

Annual Report 2019

Barrenjoey Montessori School

Barrenjoey Montessori School is a non-denominational and co-educational school catering for 100+ children from birth to Year 6. The school delivers an authentic Montessori curriculum based on the philosophy and pedagogy of the international renowned educator, Dr Maria Montessori.

The school commenced in 1985 with the primary program commencing in 2012 in a purpose built facility on the school site. In 2017 the school was registered with the NSW Education Standards Authority to provide an education for students from Kindergarten to Year 6. The school meets the outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework as recognised by ACECQA. The school is a member of the Association of Independent Schools and the Montessori Australia Foundation, and has achieved the highest tier of recognition determined by the Montessori Quality Assurance Program.

The school has a strong parent education program attracting diverse and well informed parents seeking a contemporary and authentic Montessori education for their child.

The School Board, elected by the members of the not for profit association, consist of current and past parents and local community members who bring a diverse skill set to ensure proper governance. Board Directors are elected at the Annual General Meeting held annually and commit to a 3 year term of appointment to ensure efficient and consistent governance.

Given the recent expansion, 2019 was a year of consolidation, whilst embedding the full complement of academic years (Kindergarten to year 6) and supporting the training of appropriately qualified staff to provide high quality teaching and learning into the future.

Theme 1 – Message from Board Chair

In 2019 Barrenjoey Montessori School secured NESA approval to offer continued enrolment for students through to Year 6. 2019 saw continued uptake with more students joining our upper primary program.

The graduates of 2019 continued their educational journey at diverse high schools - both independent and government with a high percentage being offered extension classes.

The recently completed new facilities will provide a light filled learning environment. This building will, in the future, also feature solar panels to support the pedagogical approach to the environment and will provide concrete learning opportunities for the students. Alongside this, we invested in additional administrative and staff areas. The

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school has in recent years focused on the educational facilities for the students and in 2019 focused on IT facilities for staff and a more streamlined communications approach for parents.

The Board continues to work closely with the Principal - particularly to ensure the training of future teachers is appropriately budgeted and resourced. The Board is pleased that the wider Montessori community sees Barrenjoey Montessori as a beacon of high quality teaching.

The Board reviewed the Strategic Plan (2015-20) and is assured that appropriate inroads have been made in its 4th year.

Theme 2 - Contextual Information about the School

In 2019 the school continued to focus on the provision of excellent learning environments for all primary years with attention to the preparation of resources in the newly established primary classrooms and also for smooth transition from preschool to primary.

There was a vibrant Parent Education program including early morning 'snippets', evening lectures, discussion groups and classroom observations and 'twilight working with your child' visits.

The school enrolled an increased number of primary students and as reflected in the local demographic there are a greater number of boys in the classroom. The majority of the students are from English speaking backgrounds and were born in Australia.

The strategic planning for staff employment and training was a key priority to ensure teachers of excellence in the classroom with both Montessori and mainstream education degrees. The school sponsored 3 current educators to undertake training in the Montessori Diploma courses. A mentoring program was introduced for recently graduated teachers. The strategic plan identifies the ongoing commitment to Montessori training and sponsorship to take Barrenjoey Montessori into 2020 and beyond.

Initiatives based from the 2014 sustainability audit continue to guide the focus in this area. 2019 saw a broader approach to indigenous study including incursions to advise on planting of local flora and excursions to access the knowledge of local elders.

Ongoing discussion on food miles and limiting of unnecessary resources occurred.

Monitoring of the solar panels, donated to the school via a NSW Department of Education grant, provided students with the opportunity to study sustainable practices.

Theme 3 - Student performance in Numeracy and Literacy Testing

In 2019 the school participated in the Year 3 and 5 Naplan. The cohort was extremely small at each year level. 2019 was the third year that there could be a comparison of growth for each student between Year 3 and 5 with all students demonstrating a greater difference between their own band and the national average.

There was growth for all students in all areas however the greatest growth was in

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reading, grammar and numeracy. Year 3 made improvements in the spelling, compared to the national average and years before.

75% of students scored 'above national average' in all areas however due to the small cohorts 1 or 2 students can bring the school average down by several points.

	Reading	Writing Narrative	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Year 3 (8 students)	Above	Average	Above	Above	above
Year 5 (4 students)	Substantially above	Above	Above	Substantially above	Substantially above

Theme 4 - Senior Secondary Outcomes N/A

Theme 5 - Teacher professional learning, accreditation and qualifications

Teacher standards

During 2019 BMS employed 6 classroom teaching staff, 1 teaching Principal and 5 support staff with an additional administration staff member

Level of qualification	Number of staff
a. Have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as a recognized within the NOOSR guidelines	5
b. Have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institute within Australia or as recognized with the NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teaching qualification.	1
c. Do not have qualifications as described in a) or b) above but have relevant successful teaching experiences or appropriate knowledge to the teaching context.	0
d. No qualifications or teaching experience	0

Professional Learning

Professional development was provided to teachers and all educators throughout 2019. The principal attended AIS briefings relating to governance, compliance and registration. All staff completed Anaphylactic and CPR training.

Teachers and the Principal attended professional development in the following areas. School Support staff underwent in-house training specific to assisting in the classroom.

Area of professional development	Teachers
Teaching and Learning	
Indigenous learning and curriculum development	1

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IT (google docs training)	5
Brain based Education (Grad Cert)(CQU)	1
Accreditation from graduate to Proficient Teacher briefings and mentoring	1
Pastoral care and Student welfare	
CPR	6
Child Protection (AIS) (refresher)	5
First Aid	2
MAF leadership	1
Early childhood workshop and briefing (ECEC)	1
Community coaching/mentoring	1
Governance and other	
Legal compliance	Principal
Early childhood workshop and briefing (ECEC)	1
NESA accreditation update	1

Theme 6 – Workforce composition

School staff 2019	
Teaching staff	5
Full time equivalent teaching staff	5
Non-teaching staff (including Principal)	8
Full time equivalent non-teaching staff	6.75

Theme 7 - Student attendance

Attendance for Kindergarten to Year 6 was over 90% with absences due to short term sickness, and children visiting extended family overseas. The school has a high percentage of Northern European families enrolled and again 2019 was a year when many families (with Principal approved leave for extended absences) visited family overseas.

Given the small cohort, an absence of one child for an extended period has significant impact when reporting percentages.

The school implements policy and procedures for the management of non-attendance. Parents are requested to contact the school in the case of sickness / absenteeism and in the case of pre planned leave, permission must be approved by the Principal and the school office advised. Records are maintained in a hardcopy role book and on an online

record keeping system (MRX). Non-attendance is followed up within 48 hours by the office (email and /or telephone) with absentee forms stating the reason and signed by parents collated and filed in a central folder located in the office on their return.

Year Level	Attendance Rate %
Kindergarten	89%
Year 1	89%
Year 2	88%
Year 3	89%
Year 4	90%
Year 5	90%
Year 6	92%

Retention rates and post school destination are not relevant to this report. Such information is not relevant to Primary schools.

Theme 8 - Enrolment policies and characteristics of the student body

In Term 4, 2019 the primary classroom enrolment was 44 children in years 1 to 6 with a Kindergarten enrolment of 14 students. This number met the expectations of the Strategic Plan(2015-2020)

Children enter Kindergarten year (Pre Year 1) when they are close to the age of 5 years or when they demonstrate developmental readiness.

In 2019 the gender balance of primary students was 59% male and 41% female which was similar to 2018 and has been the trend in the school in recent years. Schools in close geographical proximity also appear to have a higher male enrolment. The full enrolment policy is attached as an appendix at the end of this report.

Theme 9 - School policies

The school policies can be found in the School Policy folder located in the office and also electronically by contacting the office. The school is committed to providing a learning environment that supports the individual child in all areas of their development - intellectually, socially and emotionally. To this end the school has policies that ensure a safe and supportive environment at all times and for all children.

Policy	Changes in 2019	Access to full text
Student Welfare The school seeks to promote safe and supportive learning environments where all students can develop socially, emotionally	No changes were made to these policies in 2019 in part due to the extensive review in 2017	The full text of the school's Student Welfare policies can be accessed by request: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safe and supportive environment policy

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and academically both as a school community but also as individuals.	and their being no change to the Regulations or Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student Attendance policy ● Child Protection policy (reviewed Feb 2019 - no updates)
Anti- bullying (Positive Peer Relations Policy) This policy clearly sets out the expectations of the school community and outlines the consequences and actions that might be taken should such behaviors occur.	No changes in 2019 Review due 2020	The full text of the school's Anti- bullying policy can be accessed by request: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Behaviour Management procedure ● Positive Peer Relations Policy
Discipline BMS recognizes the unique value of each child and the importance of providing clear boundaries that are acceptable within both the school and wider communities. The school expressly prohibits corporal punishment and does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school. Procedural fairness underpins all processes in this policy. Parents are involved in the processes of procedural fairness when sanctions result in suspension and expulsion of a student. Disciplinary actions do not include exclusion.	There were no changes to this policy in 2019 (checked and approved NESA Aug 2017)	The full text of the school's Discipline policies can be accessed by request : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student Discipline Policy ● Discipline Policy (Procedural Fairness) ● Behaviour Management Procedure
Complaints and Grievances		The full text of the school's Complaints and Grievances policy can be accessed by request: Grievance Policy

Minor changes occurred to other procedures and statements to ensure they were compliant under NSW Teaching and Educational Standard Authority(NESA)(2019)

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Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual, December 2019. Section 3.10, and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013b* (Part 5 (60))

In addition changes were noted around the Children's Guardian Act 2019 to be introduced in 2020.

All staff and the school community were informed of these changes at staff meetings and via school communications and newsletters.

Theme 10 - School determined improvement targets

2018 identified priority areas achieved in 2019

Area	Priorities for 2019	Achievements
Teaching and Learning	<p>Refinement for curriculum tracking using Transparent Classroom will be introduced in 2019 across all classrooms.</p> <p>Pilot program for generating reports using Transparent classroom</p> <p>Criteria to be established to monitor and assess learning in objective and consistent manner</p> <p>To create a curriculum focus on local indigenous awareness</p>	<p>All classes employ Transparent Classroom for planning, recording and evaluating.</p> <p>Initial work on integrating NESA outcomes</p> <p>Pilot program: Reports generated to include NESA outcomes in Kindergarten year.</p> <p>Ongoing discussion</p> <p>Units of work generated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- local history- botany and bush plants
Financial	<p>Review and evaluate job position</p> <p>Financial manual to be updated to include financial policies and procedures</p>	<p>Accurate and timely reporting</p> <p>Actioned</p>
Facilities and resources	<p>Key focus on finalisation of the new building</p> <p>Opening of new building</p>	<p>New building completed and operating Term 1 2020.</p>

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	DA commenced to approval by Jan 2021	
Marketing	Website Alumni database (SP5.4) Vault of marketing materials To be an active member the community (5.1)	Carried over to 2020 Commenced and to be continued In the absence of achieving in this area a MarComms consultant to be employed June 2020
Management and operation	Governance workshop for all directors (4.4) Actively review Board skill set and succession plan (SP 4.1) Strategic Plan to be reviewed in readiness for new plan in 2020	scheduled for 1st Board meeting after AGM with AIS No review but 2 new board directors bring additional skill sets Revised. Review in 2020 for activation in 2021
Parent welfare	Explore extended hour options (5.5)	Introduced in T4 2019. To be reviewed in March 2020
Student Welfare	Develop and adopt a bursary (5.4) To be an active member the community (5.1)	Bursary offered to student. (Criteria is flexible however in Years 5 and 6 and demonstrated commitment to school)
Human Resources	Sponsor teacher training for NESA accredited teacher and secure in classroom T1 2020 Professional development to be a priority for teachers and support staff (with consideration to NESA requirements) (SP3.1) Develop policies and procedures around sustainability and succession (3.2)	Achieved. Sponsored teacher's enrolment (SMTC) 1 year course. To commence at school Term 1, 2020 Staff encouraged to participate in PD. Needs to be refined further Not achieved in 2019

2019 identified priority areas for 2020

Area	Priorities for 2019	Measurement of Success
Teaching and Learning	<p>NESA curriculum areas for registration to be reviewed and integrated without compromising the Montessori curriculum.</p> <p>To create a curriculum focus on local indigenous awareness</p>	<p>5 year registration granted in 2020 for 2021 - 2025</p> <p>Further units of work created</p>
Financial	<p>Employment of finance accounts manager to assist with increased financial and accountability workload as school grows.</p> <p>Financial manual to be updated to include financial policies and procedures</p>	<p>Suitably qualified person employed to support with financial reporting.</p> <p>Pending input from financial manager</p>
Facilities and resources	<p>DA application for new classroom - Tasman Road</p> <p>Lease of John street finalised and class (cycle 1) to be opened T2 2020</p> <p>Lease for Eurobodalla Under 3 program to be finalised and new facility opened</p> <p>New cycle 2 classroom to be opened T3 2020</p>	<p>New building opened Jan 2019</p> <p>DA pending</p>
Marketing	<p>Website</p> <p>Alumni database (SP5.4)</p> <p>Vault of marketing materials</p> <p>In the absence of achieving above a MarComms consultant to be employed June 2020</p>	<p>Carried over to 2020</p> <p>Commenced and to be continued</p> <p>MarsComm employee on staff</p>

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	To be an active member the community (5.1)	Community presence in village and via social media Facebook / Instagram
Management and operation	Governance workshop for all directors (4.4) Board review(SP 4.1) Strategic Plan to be reviewed in readiness for new plan in 2020	re - scheduled for 1st Board meeting after AGM with AIS (2020) Action for board director to compile in 2020 Review in 2020 for activation in 2021
Parent welfare	Explore extended hour options (5.5)	Reviewed and seen as sustainable and viable program moving forwards.
Student Welfare	Develop and adopt a bursary (5.4) Develop leadership program and to extend whole school community groups. Develop a culture of mindfulness To be an active member the community (5.1)	ongoing Bursary offered to student. (Criteria is flexible however in Years 5 and 6 and demonstrated commitment to school Integrated into daily practise not just when sessions in place
Human Resources	Sponsor teacher training for NESA accredited teacher and secure in classroom T1 2020 Professional development to be a priority for teachers and support staff (with consideration to NESA requirements) (SP3.1) Develop policies and	further potential candidates identified Reviews identify PD program for each staff member Written and ratified

	procedures around sustainability and succession (3.2)	
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Theme 11 - Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility

The school follows the educational approach as defined by the Montessori philosophy which has respect embedded as a key element. The children are valued as individuals with diversity embraced. The integrated curriculum and multi age grouping ensures that responsibility and opportunity for independence, self-esteem and a mutual respect for others and the environment are continuously addressed. Lessons of respectful community living and given are given on a daily basis and modeled by all staff.

The parents and staff provide care and support whilst assisting the school community to be considered as an educational establishment focusing on social, ethical and environmental responsibility, respect and sustainability.

Charity awareness is led by the students' interests and raises money via mini fundraisers amongst the community. In 2019 the Indigenous Literacy Foundation continued to be supported via a Book Swap and gold coin donation. Monies were also raised for the farmers affected by drought and then the bushfire project focused on 'adopting a koala' through the Port Macquarie Koala Foundation.

The school continued to support, local initiatives including the Avalon Community garden

The sustainable audit of 2014 which was incorporated into the Strategic Plan 2015-2020 continues to direct the chosen initiatives each year. 2019 focused on sustainable energy practises e.g. solar panels and sustainable wooden resources rather than plastic resources.

Theme 12 - Parent, student and teacher satisfaction

Parents continue to have several avenues to voice their thoughts and ideas. These are appropriately addressed by the Principal, the Board, teachers or a parent representative.

The school community continues to enjoy the social aspect of the school and gain from friendships created.

Enrolment is predominantly by word of mouth or families relocating to access the specific learning environment. The school is currently challenged with demand greater than places with waitlisting essential. In October 2019 the opportunity to lease a 2nd campus in nearby Careel Bay presented and this was explored and continues to be a possibility to alleviate the space issue. 2020 will see ongoing exploration of this site.

Students:

Student behavior is keenly monitored with emphasis placed on appropriate behaviour

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which in turn improves the engagement of the learners suggesting that the young students are keen participants with strong motivation and confidence to learn at school. The Under 3s program continues to be a key feeder for enrolments into the preschool program and in the past 3 years the retention rate from pre to primary increases each year. From 2018 to 2019 all primary students remained at the school (unless relocating either overseas or interstate and ongoing Montessori education being the preferred option.)

Parents:

Parents have confirmed their interest in all primary years being offered at the school and the construction of classrooms to ensure this will remain as a key focus.

Staff:

The school continues to have a high retention rate for all staff members suggesting the school as a place of preferred employment. There was minimal staff movement in 2019: a 12 month maternity leave and departure of a teacher mid way through the year due to family illness. The teacher who had been sponsored to undertake a Montessori diploma course in 2019 completed their Montessori qualification and will return to teach at the school in Term 1, 2020.

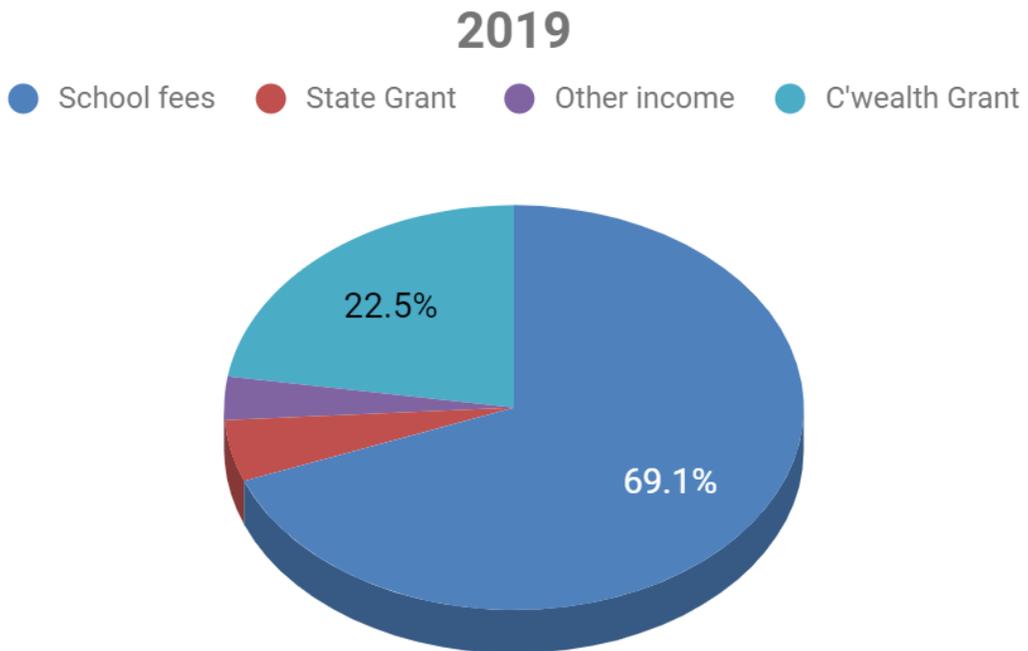
Theme Area 13 - Summary financial information

(Please see following page)

Theme Area 13 - Summary financial information

The financial year operates from 1 January to 31 December inclusive. The accounts of 2019 were audited in April with the information used for the Australian Government Financial Questionnaire. The following data has been extracted from the audited accounts of the school.

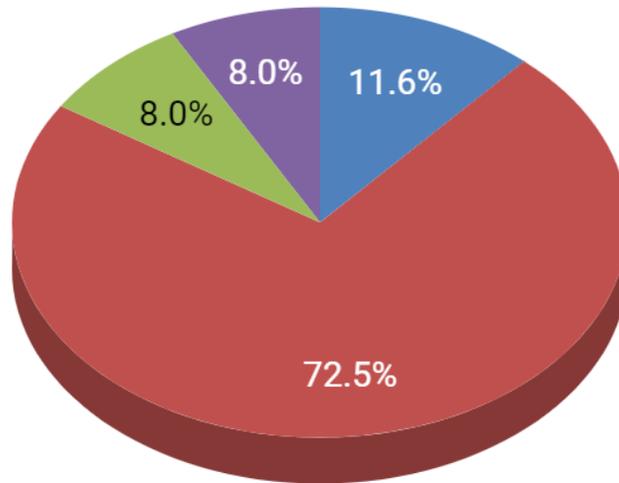
INCOME 2019



EXPENSES 2019

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- Capital Expenses
- Salary and related
- Operating espenses
- Other sundry expenses



Appendix A

Enrolment Placement Policy

[Enrolment Placement Policy 2018](#)