



# Headland Montessori ELC - Annual Report – 2019

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Principal: Margaret Thwaites

Board Chair/Company Director: Yan Wu

## 1. Message from Key School Bodies

### 1.1 Message from the Principal

2019 has been a year of with a big focus on our local and natural environments. It was our second year of the Kindergarten program and wonderful to have five children enrolled as we continued to consolidate this third year of the Montessori 3-6 program while also providing the first year of school.

There were five children enrolled in the Kindergarten program and four of whom were also completing their third year in the Montessori 3-6 environment. It was particularly special for us that these four children had been at Headland Montessori since their toddler years and were now benefitting from participating in the full 0-6 Montessori educational curriculum. These children and their families had friendships that extend 4 years and we hope will continue well into the future.

Three of the graduating children will continue with Montessori education and now attend Farmhouse Montessori School. The other two children are now attending Manly Village School.

Throughout the year we sought to integrate our fabulous setting at North Head into the curriculum as much as possible. For Anzac Day the children visited the North Head Remembrance Walk and the children were fascinated by all the names of the service men and women who are remembered by their names engraved in the pavers. This served give the children an understanding of the impact of war on the people of Australia. During Reconciliation Week the children sat at the lookout looking across the entrance to Sydney Harbour while they were read the book “Sorry Sorry” by Anne Kerr. Reading about the arrival of the First Fleet in this location was certainly provocative and served to enrich the children’s understanding of this time in Australian history.

A prescribed burn in the National Park nearby provided an interesting study of the way the Australian bush regenerates following fire and regular bushwalks always

provide opportunity for learning about our local native plants and animals. Learning to love and understand our natural environment is important for creating values of sustainability and appreciating First People perspectives.

During Harmony Week we were honoured with a visit from Aboriginal elder Roderick McLeod and his brother Jumma Jumma who spent the day with us sharing First People perspectives through stories, songs and the opportunity to handle a range of traditional items many of which continue to have practical usage today.

Throughout 2019 we walked throughout the Barracks Precinct to Farmhouse Montessori School each week to participate in shared reading sessions with the 6-9 year olds in their school library. These times promoted important literacy skills for both the readers and the listeners, and it should be noted that the younger children were not always the listeners.

Excursions beyond North Head included catching public transport to visit the Manly Art Gallery and a coach excursion to the Coastal Environment Centre in Narrabeen to deepen the children's understanding of our wonderful coastal environments.

We once again held a preloved teddy bear collection and delivered many boxes of teddies to the Royal Far West in Manly who gift the teddies to the children from remote and regional area participate in the stay-in program. Looking beyond our borders we also collected books to be distribute to schools in villages in the Philippines.

2019 was an important year to consolidate our Kindergarten program and to witness the Kindergarten children to flourish academically and socially, and grow in their appreciation of local environment, history and citizenship. I would like to thank the teachers for so capably and conscientiously developing and delivering the Kindergarten curriculum and to the families for their friendship and support over the years.

## 1.2 Message from the Board

Since establishing the school (Year K) in 2017, we have fulfilled our mission to provide a 3 year Cycle 1 Montessori program in Headland Montessori ELC for children aged 3 to 6 years. It was great to see the first graduates of our program going on to our local Montessori feeder School to attend the Cycle 2 (6-9 years) program. We are now aiming to make further initiatives and investments to promote our program and work on community engagement to build greater awareness on the benefits of attending our school.

## 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 mean 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 an 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 language 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 workshops on Reflective Practices and Special Needs.

## 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. Four of the children had previously attended the Headland Montessori ELC and 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.

## 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 - 2019 (current year)

To improve the quality of our communication and advertising of the Kindergarten program making greater use of social media platforms for year 2020 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.

#### 7.2 - 2020 (next year)

To provide at least 3 parent education evenings to promote a greater understanding of the Montessori philosophy and how its implemented within our curriculum.

To increase enrolments and community awareness of our Kindergarten Program.

Staff to join the BeYou (Beyond Blue) portal - for Professional Development in mental health and well-being.

Repair and upgrade of the play area shade sails and climbing equipment.

Sanding of the classroom floors.

Teacher to attend curriculum development workshops.

#### Improvement areas

- Building awareness of our program and curriculum with parents.
- Marketing of our Kindergarten program and Montessori Education.
- Maintenance targets – repair of play area shade sails and classroom floors to be sanded.
- Professional development for teacher
- Mental health

## 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.

The school vegetable garden 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.

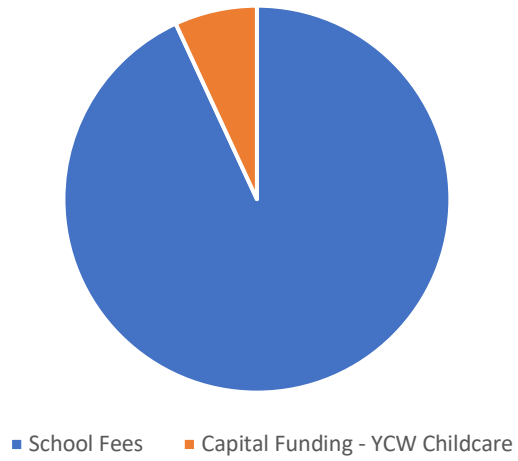
## 9. Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

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



School Income



School Expenses

