

THE FARMHOUSE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Educating the Whole Child



Primary School Campus: Building 6, 33 North Head Scenic Drive, Manly 2095

Pre-School Campus: 9 Bardoo Ave, North Balgowlah 2093

www.farmhousemontessori.nsw.edu.au

2023 Annual Report

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THEME 1: A Message from Key School Bodies

Chairman's Report

Introduction As the Chair of the Board, I am pleased to present the Annual Report for the year 2023. This report highlights key developments and achievements at our school during the calendar year and outlines our focus and strategy moving forward.

Principal and Staffing In 2023, we were fortunate to have Dr. Bruce Rixon complete his tenure as our interim Principal. His invaluable experience and calm guidance significantly benefited our community. In preparation for a smooth transition, Alia James joined us and spent the last eight months of the year becoming familiar with our school's unique dynamics, before she becomes Principal in early 2024. Her background as a Montessori specialist and her international experience have brought fresh perspectives and energy to our school. We are very much looking forward to working with Alia.

Strategic Planning Following extensive consultations with our parent body, we finalised our 5-year strategic plan. This blueprint, focusing on Montessori Education, Learning Environments, Staffing, Community Engagement, School Growth, and Governance, will guide our efforts to enhance our educational offerings and operational effectiveness.

Community Engagement Feedback from our parent survey conducted in Term 3 revealed a strong desire for increased community feeling. We have seen positive steps towards this with activities organised by the social committees at both campuses. Enhancing cross-campus collaboration remains a priority.

Property Developments Significant progress was made in progress to moving into a new building at North Head, Manly, which will enhance our learning environments considerably. The transition to this new space is eagerly anticipated and will mark a milestone in our school's history.

Challenges The year brought its challenges, notably the bushfire-related closures at the Manly campus. However, these incidents have led to a refined policy with the Harbour Trust, ensuring better preparedness and response in the future.

Financial Overview Financially, the school maintained a healthy position, though we experienced a deficit due to investments in infrastructure and lower enrolment in older classes. Plans are underway to address this in the coming year, with a focus on enhancing marketing efforts and expanding our school community.

Board Activities Our Board has continued to provide strategic oversight and governance. I extend my gratitude to all board members for their dedication and diligence in guiding the school this year.

Conclusion Looking ahead to 2024, we are optimistic about our school's direction and the opportunities to further enrich our educational offerings and community engagement. Thank you to all staff, parents, and board members for your continued support and commitment to our school's success.

Nick Fletcher.

Chair, Manly Warringah Montessori Society-In conjunction with the Board:

Principal's Report

The year of 2023 was one of consolidation and new growth. I am grateful for the support, commitment and vision for the direction of the School from the Board, the Board Chair Nick Fletcher, the staff, and the parent community throughout 2023.

Key areas which required consideration this year were strategic planning, staffing, facilities both within the classroom and a potential expansion, policies, technology, and marketing the school for future growth and sustainability.

Educational

The Montessori pedagogy was presented in each cycle and was integrated with weekly offerings of Ethics, French, Sport, and Music. Further educational experiences were provided for students through excursions and incursions, for Stage 3: camp at Milson Island Sport and Recreation Centre, the Montessori inter-school athletics carnival, and peer support program. The Ride to School program each Friday continued to be a highlight for North Head students and parents.

Parents were regularly provided with quality reports on their child's progress. To gauge a deeper understanding of student capacity and educational needs, we are now engaging in the testing of each child from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Technologically, Wi-Fi connectivity at North Balgowlah presented challenges which prevented natural workflow and productivity in the classroom and with administration and communication. The introduction of connection using the NBN largely addressed these challenges, though further support is required to reduce the amount of connectivity interruption.

Kindergarten Transition

The Farmhouse School has two campuses, North Balgowlah and North Head, Manly. The Balgowlah Campus is a Preschool Campus with a Kindergarten class. The North Head Campus is a Primary Campus.

Each year, during the last three weeks of Term 4, there is a transition period where Kindergarten students relocate to the North Head site to commence their transition to Primary. In 2023, the decision was made to commence this transition period from the commencement of Term 3.

This was facilitated through a daily morning and afternoon bus service between the two campuses was provided. The early transition of Kindergarten proved very successful and enabled Kindergarten children to engage with older children and prepare children for the next academic year.

This transition program was a pilot for future directions of the School, where there is a Kindergarten class at North Head, as well as at the North Balgowlah Campus. Given the Montessori philosophy, it is desirable to have a 3 to 6 years old program, which includes Kindergarten, at the North Head campus.

Potential of Relocating Primary Education at North Head Campus.

Education at North Head Campus is undertaken at Gatehouse, which is known as Building 6. The Primary classes operate in two large buildings, and a semi-public road intersects the buildings. While the buildings are large and can accommodate current student numbers, the Board began been looking for an alternate location at North Head for the Primary education of the children.

Negotiations with Sydney Harbour Federation Trust have been ongoing since late 2022 for the School to lease Building 5 at North Head. Building 5 is a larger, single building, with a number of rooms which could accommodate double the current student number. It is expected the lease will be finalised early 2024 and the rooms made ready for students to relocate, perhaps as early as at the commencement of Term 2, 2024.

Bush Fires

The North Head Campus is surrounded by natural bushland, operated and controlled by The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust ('SHFT'). It is a beautiful setting, which requires additional consideration in terms of weather conditions, in particular on very hot days. During Term 3 and the beginning of Term 4, the School was closed three times. To provide students with ongoing education and to ensure parents were able to undertake their normal daily duties, students were relocated to the North Balgowlah Campus and to the North Balgowlah Scout Hall.

The increased rates of school closures are due to the changes to the Fire Danger Index (FDI) rating level for bush fires which changed from six ratings to four ratings: no-rating, moderate, extreme, and catastrophic. The rating is for State-wide implementation. Whenever the weather rating is 'extreme' SHFT requires the closure of North Head Campus.

The extreme rating falls in the range of 50 to 99, during each closure the FDI rating was 51, and the view was that while the fire rating was 'extreme' the conditions were safe for continued education at the North Head Campus. Concerned about the practice of relocating students each time the fire rating reached 'extreme', the School sought to raise this concern with SHFT with input from bush fire consultants, Blackash, asking that the implications of the SHFT decision to close the site at the extreme fire rating be considered more carefully.

The School sought to use a site-specific risk-based approach to the triggers for closures of the businesses based on the Fire Danger Ratings. While the preservation of life is of the highest priority, it was felt that this could be prioritised using a detailed emergency management plan, including triggers for action and closure when the fire weather and bushfire risk was unacceptably high. The decision has been made that, if the FDI Extreme rating is between 50 and 74, North Head Campus will remain open, with management monitoring the situation. If the FDI Extreme rating is between 75 to 99, and Catastrophic rating (FDI100+) North Head Campus will be closed. Further, it was determined that the Principal, rather than SHFT would make the final decision of the closure of the School. Notably, since the increase of the FDI rating that would trigger the closure of the School, the School has remained open.

Staffing

The resignation of Ms Jenny Bensted at North Balgowlah campus in the first half of the academic school resulted in staffing and leader changes. Ms Alia James was employed as Deputy Principal. This is a new position for the School. Her focus was on the Preschool. The School appointed additional Teacher Assistants in Primary and Preschool. Farmhouse continued to attract quality Montessori educators. This included the return of Samantha, Elizabeth, and Laura, and the employment of Chris.

At the commencement of 2023 the School engaged Fiona Campbell, a former Montessori Principal and expert in Montessori pedagogy, as a consultant to teach and mentor staff on Montessori best practice proved to be extremely beneficial to mentor staff and strengthen Montessori practice at Farmhouse. Professional development and mentoring of our staff is always a School priority. We continue to assist staff in a very practical way (financially and time) to formalise their Montessori qualifications and educational best practice. These included the International Montessori Conference in Thailand attended by Harshitha Ravikumar and Smanatha Wong.

Intercampus bus service

Every effort is made by the School to assist parents in practical ways. One service provided in 2023, was the continued running of the intercampus bus service. The bus service offered parents the opportunity to transport their children to and from school in the morning and afternoon. The service proved to be very popular.

Community Service

Farmhouse is known for its generosity of others in the community and engaged in a number of extra-curricular activities.

This includes:

- ride to school day;
- cake and book stalls;
- face painting;
- Clean up Australian Day;
- combined Montessori Sports Carnival;
- bush walks, where, in the fabulous setting of North Head we are able to foster an appreciation for nature and the environment; and
- students and parents engaged in fundraising activities for a number of organisations including Bear Cottage, Ronald McDonald House, gifts for Dalwood Homes and Manly Women's Shelter.

Board Sub- Committees

During 2023 the Board formed Marketing and Technological Committees. Members of the respective committees have specialist skills which provide the Board with the appropriate depth of knowledge to assist their decision making for the betterment of the School.

The Board formed the IT Committee to consider all aspect of technology at the School. The School has a focus on a hybrid use of Google and Microsoft. The Board has confirmed the IT Committee recommendation to move to the use of Microsoft suite of software. Currently, the School operates primarily with paper for all enrolments and other administrative tasks. During 2023, the IT Committee worked through the implementation of an appropriate CRM for the school. The decision has been to use OWNA software for Preschool and Primary, with implementation to take place during 2024.

The Board formed the Marketing Committee to focus upon the development of marketing strategies for the school, in particular, to build student numbers at the North Head Campus. This included signage at Balgowlah Stockland Mall, updating the website, school branding and developing a style guide. During 2023 there has been a significant number of parent enquiries and tours of North Head Campus with the view to join Farmhouse during 2024 and beyond.

Promotion of Farmhouse

We continue to promote the School through the engagement with our parent community with events such as Grandparents, Mother's and Father's Days, Open Days, Trivia Night, and Orientation evenings for each stage of education offered. Parents have welcomed and appreciated class visitation and lesson observations at North Head. This practice was reintroduced at North Balgowlah. The Trivia Night, organised by parents, was a wonderful way to bring the school, and wider community together.

The ongoing promotion of the School to the wider community, included a number of Open Days held throughout the year both during the school weekday and Saturday morning. There was a particular focus on the building of students at the North Head campus. Staff, students, and parents took on an active role during these days, engaging in class activities and running stalls.

Strategic Plan

During 2023 the School Board completed development of the Strategic Plan. The process included working with all interest groups, in particular staff and parents. The Strategic Plan was endorsed by the Board for implementation in 2024.

In closing I wish to thank staff for their professional and diligent commitment and dedication to education of each child. I thank Alia James, Denise Tomkins, Fiona Campbell, Harshitha Ravikuma, Jenny Bensted, Alli Rayel, Jill Robertson and Suzanne Lyle for their hard work and dedication which has been invaluable to ensure the school established a level of calm and focus.

I express heartfelt gratitude to the Board who under the leadership of Mr Nick Fletcher as Chair, have played a pivotal role in the success of our students and the overall prosperity of our School. The commitment, vision, guidance and strategic decision, and tireless efforts of the Board in laying the foundation for the excellence of Farmhouse is valued and appreciated. I enjoyed my time as Principal at Farmhouse and wish the School all the very best into the future.

Dr Bruce Rixon

Principal

THEME 2: Contextual Information about the School

Farmhouse Montessori School has two campuses. The Early Childhood and also a Kindergarten program is located in the grounds of North Balgowlah Public School set on a large plot of land surrounded by large trees and generous outdoor space. With the children, we maintain chickens, herbs and a range of plants. Maria Montessori believed that children should be able to wander freely from the tactile materials found in a classroom to the sprawling wonders of nature.

Our Stage 1 environment caters for these exact needs. Children can wander freely from the classroom into the outdoor environment, where they will be met by the smiling faces of our outdoor educators as they explore the hands-on outdoor learning space. All the while, keeping within the parameters set by Montessori's pedagogy and philosophy. The Balgowlah campus provides a dynamic Montessori learning environment for 67 children per day in an intimate setting for two pre-primary classes for children aged 3-6 years old including the kindergarten class and one toddler class for children 2-3 years old.

The Primary Campus is located in heritage-listed former artillery buildings in North Head National Park, Manly these grounds are governed by the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust.. The low-set buildings have timber throughout and many original features of the historic buildings remain. The school has city and harbour views from the playground, which is surrounded by a peaceful, pristine heathland.

The school regularly use the national park for learning opportunities about Australian history, Indigenous studies and native flora and fauna. The children regularly engage with the natural environment on their doorstep, through bush walks in the national park, picnic lunches, walks to the local beaches and whale watching.

The North Head campus provides primary education for children attending from Foundation (Kindy) and then Year 1 of school in the age group of 6-9 years and 9-12 years.

The School is licensed by the Department of Education and Communities (ECED) for children from 2-6 years old and registered with the Board of Studies (NSW) (NESA) for the kindergarten and the primary as an Independent School with the AIS. The Montessori program includes the learning outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework and the key learning areas stated by the NSW Board of Studies.

The Farmhouse Montessori School is an educator of children according to the Montessori Method. It is committed to helping the child develop as an individual and as part of a community.

We provide an environment that encourages the child's awareness of their importance in caring for each other, their role in caring for the earth and its inhabitants. We aim to maintain in children, their sense of wonder of the world and their love of life in all its forms. Our school works with the children and their families to develop practices and the commitment to create a sustainable environment. Children at the school are provided with creative and stimulating, intellectual, artistic and developmental experiences. We strive to support each child's desire to learn and to foster their curiosity and love of knowledge to become a self-directed learner, flexible thinker and creative problem solver.

Our philosophy strives to instill in each child and family a sense of acceptance and understanding through our diverse learning environment and community to become global citizens.

The school is non-denominational and does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, national origin, religion, sexual orientation or disability in the admission of students, employment of staff and administration of policies.

We respect and acknowledge the Guringai people as the traditional custodians of the land on which the school is situated.

Dr Maria Montessori was dedicated to furthering the self-creating process of the child.

We aim to create an environment to nurture:

- **Respect** for oneself, for others, for the environment and all walks of life
- **A lifelong love of learning** curiosity and wonder, an enquiring mind, problem-solving, patience and tenacity
- **Independence**, confidence, responsibility, and adaptability to the ever-changing world.

How we teach:

- The children gain experience in sensations, ideas and facts; they listen to stories, look at pictures, explore how things work, feel different textures, smell herbs and flowers and taste various types of food. The senses prepare the ground for understanding;
- Learn other languages

- The environment is quiet and organised with child-sized workplaces where there is space to explore, time to discover and tools for learning;
- Each of us has something to teach and to learn. Adults in the environment observe and guide the children. Younger children learn from older ones and the reverse also happens.

The Montessori classroom is designed around the child, full of activities to stimulate the senses and develop life skills. This simple but profound truth inspired Dr Maria Montessori's lifelong pursuit of educational reform, methodology, psychology, teaching, and teacher training.

TRANSPARENT CLASSROOM

Designed by Montessorians for Montessorians, this online portal is a winner with staff and parents alike. Staff spend less time on administration and more time on planning their presentations and students' learning. Parents can see at a glance what their children are learning, who they are working with and what's next for their ongoing development. Now implemented across all programs from age 3-12 Years.



THEME 3: Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy Testing

NAPLAN results can assist teachers by providing additional information to support their professional judgement about students' levels of literacy and numeracy attainment and progress. NAPLAN tests are only one aspect of each school's assessment and reporting process, they do not replace the extensive ongoing assessments made by teachers about each student's performance. Your child's teacher will have the best insight into your child's educational progress.

NAPLAN is a national consistent measure to determine whether or not students are meeting important educational outcomes.

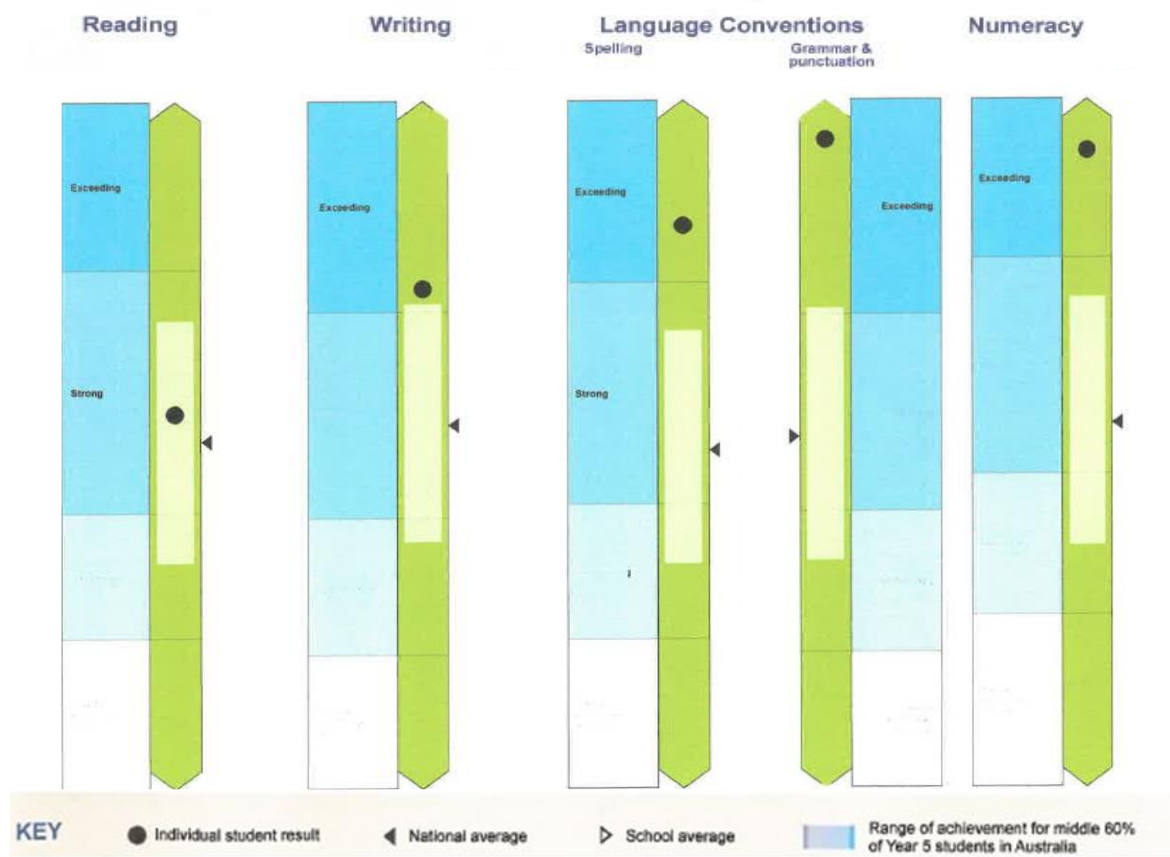
ACARA developed the Australian Curriculum. The national curriculum was introduced to improve the quality, equity and transparency of Australia's education system.

These assessments test students' knowledge of what is in the Australian Curriculum and tell us whether our students are developing the essential skills they will need in life, like literacy and numeracy.

The *My School website* is a resource for parents, educators and the community to find comparable information about each of Australia's schools. This website provide detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Go to myschool.edu.au to access the school data.

NAPLAN paper test window-2023- The NAPLAN paper test window is three days. Students who are absent during the test window can sit catch-up tests on the fourth day.

Year	Students Seating Naplan	Day 1 Wednesday	Day 2 Thursday	Day 3 Friday
Year 3	9	Language conventions: 45 minutes Writing: 40 minutes	Reading: 45 minutes	Numeracy: 45 minutes
Year 5	5	Language conventions: 45 minutes Writing: 40 minutes	Reading: 50 minutes	Numeracy: 50 minutes



THEME 4: Senior Secondary Outcomes

This section of the report area does not apply to Farmhouse Montessori Primary School as we do not have a Senior Secondary Campus.

THEME 5: Teacher Professional Learning, Accreditation and Qualifications

Staffing & Teacher Standards

All of the staff have completed the working with children check upon appointment. This is monitored and when required this is updated. We currently have one Teaching staff member on Maternity Leave.

The number of staff with the following qualifications:

Category	Number of Staff	Category	Number of Staff
PHD-Education	1	Master of Teaching (Early Childhood)	1
Bachelor of Education (Primary)	3	Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) Enrolled-	1
Bachelor of Education (Secondary)	1	Diploma in Montessori Education 0-3	2
Master of Education (Birth-12 years)	2	Diploma in Early Childhood	10
Bachelor of Applied Social Science (Counselling)	1	Diploma in Montessori Education 3-6	2
Certificate 111 in Early Childhood	2	Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood)	7
Certificate 1V in Business Administration	1	Montessori Diploma (AMI) 0-3	1
Certificate 1V in Accounting	1	Bachelor of Teaching	1
Diploma in Montessori Education (6-12)	3		

Professional Learning & Development

Farmhouse Montessori has a strong commitment to the professional development of staff. All staff participate in professional learning programs that enhance their knowledge, understanding and use of innovative approaches to pedagogy, subject specific content, legislation and other school priorities,

This is supported through weekly staff meetings where discussions cover Pastoral Care, Work Health and Safety, administration necessities, and curriculum and policy development. In addition, staff are required to attend workshops, conferences, seminars and other school observations.

This year:

Staff Professional Learning Activity/Development-2023	Focus Area	No. Of Staff Participating
CPR Refresher Training	Education	22
Child Protection & Mandatory reporting -AIS	Education	27
29 th International Montessori Congress, Thailand	Education	2
CELA-Identify and respond to children and Young People at Risk	Education	4
Autism Spectrum: Universal Support-Self paces Learning Experience	Education	1
Human Resources Professional Breakfast Briefing	Education	2
Child Protection Conference 2023	Education	1

Most of the Professional Development for 2023

Expenditure on Professional Development (PD)

On average, the expense per staff member on professional development and continuing training was approximately \$605.00.

Working With Other Schools & Organisations

During 2023, we continued to work closely with other schools and Preschools in our area. We learn as much from what we can show and share with them about our experiences in the school and classroom, as we learn from them by collaborating this way.

We are grateful for the opportunity to learn from these other schools and to use the opportunities afforded to us. Many of our staff are then able to further their Montessori education by continuing their workplace development in other Montessori Schools. Once a year we join other Montessori school in the area for a Combined Staff Development Day in June this is normally held at Northside Montessori School at Pymble. .

The school also organises multiple fundraising drives within the school community for different local Northern Beaches organises. The school community open their pantries and donate spare canned food as well as non-perishable items as part of a food drive for the Community Co-op Northern Beaches.

The Manly Women's shelter is helped each year with a fund drive of beauty products made into gift baskets by the students for the women at the shelter.

Christmas time is one of the biggest times as this is when the giving tree is on display in the school reception area so that families can bring in an unwrapped gift for a family- This goes to help the Dalwood Spilsted Service- This is a charity organisation based on the Northern Beaches of Sydney to help small children in need.



THEME 6: Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition

Principal	1
Deputy Principal	1
Classroom Assistant	14
Teacher	12
School Administration and Support Staff	4
Learning Support Teacher	1

Teacher qualifications

All casual, temporary and permanent teachers in NSW public schools and independent schools must hold a NSW Department of Education approval to teach. Teachers with approval to teach must be accredited with the NSW Education Standards Authority and hold a recognised teaching degree. All NSW teachers must hold a valid NSW Working with Children Check clearance.

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Professional learning is core to enabling staff to improve their practice. Professional learning includes student-free School Development Days and induction programs for staff new to our school and the Montessori system. These days are used to improve the capacity of teaching and non-teaching staff in line with school ethos and Departmental priorities.

Level of accreditation	Number of Teachers
Proficient	13
Provisional	2

Indigenous Staff Members: 0

Teaching Staff Retention Rate: 82.85%

We had teaching staff leave this year due to moving areas, retirement or family. These teaching staff members have been replaced for the coming 2024 year.

THEME 7: Student Attendance, Retention Rates and Post School Destinations

Student Attendance & Population

The school has enjoyed a small enrolment growth over the past year.

There are two preschool classes: a three day class on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday for 3-, 4- and 5-year-old children, and a two day class on Thursday & Friday for 3, 4 and 5 year old children in the year prior to commencing Kindergarten.

We have one Infant Community Class for 2 year old with 2,3,5 day options.

In the Primary School at Nth Head there are two classes with mixed grade (Stages). In Years 1 to 6 there was an average of 23 students per class. We have one Kindergarten class 5 days per week that moved to the Nth Head campus for the 2023 year to trial this move with 10 students.

Demographics-Pre-Primary & Primary 2023

North Balgowlah Campus

Enrolled students	78
Females	39
Males	39
Indigenous	0
CALD	13
Additional Needs	2

Primary Nth Head

Enrolled students	Semester 1	Term 3
Total	30	33
Females	16	17
Males	14	16
Indigenous	0	0
CALD	0	0
Additional Needs	13	13

Kindergarten- Primary Nth Head

Enrolled students	10
Females	5
Males	5
Indigenous	0
CALD	0
Additional Needs	1

Student Attendance -Primary

91.44% of students attended school on average each school day or were on approved leave in 2023 Semester 1.

Percentage Attendance per Grade-Semester 1			
	Average	<90%	>90%
Year 1	90.06	3	5
Year 2	86.17	3	1
Year 3	92.15	2	6
Year 4	95.53	0	5
Year 5	93.10	1	4
Year 6	89.36	1	0
School Overall Attendance :		91.44 %	

89.17% of students attended school on average each school day or were on approved leave in 2023-Term 3.

Percentage Attendance per Grade-Term 3			
	Average %	<90%	>90%
Year 1	91.96	1	6
Year 2	88.02	2	2
Year 3	84.38	5	3
Year 4	86.88	3	2
Year 5	94.38	1	4
Year 6	97.92	0	1
School Overall Attendance:		89.17 %	

Management of Non Attendance & Student attendance

The Farmhouse Montessori School is committed to working with parents to ensure that all children enrolled attend regularly. While children will occasionally be absent, regular non-attendance is disruptive both to the individual and the workings of the class and may result in difficulties for the child in their ongoing development. Where there are genuine reasons for non-attendance on a long-term basis, the school will work with parents to ensure that the child's education is continued during that time. The school's staff overarching concern is for the welfare of children. Although we appreciate the benefits in taking children on family holidays parents are encouraged to try to take these events within school breaks.

If your child is in Kindergarten or higher, it is especially important that your child attends because of the disruption that it causes to the education of individuals and class groups. Kindergarten children are now under the Board of Studies and they must legally attend a percentage of the year. It is helpful for staff to know of such absences in advance and upon parental request offer advice on projects that the child can undertake while on holiday to complement the classroom program.

Process for Noting Absent Days

1. Parents are asked to ring the campus that the student attends in the morning if their child is going to be absent for the day or for a period of time. Phone messages and emails are passed onto the relevant teacher at the time. Phone messages from a parent taken by staff members must complete for the parent an Admin/Absent Form and have the parent sign this form on the next day in at school or have the email from the parent attached.
2. If the child has a communicable disease the family is asked to contact the school immediately so we can inform the school community or if necessary, the Department of Health.
3. Contact is made with the parent if a child returns without a written explanation. Notification of absences is placed in the child's file and kept for a minimum of 7 years after the child leaves the school.
4. Parents of children who are absent for more than 3 days without explanation will receive a phone call from the Principal. In the event a child is regularly absent, an interview will be organised with the parents to determine how to assist the child to attend on a more regular basis or the child's development while away from school.
5. Parents of school aged children are reminded of their legal obligation to ensure their child's attendance at school.

Attendance Records

1. A record of attendance is maintained each day.
2. An enrolment register is kept with the following information:
 - Name of child, age, address
 - The name and contact telephone number of parent(s)/guardian(s)
 - Date of enrolment and, where appropriate, the date of leaving the school.
 - For students leaving The Farmhouse Montessori School: the next school they will be attending.
 - For students who have transferred from another school: the previous school or pre enrolment situation
3. Where the destination of a student above 6 years (from the Primary school campus) is unknown, evidence that a Department of Education and Training Officer with home school liaison responsibilities has been notified of the student's name, age and last known address.

Rolls are marked twice daily – in the morning and afternoon and all absences are noted. All absentee notes must be signed and dated by the parent. At the end of each year, the rolls and notes are collected by the school secretary and stored in the archives. These are kept for a minimum of seven (7) years as prescribed by the Education Act and Department of Education and Communities Regulations.

THEME 8: Enrolment Policies

Purpose

The Farmhouse Montessori School educates children from Early Childhood to Primary age. To ensure policies and processes by which students are enrolled into Farmhouse Montessori School are clear to prospective students and their parents.

Monitoring

This policy is monitored by the Principal for each Farmhouse Campus and implemented by the Enrolment Officer, Head of Preschool and Principal.

Audience

The intended audience is prospective students, their families and staff.

The Enrolment Process

Applications for enrolment, and the enrolment pack including the fee schedule, are available from the office at each campus or downloaded from the School website. An application form for enrolment must be completed by the parent/s or carer/s and returned to the Enrolment Officer. All application forms must be signed by the parent/s or carer/s who have full-time responsibility for the care of the student. There is a \$250 non-refundable application fee and a \$99 non-refundable Manly Warringah Montessori Society Annual Membership fee.

The school encourages applicants to attend a school tour at the relevant campus and bookings can be made on our website. For stage 2 and 3 applicants it is a prerequisite to attend a tour prior to receiving an offer.

Parents wishing to proceed and put their child's name down for enrolment in the school, must submit the Enrolment Application form to the school office along with the relevant non-refundable application & Membership fee.

All families, even those on the waitlist, must also be current members of the Manly Warringah Montessori Society. There is an annual fee (one membership per family) more information is available on the waitlist application form or from the school office. Waitlist placement however does not automatically guarantee a place at the school.

The Admissions Criteria For Children On The Preschool Waitlist

When allocating places to children the selection criteria takes into consideration, educational policies, Montessori philosophy and DEC guidelines.

The school enrolment policy advises priority is given to children on the waiting list in the following order:

- I. Places in the Infant community are prioritised in the following order:
 - Sibling from our waitlist
 - Date of application
- II. Places in Stage 1 (3-6) are prioritised in the following order:
 - children transitioning from the School's infant community if ready.
 - Siblings from our waitlist.
 - Date of application
 - Children transferring from another Montessori School
 - Children transferring from a non-Montessori School
- III. If places become available in stage 1, an internal waitlist of families wishing to increase or reduce days will be offered to the available places after siblings. For children who are not in the Board of studies kindergarten class a 5 -day a week programme will only be offered on a yearly basis.

Within the Farmhouse Montessori School's criteria for admission the DEC priority intake guidelines are adhered to when making enrolment decisions, in a way that seeks to allocate places to those in the greatest need.

The Admissions Criteria For Children On The Primary Waitlist

Offers to the external waitlist are prioritised by siblings of existing students, children transferring from a Montessori school then students applying from a Non-Montessori School. All applications are at the Principal's full and final discretion, following an interview between the Principal, child and parents applying for the place. Upon meeting with the Principal, families must attend an orientation in order to educate the family on the school's philosophy and methodology.

Offers Of Enrolment

An application form for enrolment must be completed by the parent/s or caregiver/s and returned to the Farmhouse Montessori School Enrolment Officer. Applications are available from the school website or from either of the school campuses.

When processing the application form, the following documentation needs to be attached or the application will be deemed incomplete and will not proceed:

1. Proof of student's residential address (e.g. original copies of council rates notice, residential lease, electricity accounts Driver's Licence etc)
2. Proof of child and parents' visa status
3. Birth Certificate
4. Copies of any Family Law or other relevant Court Orders (If applicable)
5. Immunisation history statement

In addition, if the child is not a permanent resident or an Australian citizen, the parent/caregiver will need to provide:

1. Passport
2. Current visa or copies of relevant documentation
3. Copy of Citizenship

Offers of enrolment from the waitlist will be selected by ***date-order***. (The date in which the family joined the waitlist).

We are required by law to ensure the health and safety of students, staff and visitors on our premises. It is, therefore, necessary for all questions on the Enrolment Form to be answered except those about parent's occupation and education. The information provided assists the School to communicate with parents and care for each child while at school. In cases where forms are incomplete, applications may be deemed insufficient and will proceed no further. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence. In the event that statements made in this application later prove to be false or misleading, any decision made as a result of this application may be reversed. The School's Privacy Policy has further details.

Third Year Kindergarten Children

In their last year of the pre-primary class children who are age appropriate and fulfilled their academic milestones have the opportunity of attending the kindergarten class (Extended Day) at the North Balgowlah campus. Children must turn five during the year before the 31st July. This class is registered with NESAs and meets the criteria of a Kindergarten curriculum. Child readiness to enter this program is determined by the Teachers and the Principal. Children are required to attend 5 days per week.

North Balgowlah Campus Induction

The school holds compulsory parent orientation evenings for parents at the end of the year before their child commences at the school. This allows parents to gain more knowledge about the Montessori philosophy and the general running of the whole school.

1. New students will be invited to attend an orientation morning.
2. New students will be offered a shorter day for the first few days.
3. The directress will notify the parent when the child is ready to attend a full session.

Transition To Primary Induction

Parents of students entering the Extended Day program will be asked to attend a compulsory parent orientation meeting before your child commences Kindergarten/Extended Day.

1. The parents will be notified of their child's readiness to transition to the North Head primary campus through consultation with their child's director/directress.
2. Following this there will be a compulsory parent information session with the principal where the procedure of transitions and the requirements surrounding this will be clarified. This meeting will give parents an understanding of the transition process and how to support your child moving to the primary school.

Withdrawing An Enrolled Child

One academic term's written notice must be given to the School on the anticipated withdrawal of any student. This notice is required by the school to allow for sufficient time to replace the withdrawn child.

Term Fees

As a not-for-profit school, fees are set by the Board to cover the day-to-day running costs of the school and to provide the sustainability of the school. There is an annual compulsory maintenance levy per family. Additional fees for specific curriculum items may be required. For example, school excursions, camps etc.

Fees are charged according to age and the number of days a child attends: 2 year (infant program), 3-6yr (pre-primary), and 6-12 (primary).

A schedule of fees is available from the school office or on our website. Late payment will incur a late fee charge.

Parent Involvement

Community is an important part of the Montessori philosophy. We ask parents to participate in various events and projects throughout the year as part of modelling for our children the commitment to building a community. This might include attending parent information nights, open days, fundraising or community events.

Photographs at the School

Taking photographs of students can constitute a collection of their personal information. Occasionally, photographs are taken of individual students and classes of students at school. In cases where parents do not wish their child to be photographed under any circumstances, this can be specified on the Enrolment Form.

Privacy

The school is subject to the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW) and the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002. The information provided will be used to process the child's application for enrolment. It will only be used or disclosed for the following purposes:

- General administration relating to the education and welfare of the student.
- Communication with students and parents or caregivers
- To ensure the health, safety and welfare of students, staff and visitors to the School
- State and National reporting purposes
- For any other purpose required by law The information will be stored securely.

Parents may access or correct any personal information by contacting the School. Any concerns or complaints about the way personal information has been collected, used, or disclosed, can be made by contacting the School. The health-related information collected is subject to the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002. It is collected for the primary purpose of ensuring the health and safety of all students, staff and visitors to the School. It may be used and disclosed to medical practitioners, health workers, other government departments and/or schools for this primary purpose or for other related purposes.

THEME 9: Other School Policies

Policy	Summary/New/Updated/-2023 Policies	Access to full text
Student Welfare	This policy highlights the school's rational, and outlines some of the various measures and programs which are implement by the way of achieving the school's overall objective.	Available from the school
Anti-Bullying	This policy provides processes for responding to and managing allegations of bullying, including the contact information for the local Police. The policy also highlights the importance of prevention and early intervention strategies implemented by the school. The development of the Anti-Bullying	Available from the school
Discipline	This policy is based on the principles of procedural fairness and highlights the importance of parental involvement in the processes of procedural fairness for suspension and expulsion. The policy further explicitly confirms that the school does not permit corporal punishment of students, nor does it sanction corporal punishment of student by non-School persons.	Available from the school
Complaints and Grievances-Parents and Staff	These policies outline the dispute resolution process to be followed by both parents and staff. The parent complaint form can be accessed directly from the school website. The form will be sent to the relevant Board Member.	School website: www.farmhousemontessori.nsw.edu.au
Privacy-Confidentiality Policy	This policy outlines the right to confidentiality and privacy of the child and the family.	School website: www.farmhousemontessori.nsw.edu.au

New/Revised School Policies 2023

Enrolment Policy & Procedure	School website: www.farmhousemontessori.nsw.edu.au
Fee Policy & Procedure	Available from the school
Attendance Policy & Procedure	Available from the school
Lockdown Policy & Procedure with Display Lockdown Procedures	Available from the school
Critical Incident Management (Traumatic Events) Policy	Available from the school
Critical Incident Emergency Situations Response Policy	Available from the school
Bush Fire Policy & Procedure	Available from the school
Abuse Identification & Initial Notification	Available from the school
Armed robbery & Cash handling Procedures	Available from the school
Disability Discrimination Policy	Available from the school
Detecting, Reporting & Addressing Grooming Behaviour	Available from the school
Hostage Situation Siege Policy	Available from the school
Identifying Student Safety Hazards Policy & Procedures	Available from the school
Security Policy	Available from the school
Storm Management Policy	Available from the school
Students with Special Needs Policy	Available from the school
Suspicious Objects on the Grounds	Available from the school
Threats Received Policy	Available from the school
Violent Intruder on School Grounds	Available from the school
Visitation Policy	Available from the school

Our policies ensure that all aspects of the schools' mission, in providing for student's welfare, are implemented. Hardcopies of policies are held in the reception area and office of both campuses with some available for viewing on the school website or on request. All staff members also have access to view all school policies online on the school GDrive.

Policies and Procedures are reviewed in consultation with the School Board, AIS, staff members, the parents and are announced in the School newsletter.

THEME 10: School Determined Priority Areas for Improvement-To be done by the Principal

Our focus will always be on the education and safety of the children at both of the school campus. We strive to provide the best Education for our students. To this end the Board has been in negotiations with Sydney Harbour Federation Trust to lease a larger building. During the year the School purchased play equipment for younger students. Students were able to undertake a variety of sporting activities with the support of NSW Sporting Grants. The School upgraded the facility of North Balgowlah, including a repair to the play area. Safety of students and staff in a Lockdown situation is paramount. An intercampus bus service was further expanded to support parents to bring students, including Kindergarten to North Head Campus. This bus service also transported students who attended an external OSH with a morning and afternoon service. The School further expanded the technological facilities and service to the North Head Campus.

THEME 11: Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Respect and Responsibility & Pastoral Care

The quality of Pastoral Care influences the culture and feeling of the whole school. It creates an atmosphere in which children feel secure, valued and encouraged in their learning, growth and social development. It will inform and reassure parents that their children are being educated in a safe, caring and healthy environment. Each person is respected and acknowledged as a valuable member of the School community. We seek to establish a relationship and partnership with staff, parents and students which promotes mutual understanding, respect, tolerance and acceptance.

Pastoral Care is fully integrated into the school's daily routines and its curriculum. The safety, health and wellbeing of each member of the School community is of paramount importance.

The aim of this Code of Conduct -Students is to ensure that the school is a safe and effective place in which learning takes place; that students develop self-discipline and consideration for others; and that the property and reputation of the school is protected.

The vision of the school, is to raise up effective leaders, who will blend academic achievement and truth, to influence society, thus fulfilling his or her responsibilities with integrity, and respects the rights of others in the school and community.

These rights and responsibilities are developed in conjunction with the School Values.

VALUE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
Cooperation	Cooperating, collaborating and leading or following as the situation demands.	Work with each other and share the teacher's time. Share the playground areas and equipment.
Integrity	Being honest and demonstrating a considered sense of fairness.	Be honest and fair to yourself and others in the classroom and the playground.
Persistence	Persevering and remaining focused and looking for ways to reach your goal.	Always give your best effort even if you are not successful the first time. Not giving up.
Respect	Respecting ourselves, others and the environment around us	Speak positively and politely. Listen carefully. Be courteous and respectful of others. Respect other's differences, Respect and take care of others.
Resilience	Ability to manage and learn from difficulties and to bounce back. Self-reliant and have a learning/coping reaction rather than the victim blaming reaction.	Resolve problems in a sensible and reasonable manner. Bounce back after difficulty
Responsibility	Taking action for our learning and behaviour.	Move safely in the buildings. Respect and take care of other's possessions.

Student Leadership

At the Farmhouse Montessori School, we focus on developing our students' leadership skills through practical leadership experiences. The approach recognises that students can be leaders across many different areas and that leadership skills learnt in early primary school can lay the foundations for future leadership success.

Extensive opportunities are created for students to undertake leadership responsibilities within the school and to represent the school in the wider community.

Student leadership is based on –

- Courtesy
- Cooperation
- Consideration
- Citizenship

When students actively participate in school life, and their ideas and opinions are listened to and valued, they feel respected and encouraged to make further contributions. This provides opportunities for:

- Increased communication skills
- Improved academic performance for students involved.
- Greater commitment to the School from the wider student body.
- Positive influences on the climate of the School.
- Strengthened School spirit.
- Increased co-operation from students.

The Farmhouse Montessori School aims to build the understandings and skills of leadership through providing opportunities within the student community and the many varied activities provided in the school environment.

1. Family grouping in the classroom allows the child the ability to move from the youngest to the oldest.
2. The elders of the group are recognised by others as ones of experience and knowledge with an opportunity to access their assistance and skills when possible.
3. All children however, are recognised for skills they may have that can be shared with others.
4. All children will be encouraged through presentations of lessons on how:
 - i. To help others having difficulty when possible
 - ii. To recognise those who have skills and ask appropriately.
 - iii. To show consideration for others.
5. All children in each class will be encouraged through presentation of lessons on how:
 - i. To work with other children in
 - ii. Giving presentations of materials that they know
 - iii. Assisting those having difficulty or are hurt.
 - iv. Assisting other children with conflict resolution
 - v. Take responsibility for their classroom.
 - vi. In ensuring the maintenance of materials
 - vii. In the end of the day closing and preparations for the next day

Farmhouse Montessori School 2023 Calendar of School Events

TERM 01	
JANUARY	
Mon 30th	Staff Development Day
Tues 31st	Staff Development Day
Tues 31st	Preschool Orientation Morning
Tues 31st	Preschool Orientation Evening 7pm
FEBRUARY	
Wed 1st	Term 1 Commences
Mon-Fri 20-24th	Parent Education Week
Fri 20th	Montessori Cycle of Work – 8.30-9am Primary Campus
Tues 21st	Assessment & Evaluation – 8.30-9am Primary Campus
Wed 22nd	Learning Support – 8.30-9am Primary Campus
Wed 22nd	School Excursion: Maritime Museum – 10.30am Primary Campus
Thurs 23rd	Stages of Development – 8.30-9am Primary Campus
Thurs 23rd	Primary School Campus Tour: 4.30pm
Fri 24th	Practicing Freedom & Independence – 8.30-9am Primary Campus
Mon 27th	Parent Information Evening: Montessori in the Home 7pm Preschool Campus
MARCH	
Thurs 2nd	Preschool Campus Tour: 4.30pm
Thurs 2nd	Clean up Australia Day: Yani Class & Parents Primary Campus
Mon-Fri 6-10th	Parent Observations Primary Campus
Wed 8th	Peace Run Incursion Primary Campus
Mon-Fri 13-17th	Harmony Week
Wed-Fri 15-24th	Naplan Primary Campus
Thurs 23rd	Primary School Campus Tour: 9.30am
Fri 24th	Naplan Primary Campus
Fri 24th	Ride to School Day Primary Campus
Fri 24th	Farmhouse Montessori Open Day 3-4.30pm
Mon-Fri 27-31st	Parent Teacher Conference Aikya & Yani Classes Primary Campus
APRIL	
Tues 4th	Strategic Planning at North Head 7.00pm – 8.30pm
Wed 5th	Strategic Planning (on-line) 7.00pm – 8.30pm
Thurs 6th	Last Day of Term
Fri 7th	Good Friday
Mon 10th	Easter Monday
TERM 02	
APRIL	
Mon 24th	Staff Development Day
Tues 25th	Anzac Day – Public Holiday
Wed 26th	Students Return
MAY	
Mon 1st	Farmhouse Montessori AGM
Tues 9th	Mother's Day Breakfast: 8-9am Preschool Campus
Thurs 11th	Mother's Day Breakfast: 8-9am Preschool Campus
Thurs 11th	Kindergarten Information Session for Class of 2024 2.30pm Preschool Campus
Fri 12th	Mother's Day Breakfast: 9am Primary Campus
Sun 14th	Mother's Day



Mon-Thurs 15-19th	Parent Teacher Conferences: Preschool Campus
Tues 16th	Primary School Campus Tour 9.30am
Wed 17th	Botanical Gardens Excursion Primary Campus
Sat 20th	Farmhouse Staff at Manly Village Markets
Mon-Fri 22-26th	Parent Teacher Conferences: Preschool Campus Combined Montessori Sports Carnival Primary Campus
Mon 29th	Reconciliation Day
Tues 30th	Parent Information Evening: 7pm Preschool Campus
Tues 30th	Yani Excursion-Sydney Writers Festival
JUNE	
Tues 6th-	Parent Information Evening: Primary Campus
Fri 9th	Pupil Free Day K-6 (Preschool normal day) – Staff Development Day
Mon 12th	King’s Birthday
Fri 16th	Kindergarten Excursion-Glen Street Theatre
Fri 16th	Parent Social Event - 5.30pm to 8.30pm
Tues 20th	Primary School Campus Tour 9.30am
Sat 24th	Open Day North Head Campus 10.30am to 1pm
Fri 30th	Last Day Term
TERM 03	
JULY	
Mon 17th	Preschool Students Return
Mon 17th	Staff Development Primary Campus K-6
Mon 17th	Kindergarten (2023 Class) Orientation Morning 9-10am – at Primary Campus
Wed 19th	Kindergarten Excursion
AUGUST	
Tues 15th	School Photos Preschool Campus
Tues 15th	Primary School Campus Tour 9.30am
Wed 16th	School Photos Primary Campus
Thurs 17th	School Photos Preschool Campus
Thurs 24th	Parent Information Evening 7-8pm Preschool Campus
Tues 29th	Father’s Day Breakfast: 8-9.30am Preschool Campus
Wed 30th	Parent Information Morning Primary Campus 9.05am-9:35am ‘Social Emotional Intelligence in the Elementary Child’
Wed 30th	Primary Excursion-Kindy & Aikya-Coastal Environment Centre
Thurs 31st	Father’s Day Breakfast: 8-9.30am Preschool Campus
Thurs 31st	Maria Montessori’s Birthday
SEPTEMBER	
Fri 1st	Father’s Day Breakfast Primary Campus 8:45am-9:30am
Sun 3rd	Father’s Day
Tues 5th	Primary Stage 3-Elephant Education Incursion.
Tues 5th	Open Day Primary Campus 9am – 11am
Tues 12th	Primary School Campus Tour 9.30am
Thurs 21st	Last Day Term Primary ONLY
Fri 22nd	Staff Development Primary Campus K-6
TERM 04	
OCTOBER	
Mon 9th	Students Return
Mon 9-11th	School Camp – Yani
Thurs 12th	Preschool Tour 4.15pm



Mon-Thurs 16-19th	Transition to 3-6yr Class Conferences Elouera
Mon 16th October – 3rd November	Preschool Parent Teacher Conferences
Mon 23rd – 27th October	Parent Teacher conferences Kindergarten
Mon 30th	Grandparent & Special Friends Day Preschool Campus 10.30-11.30am
Tues 31st	Grandparent & Special Friends Day Primary Campus 8.45-9.30am
NOVEMBER	
Wed 1st	Primary Excursion-Whole school-Kimbriki Eco House & Garden
Thurs 2nd	Grandparent & Special Friends Day 10.30-11.30am Preschool Campus
Thurs 2nd	Primary Campus School Tour 9.30am
Thurs 16th	Primary Campus School Tour 9.30am
Wed 22nd	Orientation Evening: Primary New-starters: 6-8pm Primary Campus
Thurs 30th	Primary Campus School Tour 9.30am
DECEMBER	
Thurs 7th	Primary End of Year Celebration and Picnic Last Day Primary
Fri 8th	Preschool Picnic 12noon Last Day of Preschool
Fri 8th	Staff Development – North Head Primary only



School Mixed Ensemble Band and Music

Music at Montessori is available for all students through both an in school class and an outside of school hours Mixed Ensemble. These sessions are run by Evergreen Music.

The Mixed Ensemble program is currently only available for the Primary age students..

MIXED ENSEMBLE (Band)

All members of the ensemble are required to be having weekly music tuition on their instrument in addition to the Mixed Ensemble session. Having this extra tuition is essential for children to be able to fully participate in the ensemble environment.



THEME 12: Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

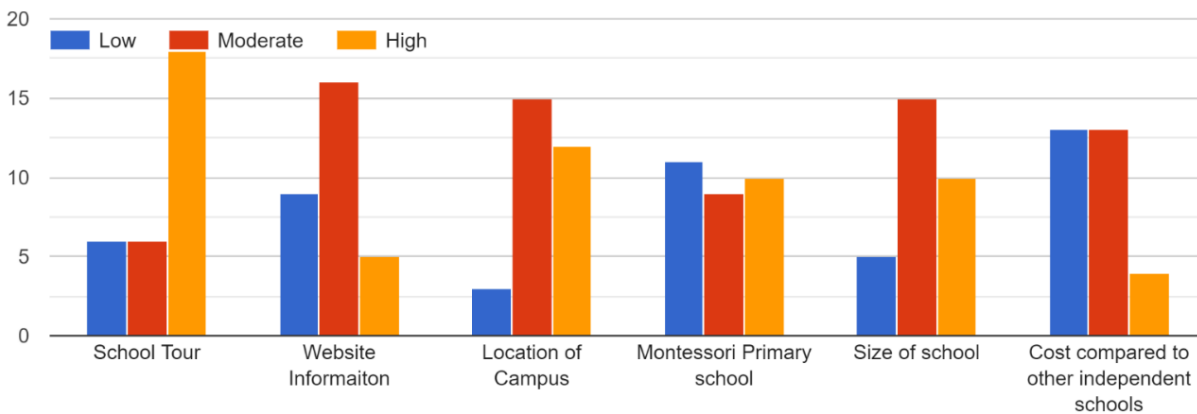
Each year schools are required to seek the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Some of their responses/percentages are below in graph form. This is the first survey that we sent out parents that were visiting the school for an open day. See more information listed below.

1. How did you first hear about Farmhouse Montessori School Campus. Select 1 only

30 responses

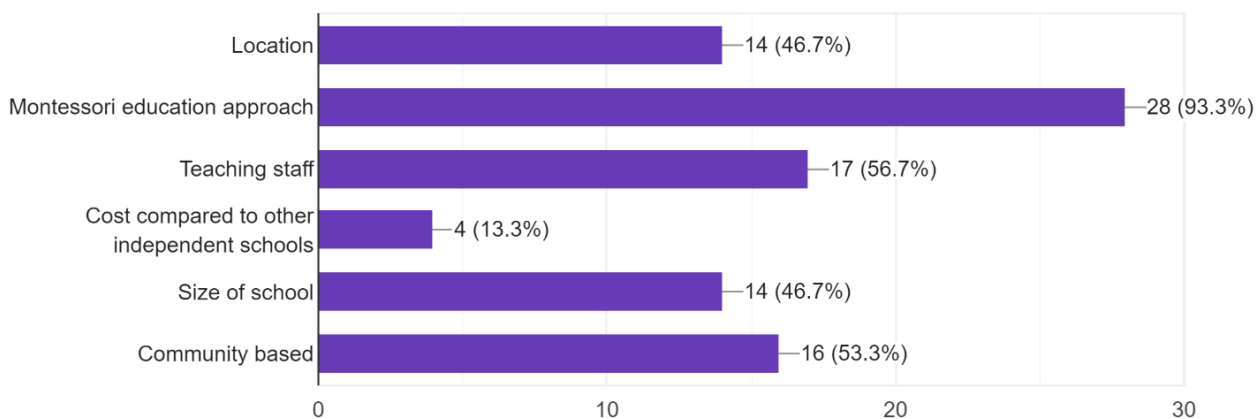


2. What factors helped you decide to enrol your child at Farmhouse Montessori School Campus? Please rank in order of importance.



3. What in your opinion makes our school unique and attractive to parents? Tick all that apply

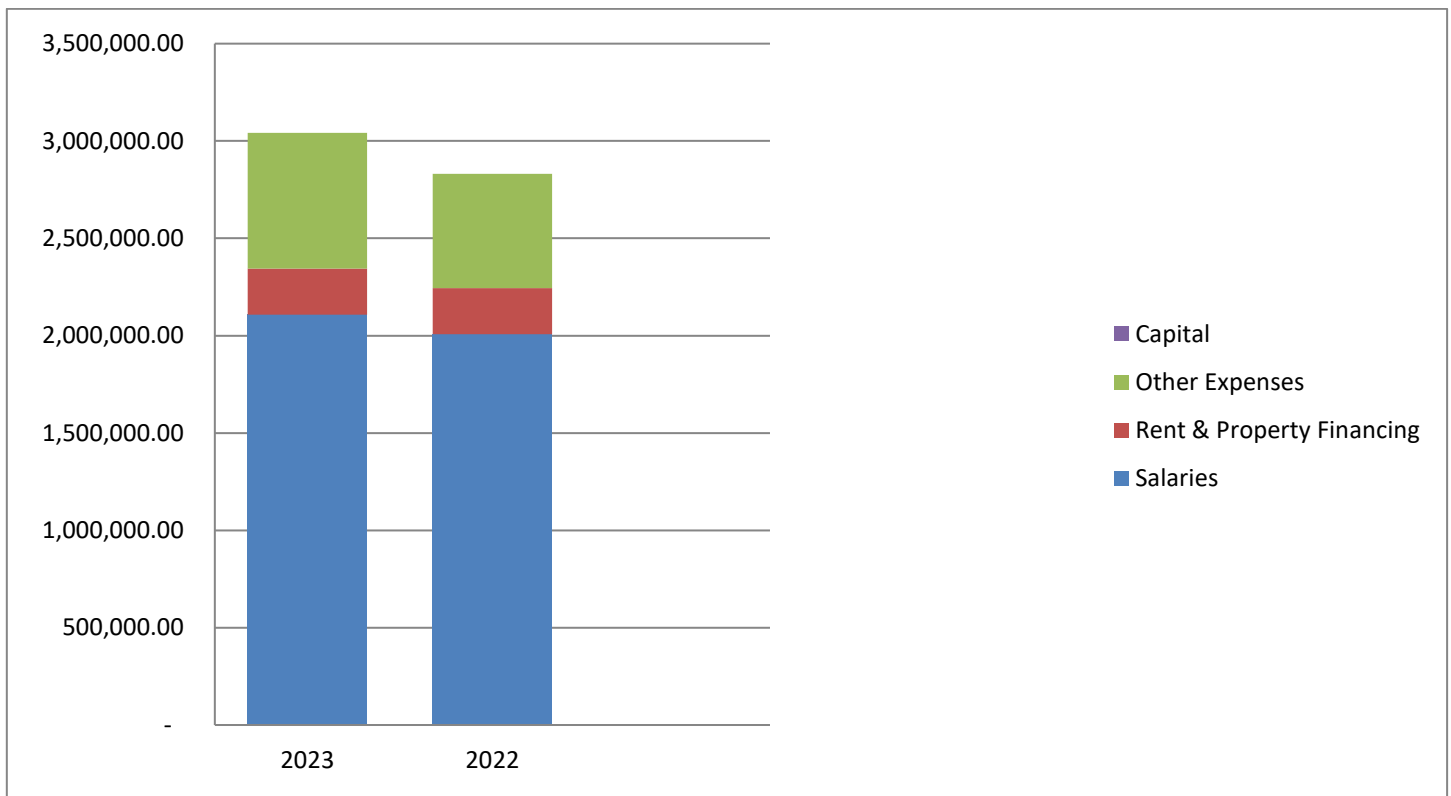
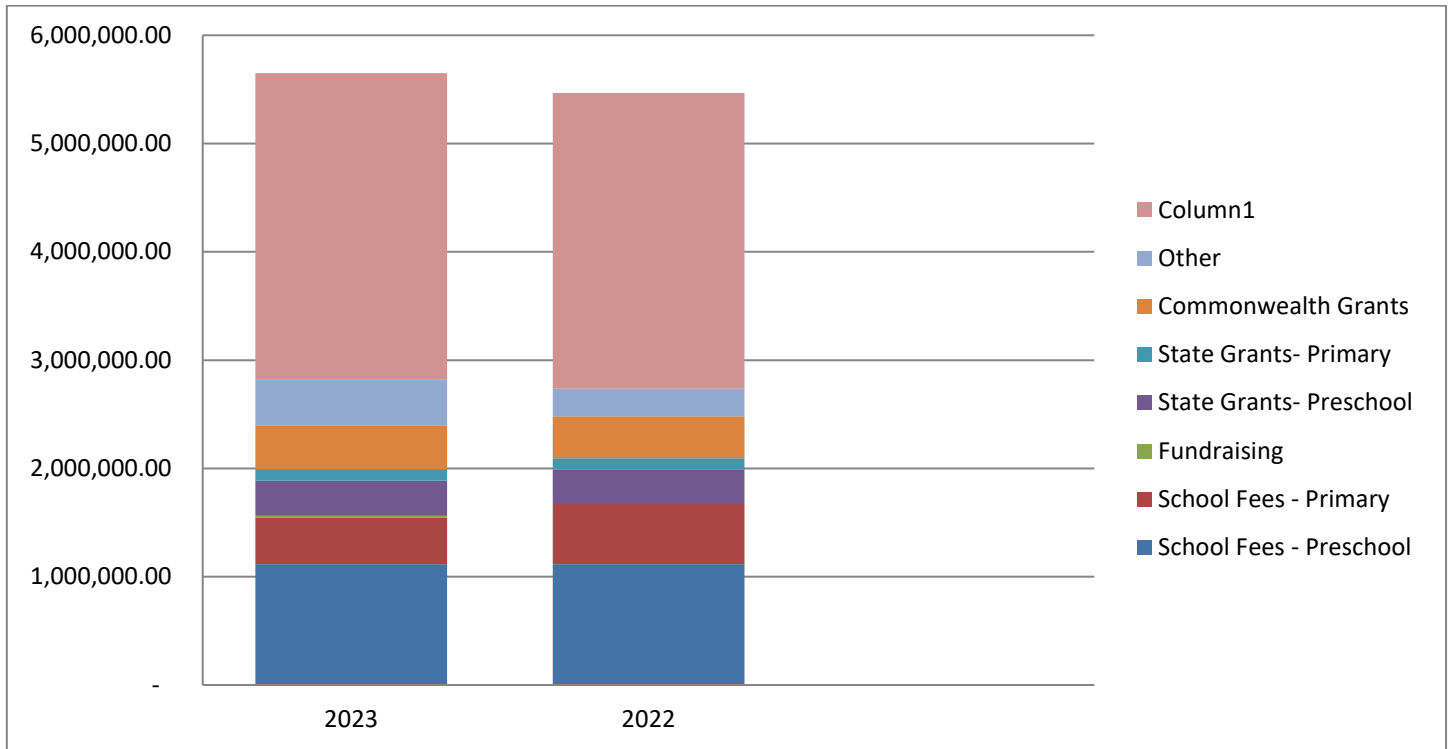
30 responses



THEME 13: Summary Financial Information

Financial Report

Below is the breakdown of income and expenses which are reflected in our audited accounts.



Changes in income and expenditure:

- The NSW Government provided Start Strong Free Preschool funding for our 3 year olds and 4 and 5 year olds in their year before school.
This provided 600 hours per year of free preschool.
- Sporting school grants \$6363.00

THEME 14: Publication Requirements

Farmhouse Montessori School has completed its publication requirements by providing:

The NESAs Registration and Accreditation Manual now states that to be compliant with requirements, a registered non-government school must participate in annual reporting to publicly disclose the educational and financial performance measures and policies of the school as identified by the Minister. Schools must also provide data to the Minister, if requested, for the Minister to report to Parliament of the effectiveness of schooling in the State.

1. Annual report sent to NESAs on RANGS online.
2. Public disclosure by uploading annual report on the school website.
3. The 2023 annual report is available to any person/persons who cannot access the document online and policies and procedures are available for the Minister on request.

