

Melbourne Montessori School

# Annual Report 2023



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# About Melbourne Montessori School

## Our Philosophy

An authentic Montessori approach to learning provides the framework for our educational program and underpins our teaching methods and materials. The words, wisdom and practical advice of Maria Montessori and her associates are the lens through which we select, design and evaluate our program and curriculum.

## Our Mission

Our mission is to provide an outstanding learning experience grounded in Montessori principles, while embracing subject and teaching excellence and a total commitment to the wellbeing of our students and wider community.

## Our Values

*We believe that self-esteem, human dignity, emotional wellbeing and the ability to communicate and cooperate effectively with others – adult to adult, adult to child or child to child – must be valued as highly as academic and material success.*

*We affirm that we will support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including the commitment to elected government, the rule of law, equal rights for all before the law, freedom of religion, freedom of speech and association and the values of openness and tolerance.*

*We affirm that we will support the ideal that all beings are interdependent and that every form of life has value, regardless of its worth to human beings. We will support and promote the belief that we need to protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, especially biological diversity and natural processes that sustain life, and manage the use of renewable resources such as water, soil, forest products and marine life so as not to exceed rates of regeneration and protect the health of ecosystems.*

*We affirm that education begins at birth and continues throughout life and all our values apply equally to adults, parents, teachers, guardians and all children in the school. We believe that intelligence is not rare among human beings.*

*We nurture intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual and physical growth for the development of a whole and healthful being.*

# Chair's Report



I'm always humbled by what our school achieves and this is particularly the case as we celebrate our 50th birthday. This is an incredible achievement for a school that began with a single Cycle 1 classroom at Brighton.

While celebrating and recognising our past, we are also looking ahead. Our Towards 500: Strategic Plan is an important demonstration of our commitment to ongoing success and growth. We are proud to be evolving, innovating and setting new benchmarks for Montessori education in Australia.

Our diverse and inclusive community is the beating heart of our school – we know we are stronger together. I would like to say a heartfelt thank you for everything our community contributes and for your ongoing commitment to MMS.

Our children continue to develop a growth mindset, natural curiosity, understanding and respect – all vital skills that will equip them for the world ahead and the essence of the Montessori pedagogy.

Of course, all of this can only be achieved with the dedication of our amazing teachers, assistants, administrators and leadership. Daniel, Tim and Yenny have calmly steered the school through the academic year and we are also lucky to have a highly skilled school Board of past or present parents who are determined to make MMS the best possible school it can be.

On behalf of the Board, we thank everyone for another extraordinary year.

**Neil Cook**

**Chair, Melbourne Montessori School Board**



# Principal's Report



Rise, 2023! Like the phoenix, a symbol of strength and resurgence, we have given everyone the opportunity to discover their potential and RISE. Each of us has tapped into our potential, developed our strengths and faced challenges. We have risen to new heights together!

To rise is a testament to the resilience and fortitude within each of us because the journey is not merely about reaching the mountaintop; it is about the strength you gain with each step as you climb.

This year, opportunities for new leadership arose, the new Caulfield playground was opened, and the Caulfield library space was established. The new strategic plan, Towards 500, was launched, setting the school's direction for the next three years. All this could not have come to fruition without the support and direction of the MMS Board and MMS Foundation.

I would like to thank our incredible MMS staff who have created a learning environment that generates success for all. It is a privilege to work with such a dedicated team and such creative educators.

Thank you also to the parents who have worked tirelessly whenever asked to organise a costume, join an excursion, be a guest speaker and support school celebrations. We appreciate your generosity and support.

Thank you to all the students of the MMS community. Your enthusiasm to learn and your spirit of fun makes every day a joy. My favourite part of the day is welcoming each of you to school in the morning.

**Daniel Thomas**

**Principal, Melbourne Montessori School**



# Foundation's Report



The Melbourne Montessori School Foundation was established in 2014 to offer a long term and strategic approach to fundraising, and to foster community commitment and financial support to preserve, improve and develop the opportunities, property and facilities of our school.

By connecting with current families, staff, alumni, parents and friends of MMS, the Foundation drives fundraising initiatives and capital raising in three areas:

- the Building Fund supports new buildings and facilities, and the preservation and maintenance of existing facilities.
- the Scholarship Fund provides means-tested scholarships to enable students to attend the school or remain at the school; and
- the Library Fund provides materials and resources for the school's libraries.

In 2023, through the generosity of our school community, the Gift Giving 2023 Appeal exceeded our goal and raised \$30,021. Donations received this financial year were \$28,072, with additional pledges for FY24.

This campaign supports MMS as it designs and plans the transformation of the original church building at Brighton into a new learning and performing arts precinct. The Foundation is enormously thankful to families for supporting this exciting initiative.

This year the Foundation secured \$23,965 in philanthropic and government grants including a Landcare Australia grant for the Indigenous Horticulture Project at Brighton Campus, a grant to enable our Learning Differences Unit at Caulfield Campus to purchase materials and equipment, and sporting grants for equipment and programs at both campuses. We also opened the new playground with funding from the Victorian Schools Building Authority, secured by the Foundation in 2022.



The MMS Board delegated to the MMS Foundation Board to oversee the MMS Scholarship Fund. We are committed to providing opportunities for students who would otherwise be unable to access an independent Montessori education. The Foundation is delighted to award eight scholarships worth \$42,000 for the 2024 school year.

In 2023, the Voluntary Building Fund Levy raised \$106,535. Thank you to everyone who supported this tax-deductible levy that supports loan repayments on the Brighton Campus and building maintenance.

Each year, the MMS Foundation awards a grant to the school. In 2023, \$2,500 was awarded to the MMS Building Fund for the Caulfield Library.

The Foundation's achievements are due to a committed Board of current and alumni parents who believe in our extraordinary school and the opportunities it brings our children and future generations.

Founding Board Chair, LJ Ryan, retired after 10 remarkable years at the helm and is now Deputy Chair. We are enormously grateful to LJ for taking the Foundation from a concept to becoming the MMS cornerstone it is today.

Thank you also to our other Directors: Hali Halphin, Sarah Turkopp, Sascha McGregor and Julian Issacs - these extraordinary alumni and current parents, tirelessly support the MMS Foundation and contribute to our success.

## Melissa Schraner

Chair, Melbourne Montessori School Foundation

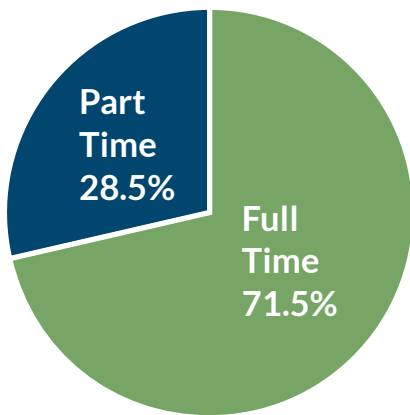
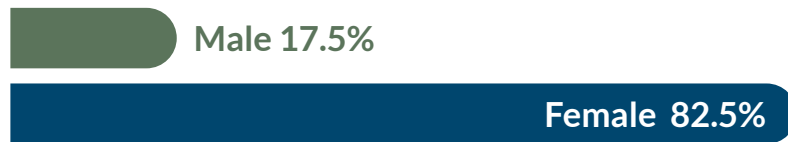


# Staff

The staff at our school are vital to its growth, professionalism and success. Each member of the MMS team is committed to supporting every child as they develop, learn and explore.

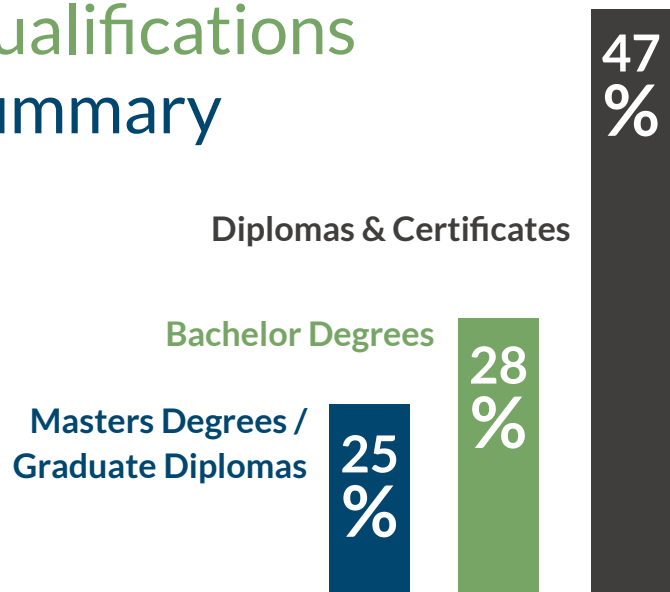
At the end of December 2023, the school had 63 staff: 52 female and 11 male members. 45 of those members were full-time and 18 were part-time.

## 2023 Staff Members



## Full Time vs. Part Time

## Qualifications Summary







# Professional Development and Compliance Training

Melbourne Montessori School actively encourages all staff to engage in ongoing learning as part of a learning community. Illustrating this, professional and personal learning opportunities are provided through school-based, online and external programs.

Compliance training is essential for risk management and to meet the responsibilities of the school to our staff in providing the skills and knowledge necessary for duty of care and OH&S.

During 2023, courses, workshops and briefings were held that covered:

Level 1 and 2 First Aid training

Diabetes education

Asthma training

Mandatory reporting compliance

Montessori conferences

CPR updates

Anaphylaxis training

Emergency control and warden training

IB courses and conferences

Child safety and wellbeing



# Students

Throughout the year we closely monitored our students, including their attendance, NAPLAN results, the outcomes of our graduates and the pathways they took after leaving MMS.

Here is a snapshot of what our students achieved...

## Attendance

Student attendance is recorded online twice daily through the school's database. Teachers and administration staff monitor student absences and parents are informed of absences when appropriate.

**2023 85.10%**

**2022 82.36%**

Overall, in 2023, average attendance was 85.10%, compared to 82.36% in 2022.

## 2023

## NAPLAN Results

In 2023, all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 completed the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy.

Our student results were:

	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Year 3	456	461	459	462	453
Year 5	541	540	523	542	531
Year 7	539	553	553	542	518
Year 9	605	605	599	620	621

Source: MySchool Website

## Graduate Outcomes

We are so proud of what our 2023 graduates achieved, with 100% passing the IB.

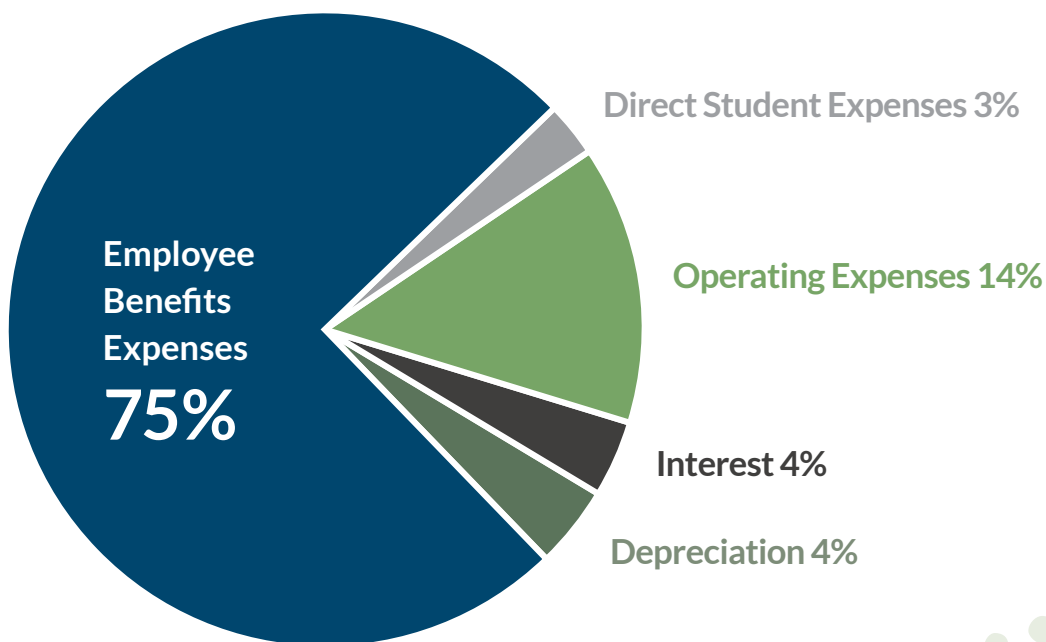
# Finance Report

These charts are a summary of Melbourne Montessori School's income and expenses for 2023.

## MMS Income



## MMS Expenses





Melbourne  
Montessori  
School

Inspiring our children  
to create a better world  
with their *own* two hands

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