

Elonera Montessori School

Happy, Harmonious, and Hands-on

Working together to help our children to help themselves



Annual Report
Education and Finance

2010 (2009 Data)

The School Council Chairperson's Message

It is my pleasure to introduce the Annual Report for 2009 for Elonera Montessori School. In the twenty-five years that I have had the pleasure to be associated with the school, I continue to be impressed with its progressiveness. This is a school where value and good values co-exist.

The governing body has as its mission to provide quality Montessori education for the Illawarra community. The major tasks of the School Council undertaken during the year were implementing the vision of the revised Strategic Plan and Master Plan from 2008; actively supporting the development of the facilities for the High School and upper primary; beautifying the buildings and the front entry point; creating a front courtyard to provide an outdoor learning environment for Years 4-6; planning for the new school hall; attracting growth funding for the larger preschool; the training and development of Montessori teachers and assistants; enabling parent and family inclusiveness and offering more services to our families through Vacation Care as well as the Toddlers' Cottage; compliance and risk assessment; review and development of policies and procedures.

I would like to acknowledge the parents' and teachers' consistent contribution and dedication towards the children. Again, the support this year has been overwhelming. We achieved great things together under the shared leadership of the committees of the School Council. The Education committee, Capital Works, Fundraising, Canteen and Progress committees have provided solidity, friendships and unification for the whole school.

The Montessori Method of education is strong, reliable and proven. The key highlight of this approach is to create a better everyday life for our children. As a parent I see such positive outcomes for the children as evidenced in the very special, thoughtful adolescents and young adults that they have become.

Parental participation is cornerstone to Montessori. Our canteen parents continued to offer a valued service to the children and Trish and Gabrielle ensured that things ran smoothly. Vicky and Glenyce again enthusiastically managed a Halloween fundraising extravaganza for the children. The Parent Progress Committee continues to liaise through a book club and progress meetings. They continue to provide monthly coffee mornings for parents to connect and share philosophies. They have organised working bees and were the driving force behind the inaugural High School Newsletter which showcases the past and present personalities and achievements. A large number of parents, too many to mention, continue to tackle great projects throughout the year.

The Capital works committee saw much of their planning in 2008 come to fruition with the implementation of the Master Plan. Thankyou to David, Dennis, Phil, Mal, Alex, Alex and Elizabeth for continuing to upgrade the facilities.

I would also like to thank the School Council Directors for their expertise in governance and their ongoing support to the Head of School. Jason, Mark, Alice, Illana, and Malcolm displayed great understanding of the Montessori vision and brought strength of governance to the Council.

Thankyou to Elizabeth Goor, for her leadership, vision and enthusiasm for Montessori education and her ongoing commitment to providing a safe environment for our students and staff.

Judy Ayre
Chairperson
Elonera Montessori School Council

Head of School Message

2009 has been one of great excitement for Elonera Montessori, where we have achieved a considerable number of our targeted improvements. This amazing progress was enabled by collaborative decision making, great teamwork, unexpected resources from the government, and enthusiastic support from our parent body. It has been very rewarding in many ways.

I'm very thrilled and enthused as we enter the next year with great optimism and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the dedicated parents, teachers and staff who make Elonera Montessori such a fabulous school for our children, and a great place to work.

Each day as I see our students, I observe happy, harmonious groups of children really engaged in their hands-on activities. People who visit our classes come more and more to appreciate the value of the Montessori teacher – one who values and develops independent, “self motivated” learning.

Our annual survey indicates very high parent satisfaction. We follow the standard school curriculum, however our process has as its outcomes, students who demonstrate happier attachments with their teachers, have better general knowledge, and are more able to initiate, understand and participate in conversation and debate. They are cooperative, self motivated and learn skills of conflict resolution as part of the curriculum. It is all part of our motto of “Education in Harmony with Life”.

You can only achieve these great outcomes by having professional teachers, and assistants who have additional Montessori training with a clear understanding of the developmental needs of the students, know the children incredibly well, and have positive respectful relationships with their students.

Elonera Montessori is one of the few in Australia that offers a pre-school to high school education, allowing for individual instruction by our trained, knowledgeable, warm teachers in open and ordered classrooms using our amazing hands on materials, adding a critical tactile sense to the “traditional” tools. We also operate the same number of weeks as the State system.

Our students continue to excite us with their continuing development. The teachers regularly share with each other and parents their joy with the particular work of their students at all levels. Our 2009 staff reflections indicated that the teachers were happy working at Elonera Montessori School and parents indicated in their survey that they felt it that it was a safe, nurturing, intellectually stimulating environment that assisted their children to be empowered to develop their character.

I would like to acknowledge contributions to Elonera Montessori from the school community. We not only have benefited by the social capital that parents provide in working bees, canteen, fundraising, book fairs, committees, and the School Council, but we have also been fortunate to receive numerous donations, resources, books, furniture, plants, subscriptions, food, games for OOSH, to name a few.

Our parents, generally progressive, open minded thinkers, are motivated to give their children something special. As a result we have a strong and committed group of parents, and we encourage all parents to participate in any small way in the building of a great school.

Some major achievements for our school during the year are:

- The wonderful community spirit driven by the parents of the school

- Retention of a very stable and caring group of highly committed staff
- Facilitating each of our delightful children to gain independence and enjoy learning
- Beautifying our indoor and outdoor classroom facilities, and purchasing of Montessori equipment
- We have a strong and active school council that is supported by an involved and growing group of parents, including a formalised feedback system where parents submit suggestions to teachers and staff
- The Montessori process identifies relevant contexts through which students can be engaged. Our strength is in our pedagogy where the integrated curriculum provides an interdisciplinary approach within the classroom.
- We continue to provide individual teaching for gifted and talented students, and our composite class structure of three age groups per Stage (e.g. Stage 2 = Years 1, 2 and 3) is particularly well suited to these students, enabling them to advance at their own pace.
- In addition, educationally disadvantaged students groups such as children who may have difficulties with Literacy and Numeracy and those who speak languages at home other than English benefit from our Individual Education Planning support that is provided primarily by the classroom teacher who liaises with the Literacy support teacher.
- Strengthened links with the TAFE to provide traineeships to two staff members
- The OOSH/Vacation Care services continue to be valued by the parents for providing positive relationships and service for their children.
- Re-registration with the Board of Studies for five years (K-6) after a very successful inspection.

I would particularly like to thank Alex Ioannou, the Curriculum Coordinator, who led the school during term three while I was on leave. She had an enormously busy time with two demanding major capital works projects to manage. Alex appreciated the strong team of staff as well as the extremely supportive parents with whom she collaborated. Notable thanks go to Dennis Stone for assisting Alex to work through the tendering process for the new school hall. This was an enormously important financial decision that ensured the great success of the project.

There is an exciting energy with vigorous activity being shared by parents, staff and students that bodes well for a promising future for the school. During 2010 I will continue to work on behalf of the parents and school council to further develop Elonera Montessori School's staff as well as the facilities to attain its long range plan of programme innovation and integration based on the fundamental values and beliefs of the Montessori Method of Education.

Elizabeth Goor
 BA; Dip Dietetics; MHP; MTQM; Dip Ed.
 Head of School
 Elonera Montessori School

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1. ELONERA MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Elonera Montessori School is a small family oriented school in Wollongong. It is located in the Education belt, and has close relationships with the University as well as the TAFE. The school caters for children from the ages of three to seventeen and is based on the world-wide Montessori philosophy.

This report will briefly review values of Elonera Montessori School and the steps that the Council, staff and the various Committees have made throughout the year to address the educational and financial performance measures and policies of the school. More information is available on our website.

Policy information is made available to school members on an annual basis in the parent's handbook on the website. Financial performance is provided at the March Annual General Meeting where reports and audited statements are made public to the families and staff of the school. A staff handbook provides the staff with information as well as policy and procedure protocols. A weekly newsletter provides ongoing communication to the school body. Members meetings are held quarterly, for the Governing body to meet with the members (parents, and staff).

This document will report on student performance in testing and retention rates as required by our accountability requirements as set out by the Commonwealth Government. It is not a part of the Montessori philosophy to make this information public, as it is only a snapshot of the child that does not provide information on the development of the total child. We are extremely proud of who they are and value them for their uniqueness. This has been one of the many ways that we teach our children self-confidence, inclusion and tolerance. Refer to www.myschool.edu.au for school profile and performance.

The ethos, educational philosophy, values, and aims of the school

The philosophical foundation of the Montessori approach is based on the premise that education should be an aid to life. In order to develop their physical, intellectual and spiritual powers to the fullest, children must have the freedom to achieve this through order and self-discipline. Dr. Montessori realised that the only valid impulse to learning is the self-motivation of the child. Respect for a child's personality and trust in the inner potentialities, are prerequisite to the foundation of an adequate educational alliance, between parent and teacher, parent and child and between teacher and student.

Our procedure is to create a school environment in which the child can do and think for him/herself.

Montessori education concerns itself with creating an environment, specially suited to the un-deviated development of the child's psychic, physical, social, moral and intellectual potential qualities.

Dr. Maria Montessori drew on scientific study of how children learn in the early 20th century, and her insights are reflected in their similarity to educational principles generated by modern psychological research. The following principles list some of her major ideas about how children learn and develop.

1. *Movement and Cognition* -that movement and cognition are closely entwined, and movement can enhance thinking and learning;
2. *Choice* - that learning and well-being can be improved when people have a sense of control over their lives;
3. *Interest* - that people learn better when they are interested in what they are learning;
4. *Extrinsic rewards are avoided* - that tying extrinsic rewards to an activity like money for reading or high grades for tests, negatively impacts motivation to engage in that activity when the reward is withdrawn;
5. *Learning with and from Peers* - that collaborative arrangement can be conducive to learning
6. *Learning in Context* - that learning situated in meaningful contexts is often deeper and richer than learning in abstract contexts;
7. *Teacher Ways and Child Ways* - that particular forms of adult interaction are associated with more optimal child outcomes and
8. *Order in Environment and Mind* - that order in the environment is beneficial to children

Maria Montessori's imaginative and innovative solutions to the problem of harnessing the school child's innate curiosity and delight in discovery are no less relevant today than they were in her own time.

2. Messages from Parents of Committees

Capital Works Committee

The Capital Works team met frequently throughout 2009, as there were an unprecedented number of major projects running concurrently, due to the previous government grant processes as well as the building education revolution initiative of the current government.

The Block Grant Authority works that had been planned by the committee in 2007/8 were implemented which included the redevelopment of the western wing of the administration building to create a space to include a secondary classroom, kitchenette, science lab, music room, student amenities, visual arts space, tutorial rooms and required technology infrastructure as well as a new library facility. The project cost \$506,624 with a contribution of \$106,624 from the school and \$400,000 from the Commonwealth government.

The National School Pride Funding of \$75,000 was used to create a front wall to the school, providing an inner courtyard for the primary classrooms (CODA), as well as to cement render and paint the 50's red brick building, purchase new signage as well as beautify the front entry point. The project cost \$83,017, with a school contribution of \$8,017.

The Capital works committee was involved in contracting ADM architects, developing the scope of the project for a hall, parking lot and ball court, having the project go out to tender, selecting the builder, applying for a DA and demolishing a school building to clear the site so that we could implement the BER P21 project for Elonera Montessori. Although the project has involved about a six month delay due to local council approval as well as inclement weather, we are progressing very well and are very close to the required budget of \$850,000.

The school has also continued with its ongoing maintenance plan. We contracted a roofer to re-roof the school buildings, and are currently half way through that project. We also upgraded the electrical wiring, and light fittings in a number of areas of the school.

Capital Works Committee

Thankyou to Dennis Stone and David Little, parents of Elonera Montessori School, who have contributed a huge amount of time on the committee for a number of years. It is amazing what a small team of talented staff and accomplished parents can achieve!

Canteen Report

Elonera Canteen operates every Monday and is run by parent/volunteers.

Canteen has been running this year in the renovated kitchen (formerly the high school kitchen) rather than the OOSH room. It has been a pleasure to work in this environment which has more storage, sinks, bench space and ovens.

In 2009 we paid particular attention to standardising our hygiene and food handling protocols and each volunteer received information about the standards that are required.

We had a welcome increase in the number of parents and carers volunteering for canteen so that we rarely had a volunteer crisis. Thanks to those who have already volunteered and to those who have expressed interest in working in the future.

The menu has undergone a few changes and we are endeavouring to introduce more fresh food alternatives. The watermelon and grape cups and salad cups on the summer menu and the baked potato and steamed rice cups in the winter menu are two examples of these new fresh food choices. A goal in the long term is to add more vegetarian food options.

Gabrielle

Elonera Progress Committee

The progress committee is a parent group which is interested in building relationships within and outside of the school. The committee focuses on four key areas:

- Building the school community;
- Promoting the school to the wider community;
- Promoting the high school and the progress towards the IB; and
- Enhancing communication through shared information and feedback.

The activities performed by the Progress Committee in 2009 included:

- two successful working bees;
- monthly parent/carer coffee mornings;
- the high school newsletter;
- the high school information evening; and
- the official opening of the high school and west wing.

Emma

Fundraising Report

A variety of fundraising activities have been organised by Elonera Montessori families during 2009. The Easter basket raffle, the fantastic Halloween Party, and the raffle of a painting donated by an artist parent, are all examples of the enormous success that can be achieved by Elonera Montessori families keen to work together to support their school by organising and participating in fundraising activities.

Due to the considerable building works taking place at the school during 2009, a number of innovative fundraising ideas were also developed and commenced during 2009 for delivery in 2010. The Elonera Montessori Cookbook is an example of a significant fundraising project commenced in 2009 that will deliver a fundraising outcome for the school in 2010.

Many more school fundraising activities, with a variety of imaginative themes and organised by a range of Elonera Montessori families, are already scheduled to take place regularly throughout the year ahead.

Caroline

3. A Message from the High School

New traditions have begun and established ones strengthened!

2009 has had many highlights. There is always much laughter which accompanies our teaching and learning and our High School students have continued to extend their understanding and practice of service and commitment. The High School in 2009 continued to organize and co-ordinate a number of whole school activities and events and some of our memories of the year include:

- The Otford to Burning Palms overnight hike. This year we combined our adventure with the students of Gynea Montessori High School for double the fun and laughter. Activities included fishing, cooking that amazing bream, bonfire on the beach and games.
- Harmony Day celebrations in March with performances from students from all stages of the school.
- Playing host to Australia's Biggest Morning Tea in May
- Watching various performances at IPAC.
- The 40 hour famine sleepover at school in August! A welcome diversion from the hunger pangs is always playing "Risk" and other games, as is playing Sardines and the movie events. Thanks, Michael for the fun and "Murder in the Dark"!
- The Melting Pot, manned by the Stage 5 Technology class, sustained the whole school during the winter months with a variety of culinary treats including chicken, chickpeas and couscous, pasta dishes etc.
- Work begins on renovations to the Western Wing...a new General Learning Area, Science lab, presentation rooms, art/drama space and music room and kitchenette/rec area are created to house our High School.
- Maria Montessori's birthday is celebrated as a whole school event.
- Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day events have been organised by the students to ensure we acknowledge the wonderful achievements of our parents.
- Stage 4 and 5 had their inaugural participation in the University of Wollongong Science Fair and produced some exciting projects.
- Italian Day was celebrated once again in November with a fest of food and fun.
- Our Spring Concert in September had the High School as MCs and who also participated in the event.
- End of Year Camp was held in Bundeena where we flew kites, rode the "wild" currents from the bridge and dodged the crazy possums and white cockatoos.
- The delights of the end of year were celebrated with our Mexican student, Paola Martinez, dearly loved and remembered with a smile!

- The End of Year dinner was another successful event ... a mixed evening of sadness and excitement as we farewelled students, Brei and Courtney.
- The December Kris Kringle tradition continued in our classroom this year.

These are the events which help to define our community and the vision for our students, but these are complemented by the teaching and learning as the basis of our day. The students have set up sound work practices. They are empowered to manage their time effectively, to make decisions to extend or consolidate their work and to share their particular strengths with their peers. They continue to perform well in external testing and to produce high quality work. All this, of course, has been under the guidance of their teachers who are passionate about young people, have a love for their subject areas and are constantly learning and developing themselves, through their access to workshops and programmes, reading and sharing with colleagues. They take seriously the work which has been entrusted to them, "the release of human potentialities...a New Man who will not be the victim of events, but will have the clarity of vision to direct and shape the future of human society". (*Maria Montessori, "Education for a new world"*.)

4. Student Performance in Statewide Tests and Examinations

Elonera uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the teaching/ learning cycle. These include teacher observations, a range of presentations both written and verbal, formal assessment tasks as well as participation in the state-wide literacy and numeracy testing program. Feedback on student progress is regularly provided, in a variety of ways, as a strategy for promoting learning.

- Provided below is the data for the School Certificate in Year 10, 2009.

Performance on NAPLAN is documented on the My School website: www.myschool.edu.au

It should be noted that Elonera has a very small sample of students represented in each of these tests and as, at times, we are providing comparisons according to state-wide performance bands or percentages, the results may at times seem unrealistic as 1 or 2 students performing significantly higher or lower than their class can impact on the school mean. Because of this, results are not reported according to state-wide benchmarks.

School Certificate

The School Certificate is reported between Bands 1 and 6 with Band 6 being the highest level.

Two students sat the school Certificate Tests in 2009. Consistent with previous years, our students performed well with all results across each of the subject areas placed in Bands 2 -5 (60% placed in Band 4). Grade allocation saw 85% of results being allocated a Grade B or above. Both students attained a Highly Competent in the Computing Skills test which was conducted online.

5. Professional Learning and Teaching Standards

The professional learning undertaken by teachers as part of the school's professional development include our weekly meetings, where the preschool, primary and high school teaching staff meet to discuss student welfare, occupational health and safety, curriculum matters, parent feedback, administrative processes, report on any training that they have attended, and discuss articles and texts that are particularly helpful.

Professional Learning 2009

Professional Learning Activity	Focus Area	No of staff participating
Montessori Assistants four day Foundation course	Philosophy, pastoral care	1
Leadership Forum	Governance	3
TAFE site visit for Trainee Child Care Workers	Child Care Trainee support	3
Quality Care Practices	Compliance	1
School Boards Orientation (3 parents, Head of School)	Compliance, Governance	4
Annual Heads of School Meeting	Whole School Management	1
First Aid	Risk Management	12
IB Coordinators meeting	Curriculum	1
Capital Works – BER	Future Infrastructure	1
Mentors Course	Quality Assurance, Curriculum	1
Identifying and responding to children and Young people at risk of harm	Risk Management	1
Language and story telling workshop	Programming	1
Music and movement Workshop	School Curriculum	1
Montessori Conference and whole school refresher	Whole School Curriculum	8
Montessori Assistants four day Foundation course	Philosophy, pastoral care	2
Child Care Protection - Identifying and Responding to risk of harm	Risk management	10
Association of Independent Schools		
First aid OOSH worker	Risk management	1
International Baccalaureate- Melbourne	Community Action and Service Curriculum	1
International Baccalaureate Brisbane	Biology	1
DOCS new structure	Preschool management	3
Child Care Forum	Management	2
Early Learning Framework	Curriculum	3
Multi-enterprise agreement training AIS	Human Resources	1

Other Professional Learning 2009

Professional Learning Activity	Focus Area	No of staff participating
Traineeship – Certificate III in Child Care Studies	Staff development	1
Certificate IV in Child Care Studies	Staff Development	1
Observation at other Montessori Schools	Curriculum	3
Montessori Heads of School Advisory Committee- NSW representative	Montessori Australia Foundation – Leadership and Development	1

The average expenditure per teaching staff member (FTE) on professional learning in 2009 was \$500. The training of assistants, School Council members, IB training and preschool teachers are not included in this figure.

Teaching Standards

Category	Number of Teachers
Teachers who have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines, or	10
Teachers who have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications, or	0
Teachers who do not have qualifications as described in (a) and (b) but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context.	0

Note: The teachers in the first category have been employed due to their expertise and qualifications and take up 6 fulltime equivalents. Of the fulltime equivalent teachers 50% of the teachers have additional specialised Montessori qualifications; 25% are secondary teachers and 7% are specialist teachers (language, ESL) and 18% are teacher administrators. These figures do not include the preschool staff.

Workforce Composition

We are proud to have a multicultural workforce. Some of our teachers have immigrated from Finland, Canada, Lebanon and Switzerland. The Australian-born teachers have a variety of backgrounds such as Italian, Greek, and Egyptian. Our assistants have German, and Indigenous backgrounds. The Preschool staff that are not included in the teaching staff numbers have Sri Lankan, Dutch and German backgrounds. Please refer to the My Schools website www.myschool.edu.au

6. Student Attendance, Retention Rates and Post School Destinations

Student Attendance Rate

Year Level	Attendance Rate %
Kindergarten	88.3
Year 1	92.5
Year 2	91.8
Year 3	93.3
Year 4	91.4
Year 5	88.9
Year 6	98
Year 7	95
Year 8	100
Year 9	98
Year 10	100

Retention Rates and Post School Destinations

100% of our students who have completed Year 10 continue from Year 10 to Year 12.

At the end of 2009 one Year 10 student has chosen to remain at the school and complete external higher secondary studies, and the other has chosen to continue studies at another secondary school.

Students who have attended the high school to Year 10 are now in the following post high school destinations: At University: studying Commerce/Arts, Law/Creative writing, Macaronic Engineering, Marine Studies, International Law/Peace Studies, Early Childhood Education; At TAFE Creative Arts Diploma, or working: in a Ballet Company, Owner of a restaurant, Owner an electrical firm, Apprentice of the Year 2009 (NSW) in Building Trade, Apprentice BHP, Travelling and working in administration overseas.

7. School Policies

To ensure that all aspects of the schools' mission for providing for a student's welfare are implemented the following policies and procedures are in place:

Policy	Changes in 2009	Access to full text
Fees Policy	Increase fees by 2.5% for 2009	Finance Committee Minutes
Delegation of Authority	Nil	Governance Manual
Child Protection Policy	Updated 18/5/09	Staff Handbook; Parent Handbook
Code of Ethics	Nil	Staff handbook
Security Policy	Nil	Occupational Health and Safety Manual
Policies of Enrolment	Nil	Parent Handbook; Policies and Procedures Manual;
Privacy	Nil	Policies and Procedures Manual; Staff Handbook; Parent Handbook
Code of Conduct on Excursions	Nil	Parent Handbook; Staff Handbook
Grace and Courtesy (Student Welfare and Discipline Policy)	Nil	Parent Handbook; Staff Handbook;
Communication Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Formal and informal mechanisms in place for facilitating communication between the school and those with an interest in the student's education and well-being 	Nil	Parent Handbook
Grievance Procedure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Formal and informal mechanisms to make a complaint. 	Nil	Parent Handbook; Staff Handbook
Additional Strategies to Avoid Allergens	Nil	Staff handbook
Asthma Management Policy	Nil	Staff handbook
Parent Participation Policy	Nil	Parent handbook
Animal Welfare Policy	Nil	Staff handbook
Curriculum Policy	Nil	Staff handbook
Educational and Reporting Policy	Nil	Staff handbook Governance Manual
Quality Policy	new	Staff handbook Quality Manual
Occupational Health and Safety Policy Parking and Traffic Management	new	Parent Handbook Occupational Health and Safety
Occupational Health and Safety Policy Arrival and Departure of Child Policy	new	Staff Handbook Parent Handbook Occupational Health and Safety
School Council Conduct Procedure	new	Governance Manual
Aquatic Policy	new	Staff Handbook
Transition Process Policy	new	Staff Handbook

POLICIES OF ENROLMENT

The school's policy on enrolment acknowledges the rationale and requirement of current legislation. It combines this with the processes of enrolment and responsibility for student welfare established in the school already. In particular it is the policy of the school that Elonera Montessori School adheres to the legislated acts of the Anti-Discrimination Act (NSW); the Disabilities Act (1992); Occupational Health and Safety Act (NSW) 2000 and the Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000.

STATEMENT (in the Parent Handbook 2009)

The Elonera Montessori School admits students of any race, gender, religion, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programmes, and activities available to students at the school in line with Montessori learning and philosophy. We are proud to have such a diverse mix of people in our school community. All admissions are considered individually, based upon the Montessori classroom environment, the existing number of children, staffing, and the timeliness of intake.

Previous students who wish to re-enrol in the school, after they have been withdrawn and attended another system of education, will be considered individually based upon an admission criteria which supports the value systems of the school including such attributes as the students' work ethic, level of cooperation, and independence.

ENROLMENT PROCEDURE

1. Enrolment officer responds by phone to initial enquiry. She notifies them of tours that are available on Wednesday mornings.
2. the following documents are then provided:
 - a. Prospectus
 - b. Fees Structure
 - c. Enrolment form
 - d. Information handout on Montessori Classroom
3. On return of the Applicant Details, along with previous school reports, the Enrolment Officer places the child's name on the waiting list.
4. A request to attend the tour as well as an Interview of the parents and child with the classroom teacher will eventuate if and when an appropriate vacancy occurs.
5. An Appropriate Vacancy Occurring
Once a vacancy exists and the enrolment fees and forms have been received, the child spends up to a half-day at the school. After this visit, and it is agreed by the child, the parents and the Directress, that this may be the right environment, the Directress will arrange a starting date and will notify the enrolment officer who then contacts the parents, requests and informs them of relevant details (i.e. payment of fees).
Conditions of entry and acceptance of enrolment are to be signed by parents and fees are to be paid before the child commences. Parents are given the Parent Handbook.
The offer of enrolment is valid for two weeks.
6. On the date specified in the offer of enrolment, and after the above payments have been received, the child commences a four week mutual trial period at the school.
7. At the end of this trial period the Directress presents a recommendation to the School Council. A decision is then made regarding the acceptance of the child, and their family as members of Elonera Ltd.

Mutual Trial Period

If, at any time during the 4 week mutual trial period, the applicant chooses, or is counselled by the school to withdraw the child, all payments (save the fees for tuition incurred) may be refunded.

Waiting List

The waiting list is held according to the preferred time of entry requested by the parent, in order of date received. Students who are transferring from another Montessori preschool or school will be given priority, then siblings, then all other applicants as they have been received.

Transition Days

For those children who are moving from one stage to another, transition days are organised for half days, once a week in the term before the enrolment date, for approximately four weeks.

Please refer to the My School website www.myschool.edu.au for a description of the characteristics of the student body.

ENROLLING IN MONTESSORI

(from the Parent Handbook 2009)

Harmony, Stability, Education in Life, is provided when you commit to a continued Montessori education for your child/ren from Preschool-Stage 1 through to Stage 5 High School.

Most Preschools are independently operated and don't lead into a particular primary school. Elonera Montessori School, Children's House - Stage 1 (3 to 6 years) provides fundamental early childhood learning directly preparing the child to transition into a Primary Montessori education i.e. Stages 2 and 3, then High School Montessori education Stages 4 to 5.

It is extremely disruptive to our school culture and to families that are seeking placement for a long-term relationship with our school when others use us simply for Preschool purposes.

OPEN MORNING

Open Visits are held every Wednesday of the month. Parents, Grandparents and relatives interested in the Montessori Method are invited to make an appointment. The school office is contactable on Phone (02) 42251000.

OBSERVATIONS

Observations before enrolling are most beneficial and are by appointment only. Parents are encouraged to observe at other Montessori schools as well. You may obtain the telephone numbers of the other schools from the office.

SUGGESTED READING

It is highly recommended that parents and prospective parents make themselves familiar with the Montessori Method of education. Books are available at the Wollongong Public Library. Please ask the office or teachers if already enrolled, for a list of recommended reading.

WAITING LIST

A commitment to a total Montessori education i.e. from the age of three to the age of fifteen is sought from the parents prior to embarking on a Montessori education.

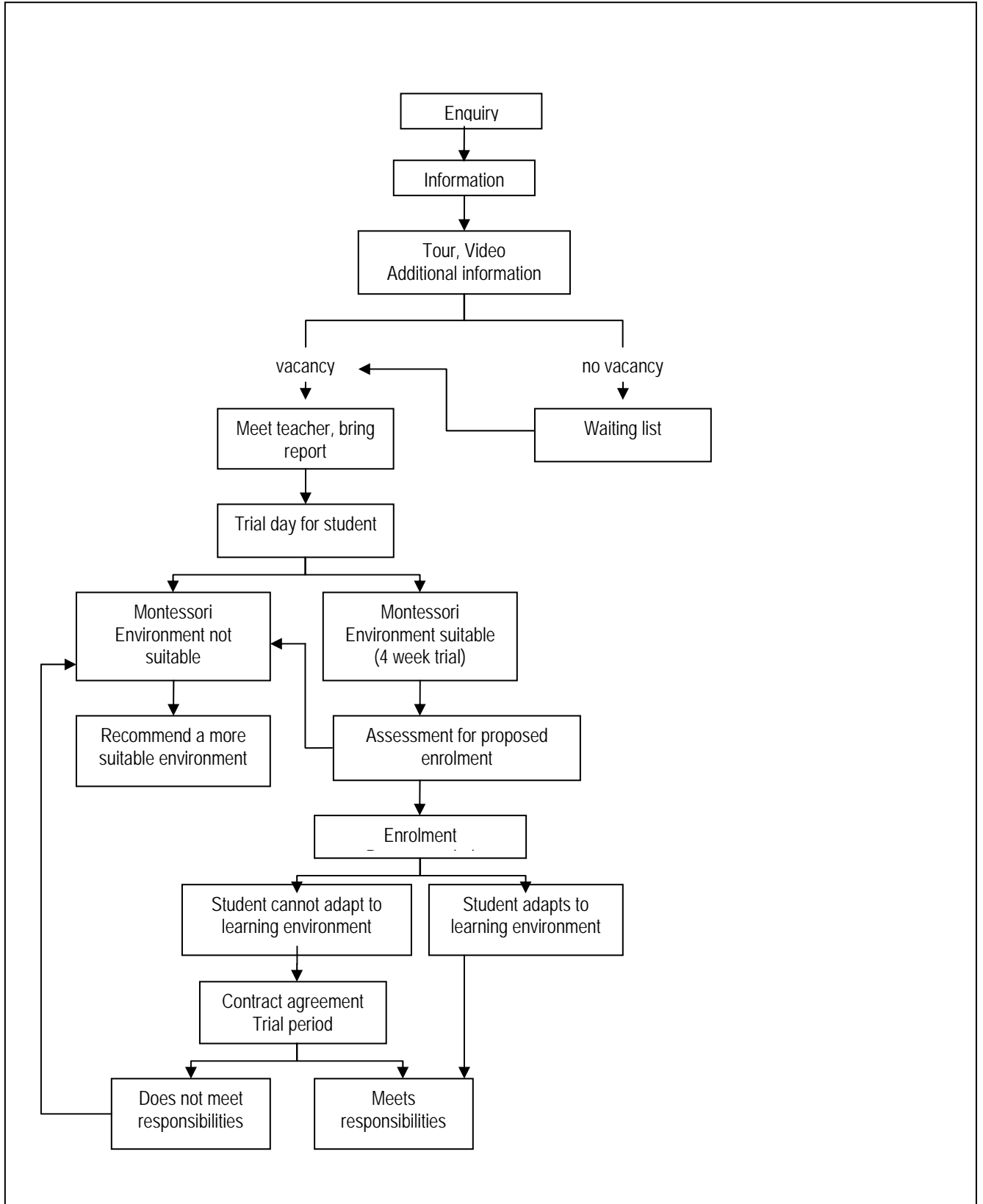
Children are placed on a waiting list when they apply to the school. The waiting list is reviewed when a vacancy occurs in the school.

FEEDER PRE-SCHOOLS

Illawarra Montessori Preschool (IMPS), located in Bristol Street in Berkeley, has been in operation for over twenty years. It has placements for twenty children, and is managed by a parent committee. It is not part of Elonera Montessori School and it retains its own autonomy.

Thirroul Montessori Preschool, established in 1999 in Thirroul, is owner-operated and currently has 10-12 students in its Montessori classroom.

ENROLMENT FLOW CHART



BOND REQUIREMENTS

On acceptance of a placement at the School the bond shall be paid and held by the School. The bond will be \$300.00 per child. This is non refundable if the conditions of enrolment are not met.

After the four week mutual trial period, and once a pupil has been accepted, the pupil will be deemed to be enrolled for that year. No refund of the bond will be made if subsequently the application is withdrawn.

Once a pupil is enrolled at the School, **10 school weeks notice of withdrawal must be given in writing to the Office**. In default of such notice a full term's fees will be charged, and the bond will also be forfeited.

If conditions for withdrawal, including adequate notice, have been met, and all fees paid the bond will be refunded.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE SCHOOL

Notification of withdrawal must be put in writing to the office, ten school weeks before the child is withdrawn. If the **full amount of notice is not given the bond is forfeited**. It cannot be used to pay the final fees, unless the correct amount of notice has been given.

Parents are reminded that withdrawals affect not only their own child, but the whole group.

A commitment to a total Montessori education i.e.: from the age of three to the age of sixteen is sought from the parents prior to embarking on a Montessori education.

During enrolment period – Should it be determined by the teachers that the child does not appear to be compatible with the school the parents may either choose to withdraw their child or apply for an extension to the trial period. The teachers may grant the extension, at their discretion. Otherwise, the matter may be directed to the Head of School, for further consideration if deemed appropriate by the teachers.

EXIT INTERVIEWS

The school welcomes your feedback. An exit interview form with a pre-paid return envelop is sent out to the family.

SUMMARY OF WELFARE AND DISCIPLINE POLICIES (from Parent Handbook 2009)

CHILD PROTECTION

The school's policy on Child protection acknowledges the rationale and requirement of current legislation on the issue of Child Protection and combines this with the processes of childcare and responsibility for their welfare established in the school already. In particular it is the policy of the school that:

- ◆ All members of staff should be conversant with current legislation and recognise the responsibility we each carry to report cases of suspected neglect or abuse towards children
- ◆ While there is a single member of staff with responsibility of communicating reports to the Department of Community Services (DOCS) such reports will be shared in utmost confidence with the Head of School
- ◆ All workers who have primary contact with the children at school taken on are screened by the Child Protection Bureau
- ◆ The school does not permit corporal punishment of students

PRIVACY

Elonera Montessori School must observe the National Privacy Principles in the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000.

- ◆ Parents are asked to notify the school if they wish to have their name, and phone numbers taken off the parent telephone list, which is used for internal school distribution only.
- ◆ When personal information is collected regarding a student, a collection statement will be given to the parents (for example, for purposes of literacy and numeracy support, as well as classroom support).
- ◆ Children are not to be photographed for newspapers unless parents provide consent
- ◆ Use and disclosure of sensitive information about a person is considered a breach
- ◆ The school cannot directly market in the newsletter, when its primary purpose is to provide news and information to the students and parents.
- ◆ Records on students must be secure, and therefore access to the School Office and data collection systems is limited to staff only.

CODE OF CONDUCT ON EXCURSIONS

A Code of Excursion Behaviour provides clearly defined rules and principles, for all students, parents and staff of Elonera Montessori School to: Ensure the safety and well - being of our school community; Promote acceptable behaviour; Modify unacceptable behaviour; Formalise parent responsibility; Promote a positive image when the Elonera Montessori School is on excursion. It provides information on responsibilities of the supervising adults as well as the students.

All parents are requested to remind their children of the student's responsibilities, before each excursion. If a child disrupts an excursion or breaks the safety rules, on at least two occasions, they will not be allowed to attend the next two excursions.

STUDENT GRACE AND COURTESY POLICY

In accepting our responsibility for the optimum educational development of every student at Elonera, we recognise the need to create the best possible learning environment and social climate.

Student grace and courtesy management at our school recognises the need for a series of sanctions based on Montessori principles that endeavour to specify behavioural approaches in a variety of situations. This must be done in order to provide mutual understanding between the parents, staff and students regarding any corrective action the school may be required to take.

INNER DISCIPLINE

The development of inner discipline in a child is the goal in a Montessori education. Self-discipline is fostered in many ways. The classroom environment is organised in an orderly, logical manner. Children choose work, which they are capable of doing and are free to do it without interference from others. This approach alleviates many problems of discipline, which may be present in another kind of environment. In addition, the mixed age group allows the younger children to emulate the older children's more mature behaviour.

POSITIVE APPROACHES TO DISCOURTEOUSNESS

The positive model of grace and courtesy within a Montessori setting is self-discipline (Where concentration, focus and independent learning happen without contention or interruption). Children are respected and discourtesies are handled with positive responses, including:

- The actions of a child are discussed, not the personality.
- Opportunities are provided for the child to express and define his/her feelings.
- The teacher sets the tone for bringing the child into harmony by avoiding harsh words and sudden reprimands.

DEFINING DISCOURTESY AND CONSEQUENCES

Minor Discourtesy

Is behaviour or general classroom disruption (such as silliness, minor hitting, taking other's work, repetitive noise, copying, making a fuss and the like), that interferes with the orderly educational process

The teacher manages this kind of behaviour by gentle direction - parents will be contacted if it is considered to be a repetitive form leading to other problems.

Serious Discourtesy

Is behaviour that results in property destruction, wilful defiance, or endangering others? Such behaviour may be divided into two categories - NON-CONTACT and CONTACT

Serious Discourtesy (Non-Contact) - is seen as refusal to do work, constantly interfering verbally with other's work, bad language and the like. The Procedure the Teacher follows:

- Firstly the child is reminded that the behaviour is unacceptable.
- If the offence is repeated the child is given "time-out", in a temporary chair near him/her, to consider their behaviour.

If it is repeated, action is taken by the teacher and the parents will be informed. **Parents will then be invited to attend consultation, at this stage, with the teachers** with a view to solving the behavioural problem in a mutually supportive way.

If the child does not modify behaviour and continues to be disruptive, parents will be asked to a second consultation with the teacher. In this instance, the child should also attend the first part of the consultation and be informed of the seriousness of the behaviour. *Action taken may be the withdrawal of the child from the school for a "cooling-off" period where the child is told that he/she is being given time to consider his/her behaviour away from the school environment.* If this does not work, the parents and the teachers may then choose to look at assistance outside the school, if necessary.

This process will be monitored and further action may be necessary if there is no change in the child's behaviour. *There may be a need to consider the child's inability to fit into the Montessori system.* Action at this stage will be determined by the teacher, in consultation with the Head of School, following the above-mentioned process.

Serious Discourtesy (Contact) - is seen as out-of-control behaviour, hitting and kicking, temper tantrums, throwing objects, damaging students' work or school property or harmful hitting and the like

The Procedure the Teacher follows:

Firstly the child will be removed from the immediate problem and told that his/her parents are being informed. Parents will then be asked to attend an interview with the teacher to try and solve the behavioural problem in a constructive way. There should be regular contact between the parents and teacher during the following period to monitor improvement in the student.

If the child does not modify behaviour and continues to be disruptive, parents will be asked to a second consultation with the teacher. In this instance, the child should also attend the first part of the consultation and be informed of the seriousness of the behaviour. *Action taken may be the withdrawal of the child from the school for a "cooling-off" period where the child is told that he/she is being given time to consider his/her behaviour away from the school environment.* If this does not work, the parents and the teachers may then choose to look at assistance outside the school, if necessary.

A third occurrence constitutes serious disruption to the welfare of the school and indicates an involvement by the Head of School. *At this stage, there exists a real need to consider the child's inability to fit into the Montessori system.* Action will be determined by the teachers, in consultation with the Head of School. Following the above mentioned process, action may be necessary to terminate the child's enrolment at the school.

Any damage to school property will become the responsibility of the offending child's parents and they will be expected to meet the cost of the damage.

All misbehaviour will be documented by the teachers and details will be available to parents, upon request.

REPORTS OF OFFENDING BEHAVIOUR BY THE CHILD

Offending behaviour should be reported to the teachers in the first instance.

If a child reports to their parents that they have been hurt by another child during school time, parents are requested to contact the teacher. The teacher is in the best position to document and deal with such occurrences.

Parents are requested not to take action by directly contacting parents of the "other" child. There may be a situation where there is a disagreement between two children that escapes the attention of the teacher. Parents should contact the teacher and rely on the teacher's judgement in assessing the nature of the incident and work with the teacher in evaluating the situation.

PROCEDURE FOR ASSESSING BEHAVIOUR DURING THE ENROLMENT PERIOD

All new students enrolling at Elonera are placed on a mutually agreed four-week trial period. This period enables **both the** parents and the school to gauge the compatibility between the child and the school. This period also allows the child to make an Individual judgement about staying at the school.

During this period, **the teacher** will assess the child's "settling-in" process. After the first two weeks, the parents will be asked to attend a consultation with the teacher to discuss their child and any problems he/she may be experiencing. After the third week, another meeting may be requested to further assess the child's progress.

If any problems are occurring, they should become evident during this time and both the parents and the teachers should have enough time to assess whatever action may be necessary to help the child settle into the school environment.

Should it be determined by the teachers that the child does not appear to be compatible with the school, and then the parents may either choose to withdraw their child or apply for an extension of the trial period. The

teachers may grant the extension, at their discretion. Otherwise, the matter may be directed to Head of School, for further consideration if deemed appropriate by the teachers.

SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS AND RESOLVING GRIEVANCES

COMMUNICATION

Communication is a two way process, and should be the responsibility of all members of the school. A good communication flow with your child's teacher is essential and should be the principle vehicle for questions that may arise. Parent - Teacher Interviews are scheduled mid year for this purpose.

A Glass Notice Board for parents and students is provided in the Stage 1 entry as well as in the courtyard walkway. A small whiteboard opposite the office door provides you with a brief update/reminder of school happenings, and is maintained by a parent volunteer.

All families are encouraged to attend members meetings that are held in the evening usually once a term.

Communication pockets for each family have proven to be very successful. All school notices, excursion permission forms, and newsletters are placed there.

Appointments can be made with your teacher after school, if you have any concerns that you need to discuss.

Parents who wish to suggest excursions, guest speakers and provide other links to our local community are asked to discuss their ideas with the teacher.

Members who wish to make a suggestion or to raise a concern to the School Council are to submit a formal "Issues Paper". Copies of the Issues Paper Template are available from the office.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Parents and other members of the school community may from time to time wish to complain about a school matter.

The vast majority of concerns that arise from parents need never take the form of a formal complaint. The teachers and the executive are available to discuss these concerns in more informal ways. Complainants should have in mind an outcome from their complaint.

Receiving an Informal Complaint

- talk to a teacher/staff member first about your complaint outlining the issue(s)
- have in mind what you want would like done to resolve the issue(s)
- come to a resolution about your situation
- have a follow-up discussion between the parent and the teacher/staff member
- If a solution cannot be reached between the parent and teacher, raise your concern with the Head.

Receiving a Formal Complaint

A formal complaint must be made in writing. It must be signed by the complainant, and addressed to the Head of School.

Upon receipt of a written complaint, the Head is to meet with the complainant as soon as possible; discuss the complaint with the complainant to identify the key issues and desired outcomes; inform the Chairperson of the School Council; provide a copy of the written complaint to the person who is the subject of the complaint, and request a response within one week; work towards conciliation within four weeks

Where the complaint has not been resolved through conciliation, the School Council Executive must make a decision after considering the substance of the complaint; all relevant information, and any relevant policy. A copy of the decision and reasons must be provided to the complainant and the relevant staff or council member.

8. Improvement Targets for 2009

Excellence and Equity		
	Priorities	Achievement
Levels of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Double the number of Parent education programs for 2009 ▪ Market the parent toddler program (another parent education program) ▪ Plan for the development of a second Stage 3 class by the end of 2010 ▪ Establish another Children's House classroom by the end of 2009 ▪ Establish an IB program by the end of 2009 ▪ Continue to mentor those in the OTEN course ▪ Support entry and exit of each stage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two courses held March and June 2009 ▪ Increased utilisation ▪ Renovated new premises for Stage 3 ▪ Feasibility study regarding the management of a third preschool class ▪ Deferred for one year to establish an IB Middle Years program by 2011; ▪ Continue to mentor OTEN course ▪ Supported entry and exit of each stage through parent information sessions; individualised education plan
Building Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Publish an article in the new Wollongong magazine called "Coast Kids" twice in 2009 ▪ Hold an open morning session in the PTP to introduce the community to the concept ▪ Celebrate ten years of operation of the High School at a Ball ▪ Continue to celebrate Harmony Day ▪ Hold a Transition to Montessori School for the whole community in Term 2 ▪ Continue to develop links with Illawarra Montessori Preschool ▪ Strengthen links with Preschools that are aligned to Montessori philosophy ▪ Provide access to the school for Montessori teacher trainee workshops (MWEI). ▪ Further develop networks with other secondary schools in Australia and overseas. ▪ Continue to work with the Montessori Australia Foundation (MAF) ▪ Head of School to assist with MAF working towards becoming a self-regulating body, developing accreditation standards, as well as pursuing accreditation of AMI teacher training courses. ▪ Continue to hold Open Mornings every week ▪ Improve our website to include more information about parenting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ not achieved, however the Parent Progress Committee has produced a HS newsletter for the community ▪ Open morning held ▪ Extremely successful celebration. ▪ Celebrated Harmony Day ▪ Our founding teacher is mentoring other preschools that are aligned to Montessori philosophy, improving links. ▪ Ex-Montessori students are trained as OOSH assistants at Elonera Montessori (policy established in 1999 by School Council) and some go on to become teachers or classroom assistants. ▪ Through the IB we have further developed networks with other secondary schools in Australia ▪ The Head is on the Heads of School Advisory Council and continues to work for the Montessori Australia Foundation (MAF) ▪ We hold Open Mornings every Wednesday ▪ The progress committee has become very active through fundraising, as well as a book club and they have re-introduced a monthly coffee morning ▪ Strong participation of parents ▪ Held whole school celebrations
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with MAF to help to review the models of governance in Montessori Schools (i.e. use of experts/ corporate directors) with the view to provide a productive/supportive governing body ▪ Provide training for the Governing body (Montessori Leadership workshop) ▪ Support and Implement the Quality Montessori School Plan ▪ Equity initiatives with particular reference to access, participation, achievement and outcomes including transition to further education, training and development in relation to: education of boys, science education of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Currently considering different models of governance. ▪ Parent Directors attended sessions discussing models of governance ▪ The Council has adopted concept of the five year Quality Plan for the school to work through ▪ The school has further developed its system of inclusion of parents of students who will be individually assessed and supported for literacy and numeracy needs, keeping on task, or other needs. ▪ We have reviewed policies and procedures ▪ The policy and practice manual for the School Council was updated. The Council has access to

	<p>girls, literacy and numeracy needs, education of gifted and talented students, education of students with an ESL background, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, and those with special education needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Systematic review of policies and procedures, compliance ▪ Consider implementing the MAF data management system ▪ Risk management in all classrooms. Teachers to document all products in use, check the chemwatch rating, and have an up to date MSDS manual. 	<p>the Governance Manual, the staff manual, and the parent handbook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction of the CCMS system of data collection for Vacation care and OOSH
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to meet ongoing financial accountability, and reporting requirements for the various government bodies ▪ Ensure that approved capital works projects are within the financial projections that were made for the BGA (Western wing development) the National Schools Pride and the Primary School Priorities BER Grants ▪ Continue to manage the long service leave entitlements ▪ Continue to manage the ongoing upgrade of Montessori equipment ▪ Establish a Trust Fund for the IB ▪ Prepare for the future purchase of property at 11 Mt Ousley Rd, projected for the end of 2010 ▪ Support for planning of fundraising, canteen etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We met our financial accountability, and reporting requirements to the various government bodies ▪ The fee structure was modified, to include incentives for early payment, as well as penalties for payments over one term. There were also discounts introduced for siblings. Discounts for PTP children if they attend multiple sessions or if they are siblings. Fees were not increased with inflation for 2009 due to the financial situation. We also absorbed the sport fee so that fees in real terms did not increase for the year ▪ We supported the fundraising, canteen etc through the parent activity policy. Parents are charged if they do not get involved with the school. ▪ We invested in infrastructure (IT/Fire services)
Building and Premises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Submit a BER application based on the Master Plan for upgrading the facilities (i.e. includes an indoor hall/sports centre). ▪ Beautification of the indoor and outdoor environment ▪ Signage to be improved ▪ Create an outdoor learning environment ▪ Improve entry point ▪ Renew painting in school ▪ Renew roofing of all buildings ▪ Covered outdoor area ▪ Further develop classroom resources in Children's House and Stage 2/3 ▪ Finalise and implement the BGA project ▪ Upgrade the electrical circuits to the Primary to cope with the demand ▪ Wireless computer throughout the school ▪ "F" drive access for Preschool and Primary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We implemented the Master Plan and submitted a successful BER, and NSP application to upgrade the facilities. We developed the Western wing of the school to create another GLA, a science facility and a library. ▪ New signage purchased ▪ We installed an air conditioner for the OOSH room. ▪ We re-roofed and painted the interior of the OOSH Room, and the admin building. ▪ The existing western front fence was cement rendered and tubular fencing was installed to improve the security of the school. ▪ Upgraded electrical circuit board in preschool/Kinder ▪ Painted woodwork room ▪ Purchased Montessori classroom resources for the two Stage 2 classes ▪ Continuing to work towards the establishment of the Science Centre for the secondary. Some purchases of science equipment for all stages
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attitudinal/Perception Data (students, teachers, parents wider community) ▪ Succession planning will be in place by the end of 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We collected Attitudinal/Perception Data from a parent forum as well as from the parent survey. ▪ The teachers started the new year by reviewing their whole school goals of last year, reflected upon the success of the goals and brainstormed further goals for 2010 ▪ Succession planning discussed by Finance committee and to continue in 2010.

Student Learning		
Continued development of the eight key learning areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purchase Montessori Manuals and Materials to assist with the curriculum development continuity, implementation and assessment ▪ Encourage more support for a social skills program at home through the PALS project in the Children's House ▪ BOS Inspection – Montessori scope and sequence, linked to the Board of Studies Outcomes ▪ Implement music appreciation program in the primary through keyboard instruction as well as drumming. ▪ Ensure that classrooms are socially supportive, 'student centred" and continue to be intellectually demanding ▪ Continue with the Individualised Education Plan for children who have special needs – include parents, teacher, literacy support teacher, Head of School, external support person (if working with the child) – meet formally at least twice a year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purchased Montessori Manuals for primary ▪ Curriculum development, implementation and assessment ▪ Encouraged more support for a social skills program at home through IEP process ▪ BOS Inspection for primary (early 2009) – Montessori scope and sequence, linked to the Board of Studies Outcomes – achieved 5 years registration ▪ Implemented choir and music appreciation program. Implemented School band as after school program ▪ Ensured that classrooms are socially supportive, 'student centred" and continue to be intellectually demanding ▪ Expanded the Individualised Education Plan for all children who are at risk.
Integrated curriculum with cross-curricula emphasis on literacy and technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to develop the IT plan ▪ Wireless technology to be installed in the Western end ▪ Technology implemented to allow teachers to access their school files while at home ▪ Establish a budget for ICT ▪ Re-assess the students in the primary, regarding their skills and knowledge of computer technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IT plan was submitted to the AIS ▪ Wireless technology has been installed throughout school. ▪ Teachers have a school contact point/address linked to the website ▪ Teachers have a planning tool in excel to document the work that the students have done. ▪ Planning of program to monitor students in the primary, and high school with access to internet.
Reporting to parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue with current school report form. Show portfolios at parent /teacher meetings. ▪ Re-Introduce meetings with new students parents after four weeks of attendance ▪ Continue to communicate with parents through the newsletter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continued with current school report form. Showed work at parent /teacher meetings. ▪ Parents in the preschool have requested more formalised feedback on their child's progress. Preschool Teachers developed an orientation booklet.
Entrepreneurial initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary students to continue to fundraise-proposal of producing food to sell to primary as well as to parents ▪ Stage 3 to continue fundraising for camps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary students fundraised for the cost of their camp with "The Melting Pot" (extremely successful) ▪ Stage 3 fundraised for their camp
Parent Involvement		
Parents expertise to be valued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guest Speakers i.e. philosophy discussions; career information; marketing; art; technology etc ▪ Commerce expertise to support commerce students ▪ Design, engineering, building and horticultural expertise needed for capital works projects ▪ Finance and human resources support ▪ Parents networking with other organisations on our behalf – MAF, Health Services etc ▪ Parents creating amazing fundraising projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guest Speakers attended both the High School and the primary ▪ Marketing expertise supported parent forum ▪ Design, building and engineering expertise provided for capital works projects ▪ Finance/ Occ health and safety and human resources support was provided to senior student by Head ▪ Parents networking with other organisations on our behalf – MAF, Health Services etc ▪ Parents creating amazing fundraising projects such as donation of painting, a Halloween party, Italian Day celebrations
Montessori education/information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educational Articles to be placed in a few newsletters. ▪ Continue to hold hands on sessions for parents to understand the materials used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parent course offered twice during the year for five weeks. ▪ Hands on -Information session held for parents on Mathematics

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parent Toddler ongoing education information distributed ▪ Guest speakers- from MAF ▪ Access to MAF information is available on the website for parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parent Toddler handouts given out each week by Early Childhood Teacher ▪ Sponsored parents to attend Montessori meetings ▪ Access to MAF information is available on the website for parents
Inclusion of parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guest Speakers – by request of teachers ▪ Marketing expertise- parents in Stage 3 have offered to assist with High School newsletter ▪ Working bees for capital works projects ▪ Finance and human resources support provided to the Head ▪ Parents networking with other organisations on our behalf – MAF, Health Services etc ▪ Parents coordinating and creating achievable fundraising projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The book club created by the parents continues to be extremely successful ▪ Excursions held ▪ Whole school celebrations – Harmony Day, Dr Montessori's Birthday, Great Morning tea, 60 Earth hour ▪ Parents have observed in the classroom ▪ Established a social occasion at the end of each term, i.e. sausage sizzle, and held an afternoon tea at the beginning of the school year in 2009
Teaching and Learning		
Staff Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue with formalised staff performance planning and review to support quality teaching – including self-evaluation and accreditation. ▪ Establish a system for the staff performance of support staff and assistants. ▪ Continue to train staff for the implementation of an IB program ▪ Recruitment, selection, and commitment of Montessori staff to continue. Best people for the job. ▪ Teacher's use of technology to be supported ▪ Development of Mentoring – providing leadership for teacher development ▪ Support Montessori training at levels beyond initial training – refresher courses ▪ Support Montessori assistants to attend training ▪ Ongoing education and training in areas of special needs, first aid, peer support, art and cultural workshops, and understanding parent's needs ▪ Observations in Montessori schools that model 'best practice' ▪ Continue to develop our program by continuing with the policy of recruiting OOSH assistants from our past and present students. ▪ Development of Mentoring – providing support for Cert III child care workers development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Formalised staff performance planning and review to support quality teaching was held for the preschool and primary teachers. The High school teachers were evaluated and supported informally, however they require the same process as the primary. ▪ Commenced training staff for the implementation of an IB program (Alex, Marina and Simon) ▪ Recruitment, selection, and commitment of Montessori staff discussed at the Finance Committee and action was taken for 2009. ▪ Teacher's use of technology has increased with the majority of teachers ▪ Josy and Alex continue to provide Mentorship– this role will be formally taken on by the MAF in their future QA programme ▪ Supported Montessori training at refresher courses ▪ Supported assistants to attend Montessori assistant training ▪ Ongoing education and training have occurred in a number of areas including special needs, art and cultural workshops, music workshops, child protection, Occupational Health and Safety workshops ▪ Observations in Montessori schools that model 'best practice' by Josy, Kanthi, and Laura ▪ We continue to develop our program by continuing with the policy of recruiting OOSH assistants from our past and present students and recruited Liam this year.

Improvement Framework for 2010

Excellence and Equity	
Levels of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce fulltime classroom assistants in all classes ▪ Double the number of Parent education sessions for 2010 ▪ Market the parent toddler program ▪ Plan for the development of a another Stage 2 and 3 class by the end of 2010 ▪ Establish another Children's House classroom by the end of 2010 ▪ Establish an IB program by the end of 2010 ▪ Continue to mentor those in the OTEN course, and extend the course work ▪ Support entry and exit of each stage
Building Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Publish an article in the new Wollongong magazine called "Coast Kids" in 2010 ▪ Hold an open morning session in the PTP to introduce the community to the concept ▪ Celebrate opening of new wing of the High School and new school hall ▪ Continue to celebrate Harmony Day ▪ Hold a Transition to Montessori School for IMPS in Term 2 ▪ Continue to develop links with Illawarra Montessori Preschool ▪ Strengthen links with Preschools that are aligned to Montessori philosophy ▪ Provide access to the school for Montessori teacher trainee workshops (MWEI). ▪ Further develop networks with other secondary schools in Australia and overseas. ▪ Continue to work with the Montessori Australia Foundation (MAF) ▪ Head of School to assist with MAF working towards becoming a self-regulating body, developing accreditation standards, as well as pursuing accreditation of AMI teacher training courses. ▪ Continue to hold Open Mornings every week ▪ Improve our website to include more information about parenting
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with MAF to help to review the models of governance in Montessori Schools (i.e. use of experts/corporate directors) with the view to provide a productive/supportive governing body ▪ Provide training for the Governing body (Montessori Leadership workshop) ▪ Support and Implement the Quality Montessori School Plan ▪ Equity initiatives with particular reference to access, participation, achievement and outcomes including transition to further education, training and development in relation to: education of boys, science education of girls, literacy and numeracy needs, education of gifted and talented students, education of students with an ESL background, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, and those with special education needs. ▪ Streamline enrolment processes ▪ Develop clarity in the messages that we as an organisation give ▪ Retain current enrolments ▪ Reduce wastage in operational costs ▪ Attract grants to assist with linking with other key initiatives throughout the year ▪ Systematic review of policies and procedures, compliance ▪ Consider implementing the MAF data management system ▪ Risk management in all classrooms. Teachers to document all products in use, check the chemwatch rating, and have an up to date MSDS manual.
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to meet ongoing financial accountability, and reporting requirements for the various government bodies ▪ Ensure that accountability for capital works projects are completed ▪ Continue to manage the long service leave entitlements ▪ Continue to manage the ongoing upgrade of Montessori equipment ▪ Establish a Trust Fund for the IB program ▪ Prepare for the future purchase of property at 11 Mt Ousley Rd, projected for the end of 2010 ▪ Support for planning of fundraising, canteen etc ▪ Investigate the possibility of a second campus to the south
Building and Premises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Submit a BGA application based on the Master Plan for Shellharbour area ▪ External beautification of the Toddlers cottage ▪ Student amenities in primary to be improved ▪ Create an outdoor learning environment with student gardens ▪ Renew roofing of preschool and primary buildings ▪ Further develop classroom resources in Children's House and Stage 2/3 ▪ Purchase books ▪ Finalise ventilation of the BGA project

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Upgrade the electrical circuits to the Administration Eastern wing to cope with the demand ▪ Establish a screening program on the internet to manage access to websites ▪ "F" drive access for all areas
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Apply to MAF to become part of the Quality Assurance program ▪ Join Action Research Forum for Montessori Schools ▪ Research evidence based evaluation, data collection, Attitudinal/Perception Data (students, teachers, parents wider community), analysis ▪ Succession planning will be in place by the end of 2010
Student Learning	
Continued development of the eight key learning areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review materials in all classrooms ▪ Purchase Montessori Materials to assist with the curriculum development continuity, implementation and assessment ▪ Review– Montessori scope and sequence, linked to the Quality Assurance program ▪ Implement music program in all classes ▪ Ensure that classrooms are socially supportive, 'student centred" and continue to be intellectually demanding ▪ Develop internal and external referral pathways and partnerships ▪ Review the Middle Schools IB program, and start training staff ▪ Hold weekly Education Series for staff to focus on setting objectives, assessment, programming, student record keeping
Integrated curriculum with cross-curricula emphasis on literacy and technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to develop the IT plan ▪ Monitor use of technology ▪ Data projectors to be placed in the upper primary and the high presentation rooms of high school ▪ Purchase more laptop computers for High school students
Reporting to parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider purchasing the database from MAF for student reporting ▪ Develop tools and techniques to keep records until we make the decision to commit ▪ Continue with current school report form. Show portfolios at parent /teacher meetings. ▪ Re-Introduce parent forum meetings ▪ Continue to communicate with parents through the newsletter
Entrepreneurial initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider having High school students link with the community with philanthropic goals ▪ Secondary students to continue to fundraise ▪ Stage 3 to continue fundraising for camps
Parent Involvement	
Parents expertise to be valued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guest Speakers i.e. book week etc ▪ Commerce expertise to support commerce students ▪ Design, engineering, building and horticultural expertise needed for capital works projects ▪ Finance and human resources support ▪ Parents networking with other organisations on our behalf – University, Rotary, MAF, MWEI, Health Services etc ▪ Parents creating amazing fundraising projects
Montessori education/information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guest speakers- from MAF ▪ Educational Articles ▪ Information sessions for parents ▪ Continue to hold hands on sessions for parents to understand the materials used. ▪ Parent Toddler ongoing education information distributed ▪ Encourage access to MAF information is available on the website for parents
Inclusion of parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guest Speakers – by request of teachers ▪ Encourage observation in the classroom ▪ Working bees for capital works projects ▪ Parents networking with each other, and assisting with celebrations ▪ Include parents in in-house training
Teaching and Learning	
Staff Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue with formalised staff performance planning and review to support quality teaching – including self-evaluation and accreditation. ▪ Establish a mentorship system for the staff performance of support staff and assistants. ▪ Continue to train staff for the implementation of an IB program ▪ Recruitment, selection, and commitment of Montessori staff to continue. Best people for the job. ▪ Teacher's use of technology to be supported

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commitment to the Development of Quality Assurance – providing leadership for teacher development ▪ Support Montessori training at levels beyond initial training – refresher courses ▪ Support Montessori assistants to attend training ▪ Ongoing education and training in areas of special needs, curriculum development, creative arts and cultural workshops, and understanding parent's needs ▪ Observations in Montessori schools that model 'best practice' ▪ Continue to develop our program by continuing with the policy of recruiting OOSH assistants from our past and present students. ▪ Establish opportunities for students to do community service within the school as well as through our community links
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9. Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Elonera Montessori School’s Vision is a world that lives in peace, a global community based on interdependence, respect for all life and all people reached through the only path that can truly lead there, our children. The school has undertaken a number of celebrations during 2009 to promote our cultural diversity and inclusiveness.

Respect and responsibility are core attributes of the Montessori philosophy. Families are provided with a Values and Beliefs document when they join the school that was developed and adopted by the parent body in 2004. This document clarifies the mission and vision of the whole school and explains to parents how we practice respect and responsibility. It is central to the decisions that the governing body take and the day to day leadership that classroom teachers practice to continually implement these initiatives.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The school has always had an open door policy for students, parents and teachers. Students know that they can have direct access to the Head of School if they wish to talk about any school matter. Teachers make themselves available to communicate with parents on an ongoing basis, and will contact the parents if they wish to clarify anything.

Parents communicate with administration in a variety of ways by dropping into the office, via the internet or through members’ meetings.

Parent Survey results 2009

The results of the parent group reflection indicates that the quality of service was considered high; communication effective; staff were interested in doing a good job; they felt that it was a good place for their child to learn and that the facilities were developing very nicely.

The following parent and guardian feedback has been compiled from open ended questions in the parent forum, held in November.

Parents perceptions of what is working

Children’s Rights and Needs	Curriculum	Staffing/In-service
<p><u>The Child’s Needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feel proud of school ▪ Child's happiness; children are relaxed; love being at school; enthusiasm and fun instilled in the children ▪ Preparation for the outside 	<p><u>Montessori Philosophy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Philosophy, values and teaching principles ▪ Teaching/approach to education which allows more flexibility and choice. ▪ One to one interaction 	<p><u>Teachers Commitment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality teachers ▪ Caring and friendly teachers who love children ▪ Enthusiasm and Dedication – students are learning a lot; it is infectious

<p>world</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freedom for children to be who they are; individuality. <p><u>School Community</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connected Sense of community and potential for involvement <p><u>Relationship Between Children</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wide age groups – they are connected Good kids and friends for children Delightful children Small setting allows them to sort things out 	<p>between teacher and student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides strong foundation <p><u>Level and quality of the work</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education that goes beyond the classroom setting Take on the interests of the child. The work is more real <p><u>Parent Participation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are speaking up and getting the message out in the community Montessori teaching and learning is more understood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holistic view Respectful treatment; a vocation <p><u>Teacher Student Ratio</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small number of children in class compared to other schools allows for more individual attention <p><u>High School</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awesome The school report is outstanding. They provide us with a well-considered and insightful commentary on our child. Treated like adults Does a good job meeting the emotional and social needs of our child
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Facilities and Equipment		
<p><u>Site</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thrilled about the new look of the school Extremely happy about getting a school hall, new canteen and a ball court Location is good Front entry improvements are great <p><u>Equipment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Montessori equipment provided by the school is wonderful 		

Parents perceptions on how to improve

Children's Rights and Needs	Curriculum	Services
<p>Preschool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Am unsure if my child is meeting the outcomes, I would like more feedback <p>Primary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the disruptive behaviour of some of the children as there is a concern of a perceived lack of action More parent involvement required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen music and drama Offer Japanese <p><u>High School</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need a year 11/12 Need to grow the high school to about 30 students Worry that the High school could get too big and lose its quality Misinformation that is out in the community- Inform parents about the work that is achieved to address their perceptions 	<p><u>Fees</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More fundraising by parents to update the facilities Fees are a concern, although they are fair <p><u>Transport and Parking</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is difficult

Teacher Satisfaction

Overall the teachers are satisfied with their beautified work environment. Upon group reflection many of the big picture goals that they had highlighted in 2008/9 had been addressed, particularly the improvement to the front entry of the school. Staff had connected with families at celebrations and through information evenings; the increased classroom assistant hours were benefiting the students; we had purchased some Montessori equipment however there continued to be a need to renew the existing books and equipment; the Board of Studies inspection inspired a total review of the curriculum and provided affirmation of what they were doing; there was a sense that people in the community were starting to develop a better understanding of what Montessori education was about.

The teachers felt that the roof repair continued to be a priority for the preschool and primary building.

All in all the greatest satisfaction for the teachers came from the ability to work with delightful children – to nurture their gifts; working with their colleagues; and the open-minded and creative approach to the school. Informally, a number of teachers have also commented on the insights and wonderful support that they felt when meeting with the parents during parent/ teacher meetings.

The teachers feel that we have undergone great change in our facilities and services in a short period of time, and feel that these improvements were reflected in the morale of the whole school – parents, students and staff.

Student Satisfaction

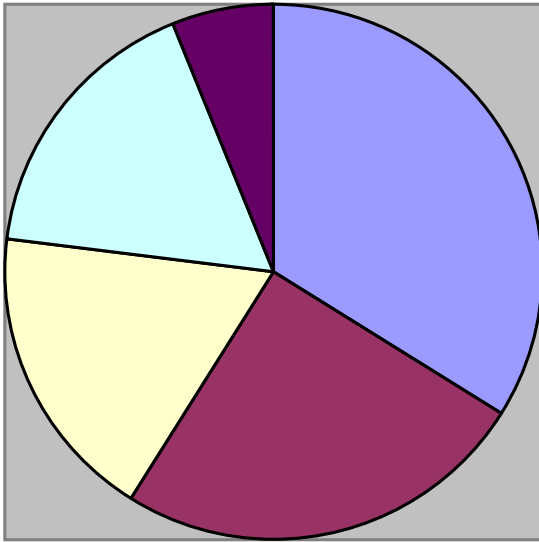
Students are empowered to make decisions, via consensus at their regular weekly meetings. The meetings are chaired/ managed by the students. They discuss matters that can include how their classroom is set up, activities that they would like to do, classroom behaviour, ideas for fundraising and many other agenda items that they wish to put forward.

As a result of a student survey in the upper primary the common themes of “What did you like about school” were: friends, teachers, math, art and learning. The response to things that they did not like varied: from the work was too easy, to the work was too much; Athletics; friend leaving; the change in the timing of the school concert; sports; and spelling.

Generally a number of students indicated that they love it as it is, but it would be great to have a swimming pool; they wanted more time to read, cook, draw, and play.

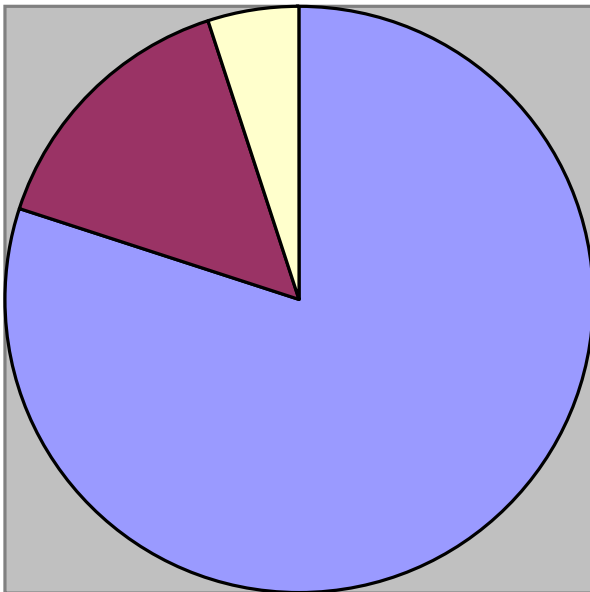
10. Summary of Financial Information

Recurrent/Capital Income



- Fees and Private Income (34%)**
- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants (25%)**
- State Recurrent Grants (18%)**
- Capital Building Fund (17%)**
- DOCS Preschool Grant (6%)**

Recurrent/ Capital Expenditure



- Salaries (80%)**
- Non-salaries (18%)**
- Capital Expenditure (5%)**