

# Elonera Montessori School

***Working together to help our students to help themselves.***



**Annual Report  
Education and Finance**

**2017 (2016 Data)**

## Introduction

Elonera Montessori School has successfully made a commitment to excellence in education since 1987, when parents of an alternative school introduced the world-wide Montessori philosophy to our primary.

We have developed into a quality co-educational school that offers programs for toddlers from the age of 18 months through to students who are preparing to enter University.

The annual report is required by the NSW Education and Standards Authority (NESA) for all registered and accredited individual nongovernment schools and documents the following:

Messages from Key School Bodies

Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy Testing

Contextual Information about Elonera Montessori School

The Granting of Records of School Achievement

Results of the Higher School Certificate

Professional Learning and Teacher Standards

Workforce Composition

Senior Secondary Outcomes

Student Attendance and management of non-attendance

Retention Rates of Year 10 to Year 12 and Post school Destinations

Enrolment Policies and Characteristics of the Student Body

School Policies

School Determined Improvement Targets

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

Summary of Financial Information

## **Elonera Montessori School**

Elonera Montessori School is a small family oriented school, located in the Education belt of Wollongong, and has close relationships with the University as well as the TAFE. Based on the world-wide Montessori philosophy, the school caters for over 170 children from the ages of eighteen months to eighteen years. This report briefly reviews values of Elonera Montessori School and the steps that the School Board, staff and the various committees have made throughout the year to address the educational and financial performance measures and policies of the school.

Policy information is made available on an annual basis in the parent's handbook on the website. Financial performance is provided at the 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. Parent Information sessions are held from time to time, to support the school philosophy, values and beliefs. The School Board is responsible for reviewing and approving all policies.

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.

Please refer to <http://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 make choices and think for him/herself.

Montessori education concerns itself with creating an environment, especially 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 20<sup>th</sup> century, and her insights are reflected in their similarity to educational principles generated by modern neuro-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.

## The School Board Chairperson's Message

2016 has begun a new era for Elonera Montessori School (EMS), we embarked into transition of leadership with Chris Peach commencing the challenging role of Head of School, while Elizabeth Goor continued to provide leadership support and mentorship. We saw our biggest group of Year 12 student's graduate from their respective IB and HSC courses. Congratulations to the 2016 year 12 graduates, we wish you all well in your chosen future endeavours and we are certain you will achieve many things.

The education industry continues to experience constant review and changes from and by government organisations and industry authorities. The Montessori sector also continues to experience a significant shortage of experienced and qualified Montessori staff. These combined issues present challenges for EMS long-term planning and EMS board remains committed towards ensuring the EMS service maintains its high Montessori standards and operations by supporting and ensuring all EMS staff are able to easily access Montessori training and obtain Montessori qualifications, we continue to maintain our close working relationship with MWEI (Montessori World Education Institute).

During 2016 EMS completed the playground refurbishment and invested in several smaller maintenance projects to preserve and improve our infrastructure and facilities. We began operating a Montessori Long Day Care service (LDC) for 2 year olds in the Parent Toddler Program (PTP) classroom. All EMS board members participated in governance training and attended professional development courses. During 2017, EMS Board will continue focusing on our core constitutional objectives. These are:

- (a) To operate a School in accordance with the Montessori principles and practices of education and human development;
- (b) To support and encourage the full development of every child; and
- (c) To encourage educators, parents and those working with children to apply the Montessori principles and practices of education and human development.

EMS Board will continue professional development in governance and will implement an improved orientation process for new EMS board members. We will also focus on succession planning for EMS executive board members.

Planning for a specialised LDC classroom (purpose built) operations commenced late 2016 and will be a big project throughout 2017. This exciting new development will help support growth at the entrance level, and will directly expand EMS service provision in the early years, as well as indirectly in the Vacation Care service support program.

EMS Board will continue to support and attain stable and positive development throughout the organisation to ensure EMS remains a leading Montessori service. I would like to acknowledge and thank EMS staff for their, hard work, dedication and commitment to EMS. The High Quality Montessori Accreditation EMS received this year, after several years of implementation, is a tribute to, and indication of, your wonderful work.

As EMS celebrates 30 years of operation in March 2017 - I would like to thank Elizabeth Goor for her magnificent leadership and guidance throughout these years - her vision and dedication has provided us with the solid and secure foundations, both financially and operationally. We have high quality services, multi skilled staff, and beautiful buildings and facilities in this amazing organisation. The next generation is very lucky to have all of these advantages as a result of her efforts. We are grateful for her continued support at EMS.

I would like to congratulate Chris Peach for the successful completion of his first transition year as Head of School – Chris has worked tirelessly and enthusiastically throughout 2016. His willingness to tackle any and every challenge is very valuable and helps maintain the positive progression the EMS organisation needs.

2016 Audited Financial Statements show EMS remains financially stable. EMS board remains committed to keeping fees as low as possible, while still ensuring the organisation has sufficient resources to continue operating a high quality specialised Montessori educational service and program. We are in a good position to proceed with increased development and expense for the new LDC project.

The EMS board members volunteer their time in-order to support this wonderful Montessori service and we also have positive and constructive parent support. I would like to acknowledge and thank the parents whom have volunteered their time to help support the school on numerous occasions during the year. Your support and contributions are very much appreciated.

Thank you to the teachers, admin & maintenance staff who continue to provide a fantastic education service and help maintain our beautiful school.

Judy Ayre  
President  
Elonera Montessori Board of Directors

## Head of School Report 2016

Elonera Montessori, a not for profit organisation, focuses on the advancement of Montessori education. The Elonera School Board has enabled and supported the school executive to achieve outstanding progress in 2016. I would like to thank the governing body for their strong mentorship, vision and insight into what needed to be done to move the school forward, particularly with the implementation of our new Long Day Care for two year olds. Thank you to Illana Gear, Karen Love, Judy Ayre, Josy Ludwig, Evelyn Ireland, Alex Ioannou and Elizabeth Goor, our current directors who have continued on this important work.

We provide an independent system of education that includes programs for Toddlers, Preschool, Kindergarten to Year 6, Years 7-10 and the HSC and the International Baccalaureate, as well as OOSH care. We inspire a passion for excellence in everything that we do, and model this for our students.

I have selected 9 highlights that I would like to mention for 2016.

- Introduction of a Long Day Care service for two year olds. The service was up and running in Term 3, 2016 and grew to an average of 9 enrolments each day by the end of the year. We are hoping to expand the service in 2017 and into the future and are in consultation with council, seeking approval to build on the property on the eastern side of the hall. We are anticipating this new Early Learning Centre will house 14 LDC 2 year olds, a second LDC Stage 1 class of 24, and possibly a third Stage 2 class in the near future.
- Enrolments – figures from the Feb 2016 to Feb 2017 non-government schools census data show numbers increasing in Primary from 77 to 81 enrolments and Secondary from 47 to 48 enrolments. The pre-school census data captured 16 students in Feb 2016 and an ad hoc capture of 4 year olds only in 2017 confirmed 19 enrolments. The 2017 pre-school numbers do not include our 3 year olds or our Long Day Care students (14 total FTE). There has therefore been significant growth in the early years which is obviously important for the growth of the school. Some of the enrolment increases can be attributed to the opening of the new LDC service but much of this growth can be put down to the hard work and dedication of staff, ensuring Elonera is a happy and safe place to learn and for students and families to be part of a tight-knit community.
- Effective communication from school to families - we revised our website to be more user friendly and easy to navigate, we introduced a static Facebook page, we introduced stage reports from each area of the school that includes a short report on what students have been working on and photos of our children to illustrate this, and we designed and introduced a new format for our Elmonti newsletter. We also developed better communication with families about our goals and outcomes through our showcases, as well as encouraging parental participation in our individual planning meetings.
- Successfully completed an OOSH accreditation and rating visit. We thank all

OOSH staff for their knowledge and understanding, and preparation for the inspection.

- Playground upgrade for the High School designed by Tessa Rose (Kidsafe Australia 2012 and 2014 Award Winner).
- Strengthening our Culture as a learning organisation by completing a school wide program with the AIS on Inclusion, continuing our own research in “Be prepared to Think” strategies; as well as the Professional Companion Program to complement our regular ongoing professional development of staff. These programs strongly support our mission.
- Held Parent Information sessions each term that explained the Montessori Philosophy in interesting and understandable terms. This assists us to reinforce our goals of encouraging independence, explaining the magic of the work cycle, and showing our amazing materials in action.
- Supported the MWEI training course for Montessori Teachers onsite, in which we have staff working towards their 6-12 Diploma’s.
- EMS commitment to ongoing Professional Development and Training for IB staff in Category 1 and Category 2 Workshops in relevant subject areas. (each IB subject normally has an updated syllabus every five years).

We are financially sound, and are considered by other Montessori Schools as leaders in field of education. The financials are reported on the MySchool website as a part of our accountability. Parents who wish to get a copy of the financial statements can collect one from the school office.

EMS has a powerful story about its development over the 30 years that we have been in operation. It has only been possible because of the impact of the work of dedicated staff and parents. They inspire others to want to contribute to the whole school, and to be a part of a strong school community. We thank parents for the donations of musical equipment, music stand, books, material, binders, tablecloths, DVD’s, documentaries, games and craft materials, timber puzzles, spare clothing, Easter raffle contributions, plants etc: the organisation of robotics, drama, and the sports day; the participation in attending showcases, science fairs, art exhibitions, Bunnings fundraising, washing rosters, canteen, and presenting at World Book Day.

We are embracing you as partners in bringing about all of the year’s accomplishments.

Chris Peach  
Head of School

## Early Childhood Pedagogical Leader's Message

We have continued to implement a quality Montessori curriculum over the last twelve months. Classroom attendance is slowly increasing with over 40 enrolments and potentially 36 children attending on any one day. We now have three full-time assistants (and one Directress). We anticipate being at full capacity from next term, with over 50 students enrolled. We have moved to individual student folios where we store children's reports, checklists, work samples, lesson plans and observations. Compiling individual student folios provides consistency in guiding the children through their work-cycle, monitoring their progress and allows parents to view their child's work.

Stage 1 and Long Day Care come together in fortnightly meetings to review classroom processes, programming, professional development needs, the QIP, student transition, special needs and physical grounds concerns. We review the Quality Improvement Plan each quarter with the Head of School Chris Peach. Adjustments are made as we go and requirements are met with efficiency (i.e.: installation of a new fridge and a printer). We have established a strong connection between Stage 1 and Long Day Care and have had several students transitioning successfully this year. Continuing with Inclusive Schooling and through our school coordinated "Be Prepared to Think" program, I implemented a lesson on 'Thinking' with an emphasis of 'withholding information' to the children.

Students participated in several incursions at the School Hall and Stage 2 playground which included a Teddy Bears Picnic with parents, our annual Art Exhibition displaying Stage 1 artwork, an Orchestral performance to Peter and the Wolf, and a dramatic play about the environment put on by Smiths Hill students. The class participated in many community events which form important elements of our curriculum including: Crazy Hair day fundraisers, Wild Onesie Week, Harmony Day, Children's Book Day, Anzac Day and celebrations for Grandparents Day, Father's Day and Mother's Day Morning Tea. Stage 2 and 3 students continue to attend the classroom for reading. Following our comprehensive Physical Education program children are learning fundamental motor skills and also engaged in Yoga, Meditation and Dancing within the program this semester.

Stage 1 Lesson Plans meet the BOSTES (now NESAS in 2017) outcomes; comply with the Board of Studies and the EYLF. This year we programmed the following lesson plans into our curriculum: National Sorry Day, Living and Non-living things, Patterns, Invertebrates and Invertebrates, French lessons, Sink and Float, Insects, Capacity, Family Roles and Responsibilities, Exercises in Grace and Courtesy, Astronomy, Autumn, Road Safety, Fractions and Italian Lessons.

We work regularly with professionals associated with children with special needs. Children with learning differences have Individual Education Plans and we hold regular meetings with the IP Coordinator. We continue to provide ongoing Literacy and Numeracy support on a weekly basis to those children who need one-on-one

support in these areas. Our Montessori Classroom Assistants attended a workshop on Autism Spectrum Disorder, presenting their experience back to the whole school staff. At the beginning of the semester, staff attended PD in Mental Health Disorders and recently I attended a presentation on Pre-school Funding.

Parent education has included presentations in Culture and Language to promote understanding of the Montessori curriculum. This year our Stage 1 parents received a book titled Understanding Montessori - A Guide for Parents, by Maren Schmidt and numerous handouts on various topics including Separation Anxiety, Freedom within Limits and Logical and Natural Consequences. Students and community members are always welcome to the Stage 1 Classroom and this year we have had a TAFE student placement and a Montessori student in training from MWEI.

Each staff member is involved daily in the educational programming and allocated different areas to work with the children often taking small groups in the areas of art, cultural and health.

Goals for next year include new equipment in the cultural, art, music and outdoor areas. We aim to increase our Music program and introduce some new outdoor interactive activities.

Yours sincerely,

Akila Liyanaarachchi  
Montessori Directress  
Children's House (Ages 3-6)



## Primary School Curriculum Report

There were many events in 2016 aimed at supporting the development of primary students and fostering strong relationships across the whole school community. We continued to work collaboratively across stages, with Stage 2 and Stage 3 participating in numerous events and activities together.

### **Events 2016**

\* Fostered an appreciation of the natural environment with excursions to Wollongong Botanical Gardens and participation in community activities such as 'Clean Up Australia Day'.

\* Continued the Primary Showcase, a periodic event where students in Stage 2 and 3 share their work and achievements with parents and younger students. Primary Showcase events were implemented regularly throughout each term.

\* Students in every stage performed in the annual School Concert. Stage 2 presented many items they had been working on in class throughout the year and sang along as members of the School Choir. Stage 3, following previous tradition, performed a comedic play for the audience.

\* Stage 3 and HS students entered into the First Lego League Robotics competition held in Wollongong in November 2016. The students showcased their research project, demonstrated 'core values', explained their robot design and programming as well as competed in the high-pressure two minutes and 30 seconds of robot game.



\* Our maintenance staff explained to Stage 2 and 3 children how to take care of the worms by sharing what they can and cannot eat. Each class has their own worm scrap bucket to collect food for the worms and took turns in feeding the worms on a weekly basis. The worm farm is a practical life experience that the children are responsible for.



\* Continued to foster partnerships with other Montessori schools. For example, teachers in Stage 3 were able to share ideas with organised observations with Sydney Montessori School in 2016.

\* Continued to engage with parents about Montessori philosophy and methods. Inspiring Parents workshops were held throughout 2016. These sessions covered the areas of mathematics, language, and Cosmic Education.

\* Continued to invest in the professional development of teachers by hosting numerous workshops in Montessori education run by the Montessori World Educational Institute (MWEI).

# A Message from the High School 2016

## Events



The High School 2016 year began with students travelling to The Great Aussie Bush camp at Tea garden taking the train and bus trip to and from the venue. It remained a memorable event alluded to much throughout the year matched only by a day spent with the students from Brisbane Montessori who called in on their way from Canberra to the airport on one of their adventures.

Term 2 found students and brave staff sleeping rough outdoors to raise awareness of homelessness. Despite a soup kitchen, fire pit and treats shared, the cardboard mansions really didn't stave off the cold through the night.

Term 3 saw the continued tradition of the High School sleepover for the World Vision 40-hour famine.

Our Occupations program has continued to grow over 2016. Students have been working in the garden, fundraising or preparing lunch once a week for all the High School students and staff. Events have been organized with significant duties being taken on around the school environment and beyond. The weekly meals eaten together are a significant part of community, with



groups shopping for, planning and setting up and cleaning for roughly 40 students each week. A highlight was Grandparents' Day, which students coordinated as a whole school event, beginning with an anticipated 40 people but attended by over 120!! Catering was a challenge but a resounding success and it was delightful to witness the interactions and depth of connection across the whole school between all members of the school community. Many of our celebrations have taken place amongst the beautiful new playgrounds purpose built for Eltonera over the course of the year.





The High Tea organized by Years 7-11 students, in keeping with tradition, celebrated the Year 12 graduating class, this time held in beautiful weather in the courtyard. Graduating students' speeches are always a highlight as is the service provided by the year 7 -10 students.

Our Micro-economies culminated in a successful Christmas stall and a highly popular Panini group "Eager Appetite". Group members were able to not only pay back the capital borrowed from school, but also pocket a third of profits and donate the rest to charity.

Our senior years programme continues to enrich our school in many ways, academically in the rigour required for success in Years 11 and 12, and socially because of the mentorship and positive contribution to our school as provided by these senior leaders. Our students continue to develop and consolidate 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. Whilst independent work practices are essential, so too, has been collaboration and the recognition of the qualities and the encouragement of the



strengths in others.

## **Student Performance in state-wide tests and examinations**

Students continue to perform well in external testing and to produce high quality work. Elonera uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the teaching/learning cycle and is committed to the purpose of assessment for learning. These include teacher observations, a range of presentations both written and verbal, formal assessment tasks as well as participation in the statewide literacy and numeracy-testing program. Feedback on student progress is regularly provided, in a variety of ways, as a strategy for promoting learning.

The showcase continues to be a much-anticipated event within the High School calendar with subjects ranging across subject areas. It provides an excellent forum for providing authentic feedback to parents and students about student achievement.

Performance on NAPLAN is documented on the MySchool website: <http://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 often reported according to statewide benchmarks.

**Staff professional development** in 2016 covered many areas including Work, Health and Safety legislation, Child Protection, Supporting students' Mental Health, Inclusive practices, Be Prepared to Think (Elonera's own Critical Thinking pilot program) and MWEI Montessori and International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme workshops undertaken by a range of staff. Links to other Montessori adolescent programmes were held with a 3-day conference held at the Templestowe College, Victoria attended by 2 Elonera High School staff.

The spirit of Elonera High School lies in the energy and dedication of the teachers who strive to understand young people, are passionate about their subject areas and are constantly sharing, learning and developing. We look to ways to improve and develop with reflection and constructive discussion at the heart of progress and look forward to bringing this same spirit to 2017.





# International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Coordinator's Report

November 2016



Elonera Montessori has been the only authorized IB Diploma School in the Illawarra since 2010, and we continue to develop the program each year. November 2016 saw our largest graduating cohort of nine students, achieving excellent results:

- Improved average score
- 100% of students who applied for early entry through UOW were accepted
- One student offered a Deans Honours degree at UOW based on their IB Diploma studies.

In Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) element of the programme, students both initiated and assisted with a number of projects. These included the annual IB art exhibition, school concert, 40 hour famine fundraising and homeless sleep-out, learning new creative skills, getting active through participation in sporting endeavours and many other community minded pursuits. Students also engaged in the planning of the Fiji service learning trip, our first overseas CAS initiative.

Students also engaged in writing 4000 word Extended Essays in Biology and English Literature, as well as a 1600 word Theory of Knowledge essay requiring students to think critically and creatively on a given topic. The skills students gain through these subjects are critical to their preparation for and subsequent success at university.

Showcases continued to be an integral part of the IB Diploma Programme; this year saw students' present TOK and Mathematics showcases to visiting TIGS Year 10 students, which was a valuable experience in public speaking and in sharing an understanding of critical thinking.

The school put on its Graduation Night at a different location for the November 2016 graduating cohort – at Ruby's in Kembla Grange. The evening was attended by parents, teachers, and year 11 students and was a special occasion to celebrate the graduates hard work and success in the Diploma Programme.

## **Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy Testing**

Students continue to perform well in external testing and to produce high quality work. Elonera uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the teaching/learning cycle and is committed to the purpose of assessment for learning. 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.

Performance on NAPLAN is documented on the My School website: <http://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 often reported according to state-wide benchmarks (reported as “below reporting threshold”).

## EMS NAPLAN Testing Analysis 2016

The above results are compared against the Australian average. The five possible results are:

- Substantially above
- Above
- Close to
- Below
- Substantially below

Year	Reading	Persuasive writing	Spelling	Grammar and punctuation	Numeracy
3	Close to	Close to	Below	Close to	Below
5	Below reporting threshold				
7	Substantially Above	Substantially Above	Substantially Above	Substantially Above	Close to
9	Substantially Above	Substantially Above	Close to	Substantially Above	Close to

## Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

In 2016, Elonera did not have any students who left at the conclusion of Year 10. All students moved into the first year of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP).

## **Higher School Certificate (HSC)**

In 2016, Elonera had one candidate sitting for the Higher School Certificate exams as the majority chose to do the International Baccalaureate Programme. The student successfully completed Year 11 and 12, and received the Higher School Certificate.

## Professional Learning and Teacher 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, work 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. The Long Day Care (from Term 3) and Preschool holds a National Quality Framework meeting each week, rotating from Directresses meeting with the Head of School one week and directresses meeting with assistants on the alternative week.

### Professional Learning 2016

TOPIC	FOCUS	ATTENDEES
International Baccalaureate Diploma Program Extended Essay Training for Staff	Curriculum	9
Moodle Training	IT Curriculum	4
Vision, Values & Expectations 2016	Management	30
Finance Management 2016	Finance	30
Be Prepared to Think Project meeting	Curriculum Philosophy	13
Kidsoft training	Administration Management	30
Child Protection Toolkit training & discussions	Risk management	12
Montessori Leadership Network Meeting	Leadership	3
Autism Workshop Tony Attwood	Inclusion Support	3
First Aid Training	Risk Management	15
AISNSW Governance Symposium	Governance Leadership	3
IBDP Category 3 Mathematics workshop	Curriculum	1
NSW Geography Teacher's Association Annual Conference	Curriculum	1
IBDP Category 2 workshops – Psychology, Sports Exercise and Health Science, Mathematics	Curriculum	3
NSW TAFE Child Protection Training	Risk Management	15
AIS Inclusion Project Meeting	Inclusivity	16
Montessori School Observation	Leadership Management	2
Child Protection Investigation Course	Risk Management	1
Montessori Principals Meeting	Leadership	2

	Management	
Montessori Quality Assurance Program (MQAP) Accreditation Visit	Curriculum Management Accreditation	30
Multi-Enterprise Agreement (MEA) Briefing	Finance management	1
Montessori School Observation	Curriculum	1
IBDP Network meetings	Curriculum	2
Strategies for Managing Parental Complaints training	Management	1
Medication Processes	Risk Management	30
Be Prepared to Think Project meeting	Curriculum Philosophy	13
Montessori Principals Meeting	Leadership Management	1
Internal Montessori Mentorship	Curriculum	2
MWEI Workshop – Cosmic Education	Curriculum	2
ANZCA Conference (Australian and New Zealand Cultural Arts) - Canberra	Curriculum	1
Musica Viva Forum - Music and Movement - Waverley	Curriculum	1
IBDP Moderation Training	Curriculum	1
Montessori Meeting in the middle Adolescent Forum	Curriculum	2
AIS Inclusion Project meetings – x3	Inclusion Support Curriculum	13
Internal Training on Autism	Inclusion support	15
Internal training Child Protection	Risk management	13
AIS Supporting Students with Mental Health Challenges	Inclusion Support	19
<b>Other Professional Development</b>		
Child Care Traineeship – Certificate III	Staff development	2
Diploma in Montessori Studies	Staff development	4
Certificate III Early Childhood Education & Care	Staff development	1

## 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	22
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	0

Note: The K-6 teachers have additional Montessori qualifications or are working towards them.

## Workforce Composition

We are proud to have a multicultural workforce who have immigrated from Finland, Canada, USA, England, Sri Lanka and South Africa. The Australian-born staff have a variety of backgrounds such as Italian, Greek, Hungary, Egyptian China, Germany, and Turkey. We have female teachers in the primary, with a male assistant in the upper primary class. Of the high school staff, we have 40% males and 60% females (4 males, 6 females). There are classroom assistants in all of the K-6 classrooms.

## Senior Secondary Outcomes

Eight students of nine graduated from the International Baccalaureate Diploma and have enrolled in University. One student completed the Higher School Certificate.

## Student Attendance Rate Collection 2016

Year	Attendance Rate %
Year 1	92.52
Year 2	90.82
Year 3	95.00
Year 4	93.88
Year 5	94.08
Year 6	84.03
Year 7	91.50
Year 8	90.33
Year 9	94.01
Year 10	89.73
Whole School	91.63

- For Year 6 and Year 10, small student numbers and individual student health issues impacted upon attendance rates significantly.

## **Management of Non-Attendance**

Policies provide clarity for parents and students regarding non-attendance. Regular notification is provided in the newsletter regarding the responsibility of all to ensure that students attend classes on time, and regularly. Documentation is requested from parents to ensure that we meet the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) requirements. Teachers have good communication processes with parents and are able to collect this data in a timely manner. Parents must apply to the Head of School for approval to take their child out of school for over 20 consecutive days.

## **Retention Rates and Post School Destinations**

In 2016 there was one Year 12 (HSC) student; nine International Baccalaureate second year students and eight doing the International Baccalaureate Diploma first year. Most of our graduates are at University and two are taking a gap year. One of our students went straight from Year 12 into a Child Care Traineeship and another into employment.

## **Enrolment Policies and Characteristics of the Student Body**

### **STATEMENT**

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 attend 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 or email to initial enquiry. She notifies them of tours that are available on Wednesday or Friday 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 Fundamental Values and Beliefs document as well as the Charter of Respect.

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.

## ENROLLING IN MONTESSORI

Harmony, Stability, Education in Life, is provided when you commit to a continued Montessori education for your child/ren from the Long Day Care through to Stage 6 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 and the Higher School Certificate (HSC) and International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP). 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.

### Tours

Tours are held every Wednesday and Friday. 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 two to the age of eighteen 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.

## ENROLMENT FEE

On acceptance of a placement at the School the enrolment fee shall be paid and held by the School. The enrolment fee will be \$600.00 per child. This is refundable if the conditions of enrolment are 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 enrolment fee will be made if subsequently the application is withdrawn if policy conditions are not met.

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 enrolment fee will also be forfeited. If conditions for withdrawal, including adequate notice, have been met, and all fees paid the enrolment fee 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 enrolment fee 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 two to the age of eighteen 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 is sent out to the family and feedback is used to develop strategies for improvement.

## Characteristics of the Student Body

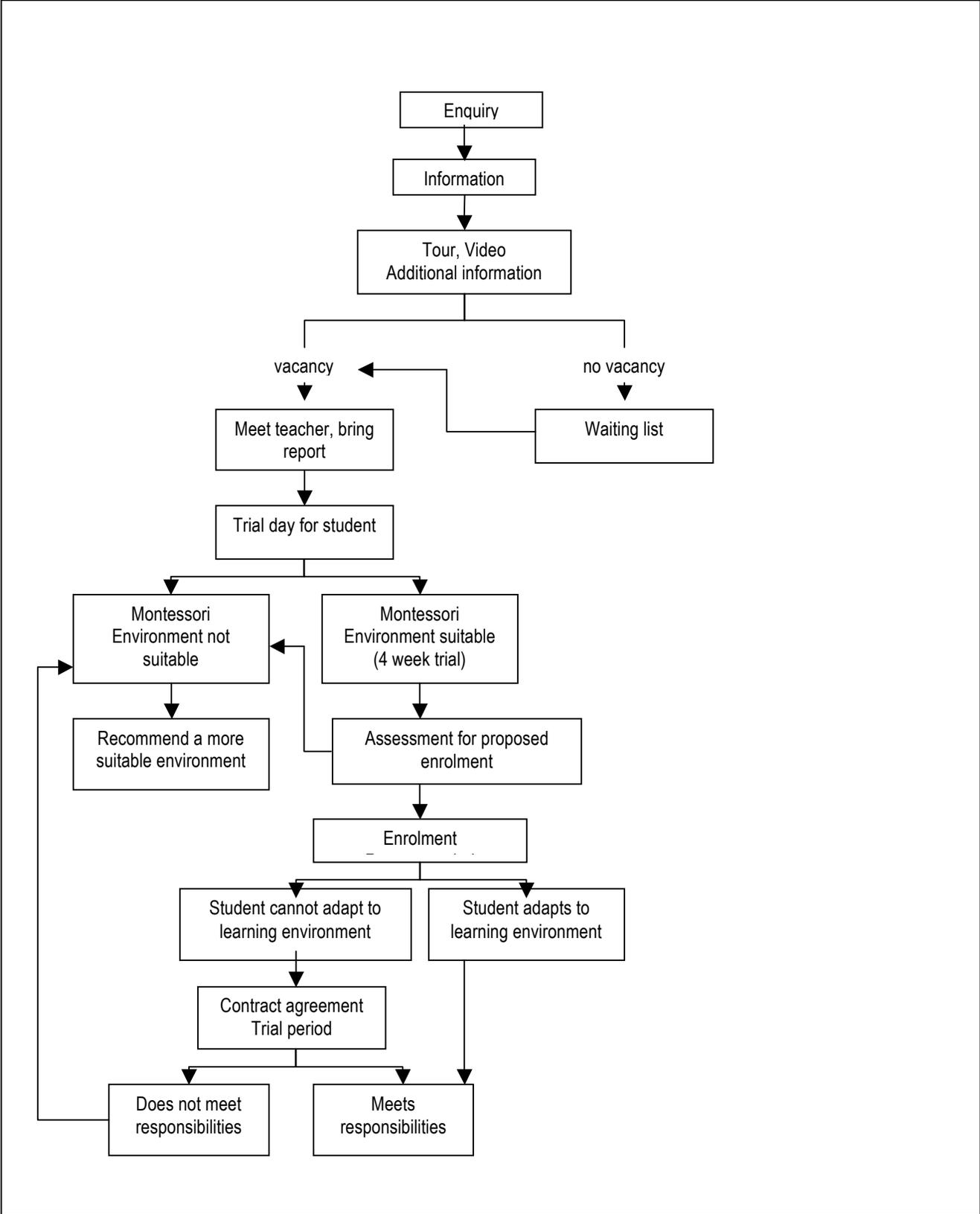
Elonera Montessori is located 80 km south of Sydney between the mountains and sea is a dynamic school with 170 students from preschool to High School. We provide a stimulating and positive learning environment for ages 18 months -18 years. Our philosophical framework is the Montessori approach to learning. We are a multicultural school that has no religious affiliations. Our curriculum is designed to prepare students both for further learning and for life. We have a strongly held set of universal values, including self-respect, respect for others, honesty, integrity, empathy, compassion and sense of international understanding. We are a close-knit community of students, educators, parents, and friends of the school that are committed to diversity.

Three year age groupings are fundamental to the successful implementation of the Montessori Method. Other key components include a unique curriculum, low student to adult ratios, individualised assessment, an uninterrupted work cycle as well as teachers trained both traditionally as well as with Montessori qualifications. Families are connected with the school and involve themselves in various committees, working bees and information sessions. Elonera is an authorised International Baccalaureate World School and has offered the Diploma Programme (Years 11 and 12) for six years.

An analysis in SCIENCE vol 313 Sept 2006 comparing educational outcomes indicates that Montessori education leads to children with better social and academic skills. The summary of highlighted benefits such as basic word recognition, mathematics, and cooperative play enables more creativity and problem solving by the age of 12. More recently a comparison of interventions that aid executive function (EF) development by Diamond SCIENCE 333 Aug 2011 state that at age 5, Montessori children showed better EF's than peers attending other schools, and that they performed better in reading and math and showed more concern for fairness and justice. At age 12, relating to EF's the children showed more creativity in essay writing than controls. They also reported feeling more of a sense of community at school.

At Elonera we cultivate within our students a passion for excellence in everything they do, both inside and outside of school. We constantly aim to be "Happy, Harmonious, and Hands-on".

# ENROLMENT FLOW CHART



## **SUMMARY OF WELFARE AND DISCIPLINE POLICIES**

### **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, 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 Office of the Children's Guardian
- ♦ The school does not permit or condone 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 and is only accessible by staff.
- ♦ 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, 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.

We have a meet the Principal coffee morning once per term. Members have an opportunity to make suggestions or raise concerns here.

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

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

Weekly school newsletters are sent to parent emails and are available from the office.

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.

### **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 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 Board; 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 Board 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.

## 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. All of the following documents are stored on the Internal School Server.

Policy	Changes in 2016	Access to full text
Delegation of Authority	Nil	Governance Manual
Child Protection Policy	Revised	Staff Handbook; Parent Handbook
Code of Ethics	Nil	Staff handbook
Security Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lock-Down</li> <li>• Evacuation</li> <li>• Premises and Buildings</li> </ul>	Revised (OOSH)	Work Health and Safety Manual
Parent Handbook	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"> <li>▪ 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</li> </ul>	Nil	Parent Handbook
Grievance Procedure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Formal and informal mechanisms to make a complaint.</li> </ul>	Nil	Parent Handbook; Staff Handbook
Anti-Bias Policy	Nil	Policy Manual
Additional Strategies to Avoid Allergens	Nil	Staff handbook
Annual permissions and updates	Revised	Parent handbook
Asthma Management Policy	Nil	Staff handbook
Assessing and Monitoring of Buildings	Nil	Policy manual
Attendance Policy	Nil	Parent handbook
Parent Participation Policy	Nil	Parent handbook
Animal Welfare Policy	Nil	Staff handbook
BYOD Agreement	Nil	Policy Manual
Charter of Respect - guidelines	Nil	Enrolment manual, Parent Handbook
Child Enrolment Records in Early Years and School Age	Nil	Policy Manual
Child Attendance in Early Childhood and School Age Care Services	Nil	Policy Manual
Curriculum Documentation Policy	Nil	Staff handbook
Collaborative Partnerships with	Nil	Policy manual

Parents		
Conditions of Entry	Revised	Policy Manual
Conflict of Interest Register	Revised	School Board Meeting Minutes
Counselling Policy	Nil	Policy Manual
Educational and Financial Reporting Policy	Nil	Staff handbook Governance Manual
Exit Survey	Nil	Enrolment manual
Fees and charges	Revised	Policy Manual
Fire Services Policy	Nil	Policy manual
School Prospectus	Nil	School Prospectus
Inclusion/excursion Policy	Revised	Policy manual
Individual Education Plan	Revised	Policy Manual
Keeping of Records	Nil	Policy manual
Staff Handbook	Revised	Staff handbook
Staff Code of Conduct	Nil	Policy Manual
Staff Interview Checklist	Nil	Policy manual
Staff Reference Checklist	Nil	Policy manual
Staff Orientation Checklist	Nil	Policy manual
Learner Profile	Nil	Curriculum Documents
Quality Policy	Nil	Staff handbook, Quality Manual
Medication Processes	Revised	Policy manual
NAPLAN Management Policy	Nil	Policy manual
Nutrition Policy	Revised	Policy manual
National Safe School Action Plan	Nil	Policy Manual
Work Health and Safety Policy	Nil	Work Health and Safety Manual
Arrival and Departure of Child Policy	Nil	Parent Handbook
School Board Conduct Procedure	Nil	Governance Manual
School Board Member Criteria	Nil	Governance Manual
School Board and Committee Structure	Revised	Governance Manual
Obligations of School Governors	Nil	Governance Manual
Responsible Use of Technology	Revised	Staff Handbook
Transition Process Policy	Revised	Staff Handbook
EMS Community Board Members	Nil	Governance Manual
EMS Terms of Reference	Nil	Governance Manual
EMS Board Director – Notification of Character	Nil	Governance Manual
Excursion Policy - Overseas	Nil	Governance Manual
Bullying and Harassment Behaviour Communication Flow	Nil	Policy Manual
Sun Protection Guidelines	Nil	Policy Manual
Curriculum Management in Preschool	Nil	Policy Manual
Philosophy of Play-Based Learning in Montessori	Nil	Policy Manual
High School Teacher Relief for extended Leave of Absence	Nil	Policy Manual
Credentialing Student Achievement policy	Nil	Policy Manual
School Donations Policy	Nil	Policy Manual
International Baccalaureate Policies IB Guide Theory of Knowledge Guide Creativity Action Service Guide	Nil	Curriculum Documents
Volunteer and Practicum Student	New	Policy Manual

Agreement		
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**Please note that this is not a complete list of policies and procedures, but rather indicates some of the more recent policies and procedures that have been reviewed. The School Board will be reviewing all policies and procedures in 2017, and the list will look different next year.**

## School Determined Improvement Targets for 2017

	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
<b>1</b>	Further Develop Continuity within the school – Early Years Framework, Montessori National Curriculum, and the International Baccalaureate, OOSH, and its application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue having teachers report to colleagues on their scope and sequence plans</li> <li>• Continue using the Kidsoft Data Management System as the whole school record keeping</li> <li>• Monitor the EMS internal server for clear and effective communication across the school</li> <li>• Commit time for a teacher to coordinate the Independent Plans for the whole school, to ensure that meetings with parents have been documented and responsibility for shared action has been taken on by teachers, parents and students</li> <li>• Hold regular Quality improvement meetings for LDC/Stage1/OOSH, Primary, High School and IBDP</li> <li>• Provide Montessori mentorship for new staff that are coming into the school in all stages</li> <li>• Continue structured Numeracy and Literacy support system for the whole school that is monitors outcomes</li> <li>• Review and update the enrolment policy and procedures</li> <li>• Involvement of all new staff in the EMS Staff Induction Program</li> <li>• Continue our school wide “Be Prepared to think” program and introduce it to parents and the wider community</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	Review the School Governance Framework to ensure that EMS is following Industry Best Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To use the Framework to develop Governance Guidelines in accordance with the NSW Education Standards Authority registration and accreditation requirements</li> <li>• Develop a policy for travel assistance of volunteer external Board directors, and actively seek external Board Directors for the upcoming positions as they become available</li> <li>• Continue to register Conflict of Interest matters for transparency, and document the Board position on each matter so that it is on record</li> <li>• Review and update Governance policies</li> <li>• Revised a guide for the role of the Board, based on industry standard with an approach to review Board performance</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	Growth in Early Years (LDC to be 14 by the end of the year, Stage 1 to be 42 by the end of the year, and expand Stage 2 classes to be 50 by the end of the year to ensure stable growth throughout the school)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide Montessori training for all staff on an ongoing basis</li> <li>• Review induction process for all new staff</li> <li>• Update all job descriptions</li> <li>• Strong relationships, clear and transparent communication, follow processes (particularly Enrolments Officer and Teaching staff)</li> <li>• Review the Fundamental Values and Beliefs with the Staff, School Board and Parents to determine if it needs to be changed</li> <li>• Continue with annual Staff Development and Goal Setting meetings and review meetings</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High expectations of students, setting of high standards, emphasis on basics, high level involvement of decision-making among teachers, cohesive and clear policies, outstanding educational leadership primarily directed at establishing clear goals, increasing the competence and involvement of staff, and clarifying roles and expectations</li> </ul>
4	Provide improved Parent Education and Communication, roles and responsibilities as a member of the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Minimum of one session per term, by each fulltime teacher for parent education specifically regarding their children's level of education (Parent information sessions in Term 1, Montessori Materials parent education sessions, Parent teacher conferences)</li> <li>• Include parents and grandparents in more celebrations, showcases, visits to the school (Primary showcases to continue from Term 2, HS and IBDP showcases to continue throughout the year, 30<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary celebration at the beginning of the year, parent coffee mornings, working bees, event invitations such as Teddy Bears Picnic, Harmony Day, World Poetry Day, etc.)</li> <li>• Continue using the student planner for Stages 3-6 and the IBDP to improve home and school communication</li> <li>• Review Charter of Respect with parents when they enrol their children</li> <li>• Maintain and monitor the school website and EMS static Facebook page</li> <li>• Each Stage area to rotate news throughout the year to be presented in Elmonti, on our website and on our Facebook page</li> </ul>
5	Research, Develop and Monitor the Culture and Environment of the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constant references and reflections related to professional behaviours and key documents The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, Montessori Quality Assurance Program, Charter of Respect, Blueprint of Fundamental Values and Beliefs, the Parent Handbook, and the Staff Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Continue to hold a register of concerns by students, parents, staff or administration</li> <li>• Regularly meet with the Police Liaison Officer</li> <li>• Refer serious matters of IT breaches to the Police</li> <li>• Seek external advice on ways to develop, improve and monitor the culture of the school</li> </ul>
6	Strengthen Relationships with the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to liaise with the community such as the Group home (our neighbours) as well as the aged care facility in Cringila</li> <li>• Continue to make links with IMPS and recommend children to them if not possible at EMS</li> <li>• Hosted a Montessori meeting with all local Montessori pre-schools</li> <li>• Continue to make links with the University of Wollongong and the TAFE</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide/participation in practicums for Montessori teachers</li> <li>• Respectful follow up emails and correspondence for anyone who applies for a position or a work placement</li> <li>• Tours/observations offered for those interested in EMS</li> </ul>
7	Address the changing regulations of our Regulating Bodies – NESA, ACECQA, IBO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update staff through current training on the regulations for each body</li> <li>• Provide training to the governing body as required by the NESA</li> <li>• OOSH – appoint an Assistant Coordinator to lead the OOSH service and hold quarterly Quality Improvement meetings</li> </ul>
8	New and existing Teaching Staff meet NESA Registration and Accreditation Standards and Montessori/IBDP standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruit the most qualified, experienced and suitable teachers, and support staff who apply for a position by advertising on SEEK, and the Australian Montessori Foundation website</li> <li>• Support staff with the ongoing teacher accreditation requirements for the NESA</li> <li>• Ensure that staff are aware of legislation and their responsibilities</li> </ul>
9	Provide more structure to the Montessori and IBDP Training, both in-house and externally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to provide training for any new IBDP staff</li> <li>• Provide Montessori Foundation Theory for all new staff</li> <li>• Facilitate a Montessori Cosmic Education (Holistic Teaching) at EMS for staff in July</li> </ul>
10	Address the Work Health and Safety concerns raised by all staff, with the view to providing a safe workplace for staff, students and parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to discuss and update this area at each of our Staff meetings</li> </ul>
11	Construct a new Early Learning Centre on the eastern side of the Hall to cater for our growing enrolment numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-lodgement meeting with WCC</li> <li>• AIS BGA Capital Grant application to assist with funding</li> <li>• Employ a company to assist in the planning (including architect plans, reports, etc.) of the building</li> <li>• Employ a builder to carry out works</li> <li>• Educate staff and work with the School Board on legislation and logistics around opening the new building (this includes finances, staffing, space, facilities, timings, interest, etc.)</li> </ul>

### Financial Challenges

- Early Childhood building
- Montessori equipment/resources
- Stage 3 classroom refurbishment to cater for increased enrolments
- Staffing costs

## Achievements 2016

Excellence and Equity
<p><b>Levels of Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued to consolidate the IB and HSC program, incorporating changes to syllabus documents</li> <li>▪ Targeted the Years 7-10 curriculum with particular emphasis on resourcing Mathematics and Science</li> <li>▪ Grew the Primary program back to two Stage 2 classes with 20 students in each class by the end of the year</li> <li>▪ Continued with strong Early Childhood collaboration with IMPS as well as our own Children's House</li> <li>▪ Continued to provide the parent toddler program as a feeder for the preschool</li> <li>▪ Opened up a Montessori Long Day Care program for two year olds as a feeder for our preschool</li> <li>▪ Continued to support entry and exit of each stage with improved transition, information meetings for parents and observations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Building Community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued partnerships with Health and Community Services, such as Headspace, and police school education to improve the health and well-being of our students</li> <li>▪ Continued with Montessori Principles information/meetings and curriculum forums for Parents</li> <li>▪ Continued to celebrate Harmony Day, and other cultural days</li> <li>▪ Further developed networks with other Montessori secondary schools in Australia and overseas</li> <li>▪ Marketed our school through the local media</li> <li>▪ Updated our website and introduced a static Facebook page to be more interactive with the members of the school, functional and effective</li> <li>▪ Celebrated student's work through reporting, Math and Science expos as well as Showcases in the primary and the High School/IB</li> <li>▪ Included parents in the Individual Plan process</li> </ul>
<p><b>Administration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attracted high-performing teachers and staff that foster a positive climate that focus on the importance of learning as a direct aim and on the maintenance of a safe, orderly and supportive environment</li> <li>▪ Continued to work with MAF and MWEI to provide the training for Montessori teachers that the school requires</li> <li>▪ Continued Mentoring program (called Professional Companion Program) to integrate Montessori principles into the whole school professional learning</li> <li>▪ Provided a more focused induction for new staff with an allocated mentor</li> <li>▪ Supported the staff to provide a challenging, dynamic curriculum with clear, high expectations in order to prepare students for the real world</li> <li>▪ Liaised with the Montessori High Schools to share curriculum development, expertise and experiences</li> <li>▪ Improved the books/ text resources, and Montessori Materials</li> <li>▪ Continued to develop TVET partnerships</li> <li>▪ Supported ongoing development of the Quality Improvement Plans of each level of service through regular meetings</li> <li>▪ Reviewed enrolment processes</li> <li>▪ Reduced wastage in operational costs (Internet and printing costs)</li> <li>▪ Attracted grants (AIS Inclusion Project) to assist with linking with other key initiatives (Literacy, Inclusion goals) throughout the year</li> <li>▪ Systematically reviewed policies and procedures, compliance</li> </ul>
<p><b>Finances</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensured that the enrolment numbers in the classrooms are adequate to allow for an assistant as well as a teacher</li> <li>▪ Ensured that the students with disabilities are supported with documentation to ensure that they are adequately funded</li> <li>▪ Applied for funding for students in the preschool who have additional support needs</li> <li>▪ Continued to manage the long service leave entitlements</li> <li>▪ Continued to manage the ongoing upgrade of Montessori equipment and resources</li> <li>▪ Monitored the financial operation of all levels of service, including the canteen</li> <li>▪ Educated all school leaders about their budgets, and encouraged prioritising expenditure</li> </ul>
<p><b>Building Premises and Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reduced the cost of Internet service by shifting from Microwave Internet to NBN service</li> <li>▪ Updated computers across the school (SSD card implementation)</li> <li>▪ Improved the outdoor space in High School</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Developed Stage 3 to accommodate team teaching</li> <li>▪ Monitored the parking situation, in particular the businesses that continue to park in front of the school all day when there is limited parking</li> <li>▪ Continued to consider developing more parking for school purposes on the site next to the hall</li> <li>▪ Continued to develop the assets management (assets register and audit schedule)</li> <li>▪ Invested in the library resources</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Prepared and successfully completed an OOSH Assessment and Ratings visit</li> <li>▪ Ongoing review of the Early Childhood services as well as the OOSH service</li> <li>▪ Worked with MAF to participate in the Quality Assurance Program and achieved registration for 5 years</li> <li>▪ Reviewed processes of Individualised Plans and made adjustments with the IEP team</li> <li>▪ Data collection of students, teachers, parents wider community, analysis following survey</li> </ul>
<p><b>Continued development of the eight key learning areas</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strengthened the culture that promotes learning</li> <li>▪ Continued to expose the students to the integration or connection among and between subjects</li> <li>▪ Greater development of the implementation of the National Montessori Curriculum and National (NSW) Curriculum</li> <li>▪ Provided scope and sequences, and programmes for all subjects that are offered</li> <li>▪ Reviewed assets and materials in all classrooms and targeted the use of resources</li> <li>▪ Purchased Montessori Materials to assist with the National curriculum development continuity, implementation and assessment</li> <li>▪ Reviewed with other Montessori schools the Montessori scope and sequence, linked to the National Curriculum and Quality Assurance program</li> <li>▪ Ensured that classrooms are socially supportive, ‘student centred’ and continued to be intellectually demanding</li> <li>▪ Continued with transition plans for students</li> <li>▪ Considered a variety of scheduling options in the High School and IBDP that are realistic for the size of the High School</li> </ul>
<p><b>Integrated curriculum with cross-curricula priorities and general capabilities.</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Utilised technology to optimise student achievement</li> <li>▪ Continued to develop the IT plan to support teaching and learning</li> <li>▪ Monitored use of new technology</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reporting to parents</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued to develop tools and techniques to keep records that are manageable and realistic</li> <li>▪ Continued with the portfolios in Stage 1, and used them as a basis for dialogue in the parent teacher interview</li> <li>▪ Provided Strategic updates from the School Board, in the newsletter</li> <li>▪ Continued to communicate with parents through the newsletter; at informal meetings; and at parent coffee mornings</li> </ul>
<p><b>Entrepreneurial initiatives</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Had ex- students link with the school community with philanthropic goals</li> <li>▪ Secondary students continued to fundraise through occupations training</li> <li>▪ Stage 3 continued fundraising for camps</li> <li>▪ Introduction of micro-economy projects in the HS</li> <li>▪ Asked parents to plan and contribute to extracurricular clubs such as Drama, Robotics Club, Fun Run</li> </ul>
<p><b>Parents expertise is valued</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Asset register of parent skills</li> <li>▪ Used Volunteers in the Canteen, classroom activities such as reading to students, Book club, as well as in Governance, Finance and human resources support, development of community policies and guidelines</li> <li>▪ Parents networking with other organisations on our behalf – University, Rotary, MAF, Health Services</li> <li>▪ Enthused parents to provide information sessions for students</li> <li>▪ Fundraising initiatives to support resource purchases</li> </ul>
<p><b>Montessori education/information</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provided more information for parents about the next stage so that they are aware of what is offered</li> <li>▪ Provided parents with updates on the changes that are occurring in the Long Day Care, Preschool, Primary and High School</li> <li>▪ Continued Educational Articles</li> <li>▪ Information sessions for parents that improves home-school communication that include family reading and writing/numeracy</li> <li>▪ Positive parenting advice by classroom teachers</li> </ul>

- Continued to hold hands-on sessions for parents to understand the materials used
- Parent Toddler ongoing education
- Encouraged access to MAF information on the website

**Staff Development**

- Building and sustaining a school culture of ongoing professional growth
- Ongoing support of the Professional Companion Program
- Ensured that there are systems to review effective teaching practice through observation, peer review, meetings
- Continued to build and sustain a mentoring program which links newly appointed assistants with teachers
- Training regarding support systems for students with disabilities (adjustments, documentation, needs, assessment)
- Encouraged senior teachers to play a lead role in school-based professional learning (classroom management, leadership, professional ethics)
- Encouraged assistants and teachers to commit to the Montessori training that is provided on site
- Continued with formalised staff professional learning plans for teachers, school executives and Head based on key responsibilities linked to performance review
- Training in managing parent expectations, grievance handling, and implementation of Charter of Respect
- Training in cross curricular capabilities, learner profile, global citizenship, music, first aid, asthma and anaphylaxis
- Continued to support the assistants to understand their role
- Continued to train staff internally and externally for the IB program
- Teacher's use of technology was supported
- Continued to support Montessori training at levels beyond initial training – refresher courses
- Facilitated observations in Montessori schools
- Continued to use Montessori staff in OOSH program
- Held regular Education Series for staff to focus on setting objectives, assessment, programming, student record keeping, literacy and numeracy interventions, ESL scales
- Participated in the Adolescent forums
- Reviewed Montessori data management systems for record keeping

## **Initiatives 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.**

Respect and responsibility is a core attribute 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, and regularly reviewed. 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.

Upon enrolment to the school, families are asked to commit to the Charter of Respect, which was developed by the parents of the school, and endorsed by the School Board.

The school has undertaken a number of showcases and projects during 2016 to promote our cultural diversity and inclusiveness. We held seminars for parents, students and staff. We have taken part in an Inclusiveness project with the AIS that will assist us to reflect on what we do, and will include a mentorship program for staff.

## **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 through email and our website, or through individual meetings. We can assist families to construct formal suggestions or to raise awareness of whole school or classroom issues that can be tabled at the Education Committee for discussion.

Teachers are empowered in the weekly staff meetings to suggest what the school needs to do to continue to succeed and improve. They make decisions, raise concerns, and resolve issues.

Students were surveyed a number of times during the year in the High School for baseline information and feedback.

## **Student Satisfaction**

Students are empowered to make decisions, via consensus at their fortnightly community 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 linking with the community and many other agenda items that they wish to put forward.

High School and IB staff administers a student survey that analyses their individual subjects in more detail (part of the Professional Companion Program). Staff hand out this student survey in order to receive teaching and learning feedback. This occurs in Term 1 and again in Term 3 of the school year. The survey enables staff to take into account student's thoughts/opinions and give teachers a clearer scope for writing and adjusting programs.

The process of including students in decision-making gives them the sense of ownership and belonging they have commented on in their surveys and at community meetings. This approach clearly demonstrates the outcome that students are valued at EMS and feel part of a tight knit community.

## **Staff Satisfaction**

Staff meet twice per year for staff development and goal setting sessions. During this time, goals are set and documented and a plan is developed for how to achieve these professional goals.

Staff are part of a school wide professional companion program in which they are paired with another staff member. They meet fortnightly to discuss everything from day to day issues to professional conversations regarding teaching, learning and education. They also regularly observe each other and other teachers within the school (and externally with other Montessori schools) so as to share expertise and learn from their colleagues. The program strongly promotes teacher self reflection and life long learning skills.

At the conclusion of the year, staff are engaged in planning days. Amongst program planning and other curriculum related activities, these planning days allow staff to review the year and come up with strengths and also ways that improvements can be made for the future. Some of the common trends mentioned of strengths in 2016 were: positive relationships, a supportive environment, holistic learning, good staff:student ratios, great pastoral care for students, and good communication within stage areas.

## **Parent Satisfaction**

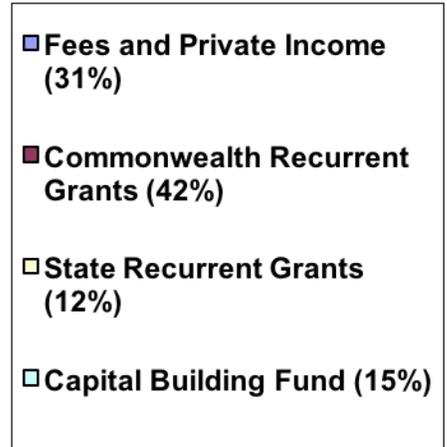
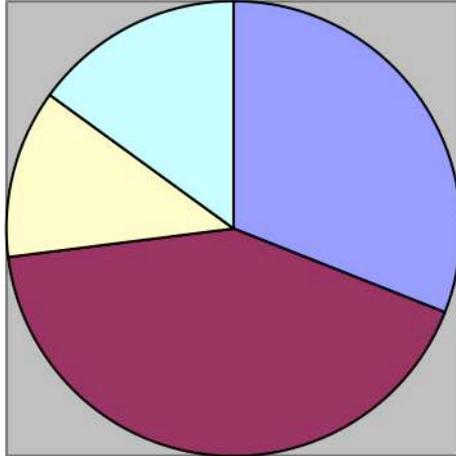
Our parent community is surveyed at least once per year so that we are able to monitor feedback and address any areas that need development and improvement.

The survey information below draws comparisons from the identical surveys completed in October 2015 and August 2016. A breakdown of results from parents who either strongly agree or agree (as a percentage) with survey questions (the options left out are unsure, disagree, and strongly disagree) have been tabled:

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>October 2015 %</b>	<b>August 2016 %</b>
1) Teachers at this school expect my child to do his or her best.	95.92	95.35
2) Teachers at this school provide my child with useful feedback about his or her schoolwork.	81.63	81.4
3) The school gives my child opportunities to do meaningful work.	95.91	95.35
4) The school works with parents to support student learning.	75.51	86.05
5) Teachers at this school motivate my child to learn.	81.63	90.7
6) My child is treated with respect.	97.96	95.35
7) My child feels safe at this school.	91.84	95.35
8) I can talk to my child's teacher about my concerns.	89.58	93.02
9) My child likes being at this school.	93.75	90.7
10) The information we shared this year has been helpful and appreciated.	Not asked	90.47

# Summary of Financial Information 2016

## Recurrent/Capital Income



## Recurrent/ Capital Expenditure

