

Sophia Mundi Steiner School

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



SOPHIA MUNDI
Steiner Education and IB World School



Sophia Mundi Board of Directors' Report

2023 was a year of mixed experiences, characterised by grief, loss, change, and new beginnings. We want to acknowledge that it was a very challenging year. Despite the challenges, our staff, parents, and students have shown resilience and compassion, coming together to support each other, enabling us to recover and regroup. We are extremely grateful to the teachers and staff for their tireless efforts in maintaining a rich and nurturing learning environment for all our students.

We started the school year by welcoming our new Principal, Matthew Cunnane. He has orchestrated the school's operations, and implemented several fundamental initiatives. We also finalised our Strategic Plan, which sets goals for Sophia Mundi for the next four years. We look forward to implementing and reviewing this plan over the next few years.

We also initiated a Marketing campaign and redeveloped our website, which have already achieved promising results, with increased enrolments for the years to come.

We welcomed two new Board members: Inger Boerema and Ilja Battley, who have drive and

passion to support and govern our wonderful school. Past and current directors provide(d) significant time and effort in a voluntary capacity. Their continued efforts are valued contributions to the strategic direction, governance and leadership of the school. Together we continue working alongside our school's amazing staff and community.

The Board is committed to improving governance and building our capacity. Governance training provided by Independent Schools Victoria lead us to review and update policies, and to also engage a consulting firm to assess the school's financial position and performance. The results of this engagement recommended that significant changes need to be made in the short term to ensure the school achieves financial viability. These changes will be implemented in 2024 and 2025.

Let us take a moment to reflect on Sophia Mundi's founding moments, nearly 40 years ago. The school was established by several inner-city parents who wanted Steiner education for their children. The school started as a playgroup and slowly and steadily, with dedication from the community, became a P-12 Steiner Education and IB World School.

Since its early days, Sophia Mundi has faced many challenges. Our past community members and many of you would have witnessed some of these. Yet the community grows and strengthens through difficult times and it is wonderful to see the warmth and connections that form as we support each other.

Our school, which was once a dream of a few parents, has now been serving our community for nearly 40 years. As we move ahead, we will build on the successes of the past and continue to envision and work together to create a positive and inclusive learning environment for all students.

We look forward to your ongoing support and collaboration as we strive to provide the best possible educational experience for our children. We are grateful for the dedication and passion of our staff, parents, and students and are confident that our collective efforts will enable Sophia Mundi to thrive in the years to come.

On behalf of the Board -
Fereshteh Zamani

**CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
SOPHIA MUNDI STEINER SCHOOL**

*2023 Board of Directors - Fereshteh Zamani
Ilja Battley, Inger Boerema, Cheryl Nekuapil.*

Principal's Report 2023

For many of us in our school community, 2023 gave us more than our share of heartache and distress. We lost friends, colleagues, and family. Throughout this period our community has shown resilience, strength, and a deep caring for one another. I continue to be encouraged and strengthened by everyone's effort to support each other in our small school.

As a school, 2023 was a year of resetting goals, values and priorities. Building on the work that was undertaken by the Leadership Team in the previous years, we began a process of renewal. A wide review of policy and procedures was undertaken by the Management team. Much of this is still being realised in 2024. This work has been essential in improving the Teaching and Learning at Sophia Mundi. Working with the College, the school revitalised its values and this assisted the Management team and the board to create a new 5-year strategic plan for the school and commence a community-wide

process of revisioning the school through a new Masterplan.

On the teaching and learning front, the Primary faculty began the hard work of resetting and researching new literacy standards for the primary school. This has led to a new literacy program in the lower years which is one of the best I have seen. Our teachers have designed and are now working with best practice models in literacy and delivering it in a way that is completely in line with the principles and philosophy of Steiner Education. Early results indicate substantial improvements in learning too. The teaching staff are to be congratulated for their amazing work.

The Secondary school continued to work on their quality assessment frameworks and embedding consistent teaching and learning strategies through differentiated practice through the year levels. This led to a review of the teaching practices which culminated in the redesign of secondary teaching teams with teachers focused on

fewer students and a consistent team around the learner. These teams work in three-year cycles 7-9 and 10-12.

An important element within the secondary has been the inclusion of student voice in the management of the school. In addition to Sophia Mundi's wonderful student led Justice Collective, a Student Representative Council has been reinstated. This group met regularly with Management to identify issues and students concerns.

These and other endeavours have led to a redesign of how we operate as a school including; separating the break times for Primary and Secondary, implementing a study room for the Senior Secondary, having the library open during break times and the creation of a wellbeing space for students.

2023 was not an easy year, however it has produced very promising new growth.

Matthew Cunnane

2023 SCHOOL PRINCIPAL





Student Learning

Historically, many parents at Sophia Mundi Steiner School choose not to participate in NAPLAN testing. Sophia Mundi provides a rich, wholesome, and inclusive education that does not focus directly on teaching to NAPLAN.

In 2023, an average of 35% of students participated in NAPLAN from across the four year levels. Given the low numbers of NAPLAN participation, the results only reflect the performance of a small number of students. This means that our data is insufficient to draw conclusive comparative results either from class to class or from year to year.

While we do analyse the individual students' NAPLAN results, as part of our ongoing assessment processes at Sophia Mundi, we give more attention to our internal Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) results, for which participation rates are higher and results more accurate.

Emma Gillette

**INCLUSION & WELLBEING
COORDINATOR**

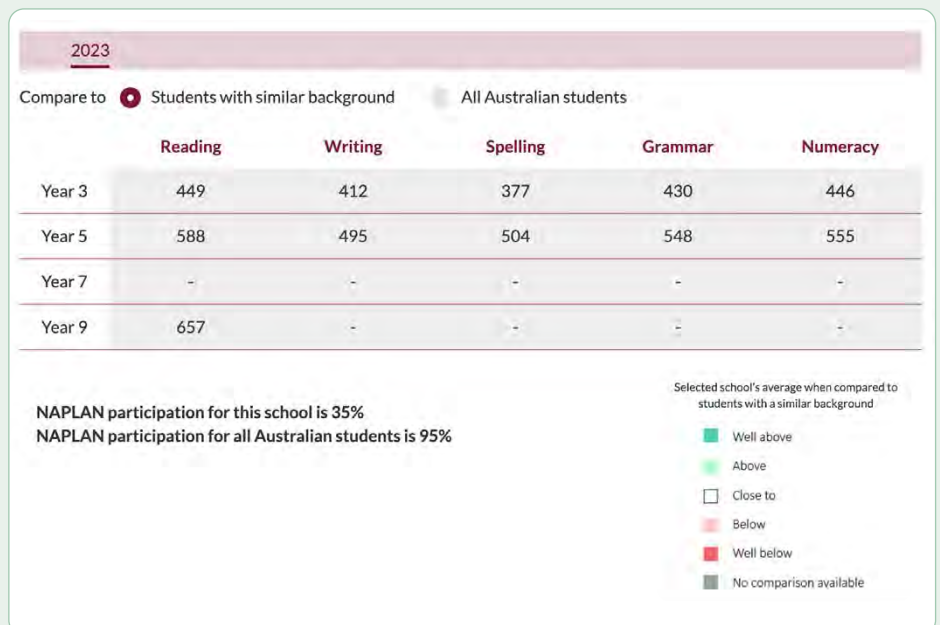
Attendance Management

Primary attendance rolls are marked twice a day, morning and afternoon. Secondary attendance rolls are marked every lesson. Any unexplained absences are followed up with parents or guardians through the school's management system - Compass Education.

Any prolonged absences are required to be supported by satisfactory evidence.

Students with ongoing low attendance are also monitored and if required appropriate authorities are notified.

Class 1	83.9
Class 2	88.8
Class 3	90.4
Class 4	92.2
Class 5	83.1
Class 6	88.6
Class 7	84.8
Class 8	88.0
Class 9	74.5
Class 10	87.1
<i>Average %</i>	<i>86.14</i>



Graduating Class of 2023

The students of our graduating class of 2023 are to be congratulated on their success in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP). The class of 2023 is the eleventh cohort to graduate from Sophia Mundi through the Diploma Programme pathway. The two-year IB Diploma Programme curriculum encompasses the study of six subjects together with the core components of CAS (Creativity, Activity and Service), TOK (Theory of Knowledge) and the Extended Essay (a 4000-word academic research-based essay). The challenging and rigorous Diploma Programme aims to educate the whole being and develop internationally-minded people who are principled, open-minded, caring, curious, balanced, and reflective. Throughout the programme students strive to become knowledgeable, inquirers, communicators, and risk-takers, attributes reflected in the IB Learner Profile.

The Class of 2023 consisted of six students, three of whom were successfully awarded an IB Diploma in November 2023. One class member completed subjects as courses rather than the whole diploma. Their results are not included in the statistics for the year group. Of the six enrolled students, two students joined the school in Prep. Of the graduating students, 83% had been at Sophia since Year 9, with 1 student enrolling in Year 10.

Scores earned in the 2023 session were 39 (ATAR 92.15), 29 (ATAR 80.1) and 27 (ATAR 75.55). The average total score of those who completed the Diploma was 31.6, above the world average IB Diploma Programme score of 29.06 for the November 2023 session. The two students not awarded the full Diploma achieved a score of 23 (ATAR 63.60) and 21 (ATAR 57.25).

All students have been accepted into a tertiary institution of their choice. They will study

degrees in Bachelor of Arts (University of Melbourne), Bachelor of Outdoor and Sustainability Education (La Trobe), Bachelor of Design: Architecture (University of Melbourne), Bachelor of Creative Arts: Theatre (Deakin) and a Bachelor of Nursing (La Trobe). One candidate has deferred and chosen to have a gap year before commencing their studies. We are excited to see how each student chooses to use their unique talents and achievements to benefit local and global communities in the years to come.

Kirsten Chapman
IBDP COORDINATOR

Leia Wren
STUDENT CAREERS COORDINATOR



Professional Development Distribution

Staff Professional Development costs in 2023 amounted to \$24,540:

\$20,964 for General Professional Development (All staff), plus

\$3,576 for International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) sessions.

Staff Retention

All Teachers 57.1%
 Primary Teachers 60%
 Secondary Teachers 54.5%

Staff Attendance

There was an attendance rate of 97.55% for both General and Teaching Staff during 2023.

In addition, some staff took Annual Leave and Long Service Leave, which is not reflected in the above figure.

Teaching Staff Qualifications

Doctorate	4
Master of Education or Teaching	11
Masters (other)	6
Steiner Education Qualification	14
Graduate Diploma of Education and/or Teaching	19
Bachelor Degrees (other)	37
Diplomas (other)	2
Certificates (including IB)	40

School Satisfaction Surveys

Each year the school is required to survey students, parents and staff on levels of satisfaction and school performance. This is facilitated by Independent Schools Victoria (ISV). Questions are assessed on a scale of 0-10, with 10 being complete agreement with the statement. The top three responses for each survey group are presented below.

Student Satisfaction Survey 2023

Students from different backgrounds and cultures are treated fairly	8.13
I am taught to respect individual differences	8.00
Other students include me in their activities	7.81

Parent Satisfaction Survey 2023

Students from different backgrounds and cultures are treated equally at this school	8.90
This school teaches children about different cultures	8.65
Teachers in this school know and care about my child	8.29

Staff Satisfaction Survey 2023

Teachers in this school know and care about students	9.90
Staff at this school respect the students	9.55
Students have positive relationships with staff	9.19

Financial Report 2023

The 2023 financial year showed mixed results for the school. Whilst gross revenue was up approximately \$700K on the previous year, operating costs also increased by about the same amount. Partly due to an increase in salaries reflecting award rises, superannuation increases and staffing changes, the school also increased spending on long overdue facility maintenance and refurbishments. Unfortunately, non-operating costs increased significantly with the school reporting a year end book loss

of \$600K. This reflected a year end audit decision to significantly increase the school's financial provision for doubtful debts. Despite a renewed focus on debtor collections there remained a significant historical balance outstanding that needed to be provided for. Despite the book loss the school completed the year with a positive cash balance.

As per the income/expense charts, government funding and tuition fees comprise approximately 48% and 47% of revenue respectively;

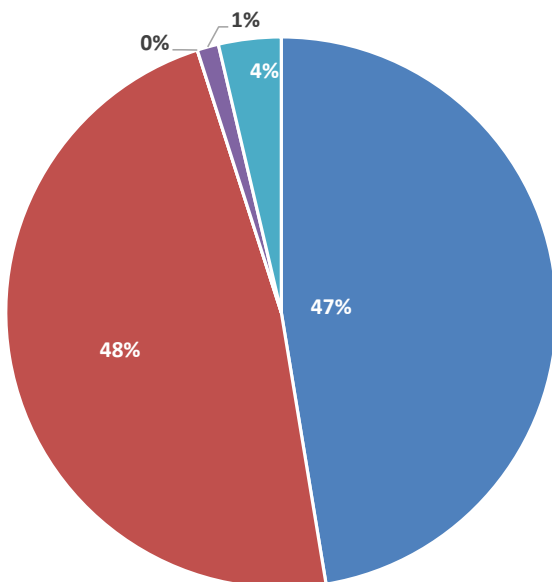
salaries were approximately 69% of expenditure, which is within industry averages.

Additional financial information is available in the school's audited financial accounts on our website and the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) website.

Glenn Robertson
FINANCE OFFICER

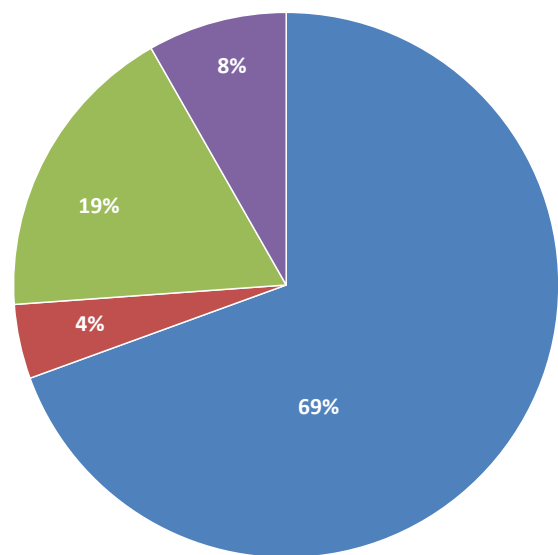
Income Sources expressed as percentages

INCOME SOURCES	2023
● Tuition Fees & Levies	47%
● Government Income	48%
● Government Capital Grants	0%
● Donations (including Building Fund)	1%
● Other Income	4%
	100%



Expense Categories expressed as percentages

EXPENSE CATEGORIES	2023
● Employment (Salaries)	69%
● Educational Expenditures	4%
● Operational & Financial Expenditures	19%
● Occupancy (inc Depreciation)	8%
	100%





Our School

Our Foundation

Established in 1985 by dedicated parents seeking a Steiner education, Sophia Mundi stands as a welcoming and united community, home to around 200 students. Our school's history is intertwined with the historic St Mary's building, which dates back to 1911. In 2006 we undertook the thoughtful renovation of the St Mary's building to house Classes 1-6. This development phase included the enhancement of our grounds with play areas and refurbished tennis courts, reflecting our commitment to creating a stimulating and engaging learning environment. The expansion continued in 2012 with the addition of two science laboratories in the Mercator Building Annex.

Our commitment to growth and excellence continues as we create

a masterplan for our school to further enhance our facilities and deepen our engagement with the community. At Sophia Mundi, we are devoted to nurturing an environment where students thrive academically, emotionally and socially. We warmly invite you to join our unique educational community, where your child's holistic development is our foremost commitment, in a setting that beautifully merges heritage, the natural serenity of Birrarung and urban vibrancy.

The Wurundjeri people (Woi Wurrung language group) are the Traditional Owners of the land Sophia Mundi is located on. The nearby junction of the Merri Merri (Merri Creek) and Birrarung (Yarra River) at Dights Falls continues to be an important meeting place for the Central Victorian Peoples, also known as the Kulin Nation.

Meeting the Future

Sophia Mundi provides a balanced and enriching education that fosters the whole child's growth. Our educational approach inspires lifelong learning, creativity and critical thinking. We actively support our students to cultivate qualities of compassion and responsibility. We aim to truly equip young people for their engagement with the world and the challenges of this century, by fostering an attitude of learning with purpose and joy.

We strive to support a consciously created community in which the whole community benefit in their personal journeys as a result of engaging with our unique school.

Our Mission:

Our mission is to educate and enable individuals to become socially responsible contributors to the ongoing well-being of the community and the world.

Our Vision:

We strive to create a school that truly equips young people for their engagement with the world and the challenges of this century, by fostering an attitude of learning with purpose and joy.

Our Values:

Our core values include: truth, courage, moral and ethical responsibility and growth.



SOPHIA MUNDI Limited

St Marys, Abbotsford Convent

1 St Heliers Street, Abbotsford Victoria 3067 Australia

T 03 9419 9229 E reception@sophiamundi.vic.edu.au

www.sophiamundi.vic.edu.au

A.B.N. 44 006 411 016



June 2024