Balmain campus. Children offered a place in Stage 1 is on the understanding that they will complete the full nine-year program from ages 3 – 12 years.

Children who have attended other Montessori Pre-Schools are also welcome to seek a transfer to ISMS for Stages 2 and 3. Their applications are subject to the same application prerequisites as listed and other considerations such as the desired balance of children in each class by age and sex.

Under certain circumstances, ISMS may accept a transferring student with no Montessori experience into the Stage 2 or Stage 3 program. This matter is of careful consideration.

Children transferring to Pre-Primary or Primary from other Schools must lodge a report from the previous School before the child is accepted.

Over the years, the School has found that the child most likely to benefit from Montessori education is one whose parents take an active and consistent interest in the School. Also, the benefits of Montessori are seen to be maximised if the child remains until the completion of their Primary education in Stage 3 (traditionally Year 6, in Australia).

For this reason, ISMS asks parents who want their children to advance to Stage 2, to learn more about Montessori and the Primary school environment, and particularly how the classroom environment and the curriculum change to match the needs of the developing child. Parents are asked to give an undertaking that they intend their child to remain with the School until the end of Stage 3.

“ To stimulate life, leaving it free, however, to unfold itself—that is the first duty of the educator. ”

Maria Montessori



SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications are considered on a case-by-case basis. The key selection criteria are:

- A demonstrated interest in and knowledge of Montessori education, for example through attendance at information evenings and open days and the meeting with the Principal. Attendance at the Infant Community Program is also regarded as an indication of interest
- The date of receipt of the application forms and payments, and the child's age at that date
- Whether a sibling of the child is or has been a student at ISMS beyond Stage 1. For this to apply, the younger sibling needs to have been registered on the waitlist prior to turning one and the parents or guardians need to have been participating in the life of the School
- Commitment to the full Montessori program to the end of Stage 3
- The needs of the classrooms in terms of maintaining a balance of children by age and by sex
- If parent(s) was a Montessori student, either at ISMS or another Montessori school.

3. ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL REGISTRAR

- Oversight of the enrolments process
- Book a place on an Observation Tour prior to application submission
- Provide Information Pack and enrolments forms at visit which includes fee schedule
- Accept application with waitlist fee and Birth Certificate
- Provide accurate information about the School
- Make no promises of accepting a child until enrolment procedures have been followed
- Disperse printed information and forms.

ROLE OF THE STAFF

Discuss philosophy and functioning of the classroom with the family.

FOR PROSPECTIVE FAMILIES

- Parents must observe classrooms through a tour process prior to submitting an application
- For Primary enrolments, the Director invites the child to visit the classroom unaccompanied for a half or full day – this is to discern how he/she may manage to transition to a Stage 2 Montessori classroom.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Classroom observations are an important part of understanding the way in which a Montessori school operates and an integral part of the Montessori philosophy. In the classroom, the teachers observe the children at work and direct them as necessary. The children observe each other and take responsibility for their work.

ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

- Interview family and child
- Confirm the interest/abilities of the family in helping within the School
- Confirm the intent to complete the full nine-year program
- Inform family of responsibility towards participation in Working Bees
- Determine appreciation and/or understanding of the Montessori pedagogy
- Determine long term educational goals
- Establish the responsibility parents have towards further education (through Parent Education Evenings).



REPORTING AREA 8.

Enrolment Policy

ENROLMENT PROCEDURE

The following outlines the enrolment procedure:

- I. Parent enquiry made – parents are instructed that the enrolment procedure begins with a School Observation Tour (Primary and Pre-Primary) and that children cannot be waitlisted until this occurs
- II. School observation booked:
 - a) 12 people maximum led by a current parent of the School
 - b) Observations occur fortnightly during term
- III. Enrolment Pack provided at observation including Application Form, Schedule of Fees, and Frequently Asked Questions flyer
- IV. School observation procedure:
 - a) Parent arrives and is met by current parent (Tour Guide), who provides parent with Enrolment Pack and provides a brief overview of the School
 - b) Tour group observes Infant Community, Pre-Primary and Primary classrooms (a selection of classes, not necessarily the whole School)
 - c) Parent may submit Application Form (including Birth Certificate) and fee to secure place on the waitlist
- V. Application Form received: once observation completed and Application Fee and Birth Certificate are submitted, child is waitlisted
- VI. "Receipt of Application" letter sent. If completed documentation has been submitted, letter will confirm child has been placed on the waitlist. If any items are still outstanding, a letter will be sent to advise parents
- VII. Short listed parents and child are invited for interview with the Principal two to three terms ahead of starting date
- VIII. Priority for enrolment is given to:
 - a) Sibling status
 - b) Position on waitlist
 - c) The age of the child on application
 - d) Age and gender (for reasonable class balance)
 - e) Commitment to the 3-12 program
 - f) Commitment and involvement of parents
 - g) When all factors are equal, the age at date of application determines priority
- IX. Following interview with the Principal, letters of "Offer of Place" are sent based on:
 - a) The child's readiness
 - b) Sibling priority (please note that priority is only given if a sibling has completed Stage 1)
 - c) Reasonable balance of gender
 - d) Montessori school transfer
 - e) Commitment and involvement of parents
- X. Parents accept place with Placement Fee
- XI. Letters sent until all available places are accepted
- XII. If a parent considers they have been unfairly or improperly treated in the enrolment process, they have a right to lodge a grievance with the Principal as outlined in the School's Grievance Policy
- XIII. Acceptance of a place at ISMS carries a commitment on the behalf of parents, to the School's philosophy and culture and a willingness to further the interests of the School wherever possible.

Applications for Primary are accepted from other Montessori Pre-Schools. As there should be no more than 10% of children without previous Montessori experience in a class, applications for Primary from children in non-Montessori schools are only accepted after consultation with the Principal and are reviewed on a case by case basis.



4. INTEGRATION OF NEW FAMILIES

a) Role of Registrar

- Informing the parents of the child's acceptance
- Sending contract and receiving deposit
- Informing the Director at the start of term, who will then contact the family directly
- Invite and host a New Starter Parent Induction meeting on the second Monday of each term

b) Orientation Day

The School adheres to the Montessori principle of staggered entry to enable maximum attention to be given to each new child in the class and to assist the children to adjust to their new environment. Commencement dates are determined and notified by the Directors.

c) Role of the Director

- Meet with parents and child prior to the child starting
- Give Class Parent Liaison details to the new family
- Connect the child with other children
- Welcome the family into the class parent community.

All questions regarding the Montessori education and philosophy should be directed to the Principal or a Director.

The role of the Parent Liaison is to assist the new families to feel welcome at the School and to involve families in the School's community activities.

“Respect all the reasonable forms of activity which the child engages and try to understand them.”

Maria Montessori

5. ENROLLING SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN (SEE DISABILITY POLICY)

ISMS is a welcoming community of learners with a proven capacity to respond to the needs of children requiring special assistance.

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

- Intellectual disabilities
 - Learning disabilities
 - Giftedness
 - Behaviour difficulties
 - Multiple disabilities
 - Physical disabilities
 - Vision impairment
 - Deafness/hard of hearing
 - Families at risk.
1. Parent follows the enrolment process up to the interview stage
 2. At interview the parents are asked to provide details of the child's needs and provide any assessment reports from other involved professionals. These are viewed by the Principal or Registrar and Director of Learning Support
 3. The Principal and the Director may discuss the child's application
 4. The Principal and Director may observe the child in their present placement. If the child is not in a school, the Director may visit the child at home
 5. When the child starts at the School all relevant staff members collaborate to draw up a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP)
 6. The School may recommend education and/or health professionals if required and these will normally assist with the writing of a Personalised Learning Plan.



REPORTING AREA 8.

Enrolment Policy

MEETING THE NEEDS OF A CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

1. When a child with special needs enrolls at the School, it is undertaken with the full understanding that the School believes the Montessori environment will be of benefit to the child
2. Obtain an independent disability assessment of the child

Where information obtained by ISMS indicates that the child has a disability, the Principal will seek to identify the exact nature of the child's needs and the strategies required to address them. Having obtained this information, the Principal will determine whether the child, if enrolled, would require some measures or actions to assist the child to participate in the School's courses or programs or to use the School's facilities or services that are not required by students who do not have the child's disability. Where the Principal determines that the child would require some such measures or actions, the Principal will seek to identify whether those measures or actions required are reasonable in that they balance the interests of all parties affected. In assessing whether a particular measure or action for a particular child is reasonable, the Principal will comply with the standards outlined in the Disability Standards for Education (Cth) 2005

Where the Principal determines that the enrolment of the child would require the School to take unreasonable measures or actions to ensure that the child is able to participate in the ISMS courses or programs, or to use the School's facilities and services, on the same basis as a student without a disability, or would cause unjustifiable hardship, the Principal may decline the offer of a position or defer the offer

3. It is recommended by the School that parents and staff work collaboratively
4. The child will be observed by all relevant staff members upon entry. When planning and evaluating a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) all relevant parties will be included in meetings to discuss the outcomes of the program and follow up

plans. Parents will be kept informed at all times

5. Educational and/or health professionals are welcomed to continue their program with the child at School
6. A child who has special needs is an integral part of the School community. Therefore, involvement in extra-curricular activities is encouraged
7. The aim is to assist the child to reach their full potential

Note: if a child is observed and appears to be having difficulties of any kind following enrolment, the Director will inform parents as soon as possible. Staff members will document all relevant instances and work with the Learning and Support team and / or Principal as required.

6. CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE

FIRST CHILD ENTERING THE SCHOOL

Offers of place must be accepted within 10 working days by returning the Acceptance Form which lists the following conditions:

- A non-refundable placement fee (per child) is payable on acceptance of the offer
- Each child is expected to attend the School for the entire nine-year program. 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
- ISMA (Inner Sydney Montessori Association) membership must be kept current for the duration of the child's attendance at the School
- Parents are requested to support and participate in the School community in a variety of ways and are encouraged to attend Parent Education Evenings organised by the teaching staff to deepen their knowledge of Montessori education at ISMS
- Parents are asked to participate in fundraising activities and Working Bees or to pay levies.



SIBLINGS

Conditions of acceptance for siblings are similar to those for the first child. Sibling priority is only applied if the older sibling has completed or has the intention of completing the full School program (i.e. Pre-Primary and Primary).

7. TIMING OF ENTRY

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 Directors once the Registrar indicates places have been offered.

TIMING OF ENTRY – PRIMARY

The child may transition to Primary at the beginning of any term per the School Transition Policy.

8. TRANSFERS

There is no automatic right to transfer between authentic 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.

9. DEFERRALS

Requests by parents for deferred entry are generally not granted but each case will be considered on its merits. Requests for deferred entry must be made in writing to the Principal.

The School may also advise a deferred start, in which case a place will be held without fees being charged until the entry date given by the Class Director.

10. 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.

11. FEE POLICY

(a) Payment of Fees

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

Fees for Stages 2 and 3 are due and payable according to a payment plan that is agreed between the family and the School. Discounts are offered for early payment.

Fees for Stage 1 are due each fortnight with payment details encrypted and held securely on the School database.

Some families of Pre-Primary children may be eligible for Government subsidies through the Family Assistance Office.

Fees for children commencing School after the commencement of term (at the request of the School) are reduced pro rata. There is no reduction for absences due to holidays, illness or a late start to the term instigated by parents.

If families do not adhere to their instalment commitment and fall behind in their fees the School is obliged to consider withdrawing the child's enrolment.



Children are human beings to whom respect is due, superior to us by reason of their innocence and of the greater possibilities of their future.

Maria Montessori



REPORTING AREA 8.

Enrolment Policy

(b) Fees Determined by School Council

School fees are determined annually by the School Council, considering:

- ISMA's status as a non-profit organisation
- Compliance with government funding and other regulatory requirement
- The financial cost to administer the School
- New and existing enrolment levels
- Applications and waiting lists
- Other relevant criteria.

The School Council determines the conditions attached to fees including late payment fees, early settlement discounts and other similar fees/discounts.

(c) Notification of Fees and Conditions

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that parents of existing students and applicants are notified of fee changes and of conditions which may apply to fees. The Business Manager and the Principal maintain current fee schedules which are available to all parents.

(d) Fee Relief

The School Council may agree to provide families with relief in relation to tuition fees. Families who have concerns about tuition fees should approach the Principal. 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 needs of the School having regard to specific needs of classes
- The current level of new and existing enrolments, applications and waiting lists
- Other relevant criteria.

In appropriate circumstances, the Principal may recommend to the Finance Committee that some form of fee relief be provided. The Principal and/or Business Manager will then meet with the family concerned in order to assess the family's financial situation and, if possible, agree on behalf of the Finance Committee to a solution acceptable to both parties.

Fee relief arrangements are made for periods of up to 12 months only. At the end of an initial 12-month period, arrangements are reviewed by the Finance Committee and extended only if appropriate based on the conduct of the Debtors account.

All fee relief arrangements are in writing by way of a letter signed by the Principal, Business Manager or Treasurer. All fee relief arrangements are assessed in strict confidence. The School Council is informed of all fee relief arrangements, on a no-name basis.

The School reserves the right to increase fees at any time by the giving of prior written notice including via the School Newsletter. The notice period will be at least one month.

The School's policies which are made from time to time are made pursuant to the requirements set out in section 47 of the Education Act, the Board of Studies for registration of the school and the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

“Joy, feeling one's own value, being appreciated and loved by others, feeling useful and capable of production are all factors of enormous value for the human soul.”

Maria Montessori





“ We must clearly understand that when we give the child freedom and independence, we are giving freedom to a worker already braced for action, who cannot live without working and being active. ”

Maria Montessori



REPORTING AREA 9.

School Policies

POLICIES GENERAL

All policies are maintained by the Principal and the Business Manager and are accessible on request. A selection of these policies are published on the intranet and accessible at Reception for members of the School community. A full set of policies are held in shared common places throughout the School for staff to refer to. The following are mandated reporting fields in this Annual Report:

1. STUDENT WELFARE

The School seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which:

- Minimises the risk of harm and ensures students feel secure
- Supports the physical, social, academic, spiritual and emotional development of students
- Provides student welfare policies and programs that develop a sense of self-worth and foster personal development.

To ensure that all aspects of the School mission for providing for a student's welfare are implemented, the following policies and procedures documents are highlighted as being in place in 2018. All staff members have been briefed in the content of policies. Policies are listed on the intranet and are available to staff. The policies that are directly relevant to parents, i.e. non staff or governance specific, are printed in full on the intranet.

I. CHILD PROTECTION:	
Child Protection Policy and Procedures	012
Child Protection Policy – Rationale and Principles	012A
Code of Conduct for Staff	013
Interactions with Children	039

II. STUDENT WELFARE:	
Administration of Medication Policy	003
Anaphylaxis Policy	004
Anti-Bullying Policy	005
Asthma Policy	007
Behaviour Management Policy	009
Dealing with Medical Conditions – General	019
Diabetes Policy	021
Disability Policy	022
Excursion Policy	028
Excursions – Risk Assessment Procedure	028A
First Aid	029



II. STUDENT WELFARE cont.:	
Immunisation Policy	034
Incident, Injury, Trauma and Medical Conditions Policy	035
Infectious Diseases Policy	037
Managing a Child with an Acute Fever	041
Overnight Excursions Policy and Procedures	043
Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy	047
Rest and Sleep Policy and Procedures	049
Safe Food Handling Policy and Procedures	050
Sports Risk Management Policy	053
Sun Protection Policy	055
Volunteers and Students Policy	057
Water Safety Policy	058

2. STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Students are required to abide by the School rules and to follow the directions of Teachers and other members of staff. Corporal punishment is not permitted under any circumstances. At all times, the positive and supportive qualities of a Montessori environment are emphasised with staff, students and parents. This approach is reflected in the policy documentation.

See:

Behaviour Management Policy	009
Code of Conduct for Staff	013
Procedural Fairness and Discipline and Punishment - Students	046

3. COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES RESOLUTION

The School's processes for resolution of complaints and grievances include processes for raising and responding to matters of concern identified by parents and/or students and/or staff members.

See:

Staff Manual	054
Complaints Handling and Grievances Policy – Parents / Staff	014
Code of Conduct for Staff	013
Procedural Fairness and Discipline and Punishment - Students	046



REPORTING AREA 9.

School Policies

SUMMARY OF POLICY	CHANGES IN 2018	Access to policy
<p>STUDENT WELFARE</p> <p>The School seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimises the risk of harm and ensures students feel secure; • Supports the physical, social, academic, spiritual and emotional development of students; • Provides student welfare policies and programs that develop a sense of self-worth and foster personal development. 	<p>The Child Protection Policy was revised to include an easy to follow Child Protection Procedure flowchart that details the initial actions of the member of staff and subsequent actions of the Principal to follow up an incident report. Additionally, a Child Protection Expression of Concern form was introduced.</p>	<p>The full text of the School's Child Protection Policy can be accessed via the School Intranet as well as in hard copy at Reception for members of the School community. A full set of policies are held in the staffroom and in the Principal's Office for staff to refer to and they are also accessible via the Staff Intranet and Google Drive.</p>
<p>ANTI-BULLYING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The School believes that all members of the community have the right to a learning and work environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. We all share a responsibility to foster, promote and restore relationships. We believe that bullying is unacceptable and we [students, staff and parents] all share a responsibility for preventing it; • This policy builds on various other policies of the School including 'Code of Conduct' and 'Interactions with Children,' to provide clear procedures and strategies to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying. 	<p>In 2018, the School revised the Behaviour Management Policy following staff professional development in this area. Students were empowered to come up with our very own ISMS Respectful Guidelines that were implemented by all across the School.</p> <p>The School's Anti-Bullying Policy was not modified in 2018.</p>	<p>The full text of the School's Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Management Policies can be accessed via the School Intranet as well as hard copies at Reception for members of the School community. A full set of policies are held in the staffroom and in the Principal's Office for staff to refer to and they are also accessible via the Staff Intranet and Google Drive.</p>
<p>DISCIPLINE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are required to abide by the School rules and to follow the directions of Teachers and other members of staff. Corporal punishment is not permitted under any circumstances. At all times, the positive and supportive qualities of a Montessori environment are emphasised with staff, students and parents. This approach is reflected in the policy documentation. 	<p>Behaviour Management Policy introduced in 2018 as detailed above.</p> <p>No change to Procedural Fairness and Discipline and Punishment: Students Policy.</p>	<p>The full text of the School's Behaviour Management and Procedural Fairness and Discipline and Punishment Students Policy can be accessed via the School Intranet as well as hard copies at Reception for members of the School community. A full set of policies are held in the staffroom and in the Principal's Office for staff to refer to and they are also accessible via the Staff Intranet and Google Drive.</p>



SUMMARY OF POLICY	CHANGES IN 2018	Access to policy
<p>COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES RESOLUTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School's processes for resolution of complaints and grievances include processes for raising and responding to matters of concern identified by parents and/or students and/or staff members. 	<p>A review section was added to the policy to state that the policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier, if a significant change in legislation or service practices occurs.</p>	<p>The full text of the School's Complaints Handling and Grievances Policy can be accessed via the School Intranet as well as hard copies at Reception for members of the School community. A full set of policies are held in the staffroom and in the Principal's Office for staff to refer to and they are also accessible via the Staff Intranet and Google Drive.</p>



REPORTING AREA 10.

School Determined Improvement Targets

1. EDUCATION

GOALS

- Continued focus on indigenous culture, history and reference throughout the curriculum in all levels
- Develop new initiatives to expand interactions between Stage 1 and Stage 2 students and the oldest children across the School
- Review Learning and Support capacity and programs – make formal recommendations for the future
- Further embed technology into the learning methods in Primary levels
- NAPLAN – use the data to further inform and reflect on teaching practices
- Introduction of Green Team and implementation of Bye Bye Plastic Club for promoting sustainability

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Cross-curricular activities focused on indigenous culture and connections with community elders. Participated in a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony. Establishment of Buddy Readers (older children supporting younger children) and 'work experience' opportunities for Stage 3 to work with Infant Community children.

Reviewed and revised the Transition Policy with the emphasis on "readiness" criteria.

Developed the Peer Support Program.

Increased Learning and Support team from 2.0 FTE to 2.5 FTE in 2018. Increased government recurrent funding through August census for SWD.

Introduced IT resource "Nessy" and Dyslexia Screener as well as a Literacy support program "Reading Their Way".

Preparation to move the School from MRX to Transparent Classroom for tracking (Reporting and Planning for student learning).

Continued Classroom ICT upgrades to iPad and laptops. Developed activities such as filmmaking and stop motion.

Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM) implementation.

Montessori Model United Nations – opened discussions and began development for the program to be launched in 2019/20.

Planning and development of After Schools Clubs with a goal to have five clubs up and running by the end of 2019.

Introduction of student developed Respectful Guidelines.

2. TEAM

GOALS

- Address the drastic shortage of quality trained Montessori Teachers in Australia by developing training opportunities
- Strengthen the leadership team and delineate roles to ensure clear understanding of responsibilities
- Board succession – continue to evolve succession planning and facilitate transition of some Board positions throughout 2018

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Planning and development of Sydney Montessori Training Centre, a subsidiary company of ISMS, to be up and running in 2019.

Introduction of a Deputy Principal of Academics and Deputy Principal of Operations, as well as Coordinators in each Stage.

New Board members joined our School Council with skills in property and strategic planning.



3. FACILITIES

GOALS

- Open the new Yalbalanga Playground. Sun safe shade and development of outdoor learning space at Lilyfield. Continue planning for additional classes and student growth – both on existing premises and possible new premises (continued from 2017)
- Continued implementation of an environmental sustainability plan (continued from 2017)
- Adopt and implement a whole school IT strategy

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Plans for the refurbishment of the Outdoor Learning Areas at Lilyfield and Balmain were finalised with the work carried out over the Summer holiday period, ready for the students' return in 2018.

Presentations and meetings with Local Council to submit the Development Application for our Camperdown site.

4. COMMUNICATION

GOALS

- Continue consolidation of all internal communication tools - web/ Intranet/ app/ newsletter – with the aim of simplification; investigate portal option and feasibility for new app integrated with new website
- Continue to develop the Parent Education program focusing on better understanding of the child's preparation for Infant Community, the benefits of completing the three Stages and High School
- Develop content strategy for the Blog including policies and procedures to maintain it and ensure it is relevant for external / internal audiences

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Developed new website. App and Newsletter were launched during the year to improve communication.

Parent Education programs were scheduled in response to need and held each term outlining the education received throughout all Stages here at ISMS.

Stage 1 parents continued to attend New Starter meetings with Extended Day and Evening tours. Parent Survey was drafted for 2018.

5. GROWTH & SUSTAINABILITY

GOALS

- Continue our Alumni program
- Continue the development of a marketing strategy to further secure enrolments
- Continue work on the new website as a front of house introduction to the School
- Continue work on the development of a High School – develop high level curriculum and funding strategy
- Develop Parent Induction Program – develop for 1st year parents and carers
- Further fundraising initiatives beyond events to be developed including consideration of potential resourcing
- Parent and Staff Satisfaction Surveys to be completed in anticipation of 'ISMS 2020'

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

An Alumni program continued to keep former students linked to ISMS.

Employed a Marketing Assistant in 2018.

Work is continuing on the feasibility of a Montessori High School for Sydney.

2018 Parent Education calendar provided varied and robust sessions.

Fundraising has continued through various events including the 'OPA! Comedy Night'.

Parent survey was issued in 2018.

6. COMMUNITY & BRAND

GOALS

- Sustainability Saturday to be further supported to become our core community open day (biennial)
- Develop Social Media presence (Facebook and Instagram)
- Continue visits and connection with Aldersgate Nursing Home

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Sustainability Saturday (name change from Green Day Out) has become a fixture on the ISMS calendar.

ISMS working with Punch Park Community Garden (Green Team Initiative).

Significant money was raised through various children initiated activities to support chosen charities such as, Fiver for a Farmer Initiative and Coffee for a Cause.

Participation in BandFest.

Hosted Thai visitors and formed connections with fellow Montessori practitioners.

Reporting Area 11.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

It is the culture within our School and within Montessori education that respect and responsibility are at the heart of what we teach and live by. There is a great emphasis on recognising and valuing the worth of each individual – student, staff member and parent/carer. The community role is to care for each of its members.

Respect and responsibility flow through the foundation of fundamental practices in Grace and Courtesy. The revising and implementation of the Behaviour Policy adopts a plan that considers the individual academic, social and emotional needs of the children at ISMS. The practice of Grace and Courtesy manifested itself in the student input and implementation of the new Respectful Guidelines adopted in 2018. These guidelines support all at ISMS; children and adults alike.

- We use our hands to help, not harm.
- We use kind and thoughtful words and actions.
- We walk indoors and use calm voices.
- We give each other time and space.
- We care for everything in our environment.
- We make a genuine effort to participate and learn.

Our Montessori environments gather children in 3 different ages: from birth to 3 years old, 3 to 6 years old, 6 to 9 years old and 9 to 12 years old. These "mixed age classrooms" favour spontaneous cooperation, desire to learn, mutual respect and the acquisition of deep knowledge in the process of teaching others. At ISMS we encourage students to collaborate rather than compete against each other. The unique integrated curriculum provides all students with experiences which allow them to discover their own innate abilities and therefore establish recognition of their independence, through learning experiences that rely on personal discipline, true collaboration, goal setting and self-assessment.

We encourage students to explore learning opportunities that encompass diverse cultural backgrounds and beliefs. Formal activities such as Grandparents' Day, Mother's Day and Father's Day, national cultural celebrations, Harmony Day are but a few of the occasions intended to acknowledge and celebrate family, culture and develop understanding, acceptance and peace. The members of the School community are routinely encouraged to share their knowledge to ensure inclusion of all students and their families.

STUDENT LEADERS AND COMMUNITY

The School continues to promote student awareness of global community issues. In Montessori education, understanding the interdependent nature of human life is very important and becomes a focus of many lessons both inside the classroom and in the wider community.

Through their desire to be of service to others, the ISMS students eagerly participate in fundraising initiatives through food stalls, School dances and charitable events. Funds raised in 2018 were donated to the following charities:

- WWF – for donations to the White Rhino, Orangutan and Chimpanzee foundations
- World Vision
- The Exodus Foundation
- The Smith Family
- RSPCA
- Great Barrier Reef Foundation
- Coffee for a Cause - Bali Montessori School
- Fiver for a Farmer

Students are also encouraged to participate in a selection of activities across the School including: The Green Team focussing on sustainable practices within our School and Bye, Bye Plastic Club encouraging students to look at ways we can reduce, reuse and refuse plastic.

The Peer Support Program was successful in 2018 with students benefiting from a whole-school culture promoting leadership, wellbeing, positive relationships, resilience, and mental and social health. The activities and interactions for students 5 – 12 years in 2018 focused on values.

In 2018, ISMS continued visits to the Aldersgate Nursing Home in Lilyfield. This initiative allows ISMS students to help others within their local community. Every fortnight, a group of ten students, along with two ISMS staff members, visit the home and its residents. The students are a mix of Stage 2 and Stage 3 children and they enjoy talking, knitting, reading to, playing board and card games, performing and showing their work to the residents. The School choirs have also visited. The staff at the nursing home are grateful and the residents look forward to ISMS students visiting.



REPORTING AREA 12.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

Parent participation and commitment to the School is both welcomed and encouraged during every family's time at the School. The School holds regular Parent Education Evenings and parent meetings to provide opportunity for parents to express their views on matters. Parent Education activities based on aspects of the curriculum are planned at every Stage for individual classes, Stages and as a whole School. The Principal and the Directors have an open door policy with the parent body and meet regularly with parents on an individual basis.

Parental involvement and attendance at these functions would suggest that parent satisfaction is high throughout the School. Parent's concerns are noted and responses are provided in a considered manner.

In 2018, ISMS conducted a formal Parent Survey with a high number of our families responding.

Our commitment towards an authentic Montessori education rated highly amongst our parents, supporting the current teaching pedagogy at ISMS.

Many past students and their families continue to visit the School throughout their High School years. We continue to see a high level of satisfaction amongst the students, and this is reflected by our graduate speeches and through informal discussions throughout the year.

Primary students have regular conferences with their teachers during each term and the Principal welcomes feedback and discussion with Teachers and students at any time.

The Principal's open door policy ensures that all staff have the opportunity to discuss educational or personal issues as the need arises.

The School Council is composed largely of current parents and feedback in that context is both regular and formal, as required.

**“The child has a mind
able to absorb knowledge.
He has the power to teach
himself.”**

Maria Montessori



REPORTING AREA 13.

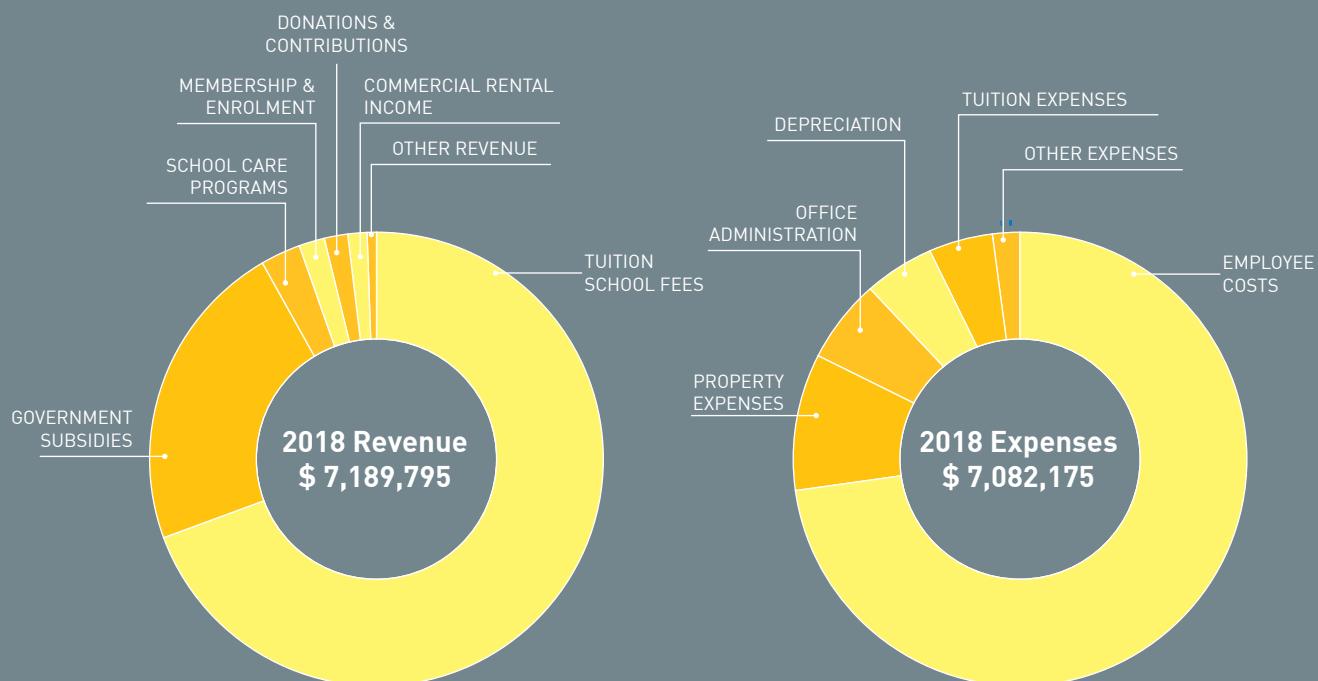
Summary Financial Information

2018 Revenue

Tuition School Fees	\$ 4,758,748.00	66.19%
Government Grants & Subsidies	\$ 1,475,841.00	20.53%
School Care Programs	\$ 373,429.00	5.19%
Enrolments, Memberships & Applications	\$ 250,557.00	3.48%
Donations and Contributions	\$ 92,893.00	1.29%
Commercial Rental Income	\$ 177,428.00	2.47%
Other Revenue	\$ 60,899.00	0.85%
	\$ 7,189,795.00	

2018 Expenses

Employee Expenses	\$ 5,054,395.00	71.37%
Property Expenses	\$ 911,040.00	12.86%
Administration Expenses	\$ 433,831.00	6.13%
Depreciation & Amortisation	\$ 252,190.00	3.56%
Tuition Expenses	\$ 81,645.00	1.15%
Other Expenses	\$ 349,074.00	4.93%
	\$ 7,082,175.00	



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