



28th June 2017

SOUTHERN MONTESSORI SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Special Edition: School Performance Information Report for 2016

As part of our funding agreement with the Australian Government, we are required to ensure that specific “School Performance Information” is made publicly available to the school community. This information has been provided to the school community in other forms such as the Bulletin, newsletters, throughout the year, the School Handbook, the Annual Report and at the AGM. What follows is a collated version of this information under the headings specified by the Australian Government. The information relates to the 2016 school year. If you have any questions regarding this information please direct them to Julie Flack.

1. Contextual Information

At Southern Montessori School, we aim to know your children well and to nurture a love of learning that will last a lifetime. Our strengths include our dedicated staff, a wonderful Board of Governors and a genuine sense of community amongst our member families. We are an independent, non-religious, low fee-paying organisation offering programs from Baby Steps (8 months), Toddlers and Preschool through to Primary School and Middle School Year 9. Class sizes are kept deliberately small. Our curriculum strengths include numeracy, literacy and environmental education. As the School grows, so does our range of extra-curricular activities offered to students in the areas of the arts, sport and recreation. In 2016 these included a free weekly Active After School Program, in Term 2 soccer, and Term 4 tee-ball. In 2016 Southern Montessori provided a challenging educational program that has Montessori principles at its core and is based on sound educational theory and practice. This is delivered through small, multi-aged cycles and fosters the development of independence, self-discipline and a lifelong love of learning. It promotes a culture of mutual respect, tolerance and encouragement to advance the diverse talents of each student. The School is registered with the Montessori Australia Foundation, the Montessori World Educational Institute and is a member of the AISSA.

2016 finished with a student base of 189 including 29 in our Reception Class. 7.9% of students were from a non-English speaking background, 1% from an indigenous background and 14.8% required additional support, including 5.8% with special needs.

The following information provides an example of activities undertaken during 2016 that added value to the educational experience at Southern Montessori School.

Curriculum Related Activities

Individualised Learning Programmes ICAS Competitions – Maths, English & Science NAPLAN Testing Years 3, 5, 7 & 9 Individual Music Tuition Student Run Assemblies Italian Performance – ‘Tasty Tunes’ NRM Youth Environment Leadership Program ‘Yelp’ workshops	Premier’s Reading Challenge Book Week – ‘Fair Dinkum’ Better Buddy Club Program Children’s Representative Council Life Education Van Café Corner – Middle School Occupations Project Creative Arts – ‘The Gruffalo’
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Excursions and Incursions

In 2016 students at various year levels went on a range of excursions and experienced a number of incursions. These included:

Receptions – National Railway Museum Festival’ Cycles 1 & 2 - Adelaide Zoo Cycle 1 – Hopgood Theatre – ‘Emily Loves to Bounce’ Cycle 3 – Guide Dogs SA Discovery Centre Cycle 3 – Botanic Gardens Whole School – Professor Flint’s Life on Earth Show Cycle 1 – visit from KidsMatter to improve children’s mental health & well being	Camp at Aldinga – Cycle 2 Camp at Victor Harbor – Cycle 3 Camp at Port Hughes – Cycle 4 Swimming Lessons - Rec–Year 4 Aquatics – Years 5 -9 SAPSASA Swimming Carnival SAPSASA Athletics Carnival Visit – Sophie Thomson (Gardening Aust) to present plants Visit – Jo Stamford from the Food Bank
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Co-curricular Activities

Southern Montessori School offers a range of co-curricular activities including:

Cricket & Soccer Competitions Tennis Coaching Pancake Day KESAB Clean Up Australia Day Casual Days (to support our World Vision child) Receptions – Pyjama Day for World Vision National Ride to School Day Cycle 4 & Years 5/6 Sports Day Children’s Representative Council Choir sang at the City of Onkaparinga Citizenship Ceremony	Year 6 Leadership Program Remembrance Day Assembly Biggest Morning Tea Combined Reception & Preschool Sports Day Active After School Sports Choir Group Glee Club Tournament of Minds Volunteer’s Morning Tea Bird Committee Amanda Rishworth’s Annual Winter Appeal
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Parent Involvement and Education

Parent Orientation Evenings School Bulletins & Notice Boards Student Orientation visits Preschool to school transitions Parent help with ‘Fruity Fridays’ and Soup & Pasta days Parent Inductions for Prospective Volunteers Bi-annual Reports to Parents Cycle 4 Food Tech Presentation Dinner for parents Cycle 4 Graduation Dinner for Year 9 School Survey sent to parents from the Board School Exit Surveys for parents ‘Parenting ideas’ articles	Montessori Information Booklets Communication Books Student Diaries Learning Conversations Interviews x twice a year Working Bee mornings Celebratory Assemblies Parent Volunteers to support Students Parent Information Evening – focus on Middle School Family Fun Night and Picnic at Karawatha Hall Scholastic Book Fair Cycle 1 Grandparents & Special Visitors Morning Tea
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2. Teacher Standards and Qualifications

A list of teachers and their academic qualifications is available in the *Parent Handbook* and is published annually in the *Annual Report*.

In addition to these formal qualifications, all staff undergo training in Child Safe Environment (Mandatory Notification), First Aid, Fire Safety Training and hold the necessary qualifications for Teacher Registration in South Australia. All teachers undertake a number of PD courses during the year and several teachers are undertaking Montessori studies.

3. Workforce Composition

Employed in our School full time for 2016 was the Principal and the Business Manager while the Assistant Principal was 0.8. 15 teachers worked the equivalent of 11.30 teachers, while 5 Classroom Assistants worked the equivalent of 2.73. There was 1 Specialist Support at 0.5, and 1 Maintenance Staff 0.32. The Administration staff was 6 with the equivalent of 1.97. This included 4 males and 24 females, none of whom were of indigenous extraction.

4. Student Attendance

The percentage figure for the average student attendance rate shows the proportion of days that each student, on average, attended school over the whole year. The larger the percentage, the less the number of days students are absent from school. In part, these figures reflect overseas and interstate travel by a number of our parents.

In 2016 the average student attendance rate was 92.24%.

Reception attendance was 93.20%

Year 1 attendance was 92.30%

Year 2 attendance was 92.59%

Year 3 attendance was 91.97%

Year 4 attendance was 90.15%

Year 5 attendance was 93.39%

Year 6 attendance was 91.66%

Year 7 attendance was 92.84%

Year 8 attendance was 91.97%

Year 9 attendance was 92.36%

Student absences are recorded for each class each day. When the school has not been informed of a student's absence, the parents are phoned that morning to confirm that they are aware that their child is not at school.

5. Student Outcomes

Each year, all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are required to sit Australia wide NAPLAN tests in reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation and numeracy to establish the proportion of students achieving national benchmarks.

Data for 19 x Year 3 (1 absent), 20 x Year 5 (1 was withdrawn), 11 x Year 7 (1 was withdrawn) and 10 x Year 9 (1 was absent) students for 2016 are shown in the table below:

Percentage of Students at or above the National Minimum Standard

	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016
Year 3	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Year 5	100%	100%	100%	100%	95%
Year 7	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Year 9	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

6. Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

Parent Satisfaction

Feedback from parents occurs through a number of sources, some formal and some informal. It includes responses to surveys, contributions to focus groups, comments through the School Board and various co-curricular parent support groups, and specific feedback to teachers and the Principal.

Such feedback is always welcome. The overwhelming message in this feedback is positive, supportive and appreciative. It manifests itself in 'word of mouth' accolades from our parents, NAPLAN results and our website, continued to result in interest in our Centre for the 2016 year, as we had not invested in advertising once again.

Of course, concerns are also expressed and this provides the school with the opportunity to enquire further and to address needs as they arise. This forms part of our cycle of Continuous Improvement.

With the advent of 'apps', later in the year the Centre invested in the 'School Star' app for parents to receive notices and the Bulletin through their phones. This initiative was well received with over half the Community signing up.

During 2016 positive parent feedback was received about:

- Information sessions for parents, focused on ongoing middle school planning
- Communications about success and achievements of students and staff, and the recognition given to individual contributions
- Student's positive mental health and wellbeing
- Transition to School
- Support given by the Board of Governors to the Middle School with a Cycle 4 class (Years 7-9) on the site of Karawatha Hall, 12 Baden Terrace, O'Sullivan Beach and the ongoing search for a permanent middle school site.
- The increasing interest in the Montessori methodology offered by the school with interest gleaned from the 'Welcome to Babies' initiative from Amanda Rishworth MP, for an opportunity to connect with the surrounding families.
- The positive perception about the quality of students from the school
- The school as a desirable place to work
- Professionalism of staff
- Literacy, Numeracy and Computer programs
- Involvement in programs run by ASMS and Marcellin Technical College
- Children's involvement in co-curricular activities e.g. sport, music, choir and SAPSASA
- The camps and excursions offered
- Community spirit/welcoming feel
- Overall teaching standards
- Student/teacher relationships
- Disciplinary standards & consistency
- Setting school/class sizes generally at no more than 24 students
- Tremendous support of the P&F with family and community events
- New native garden established

Areas that have been identified for closer attention through parent feedback include:

- Ongoing Interest in a long term Montessori Middle School as soon as possible
- Ongoing Interest in more 'nature play' opportunities in the school grounds
- Ongoing enhancement of communications

Student Satisfaction

Indicators of student satisfaction are derived from feedback from parents, issues that from time to time emerge through counselling processes, teacher observations, direct concerns from students and through the Children's Representative Council.

The key areas of student satisfaction that emerged in 2016 included:

- The Buddy Program.

- The self-selection of the work which they do.
- More self-assessments
- Children's Representative Council
- Focus on respect for self, others and the environment, to be independent and the challenge of being responsible for oneself
- Staff/Student relations (community service is encouraged, plenty of leadership opportunities, staff treat students with respect)
- Social Development (pleasant and helpful office staff, teachers have a positive attitude, school helps build self-esteem, strong moral values are important, help with time management and organisational skills is given)
- Home/School Relations (communication between home and school is frequent and the relationships between teachers and parents are supportive)
- Student perceptions of their experience at school (strong friendships, known and appreciated by staff, feel part of a close and caring school community, intellectually stimulated at school, learning is fun)
- School camps and outdoor education experiences
- New playground areas created with a 'natural environment' setting
- Kitchen Garden Program
- Care of the chicken coop with two chickens
- Year 6 Leadership Program
- Incursions
- Sporting Schools and other extra-curricular programs

Some areas for concern or improvement which emerged in the student feedback related to:

- More playground equipment is always on the agenda

Teacher Satisfaction

Teacher satisfaction is gauged from matters raised directly by individuals, discussions at various staff meetings, and items addressed by the Consultative Committee.

During 2016, Teacher satisfaction appeared very strong in regard to:

- Evidence of school performance being collected and explained to parents, students and staff
- School consideration and implementation of new opportunities to develop areas of strength
- Greater opportunities for teachers to plan co-operatively through Professional Learning Teams
- The acquisition of more student computers
- New laptops provided for teachers
- The level of interest in the school
- Support for professional development both Montessori and general
- The PC School system continues to improve access to classroom and financial detail for teachers
- Control of budget areas and accessibility of financial data
- High levels of student engagement and achievement

School specific items which caused frustration or concern included:

- Parking for staff continues to be an issue with parents dropping off children inside the school grounds
- The number of car park spaces continues to be at a premium

More broadly, concerns are sometimes expressed about the changing expectations of the teaching profession and the Principal's role. These also related to workload and extra-curricular expectations. There were good structures set in place to support teachers with their workloads, especially with study and report writing time. Even so, overall satisfaction of teachers and other staff at Southern Montessori School appears very strong with all staff retained this year except for one teacher who moved interstate.

7. School Funding broken down by Funding Source

Income for the School was through Federal and State Governments Re-current Grants and Fees Income, as there were no other grants applied for or received during the year. The following is a summary of income to the School for the 2016 year.

Commonwealth Recurrent Grants:	\$1,484,323
Commonwealth Capital Grant:	\$0
State Government Recurrent Grants (including Universal Access):	\$402,191
School Fees & Related Income:	\$862,771

The monies from Commonwealth and State Recurrent Grants and School Income accounted for all general expenditure incurred with the running of Southern Montessori School.