



# Headland Montessori ELC - Annual Report – 2017

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Principle: Margaret Thwaites

Board Chair/Company Director: Yan Wu

## 1. Message from Key School Bodies

### 1.1 Message from the Principal

2017 was certainly an adventure. This was our first year of extending our program to include kindergarten children. There were 5 children enrolled and our community worked together to ensure our students had access to the best teaching and learning facilities we could provide.

These five children were not only completing their third year in the Montessori 3-6 classroom but all belonged to families who have been a part of Headland Montessori ELC since it opened five years ago. As such these children have known each other since they were infants.

Three of the children have continued with Montessori education and the other two are at local state schools and we have heard that they are all continuing to progress well in their new school settings.

It was my privilege to take up the role of principal in April 2017 and I would like to thank the previous principal, Kamila Jendykiewicz, Monique Burton (Director of Montessori Education) and the Headland Board for all the hours of work they have put in to make this year possible.

During the year the Kindergarten children participated in projects to support and promote sustainability and connections with our local community. As part of our focus on sustainability our Kindergarten children organized a clothes swap for all the families of the service. This was enthusiastically supported by our families and after most children had gone home with new items of clothing we still had a number of bags of clothing remaining which were donated to the Royal Far West. The children caught a bus to Manly in order to deliver the clothes and were then very kindly shown around the school at the Royal Far West.

Later in the year we continued our support of the Royal Far West by collecting soft toys for the children at Christmas. It has been a wonderful experience for the children to be able to support this local charity so practically.

Sustainability was further promoted this year by the establishment of our own native beehive. A member of the local bee keepers association became a regular visitor as he assisted us with the building of the hive box, teaching all of us about the intriguing life of bees and then treating us to a hive splitting from which we established our hive.

Our students also participated in several excursions to extend and consolidate their classroom learning. They visited:

- Manly Art Gallery
- Royal Botanical gardens
- bushwalks

## 1.2 Message from the Board

Headland Montessori started as a Long Day Care Centre and it is now an NSW Independent School. It has been our mission to serve the needs of those working families that is looking for an authentic Montessori Education for their children. Our unique offering of the Kindergarten year allows our students to complete their Stage 1 (3-6 years) Montessori program, giving them the choice of going on to a Stage 2 (6-9 years) program in a Montessori school, or Year 1 in a non-Montessori school.

It has taken a few years to get the school up and running, we had to create new policies and procedures, make changes to our classrooms and facilities, including additional Boys and Girls toilets.

We are now seen genuine support from our communities and the board will continue to work with our Principal to make provisions that improve our school going forward and ensure financial viability.

## 2. School Contextual Information

Headland Montessori ELC is beautifully located in the North Head Harbour Trust Sanctuary on the doorstep of the Sydney Harbour National Park.

Established in 2013 we offer Montessori education and care for children aged 6 weeks to 6 years in a long day care setting. The introduction of the Kindergarten program has meant that we can offer the full Montessori program for 0-6 year olds. Kindergarten class runs within the context of the 3-6 classroom and is both the third year of this program and the first year of school. Children completing Kindergarten program can then continue with Montessori education in a 6-9 class or start in Year 1 at the school of choice.

Our location allows us to frequently go for bushwalks and develop an appreciation of our natural environment.

We are also in walking distance to Manly and during the year the Kindergarten children planned an outing to the Manly Art Gallery to see and exhibition that included art works by local children.

## **Why Multi-Age?**

One of the main principles of a Montessori preschool classroom consists of children in a mixed age group ranging from 3-6 years old. The Montessori model supports children helping each other and embodies an environment of peaceful peer teaching and learning. The children are responsible for their community and this encourages respect amongst the children. A Montessori trained teacher is taught to follow the individual needs of each child in his/her classroom.

## **KLA Integrated Learning**

Headland Montessori uses an integrated learning approach. This means that the topic area chosen for the term incorporates all the Board of Studies NSW Curriculum Key Learning Areas. Students study each topic in depth and all together.

We have found that this approach stimulates the learning environment and encourages students to develop a natural love for learning. Lessons flow from one-to-another and students receive a comprehensive education on each topic.

Our approach also offers the flexibility to cater for the interests of the children.

The children also participate in a French immersion program and a sport program run by Sports Fundamentals twice a week.

## **3. Student Outcomes in Standardised Testing: NAPLAN**

Since we only run a Kindergarten program we do not participate in the NAPLAN.

## **4. Professional Learning and Teacher Standards**

### **4.1 Teacher Qualifications and Workforce Composition**

The Kindergarten children were a part of a classroom with 23 children aged 3-6. This room was staffed by an Early Childhood Teacher and a Montessori teacher.

### **4.2 Professional Learning Undertaken**

Throughout the year both teachers participated in Child Protection Training and a workshop on Reflective Practices.

## **5. Characteristic of Student Body**

The Kindergarten class consisted of five children who were not only completing their third year in the Montessori 3-6 classroom but all belonged to families who have

been a part of Headland Montessori ELC since it opened five years ago. As such these children have known each other since they were infants.

#### 5.1 Student Attendance Rate 2017

The annual Student Attendance Rate for the whole school was around 90% Attendance rates for each school year cannot be published due to small student numbers and confidentiality.

#### 5.2 Management of Non-attendance

A register of daily attendance and absences of individual students was kept and recorded digitally.

All parents(s)/ guardian(s) are expected to notify the Teacher of their child's absences with a phone call or email. The Teacher will follow-up any unexplained absences with a phone call or text to the student's parents(s)/ guardian(s). Any unsatisfactory attendance information will be transferred to the student's files.

The School will maintain a roll of daily attendance (taken by the Teacher) that includes the following information for each student:

Daily attendance and absences

Reasons for absences with appropriate documentation

The register of enrolment will be available for a minimum of five years and then archived thereafter for three years. The Roll of Daily Attendance will be retained for seven years after the last entry is made. Student records will be kept for six years after the student has turned 18 years of age.

#### Application for Exemption of School Attendance

Our School understands that there may be situations where parents(s)/ guardian(s) wish to take their children out of the school environment for more than two days due to medical or extracurricular activities.

Parents(s)/ guardian(s) are requested to discuss the specific circumstances with the Principal and complete an Application for Exemption from Attendance at School Form as soon as possible.

If agreed to, the Principal will accept, sign and file the application in the Attendance File. The Head Teacher will then complete the Certificate for Exemption from Enrolment at School Form, making a copy and giving the original to the parents/guardians. An 'M' (for exemption) will be recorded on the daily attendance register for the child on these days.

A Certificate of Exemption cannot be given for a holiday. Families are encouraged to holiday or travel during school vacations; however, if travel occurs during the school term the following codes will apply:

Absences will be recorded as 'L' (leave) if the Head Teacher accepts the reason for absence.

Absences will be recorded as 'A' (absent) if deemed unjustified by the Head Teacher.

All holidays and travel taken outside school holidays will require a written letter from the child's parent(s)/guardian(s). These will be filed in the School's attendance file.

If the period of absence is in excess of 50 days, the student may be eligible to enrol in Distance Education.

### 5.3 Enrolment Procedures

Enrolments are processed in order of receipt and careful consideration is given to each applicant based on his or her individual needs and the ongoing needs of the current student body. It is expected that the child will have already completed the first two years of the Montessori 3-6 program. Continued enrolment is also based on these requirements.

Our enrolment procedures are outlined in our Enrolment Policy below:

### 5.4 Enrolment Policy

It is not assumed that all children finishing the pre-school program will automatically be accepted into the kindergarten year.

Kindergarten places are only available for existing Headland students

- Parent(s)/guardians of the student accepted in the Kindergarten Year will be required to complete a re-enrolment form for the Kindergarten Year.
- The Principal will maintain a register of enrolments electronically:
- the name and contact telephone number of parent(s)/guardian(s)
  - a. date of enrolment and, where appropriate, the date of leaving the school and the student's destination
  - b. for students older than six (6) years, previous school or pre-enrolment situation
  - c. where the destination of a student below seventeen (17) years of age is unknown, evidence that a NSW Department of Education officer with home school liaison responsibilities has been notified of the student's full name, date of birth, last known address, last date of attendance, parents' names and contact details, an indication of possible destination, other information that may assist officers to locate the student,

## 6. School Policies

Headland Montessori ELC keeps full copies of all our policies (listed below) on file in the School's Reception and online in our school CRM System using third party software provider Childcarers. All our policies are updated to meet legislative requirements.

## Headland Montessori ELC Policies

- Administration of Medication Policy
- Bush Fire Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Death of a Child Policy
- Discipline Policy and Procedures
- Educator and Management Policy
- Emergency Management and Evacuation
- Excursion Policy
- Governance Policy
- Governance - Conflict of Interest Policy
- Governance - Educational and Financial Reporting
- Governance - External Independent Attestation Audit of Annual Financial Statements Policy
- Governance - Related Party Transactions Policy
- Governance - Responsible Person Policy
- Governance - Responsible Person Induction and Withdrawal Policy
  - Induction Process for New RP Template
  - Induction Process for New RP (NS & Principal)
  - Withdraw Process for RP
- Grievance Guideline Policy and Procedure
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Induction Process for New Responsible Person
- Kindergarten Enrolment and attendance policy procedure
  - Kindergarten Re-enrolment Form
  - Notification of Leaving Form
  - Student Destination Unknown Notification Form
- Lockdown Policy
- Medical Condition Policy
- Notification to NESAs Policy
- Record Keeping and Retention Policy
- Safe and Supportive Environment
- Staffing Arrangements Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy

### 6.1 Overview of Anti-bullying Policy

We believe that every person should be valued equally thus we should care equally for all parties involved in a situation involving bullying. This policy aims to assist in the promotion of a safe school environment by reducing the occurrence of bullying and reconciling the parties involved.

### 6.2 Overview of Child Protection Policy

This Policy document is provided and made available to staff, including employees, contractors and relevant voluntary workers during their employment or engagement with the School to ensure a clear understanding of their duties and obligations under the key items of child protection legislation in NSW.

This Policy outlines the key concepts and definitions under the relevant legislation including mandatory reporters, reportable conduct, and risk management. It also sets out expected standards of behaviour in relation to employees, contractors, the Headland Montessori Board, and relevant voluntary workers, and their relationships with students.

### 6.3 Overview of Pastoral Care Policy

Individual children have a range of personal and academic needs to be met whilst at Headland Montessori ELC. In meeting these needs the School will develop individual learning programs for each child within the wider school curriculum.

It is recognised that children may have physical or medical problems that may impair their ability to learn and influence their social interactions. All efforts will be made for such children to feel relaxed and confident while at school.

This policy aims to outline the processes used to ensure the welfare and well-being of all children at Headland Montessori ELC.

### 6.4 Overview of Positive Guidance and Behaviour Management Policy

Our overall objective is to provide a happy, caring and nurturing environment in which all feel valued and trusted, showing respect and concern for one another. Students at Headland Montessori ELC are learning self-control and self-discipline.

Headland Montessori ELC will not tolerate any action that lessens an individual's right to feel safe and will take the necessary actions, as outlined in our policies, to stop such behaviour. Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment are unacceptable behaviours

### 6.5 Overview of Grievance and Complaint Policy

This policy provides a step by step process for resolving complaints or grievances, to ensure that they are dealt with in a confidential, timely and appropriate manner. It is our School's aim to ensure all matters are resolved to the satisfaction of the individual and the School community as a whole.

## 7. School Determined Improvement Targets

### 7.1 - 2018 (current year)

To improve the quality of our communication and advertising of the Kindergarten program for year 2019 to prospective parents. We will make relevant information available online and promote the Montessori program via promotional video.



To address the issues from raised from 2017 and update our policies and procedures to effectively improve quality in Educational outcome and satisfaction to families.

To improve the quality of our outdoor educational environment.

7.2 - 2019 (next year)

To improve our method of communication with parents. Allowing parents to understand Montessori philosophy and how its implemented within our curriculum.

To increase enrolments from 2018 and community awareness of our Kindergarten Program.

Improvement areas

- Management of expectations from Parents and School Educational Outcome and Philosophies.
- Software/support for teachers to effectively communicate with Parents on Children's progress at school.
- Building awareness of our program and curriculum with parents.
- Marketing of our Kindergarten program and Montessori Education.

## 8. Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Grievance; complaints, and anti-bullying policies are read and adhered to by all members of the School board and staff. All parents are encouraged to read the policies and it is readily available through our Childcares CRM system.

A school vegetable garden that is regularly maintained by students to help preserve the natural environment and to encourage healthy eating/cooking. The school also uses a compost and worm farm to help teach the children the importance of sustainability.

Students actively recycle (and reuse where possible) their rubbish and are involved in activities that promote saving water and using minimal electricity.

Children learn respect and responsibility through the older children teaching the younger children important literacy skills, an important aspect of our mixed age group environment.

Students participate in a range of excursions and sporting activities each term, to a variety of locations, where appropriate behaviours are modelled, expected and taught.

Students participate activities that enhance multi-cultural appreciation.



All students participate in activities that help to maintain a healthy and clean school environment, working together as a team.

## 9. Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

2017 was our first year in this new school. Overall, we had positive responses from parents, students and teachers. All our parents support the delivery of Montessori Education in the Kindergarten year.

## 10. Financial Information



