

# Southside Montessori School

Annual Report 2017



Southside Montessori Society, 35 Lillian Rd, Riverwood, NSW 2210

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## VISION STATEMENT

Southside Montessori School  
nurtures the whole child  
within the Montessori philosophy  
to become an independent,  
educated and socially responsible  
individual.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We pay our respects and acknowledge  
the Dharwal People of the Eora Nation,  
the traditional custodians of this land.  
May the great ancestral spirit  
of the land, the waters and the rivers  
protect and guide us as we gather here.

## INTRODUCTION

Southside Montessori School seeks to comply with the expectations of the Australian curriculum, in conjunction with the New South Wales Education Standards Authority, (NESA) and the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education (NQF).

Southside Montessori School will maintain the relevant data and documentation and will comply with reporting requirements of the NSW Minister for Education and Communities and The Department of Education and Training. This reporting will include public disclosure of the education and financial reporting measures and policies of the School as required.

### POLICY AND PROCEDURES ENSURING THE PARTICIPATION IN THE MANDATED ANNUAL REPORTING PROCESS

The Principal of Southside Montessori School is the person responsible for the coordination, collection, final preparation and distribution of the annual report to NESA and other stakeholders as required.

For each reporting area, one of the following persons, Principal, School Accountant and School Office Manager is responsible for the collection, analysis and storage of the relevant data and for providing the relevant information to the Principal for inclusion in this report.

Determination of specific content to be included in each section of the report and for reviewing this each year to ensure ongoing compliance, relevance and usefulness is the final responsibility of the Principal.

Preparation of this report is to be in an appropriate online electronic form to provide to NESA under the direction of the Principal by the due date of June 30 of the following year.

Public disclosure of this report will occur 6 months after the end of the reportable year by making it available on the School website and by providing printed copies in the Office.

### REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL DATA FROM THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

To support any requests from the Australian Government through the Minister for Education and the NSW Government through the Minister for Education, the School will identify the staff member responsible for coordinating the School's response. This person will be responsible for the collection of the relevant data/information, coordinating the school's response and for ensuring provision of data/information requested by the Minister through the specified authority (NESA) in an online format by the due date date of June 30 2017.

## THEME 1 – A MESSAGE FROM KEY BODIES

### PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Our 2017 school year was one in which Southside Montessori School focused on celebrating our achievements as well as acknowledging time needed to express our gratitude. Our learning and cultural framework, the teachings and methodologies of Dr Maria Montessori guides everything we do at Southside.

2017 saw us focus on three key areas: our students, their learning and our community, each important facets of our School.

In the busy-ness of our daily work and play, it can become challenging to pause and take note of what our learners have achieved, individually and collectively, this is our greatest strength and it does not happen by accident. Every individual student, member of staff and family contributes to our success as a collaborative school.

This year saw 5 students graduate from our Cycle Three class, moving to a variety of secondary schools in the Sydney region, successful in their transition from the Primary component of their learning, and impressive in their various skills and talents.

Our community grew as did our need for our school environment, and 2017 saw further development in our Renew and Refurbish area of the School's Strategic Plan. Staff areas and the administration received a facelift, as did our Parent and Toddler rooms. Further work was done to our Library area and the School Hall making these spaces further inhabitable as key learning areas for our students.



Ms Johanna Wilkins Bennett  
Principal

### CHAIR OF THE SCHOOL BOARD REPORT

The School Board met seven times in 2017, and welcomed two additional directors:

- Mrs. Saraa Chalak, who is a parent in the School and has a background in accounting.
- Ms. Ilona Alsters, a new member to the School community, who has a background in Governance and Law.

A major task undertaken during the year was the review of long term planning.

As a Board many areas were assessed, with a particular spotlight on enrolments. This is a key performance indicator of a school's success and growth. It is a great pleasure to report that the school has grown to strong enrolment numbers.

Many of our cycles have waiting lists and with continued enquiries, the Board is confident that the School will continue to grow. There are a number of key reasons for this growth. Firstly, our best advocates are our parents. They spread the good news about our School and its excellent results.

There has also been the creation of an improved website, along with thorough local advertising in preschools and centres which support the ethos and method of our Montessori learning.

We also have a good story to tell. With our Mini and Multilit literacy program and the continuation and upkeep of children's gardens, as well as very positive results in NAPLAN, Southside Montessori School offers a successful program of education, which is tailored to the needs of each individual student.

The staff of Southside Montessori School showed their professionalism each day at this school. These teachers have consistently shown their commitment to the Montessori teaching practise. More importantly - they teach, think and plan in a Montessori way.

The School has satisfied all of its ongoing prudential reporting requirements,

The Board along with Ms. Wilkins Bennett looks forward to future improvements to the School and to longer term plans for growing the School.



Fay Gurr  
Chair of Southside Montessori School Board

## THEME 2 – ABOUT SOUTHSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Southside Montessori Pre- and Primary School nurtures the whole child within the Montessori philosophy to become an independent, educated and socially responsible individual. Southside Montessori's long-term commitment is to see our students as competent and capable learners, who join our learning community with a wealth of knowledge and ideas about the world.

Our learning is based on strong relationships between home and school life and the development of self as a shared goal. We work together with our students and their families to discover ideas, foster curiosity and inquiry, and cultivate a learner's identity through their self-direction. We are proud of our culturally and ethnically diverse community, and honour the unique journey of all. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of our land and recognise that each learner's story contributes to our shared identity. Our prepared environment encourages action learning, and an understanding that our students are guided through experience to achieve at their own pace, so they fully realise their human potential. We nurture self-esteem through satisfaction of accomplishment, crucial to a learner gaining autonomous and self-disciplined independence. We empower our students to have a genuine voice and choice in both their learning and the learning environment they share.

Guided by the Montessori philosophy, Southside Montessori School strives to:

- enrich and inspire the child by integrating innovative teaching practices
- provide a carefully prepared learning environment that nurtures the developmental needs of each child
- allow the child to develop a love of learning through active participation, self-discovery and exploration
- promote independence and self-confidence in the child with a non-competitive approach and self-correcting materials
- treat each child as an individual and respect their needs and beliefs
- have staff continually update their professional learning to meet the needs of the students and deliver a comprehensive and ever-improving curriculum
- embrace the culturally diverse backgrounds of families and foster a community that embraces tolerance and cooperation
- build strong relationships between home and school
- promote the Montessori philosophy to the wider community
- enable children to grow into confident, happy and purposeful individuals.

The School was established on its present site in 1984. Originally a community Pre- School it now draws students from the rapidly growing southwestern corridor. The School is seeing increased enrolments due to its effective implementation of the Montessori methodology and further alignment with the requirements of the New South Wales Education Standards Authority. Southside Montessori Pre- and Primary School is an active member of the



## THEME 2 – ABOUT SOUTHSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL CONTINUED

Association of Independent Schools, which brings together independent schools in NSW, who work together to improve the delivery of education to the sector.

Since 2012, the school has completed significant building and grounds improvement. New classrooms have been constructed, completion of a School Hall and kitchen and necessitated landscape gardening. The staff mix combines experienced teachers with a range of graduated teachers. There are a significant number of staff who have spent in excess of 10 years at the school. In addition to 5 teaching staff, the School has Integration Teacher Assistants in the Pre-School and teaching support staff in the Primary Years. The School draws on external supports with Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and School Psychological services. The School fosters close links to parents and the broader school community. Our primary focus will always be the wellbeing and best interest of the students in our care. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/43857>

In 2017 there were 51 primary students enrolled at the School. There is approximately 60% male and 40% female students for the year 2017 throughout the whole school. Many students moved from our Pre- School educational setting to our Primary Years and we also welcomed new students to our primary years. In addition, 4 % of our students identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait islanders and 13% of our students come from language backgrounds other than English.

### THEME 3 – STUDENT OUTCOMES IN STANDARDISED NATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY TESTING

There are 10 bands of achievement for student performance in the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests. The bands provide a common scale for all year levels. Six bands are used for each year level.

Year 3 is reported from Bands 1-6,

Year 5 from bands 3-8,

Year 7 from bands 4-9 and

Year 9 from bands 5-10.

Further information relating to Southside Montessori School performance on the 2017 NAPLAN can be found at: <https://www.myschool.edu.au>

### THEME 4 – NOT APPLICABLE TO SOUTHSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

## THEME 5 – TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING, ACCREDITATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

The School Executive participated in courses conducted by the AIS Leadership Centre and other professional learning providers. All teaching staff participated in professional learning over the course of 2017, regarding student safety. In addition, the introduction of staff personal devices brought with it increased understanding of effective use of ICT and the required skills in many operational and classroom practice areas.

The following professional learning activities were undertaken by staff throughout 2017:

Description of Professional Learning Activities	Number of Staff Participating
First Aid Course- provide training and assesses competency in the skills and knowledge required to provide first aid to a casualty <i>Premium Health HLTAID 004</i>	12
Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation– provide training and requalification in CPR <i>Premium Health HLTAID 004</i>	12
Child Protection and Legislation Module, online workshop AIS Requalification for staff in CP and legal requirements	11
Fire Training Aus. standard 3745-2010 Aus. Standard 1851-2012 Work Health and Safety, Work Health and Safety Regulations 2001 <i>Elite Fire Training</i>	13
Montessori AMI Diploma training Teacher training in Montessori education, non-qualification	1
Asthma Prevention Training <i>Australian Asthma Foundation</i>	8
Anaphylaxis Training <i>Premium Health HLTAID 004</i>	12
Montessori Australia Foundation – whole school refresher	6
ICT introduction to O365 Word Online	12

## THEME 5 – TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING, ACCREDITATION AND QUALIFICATIONS *CONTINUED*

### TEACHER ACCREDITATION

Level of Accreditation	Number of Teachers
Pre- 2004 teachers (Accreditation not required in 2017)	2
Conditional	0
Provisional	1
Proficient Teacher	2
Highly accomplished Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
Lead Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
Total number of teachers	5

### TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Details of teaching staff (as defined by the *Teacher Accreditation Act 2004*) who are responsible for delivering the curriculum in terms of numbers in the following categories:

Category	Number of Teachers
1. Teachers having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognized within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI- NOORS) guidelines, or	5
2. Teachers having a Bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualification	0

## THEME 6 – WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

The Southside Montessori School workforce consists of teachers, support staff, and administration with both traditional tertiary and Montessori qualifications.

Total Staff	Numbers
Teaching Staff	5
Teaching Staff- Fulltime equivalent	4.4
Non-teaching Staff	6
Non-teaching Staff- fulltime equivalent	3

Southside Montessori School did not employ or retain staff in 2017 recognised as Indigenous Australian or Torres Strait Islander.

Information taken from: <https://www.myschool.edu.au>

## THEME 7 – STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Average across the school year in 2017 was similar to the daily attendance in 2016.

While there is significant improvement to be had, the School monitors student attendance administratively through their Cycle Classroom Directress and the Office. Strategies to improve poor or unsatisfactory attendance include follow up phone calls made to parents and the follow up of explained reasons for absences by parent or caregiver in the way of written confirmation. In addition to highlighted conversations regarding attendance at Parent, Student, Teacher meetings as well as unsatisfactory attendance information transferred to the student files and days absent documented on school reporting. Further information on school attendance can be found at

<https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/43857>

Retention rates are not relevant data collection for this school.

Post –school destinations in secondary schools is not relevant data collection for this school.

Year Level	Attendance %
<b>Stage One</b>	
Kindergarten	90.08%
<b>Stage Two</b>	
Year One	92.41%
Year Two	91.04%
Year Three	72.05%
<b>Stage Three</b>	
Year 4	91.52%
Year 5	93.13%
Year 6	93.54%
<b>Total Attendance</b>	<b>89.11%</b>

## THEME 8 – ENROLMENT POLICY

### ENROLMENT POLICY – NO CHANGE TO THIS POLICY OCCURRED IN 2017

*The following is the full-text of the school's policy on enrolment.*

Southside Montessori School is a comprehensive co-educational school providing Montessori education operating within the policies of the National Quality Framework as well as NESA for children ages 3-12. All applications will be processed in order of receipt and consideration will be given to the applicant's support for the ethos of the school, siblings already attending the school and other criteria determined by the school from time to time. Once enrolled, students are expected to act consistently with the school's Montessori ethos and comply with the school rules to maintain the enrolment. Parents also are expected to be supportive of the Montessori education at school as well as at home.

As a Montessori school, Southside enrolls children for 3-year cycles at the ages of 3, 6 and 9. Priority is given to the siblings of Southside Montessori students and transfers of current Montessori (full time) students. Other factors that may influence the enrolment are availability of spaces for particular age groups or gender. Nonstandard enrolments may be considered providing there is space available.

### STEP 1: ENROLMENT ENQUIRY

The initial step is to register to attend a school tour. Tours are conducted every Wednesday from 9.30 –10:30 or as the need arises.

Interested families can register via our website

[www.southsidemontessori.edu.au](http://www.southsidemontessori.edu.au),

over the phone on 9533 1229 or email

[office@southsidemontessori.edu.au](mailto:office@southsidemontessori.edu.au).

After the tour, the parents will receive an Enrolment Pack containing enrolment instructions, a fee schedule and enrolment form.

### STEP 2: ENROLMENT APPLICATION FORM

Once the family has attended our tour, they are now eligible to complete the **Enrolment Application Form**. The office is to make sure all documents requested at the back of the application form are attached and that **both** parents/caregivers sign the form and that there is a photo attached to the application. A \$300 non- refundable administration fee applies.

## THEME 8 – ENROLMENT POLICY CONTINUED

### STEP 3: CLASSROOM VISIT/INTERVIEW

Once we have received the application we will organize a visit to the school for the family and the child to observe in the classroom and meet the teachers. For Primary school, a visit of at least three days will be organised for the applying child.

The school always considers each applicant's educational needs. To do this, the school may ask for additional information and consult with the parents / family and other relevant persons in case additional information is needed and a collaborative plan needs to be developed to facilitate meeting the needs of the student.

### STEP 4: ASSESSMENT OF PLACES

In most cases, applications are reviewed approximately a term before places become available.

Enrolment is based on balancing the ages and genders of each classroom. That being equal, priority is given to siblings of children already enrolled, Montessori transfers, and then applications are processed by date of receipt.

Consideration is given to parents who reflect an understanding of the Montessori approach.

If the school does not, at the moment of application, have spaces available the application will be placed on the waiting list.

### STEP 5: OFFER OF A PLACE

Once we are sure that a place is available for the child, we will send a letter and Parent Agreement offering a place at Southside Montessori. The signed agreement should then be returned with an enrolment fee of \$1,100 within two weeks. If this is not observed, the offer of enrolment will be forfeited.

*Places are only offered to children not currently attending the school when we have been unable to fill all available places from within our membership.*

### CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE FOR FIRST CHILD ENTERING THE SCHOOL

Offers of place must be accepted within 14 days by returning the Acceptance Form which lists the following conditions:

- a non-refundable enrolment fee of \$1,100 needs to be paid on acceptance of the offer of enrolment



## THEME 8 – ENROLMENT POLICY CONTINUED

- each child is expected to attend the school for the entire programme- three years in the case of Pre-Primary and six years in the case of Primary
- membership must be kept current for the duration of the child's attendance at the school
- parents are expected to attend parent education evenings organised by the school
- parents are expected to participate in parent education offers, organised activities, parent teacher interview events.
- 

### CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE FOR SIBLINGS

Conditions of acceptance for siblings are the same as for a first child. The sibling priority is only applied if the elder sibling has completed or has the intention of completing the full program (i.e. preprimary or primary).

### TIMING OF ENTRY – PRE-PRIMARY

The school adheres to the Montessori principle of staggered entry to enable maximum attention to be given to each new child in the class and to assist the children to adjust to their new environment.

Commencement dates are determined by the school.

### TIMING OF ENTRY – PRIMARY

The child moves to Primary at the sign of readiness as determined by the class teachers.

### TRANSFERS

There is no automatic right to transfer between Montessori schools but every attempt is made to offer a place to a transfer, subject to the above criteria being met.

Once children have commenced in a class at the school, they will not be transferred to another class. (Only exceptional circumstances may be considered at the discretion of the Principal)

### DEFERRALS

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

On the other hand, the school may advise a deferred start in which case a place will be held without imposition of fees until the entry date given by the Director.

### CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

The School respects the privacy of the families and staff who make up the school community. It is the school's policy to ensure that all information obtained by the School in relation to personal circumstances of children and their families will be kept confidential unless:

- the family concerned authorises disclosure of the information, or
- the School is obliged to disclose the information pursuant to health regulations or other applicable laws.

### SOURCES

Montessori Australia Foundation  
Association of Independent Schools NSW

### REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed every 3 years. Review will be conducted by management, staff, families and other interested parties.

### STUDENT WELFARE POLICY - NO CHANGE TO THIS POLICY OCCURRED IN 2017

*The following is an excerpt from the school's 'safe and supportive environment' policy.*

The school wishes to promote a learning environment where all teachers and pupils should be mutually supportive. The school community should respect each other and not engage in conduct which undermines this mutual trust and support, and also respects the philosophy and ethics of the school.

The school encourages consultation between all members of the school community in matters which affect them. The school will provide both formal and informal mechanisms to facilitate communication between those with an interest in the student's education and wellbeing taking into account the limitations as outlined in the Privacy Act. This may include communications between some or all of the following – student, parent or guardian or other significant family member of the student, teacher, Principal, representative of an appropriate government, welfare, health or other authority.

The school has implemented measures designed to promote the safety and wellbeing of students, particularly having regard to its professional judgment as to what is required in such matters as:

- appropriate levels of supervision
- security of buildings
- procedures in case of fire
- use of grounds and facilities
- excursions, travel on school related activities
- other appropriate matters.

School staff ensure that all students are adequately cared for and supervised while undertaking both onsite and offsite activities, bearing in mind the type of activity and age of students involved.

The school has Codes of Conduct for staff, parents and students, which may be supplemented by specific rules and directives. The Codes of Conduct include such matters as:

- the rights and responsibilities of students, parents and staff within the school community
- behaviour management
- the management and reporting of serious incidents.

The school has access to pastoral care resources and can advise parents and the school community of the different options available to them.

## THEME 9 – OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES CONTINUED

The school staff are able to make preliminary identification of students with additional needs and provide families with an option of specialists who can make more detailed assessments. The school and staff can provide appropriate levels of support to assist students with their individual student programs (ISP) and education whilst at school. This is done in consultation with the intervention specialist or team. Students requiring support or medication are supervised and monitored during at these times.

### ANTI-BULLYING POLICY - NO CHANGE TO THIS POLICY OCCURRED IN 2017

The following is an excerpt from the school's behaviour management and discipline policy.

Our 'Behaviour Management and Discipline' policy outlines a whole of school approach whereby teachers, peers and parents are actively involved in working together to address and prevent inappropriate behaviour.

We define inappropriate behaviour as behaviours that, as a consequence, hurt, threaten, frighten or exclude someone by physical and non-physical means. If these behaviours take place over an extended period of time by a person or group towards another person or group, this constitutes bullying.

Our policy provides examples of what is commonly regarded as inappropriate behaviour. These include:

- continuously interfering with the work of others
- verbally abusing a person or group by calling them unpleasant names or by writing nasty notes and/or messages or by using unpleasant gestures and/or language.

In order to deal with inappropriate behaviour, staff at Southside Montessori School will:

- model positive relationships in their day-to-day dealings with members of the school and model positive ways of resolving disputes
- positively reinforce students for behaving in an appropriate positive manner
- be knowledgeable about and educate students about the nature, causes and consequences of inappropriate behaviour and the processes that have been set in place to address inappropriate behaviour at this school
- be familiar with our school's behaviour code and management system, including the contents of this policy.
- physically harming a person or group or physically intimidating them by threatening physical harm or by destroying their belongings

## THEME 9 – OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES CONTINUED

- encouraging their friends or people they know to verbally or physically threaten a person or group, or asking them to harass, embarrass, ignore or exclude that person or group from activities
- demonstrating recurring behaviours that result in property destruction, wilful defiance or injury to others.
- be familiar with our school's behaviour code and management system, including the contents of this policy
- respond immediately, decisively and consistently to cases of inappropriate behaviours brought to their attention by student, parents and/or colleagues
- respond to early signs of distress in students. These can include an unusual lack of concentration or inappropriate behaviours such as aggressive behaviour outbursts and poor class or school attendance
- seek advice and support from colleagues when unsure as to how to respond to and address specific incidents
- encourage student to report situations of inappropriate behaviour by listening carefully and avoiding giving judgments when reports are made, and remaining calm and understanding of the student's/parent's/colleague's concern

### STUDENT DISCIPLINE - NO CHANGE TO THIS POLICY OCCURRED IN 2017

The following is an excerpt from the school's 'behaviour management and discipline' policy.

This policy is based on principles of procedural fairness and involves parent in the processes of procedural fairness for suspension or expulsion.

The positive model of behaviour management and discipline within a Montessori environment is based on self-discipline where concentration, focus and independent learning happen without contention or interruption. Children are respected and misbehaviours are handled with the focus on the child and the consequences of their behaviour.

Parents and staff have a responsibility to work together so that children clearly understand the rules and possible consequences of violating rules. Through nurturing and sensitivity, we hope to prepare children to function as social assets. We encourage parents and caregivers to use the positive model of behaviour management in the home and to support its implementation in the school.

The school will establish and implement appropriate behaviour management practices for students that are consistent with the philosophy of the school.

The policy aims to ensure that:

- our school is a secure and safe environment free from threat, harassment and intimidation

## THEME 9 – OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES CONTINUED

- teachers, parents and students are aware of and encouraged to implement positive strategies to prevent and address inappropriate behaviour
- teachers, parents and students are knowledgeable about the nature, causes and consequences of inappropriate behaviour and the procedures that have been set in place to address episodes of inappropriate behaviour in this school
- teachers, parents and students are committed to collaborate on maintaining a safe and friendly environment
- students are taught appropriate peer interaction skills, conflict resolution skills, and are encouraged to and positively reinforced for interacting with members of the school community in a positive manner
- teachers are aware of their role in fostering the knowledge and attitudes that will be required to achieve the above aims.

In accordance with the Education Reform Amendment (Corporal Punishment) Act 1995, Southside Montessori School does not permit corporal punishment of students attending this school, nor sanction corporal punishment of students by non-school persons.

### COMPLAINTS POLICY - NO CHANGE TO THIS POLICY OCCURRED IN 2017

The following is an excerpt version of the School's Complaints Policy.

Our school encourages parents to:

- have respectful, direct and informal relationships with staff and other parents
- model the kind of respectful and positive social interactions which are expected of children in a Montessori learning environment
- act respectfully and appropriately towards, and in the presence of, students
- ensure your child/children arrive at school on time
- discuss issues or concerns about the school, staff or students respectfully, using these procedures
- follow school policies as well as any directions from staff.

#### What should I do if I have a concern?

From time to time parents or other members of the school community may need to approach the School in order to:

- discuss the progress or welfare of your own child
- express concern about the actions of other students

## THEME 9 – OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES CONTINUED

- enquire about school policy or practice
- express concern about the actions of staff

When problems or concerns arise, procedures need to be followed so that solutions are reached as soon as possible and a safe and harmonious school environment is maintained. It is always important to organise a time to talk with the staff at the school in an unhurried and confidential atmosphere. The best results usually flow from working together.

The following guidelines aim to:

- provide a guide in order that concerns are dealt with in an open and fair manner
- ensure that the rights of students, staff and parents are respected and upheld
- support sensitivity and confidentiality.

How will the School resolve my formal complaint?

Each formal complaint will be treated seriously and in accordance with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. These principles have developed to ensure that decision making is fair and reasonable. Put simply, natural justice involves:

- decision makers informing people of the case against them or their interests
- giving them a right to be heard
- not having a personal interest in the outcome and
- acting only on the basis of logically probative evidence.

### GRIEVANCE POLICY - NO CHANGE TO THIS POLICY OCCURRED IN 2017

The following is an excerpt of the School's Grievance Policy.

Southside Montessori School is based on Montessori philosophy which develops an atmosphere of mutual acceptance, respect and support between students, staff, parents and care givers.

The following guidelines aim to:

- deal with complaints in an open and fair manner
- ensure that the rights of students, staff and parents are respected and upheld
- support sensitivity and confidentiality
- help reach an agreed solution.

### What is a grievance?

A grievance is generally defined as 'a wrong considered as grounds for complaint, or something believed to cause distress' or 'a complaint or resentment, as against an unjust or unfair act'.

In the context of the School, this means that you have followed the guidelines in the "Complaints policy" but you and the School have not managed to resolve the issue. It is at this point that your complaint is considered to be a grievance.

### Exceptions to this policy

This policy does not cover grievances raised by staff of the School. There are separate policies and procedures for these issues. Please see Staff Grievance Procedure

### Who can lodge a grievance?

Grievances can be raised by:

- students against students
- students against staff
- parents against staff
- parents against students
- staff against parents
- staff against students

### What if I am unhappy with the way the School handled my complaint?

You may write to the Chair of the Board of the School. Your letter must include the steps taken by you to resolve the issue and a suggested solution. You must do this within 10 working days of receiving the School's written response to your formal complaint.

You may email your letter to the Chair of the Board at [board@southsidemontessori.edu.au](mailto:board@southsidemontessori.edu.au). This matter will now be classified as a grievance.

### Will lodging a grievance, complaint or concern affect my child's enrolment?

In some instances, concerns, complaints and grievances may arise from time to time and it is important that they are addressed.

Raising a concern, complaint or a grievance *may* affect your child's enrolment. If the grievance is found to be vexatious or malicious, the School may consider discontinuing your child's enrolment at the School.



## THEME 9 – OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES CONTINUED

### RELATED POLICIES AND GUIDELINES:

- Complaints Policy
- Grievance Procedure- Staff
- Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying statement for employees, contractors and volunteers 'Natural justice/procedural fairness fact sheet',
- Ombudsman NSW

### PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF SCHOOL POLICIES

The above policies are highlighted excerpts of full policies as being in place in 2017 to ensure all aspects of the School mission for providing student welfare are implemented. All policies listed have been revised and initiated for the 2017 year. All staff have been briefed on the content of the above policies. Policies listed are available in hard copy in each teaching space and centrally in the School Office for staff and parent access.

Soft copies are also available for staff from the Office.

## THEME 10 – SCHOOL DETERMINES PRIORITY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Area	Priorities	Achievements
Teaching and Learning	Literacy	Implementation of synthetic phonemic programme
	Home Reading programme	Purchase of new home readers in PM range
	Expand co-curricular programme continued priorities from 2016	Introduction of Sport skills further IT integration and support in coding and STEM
Staff Development	Introduction of staff individual devices	All teaching staff received a school laptop
	Training in the use of Office 365	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Staff trained</li> <li>Protocols established for the use of the platform</li> <li>Teams and sites for storage established</li> </ul>
	Training in the use of Sentral as a Student Management System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff trained in general operations of Sentral</li> <li>Additional staff trained in Administration and Welfare modules</li> <li>Continued training required in 2018</li> </ul>
Operational Development Marketing Communication	Continued priorities from 2016 in streamlining Administrative procedures and practices	Introduction of Sentral as a Student Management System Transfer of Student files to Sentral Implementation of new student filing system
	Improved Parent communication strategies	Implementation of School App
	Improved website	Implementation of an improved website linked to App and Sentral
Renew and Refurbishment of facilities	Continued 2016 priorities of facility improvement	Refurbishment of Administration Offices Carpet, Paint Laying of floor in School Hall Window tinting in Hall, Library and Admin Areas Painting of Parent Toddler Room New Parent room created in Parent Toddler room

## THEME 11 – INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

Southside Montessori School actively support and promote the Montessori framework of Grace and Courtesy. This is an integral part of our school culture and the wider philosophy of Montessori education.

Grace and courtesy lessons are transdisciplinary within the students learning. Lessons are taught within a just in time framework and often take the form of guided role plays to group problem-solving and community meetings. Small meetings between classmates or larger community meetings assist our students to navigate social situations. During these times, students learn the role of civil discourse, allowing one person to speak at a time. Students discuss situations, and they offer solutions. Students continually evaluate these solutions until there is one which works for everyone.

Respect, responsibility and self-directedness are at the core of our daily teaching.

Southside Montessori School is a non-denominational, non-competitive learning environment inclusive of diverse cultural backgrounds and belief systems.

The School encourages student awareness of local and global community issues and celebrations. Montessori Education fosters an understanding of the interrelationship between man and nature and Southside Montessori School supports the ethos of Education in harmony with life.

Southside Montessori students participated in numerous activities in 2017 to support many worthwhile causes, celebrations and events.

A focus of 2017 was on understanding global cultures and traditions from a historic perspective. This included Chinese New Year, Harmony Day, Diwali, NAIDOC Week, Tree Day, Anzac Day, Remembrance Day and Christmas.

## THEME 12 – PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

Parent satisfaction in the School was evident in the increase of enrolment numbers across 2017.

The level of parent attendance at School organised events saw many more parents engaged and attending our start of year information evening, as well as meeting with staff at Parent, Student, Teacher conferences.

Annual events, celebrating family and community are always popular and were again in 2017. The Father's Day Breakfast, and students verses Dad's soccer tournament, is always a highlight of the Southside year.

Issues raised by some parents related to the facilities and the renew and refurbishment of these. Further work was done throughout the school. The School Hall and kitchen received finishing touches as well as the administration Offices and the Parent and Toddler rooms. Our end of year celebration, was a time where our parents expressed to the School just how much they appreciated the upgrades to the school environment.

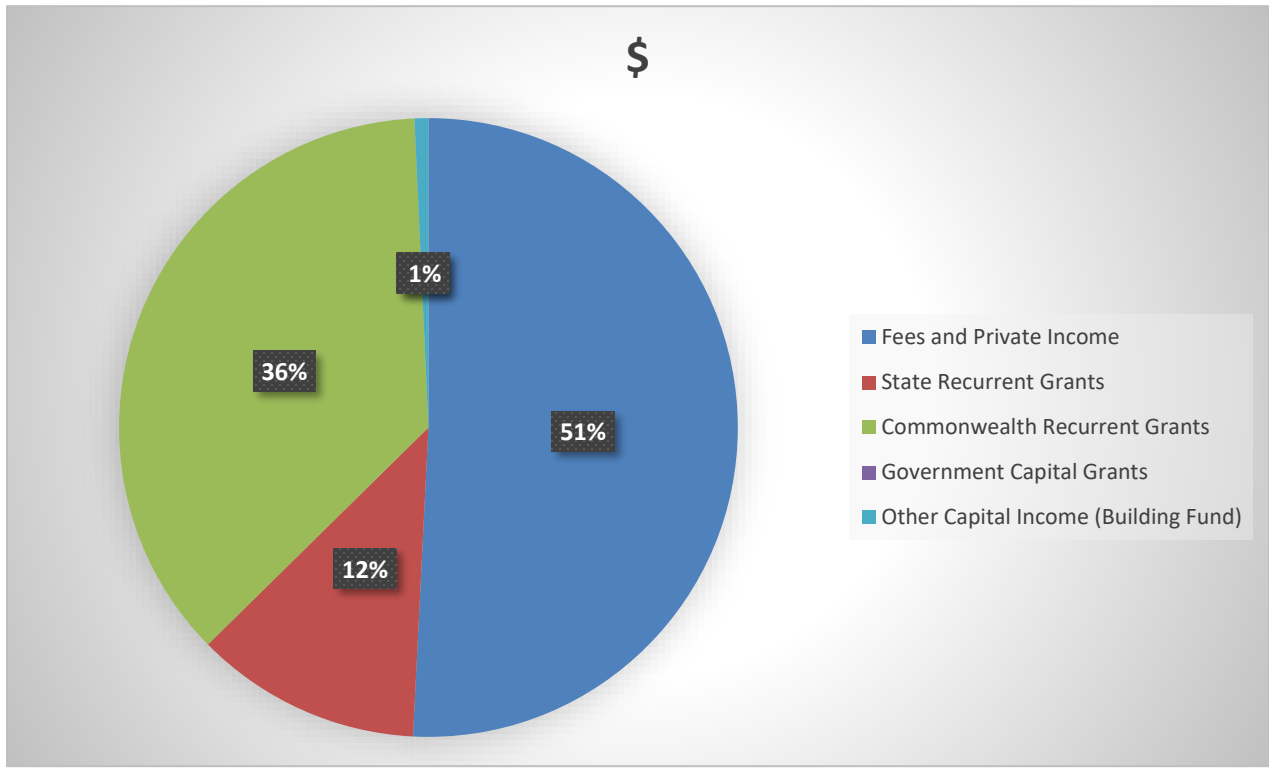
The best part of our community, our students showed excitement and wonder in all of their learning explorations across 2017. Students are regularly given voice and choice in procedural decisions pertinent to their age and the situation. Students have open access to informal discussions with all staff. Each morning community classroom discussions take place to allow students to discuss current topics, set agendas for work cycles and to share relevant information. This open access is inclusive of access to the Principal also. These aspects of communication, reciprocity and self direction form the basis of our Montessori teaching practices. Students enjoy and understand these foundational tools that allow them freedom within limits.

Informal feedback from teaching and administration staff through the regular introduction of staff meetings and open floor discussions indicated that staff were very happy with the changes the school had undertaken. Collegiality and collaboration opportunities and professional development offerings were also rated highly by the School team.

Staff morale feedback was exceptionally positive and collegial. Staff openly sought professional support and guidance from one another. Socially staff were inclusive and this was indicated in the attendance at numerous staff social gatherings offered throughout the year and through professional progress meetings.

## THEME 13 – SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

### SOUTHSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL – RECURRENT AND CAPITAL INCOME FOR 2017



### SOUTHSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL – RECURRENT AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FOR 2017

