

# **Castlecrag Montessori School Annual Report 2019**

Castlecrag Montessori School runs one class for 3 to 6 year olds. The morning class operates from 8:30am until 12 noon with before school care offered from 8am and after school care offered until 2:30pm. The children in the Kindergarten program attend school from 8:30am until 2:30pm.

## **Rationale**

This report is required to meet the educational and financial reporting obligations for the New South Wales Education Standards Authority. The details are recorded in the Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual which regulates Kindergarten through to Year 12.

## **Application**

Only a very small proportion of our students are affected by these regulations. Therefore, in most cases, the information provided relates to the whole school rather than the Kindergarten program.

## **Period of Report**

This report covers the 2019 school year.

## **Reporting Requirement**

A new policy was drafted in 2004 to ensure that the annual report would be written and ready for submission in June. The policy was presented to the management committee in August 2005 for approval and has since been ratified. It is attached as Appendix One.

## **Theme 1: A Message from Key School Bodies**

### **2019 President's Report**

#### **AGM on 15 April 2020**

#### **Welcome**

Welcome everyone to the AGM for Castlecrag Montessori School (CMS) for 2020. Tonight we meet for the first time virtually, and I'm grateful to you all for making the time to join the Executive Committee in the midst of a very busy, strange and stressful time.

A lot of tonight is recording the 2019 audit, reporting on CMS activities for 2019, and I will also give an update regarding the current operation of the school.

At the outset, I would like to thank Vicki and our Committee for the work they have put in to make tonight happen, and a huge, huge thank you in particular to Teresa and Deb, who have both put in so much work while juggling a packed home and work schedule thrown into disarray by the global pandemic.

#### **Staffing in 2019**

Our wonderful teaching staff continued to provide our children with an excellent standard of early education within the Montessori framework throughout the year.

In term 2, we welcomed Vicki to CMS to take on the office management role, while Deb continues to do the bookkeeping work for the school. Vicki is a past parent and easily settled into the role; already she has provided an incredible contribution to the running of the school and we are not sure where we would be without her!

## **Regulatory process 2019**

CMS gained accreditation from the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) early in 2019. This is a fantastic outcome, and was made possible with a huge effort from Annabel. With these significant regulatory processes out of the way, we have a few years before the next.

## **Work of the Executive Committee in 2019**

The main work of the Executive Committee continued to focus on the ongoing uncertainty regarding the long term future of CMS.

As you all know, much of the work of the Executive Committee has related to securing new premises and a long term lease; part-way through the year we were pleased to gain commitment from the St James Church wardens to a further extension of our licence until the end of 2020.

There are various aspects of this significant challenge that we have had to deal with, including finding new premises that would be suitable for a preschool, with a feasible rent; making them suitable for an early education environment and compliant with the various regulatory processes we are governed by; and getting a development application through local council.

The Executive Committee communicated updates on the relocation with the parent body at various times throughout the year, in an effort to remain transparent in our decision making. The objective of the Committee throughout has been to ensure, as much as possible, the ability of CMS to continue to provide a Montessori education to the local community, with the current teaching team, and to remain true to our roots as a parent-run, independent and non-denominational school.

A summary of the various options explored in 2019 include the following.

- We retained a commercial property agent to investigate possible commercial sites. The wide and extensive search was ultimately unsuccessful; as an independent community preschool, commercial rents are simply too high. Of the few properties we were able to view, none were at an acceptable standard to support a preschool, or required significant capital investment.
- A potential new site at a local Uniting Church property was negotiated in late 2019. The Uniting Church was keen to proceed and would have supported our lease of a local church hall for a long term lease. After initial investigation and inquiries, however, it became apparent that the cost of refurbishment and to make the site meet regulatory requirements would require a significant capital investment. The Executive Committee reached the conclusion in early 2020 that, particularly given low enrolment numbers, CMS could not financially support the necessary steps that would have to be taken, within an acceptable timeframe, to relaunch the school at the proposed premises.
- The Committee continued to liaise with Willoughby Council regarding the possible option of Warner's Park. An EOI for parts of the building at Warner's Park eventually opened in February 2020, and CMS has submitted its interest. Given the pandemic, it is unclear when we may expect to hear back regarding that process.
- CMS has also kept all lines of communication open with the St James and Willoughby Park wardens. We have continued to update them on our situation, as well as communicating with Integricare, the organisation the church intends to rent our current premises to in order to establish a long daycare centre from January 2021. At the time of writing, CMS understands that Integricare intends to proceed, although it is noted that CMS understands considerable capital expenditure would be required from Integricare to support its commencement as a long daycare centre in early 2021.

The impact of all of this uncertainty has had a significant impact on enrolments. At the end of 2019, we began to look at potential measures to adopt in order to increase enrolment at CMS, including flexible attendance models (such as a three-day option for attendance) to increase numbers. While we have been dealing with the premises issue and the pandemic, these complex discussions have not been forgotten, rather put on hold until we can get some clarity and uncertainty regarding our future. It is pleasing to note that inquiries to the school have continued, and we are clear that the obstacles to boosting enrolments are the uncertainty of our location next year, the short hours that don't match working hours, and the five-day program. We will look to address these issues.

I note that the measures that the Executive Committee has taken over the last 5 to 10 years has put the school in as good a position as we could be in at this stage. While I'm still reasonably confident we will find a solution to the challenges we face, the Executive Committee is resolute in its commitment to keeping CMS going, and to protecting the jobs of our longstanding staff members. We have been, and continue to be, very cautious and fiscally responsible in these unprecedented economic and social times.

### **Open Days, community outreach and fundraising activities**

CMS undertook a number of fundraising and community activities during the year. There are two key objectives to our fundraising activities: first, to raise much needed funds for the school; and secondly, as a marketing activity to raise our profile in our local communities. In addition to the annual Bunning BBQ and Northbridge Fireworks night, we took part in the Castlecrag Community Fair, the Chatswood Emerge Festival, and in two My Kids markets.

At both the Emerge and My Kids markets, we set up classroom activities to give a glimpse of what a Montessori classroom looks like; both events were a great success, leading to enquiries to school regarding the program and enrolments. A huge thank you to Alex, in particular, who drove both of these activities.

We held three well attended Open Days in terms 2, 3 and 4. Interest in the school remains high, even despite the obvious challenge of not being able to confirm premises for 2021 and beyond.

Once again, the school community has rallied around to support these activities, giving up precious time and energy to keep the school going. Thank you to everyone, particularly those individuals who took the lead on organising these events.

### **Class liaison role**

Kim and Asako held the class liaison roles for 2019. They did a fantastic job maintaining communication with staff, parents and the Executive Committee, organising cakes, presents and outings, and of course organising the end of year picnic and Santa visit! The school cannot run effectively without this type of volunteering, and I am particularly grateful to them for the way they have conducted this role. After Asako's departure at the end of 2019, Kim kindly agreed to continue her role for 2020.

### **Farewell and welcome to the new Executive Committee Members**

One of the many sad things about not being able to meet in person for this year's AGM is not being able to properly thank, and celebrate, our departing Committee members: Tessa, Alex and Dave. I'm not sure where to start! You have each given so much of your time, skill and care to CMS. We are all extremely grateful for everything you have done to keep CMS going, as well as the positive attitude and love of Montessori that you have brought to your role at CMS. Dave has revamped the website, strategised on marketing and conducted multiple negotiations with the Church; Alex has made an incredible contribution to the fundraising and marketing activities, invested much time in our garden and built new relationships with the local community; and Tess has strategised on marketing, been a lynch pin of communication between the parent body and the Committee, run three art nights, and has done amazing work advocating for CMS in the local community. We are so grateful to you for all the time you have invested in CMS, and your contributions will long be felt by the school community.

After much contemplation, I am also formally stepping down from the President's role. I have loved helping Annabel and our incredible teaching staff run the school, and working with the Executive Committee has been so rewarding – even despite the considerable stress we have been under over the past few years trying to secure the long term future of CMS. I am so grateful for the education both of my girls have received, and continue to receive, at CMS, and my great hope is that CMS will continue to provide its unparalleled early Montessori education experience for many years to come.

I leave the Committee in excellent hands. In addition to Teresa Paredes, staying on as the Treasurer, and Sally Shaw, continuing as Secretary, the Committee will now be led by Sarah Thornton, the new President, and Elaine Lau, as Vice President. Both Elaine and Sarah are bringing a wealth of knowledge and experience and I'm thrilled they will be taking over. Thank you to Elaine, Sarah, Teresa and Sally. I'm not sure what I'll do with myself next term, but I look forward to a close handover with the new Committee and being a resource for the rest of the year before Georgia goes to big school next year.

### **Addendum: Update on current operations**

#### **Impact of Covid-19 on CMS**

The impact of the global pandemic has been deeply felt by our small preschool community. My usual report of fundraising activities and upcoming social activities has of course been shelved given the limbo imposed by social distancing and self-isolation. We are grateful that we have had no instances of direct or indirect infection to the CMS community.

CMS has remained open for the entirety of Term 1, and the intention is to reopen as normal at the beginning of Term 2. The decision to remain open has been reached on the basis of unequivocal advice from our federal government and chief medical officers, and in agreement with the Executive Committee President and staff. We have constantly been reviewing our decision to remain open, with the best interests of our children, families and staff central factors in that process. CMS has implemented additional cleaning measures, required social distancing between parents and staff, and the children have established an approach to handwashing that would not be out of place in a hospital emergency department.

I am enormously grateful to Jenny, Sarah, Steph and Vicki for continuing to run the school and keep up a normal routine and learning environment for the children. Their attitude has been unfailingly positive, calm and constructive. For those parents who have continued to send their children, it has been such a gift for them to have some sense of normal in the middle of a very stressful time, and to have been able to continue their learning at a crucial time in their development.

Like so many independent organisations and local businesses, the global pandemic has had, and will continue to have, a significant financial impact on the operation of the school. We are working through the various fiscal support packages that have been proposed and/or implemented by the federal and state governments; the detail of these options is only now becoming available, and we are having to work through the complexities to ensure we take advantage of the various options that are available to us. Our main objective is to keep staff in place and keep the school running so that there is a preschool to return to when the pandemic has ended or social distancing measures relaxed.

I note that Vicki, Teresa and Deb have worked tirelessly the last few weeks to pass the audit, and establish the financial situation for the school. I am most grateful to them for this incredibly hard work.

#### **Looking ahead to Term 2**

I'm happy to say we will welcome Annabel back to the classroom in Term 2, following her medical leave in term 1. Needless to say, we are all very excited for her return to the classroom. The Executive Committee is grateful to Jenny, Sarah and Steph, who have maintained the classroom as normal in Annabel's absence.

As noted above, CMS will reopen in Term 2. Recognising the uncertainty surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic, we have sought to be flexible with how we are invoicing families for student fees, offering the option of a full term of payment, or weekly fees paid in advance. As soon as we have clarity regarding how government support will be made available to preschools, invoices will be sent to families in accordance with the choice you have made.

To assist us to manage the school, if you are planning to withdraw your child from school we ask that you let us know in writing as soon as possible.

### **Update on the long term future of CMS**

Unfortunately, in part due to the impact of the pandemic, the Executive Committee is not yet able to confirm the school's premises for 2021.

The Committee is working hard towards resolving this situation as soon as possible, in a context where we are all dealing with considerable uncertainty. The silver lining of the otherwise disastrous pandemic is that some options may open up to us that were not available at the beginning of the year. We will keep you updated with further information as soon as we are able to.

*Prepared by Sophie Farthing*

## **2019 Director's Report**

### **Director's Report AGM 15<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

This report covers the 2019 school year.

#### **Classroom**

At the beginning of the year we reorganised the classroom to divide it up into smaller spaces in the hope of decreasing running in the classroom. Furniture was placed on the mats to create quieter areas for floor work, and to encourage movement when using the Sensorial materials. This worked very well, indirectly guiding the children into moving around the classroom with greater care and facilitating individual work in smaller spaces.

Thanks to the generosity of parents, we were able to buy some resources for the classroom with our Earn and Learn points. Steam Construction sets for the extended day children were purchased, as well as beads, books, weaving looms and two sets of matching cards for the classroom. We also bought 2 new wicker chairs and cushions, a post box and recycling bins. The garden beds were planted and replanted at various times by Sarah and the children with a variety of herbs, vegetables and flowers. Unfortunately we had to have 2 trees removed due to borer damage and branches lopped to ensure our safety in the garden. The softfall was replenished and the garden maintained throughout the year.

In March we underwent our ACECQA assessment and rating visit. Policies were reviewed, regulatory forms checked and our interactions with the children examined. We were rated as 'Meeting the National Quality Standard' and will be assessed again in 2022.

A former parent, Jacqueline Wood, joined us in the classroom for several days to complete a practical component of her teaching degree. In Term 3 we received extra funding and Leanne Olley was employed as a classroom assistant on a part-time basis.

A course in developing resilience was run for the children in Term 4 over an 8 week period. Sessions for parents and staff were also held to enable us all to understand the concepts being taught. This was very successful and one of the highlights of the week for the children who participated. The trainers

commented on the emotional literacy of the children and their ability to identify feelings and alternative responses to stressful situations.

### **Excursions**

The extended day children enjoyed 3 excursions during the year. In Term 1 we went to the Concourse at Chatswood to watch a performance of "Room on the Broom". In Term 2 we visited The Art Gallery of NSW and were introduced to various artworks and created some of our own using the same techniques and materials. Our regular visit to Martha's Restaurant took place in Term 4. The children were excited to see their art works in Situ ready for art night, but even more excited by the ice cream they consumed afterwards.

### **Visitors**

"Hatching chicks" delivered 10 eggs in an incubator in Term 2, and the children were able to learn about and watch the eggs and chicks birth, grow and care for them.

A performance called 'Street Sense' conveyed the concepts of road rules through circus acts, much to everyone's delight.

### **Working Bees**

Two working bees were held during the year and other jobs were completed as the need arose. This strategy was introduced to reduce the burden of participation on a much smaller number of parents.

### **Professional Development**

Staff revised and updated the Quality Improvement Plan, setting new goals for 2019. The management of Asthma and Anaphylaxis and use of an EpiPen were also revised and EpiPen delivery practiced with a training pen. The child Protection Policy was reviewed by all staff and the indicators of abuse and neglect revisited. Different scenarios were used to practice using the Mandatory Reporter Guide tool.

The sun protection policy was updated and submitted and approved by the Cancer Council. We changed our sunscreen routine to an 11am application in order to cover both playtimes with so many different children staying for a longer day.

All staff attended a one day seminar on managing challenging behaviours and updated their CPR qualifications. We also completed an online course focused on supporting children with Additional Needs such as Dyspraxia and Dyslexia. Annabel attended a Montessori Conference on the Gold Coast entitled 'Responsibility, Resourcefulness and Resilience'. Work, Health and Safety Practices were also reviewed and observations undertaken at other Montessori Schools.

### **Thank you**

In conclusion I would like to thank all of the Executive Committee for their amazing generosity in sharing both their time and talents on top of their already very busy lives. The school depends on your expertise to continue operating – without your support the school would cease to function. This has been a particularly difficult period with the search for new premises taking up an enormous amount of time and generating an extra layer of stress for you all. I cannot thank you enough for the many hours you give and the dedication you demonstrate on a continual basis. Sophie of course, has borne this burden more than any of us and if not for her devotion and talent, we may well have already met our demise. Thank you Sophie for all that you have done over the years. Despite everything thrown at you and tremendous stress in your day job, you have continued to smile and support us wholeheartedly. We are forever in your debt and wish you the best as you step down from the presidency.

Finally, thank you to all parents for helping out whenever you can and making this such a lovely environment for the children and staff. I am so grateful to be part of such a caring community and look forward to new adventures in 2020.

Prepare by Annabel Needs

## **Theme 2: Contextual Information about the school**

Castlecrag Montessori School is a parent-run, non-profit, pre-school and kindergarten for three to six year old children located on Sydney's North Shore, near Middle Harbour. It was established in 1990 and provides a rich fully equipped Montessori environment that fosters a love of learning and a sense of community responsibility. The children also have access to a large outdoor natural play area. This beautiful environment has been carefully landscaped to promote creative play, encourage confident exploration, and help children develop an affinity for nature.

The school is staffed by experienced and committed Montessori Directors who have qualifications in both Montessori teaching and early childhood education.

The fundamental goals of the Montessori philosophy and environment are to develop a love of learning, concern and responsibility for self and others, self-discipline, initiative, independence, and creative intelligence and imagination. Individual programs and lessons promote co-operative rather than competitive learning.

Castlecrag Montessori School is registered with the NSW Education Standards Authority and adheres to the regulations of the NSW Department of Education. The school is a member of the Montessori Australia Foundation. Further information about the school can be found on our website.

The student population consists of children aged from 3 to 6 years of age. The cultural mix of the school includes Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Canadian and Caucasian families, almost all of whom are from a high socio-economic status. In 2019 there were 26 children enrolled in the school, 7 of whom were Kindergarten students. There were an equal number of girls and boys (13 of each). Of the 7 children in Kindergarten, we had 4 girls and 3 boys in the class.

## **Theme 3: Student outcomes in standardised national literacy and numeracy testing**

This component of the annual report is not applicable to our school as we only provide education for children in kindergarten.

## **Theme 4: Senior secondary outcomes**

This component of the annual report is not applicable to our school as we only provide education for children in kindergarten.

## **Theme 5: Teacher qualifications and professional learning**

### **Details of all teaching staff**

Total number of teachers: 2

Category	Number of Teachers	Qualifications
Teachers who have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised	2	Teacher 1: Diploma of Teaching (Primary); Bachelor of Teaching (Early Childhood); Diploma of

Category	Number of Teachers	Qualifications
within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition guidelines.		Montessori Teaching (3-6); Graduate Diploma of Counselling.  Teacher 2: Graduate Certificate in Educational Studies; Masters of Early Childhood; AMI Primary Montessori Diploma (3-6)
Teachers who have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia or one of the recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications.	0	

Number of Teachers	Professional Learning Activities	Average Expenditure
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work Health and Safety - Review of all procedures, rewriting of some procedures.</li> </ul>	\$641/teacher
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of Quality Improvement Plan for 2019 and writing of Quality Improvement Plan for 2020.</li> </ul>	
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of policies and practices in relation to education, leadership, management, children's health and safety, staffing etc.</li> </ul>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of management of asthma, anaphylaxis and diabetes.</li> </ul>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of child protection indicators and use of MRG.</li> </ul>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide First Aid; Provide CPR; Provide basic emergency life support.</li> </ul>	
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AI NSW Governance Workshop</li> </ul>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observation at Montessori Schools</li> </ul>	



Number of Teachers	Professional Learning Activities	Average Expenditure
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance Appraisals from A-Z</li> </ul>	
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional Partnership for early childhood inclusion</li> </ul>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing Emotional Regulation Skills in Children with Anxious, Oppositional and Aggressive Behaviour workshop</li> <li>Governance Workshop</li> </ul>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher Training for Students with Neurodiversity</li> </ul>	
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Montessori Australia Foundation Conference, Sydney</li> </ul>	
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Montessori Conference, Queensland</li> <li>Provide CPR HLTAID001</li> </ul>	
	The members of the Executive Committee completed their 4 hours professional governance learning by either attending the AIS workshop or completing the online AIS modules.	

#### Teacher Accreditation

Level of Accreditation	Number of Teachers
Proficient Teacher	2

### Theme 6: Workforce composition, including indigenous

#### School Staff 2019

Teaching Staff: 2

Full time equivalent teaching staff: 1

The full time teacher is the Director.

Classroom assistants: 3

Full time equivalent classroom assistants: 1.6

Non-teaching staff: 2

Full time equivalent non-teaching staff: 0.7

Staff are a mix of Caucasian and Asian ethnicities. We have no indigenous staff.

## **Theme 7: Student attendance and retention rates and post-school destinations in secondary schools**

The average attendance rate for kindergarten this year was 99%. This was higher than the daily attendance rate in 2018 (93%).

### Management of Non-attendance

The school implements policy and procedures for the management of student non-attendance. The following information is taken from the Student Attendance Policy.

The school will monitor the daily attendance and absences of students in the School by maintaining daily register for each class of students. Marking the roll each day is the responsibility of the class teacher. Contact from parents advising of absentees, via email or telephone will be provided to the class teacher on arrival.

Student absences from classes or from the School will be identified and recorded in a consistent manner by the staff member responsible. The school will contact the Department of Education via the Home School Liaison Officer in the unlikely event of a child leaving the school without the intention of enrolment at another educational provider.

Unexplained absences from classes or School will be followed up in an appropriate manner with the student and /or their parent or guardian. In the event of no parental advice with regards to absences the class teacher will initially contact by telephone after 1 day and then by email. The parents will need to fill in an absentee form on return. Unexplained absences will be reported to the School Director by the class teacher for her determination on the follow up required. (This might include, but is not limited to, direct contact with parents or reporting to the Department of Education.)

The school will record the attendance of children and notify a parent or guardian in cases of poor attendance.

Where unsatisfactory class or school attendance is identified the attendance issue and any action taken will be recorded as appropriate on the student file. All absentee forms will be filed in the class roll.

### Student Retention Rates and Post School Destinations

This component of the annual report is not applicable to our school as we only provide education for children in kindergarten.

## **Theme 8: Enrolment policies**

### **Enrolment and Orientation Policy**

#### **Introduction**

Enrolment and orientation processes and procedures form the strong foundation for relationships between families and early education and care settings and promote a quality experienced of education and care for children. Castlecrag Montessori School is committed to planning enrolment

and orientation processes that meet the needs of the child and family as well as ensuring all legislative requirements, including the Australian Government Priority of Access Guidelines are adhered to.

### **Goals**

Enrolment and orientation processes are planned and implemented.

Due consideration is given to culture and language in undertaking processes.

Documentation, including authorisations, is completed during the enrolment and orientation process.

A thoughtful process is planned in consultation with families, to orient a child and family to Castlecrag Montessori School.

### **Strategies**

Castlecrag Montessori School welcomes visits from prospective parents. Parents are invited to complete a classroom observation during their initial enquiry. This provides them the opportunity to view the classroom in action and meet one of the educators. Questions can be answered and the Montessori philosophy more fully explained.

### **Enrolment Procedure**

1. Upon a parent enquiry, parents are advised to book a school observation, and are sent a letter with information about the school and program, as well as links to the school website.
2. Following the observation, parents may submit an application form and pay the waitlist application fee. The child's name is added to the waitlist. Parents on the waiting list may receive the school newsletter and information about school events.
3. The school sends a letter and receipt confirming the child's name in on the waitlist. After consideration of the availability of a position by the Administrator and Class Director, the child/ren may be offered a place at the school.
4. Waitlist management: In Term 2 preceding the year in which a child would turn 3 years of age, initial applications are considered for enrolment and placement (refer to admission policy below). Preference is given to siblings of current students.
5. Offer of place: parents are sent a letter offering the position, along with an invoice for the Placement fee. Once the placement fee has been paid by the family, the offer has been accepted, subject to the Director interview and orientation. The Administrator will send a letter and receipt confirming the child's enrolment.
6. In the term prior to the child's start date, the Administrator send the parents an enrolment letter confirming the Director interview date, Orientation session and the child's first day. The letter will include a pack of pre-enrolment documents including:-
  - A confidential information record including authorisations, consents and immunisation record;
  - A current fee schedule and payment details;
  - Fee Invoice for first term;
  - Information about Immunisation requirements;
  - School Calendar;
  - CASA information;
  - Arrival and Departure Policy;
  - Privacy Collection Statement.

7. The Director, parent/s and child meet for the informal Interview. Prior to conducting the enrolment interview the Nominated Supervisor should consider the language and cultural needs of the family.
8. Families will provide the following, prior to the agreed start date for the child:
  - A completed confidential information record including authorisations (Appendix XVI)
  - Current immunisation record (refer Immunisation below). (Appendices X and XI)
  - Birth Certificate, Passport or other identification,
  - Current contact information for parents and emergency contacts;
  - Information on the child's additional needs (including medical conditions, health and developmental concerns) and any medical/risk management plans
  - Any custody, family court orders and relevant legal documentation

This information will be kept at the school in accordance with the school's policies and the Education and Care Services and National Regulations 2018.

9. The child attends the orientation visit, usually held the day prior to the start date, for one hour.
10. The Director, assesses the child's readiness to start, and if the child is ready enrolment commences. (Refer Determining Readiness & Notice of Placement below)
11. The Director communicates with the parents if there are any settling-in concerns in the initial weeks of enrolment, and is available for an interview or informal chat with the parents if required.

### **Custody Arrangements**

The *Education and Care Services National Law* requires all services to have details of all custodial and access arrangements.

Enrolling family members are responsible for informing the Director of custody and access arrangements on enrolment, and must advise the Director immediately of any subsequent alterations to these arrangements.

All relevant legal documentation is to be shown to the Director and a copy will be maintained in the child's enrolment record.

### **Admission Policy**

The Castlecrag Montessori School admits students of any religion, race, colour and national or ethnic origin. In allocating places to children on the waiting list, the following factors are taken into account:

- Department of Education and Communities requirements
- the age and gender balance of children in the School, with age the dominant factor
- the time spent on the waiting list
- whether the child is a sibling (see below for details regarding sibling priority)
- the commitment of the families to the full three-year program
- the commitment of families to the philosophy and policies of the school
- whether the child is transferring from another Montessori school
- the special needs of children with learning difficulties and whether the school can accommodate that child.

Access and accommodation adequacy for disabled persons shall be provided in accordance with the provisions of the DDA, including but not limited to:

- Accessibility of all required teaching and specialist spaces.
- Provision of suitable facilities to suit the needs of disabled persons.
- Provision of non-slip trafficable surfaces.

### **The Student Population**

The student population consists of children aged from 3 to 6 years of age. The cultural mix of the school includes Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Canadians and Caucasian families, almost all of whom are from a high socio-economic status.

### **Sibling and Transferee Priorities**

Priority will be given to siblings of children at the school, provided that:

- siblings are entered on the waitlist within 3 months of birth, or where this is not possible (e.g. for transferees), within 3 months of the older sibling joining the waitlist.
- the family has continued to demonstrate support for the School and Montessori education, including commitment to the three year cycle. In the event that an older sibling does not complete the three-year cycle, priority wait-listing for a younger sibling will be forfeited and the younger sibling will revert to the general waitlist based on date of application.
- Priority may also be given to children transferring from other Montessori schools provided a place is available.

### **Determining Readiness**

The decision to admit a child is discretionary and is taken only after there has been a parent interview with a Director and an assessment of the child's readiness. Children should be capable of separating from their parent/carer, be fully toilet trained (as required by Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011) and be able to use the bathroom facilities unaided.

The above guidelines apply at the discretion of the Executive Committee, whose decision is final.

### **Notice of Placement**

Demand often exceeds positions available. Bearing in mind that parents want to know as early as possible whether their child has a place at the school, places may be offered well before the child turns three. Towards the end of the term preceding the proposed start date, an interview involving parent and child is scheduled with the Director. Providing the Director is confident of the child's readiness, a classroom visit is arranged and a place is confirmed. If the Director determines the child is not ready, a more suitable start date will be found.

Very occasionally after commencement, the Director may deem that the child is not settling well, (e.g. acute separation anxiety, ongoing toileting problems). The Director and the Executive Committee may then advise the parents of the following actions:

- Request the child's attendance at the school be delayed until a more suitable time, usually no longer than one term's delay.
- Request to terminate the child's enrolment. In this situation the Placement Fee would be refunded in full.

Children are admitted to the school in Terms 1, 2 and 3. Children are rarely admitted in Term 4, and then only at the Directors absolute discretion.

Children are admitted usually in the term in which they turn 3 years of age. However, the Director determines the exact date. When several new children are due to commence in one term, the individual start dates are staggered to assist the children in adjusting to their new environment, as well as minimising disruption to the rest of the class. Children will start in the designated term in order of readiness relative to the other children. The start date is dependent on the Directors' assessment of the child irrespective of whether or not the child is a sibling.

Tuition fees for new children to the school will be calculated on a pro-rata basis for the child's first term at school. The term fee payable will be based on the number of weeks (or part thereof), that remain in the term at the time the child commences.

### **Immunisation**

It is currently a requirement of admission at the school that the child's immunisation status is as recommended by the NSW Department of Health. The school needs to sight an Immunisation Record for each child. In the event of an outbreak, non-immunised children will be required to withdraw from school for the duration of the outbreak.

Under the current NSW legislative requirements (Public Health Act) proof of a child's vaccination status must be provided prior to enrolment.

Parents/guardians must provide a copy of one or more of the following documents to enrol in a child care centre:

- an [ACIR Immunisation History Statement](#) which shows that the child is up to date with their scheduled vaccinations; or
- an [ACIR Immunisation History Form](#) on which the immunisation provider has certified that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule; or
- an [ACIR Immunisation Medical Exemption Form](#) which has been certified by a GP.

The documents must be stored in a secure location for 3 years, unless a child transfers to another child care centre.

In the event of an outbreak, non-immunised children will be required to withdraw from school for the duration of the outbreak.

### **Definitions and Policies on 'Extended Day'**

#### The Three Year Cycle

The Montessori philosophy works in three year cycles and the Montessori classroom is structured accordingly. When the child commences the cycle he attends school for three hours per day from 8:30am to 12 pm. When the Director determines the child is ready he will move into the "extended day" part of the program and will attend school from 8:30am to 2.30pm.

Early withdrawal of a child from this learning cycle is disadvantageous for the child and for the school. The child misses the most fruitful part of the Montessori experience. The final year in the classroom is the most rewarding in the cycle. It offers the child the opportunity to build on and consolidate skills, to realise the potential of the Montessori materials and to extend and enrich his understanding of the world. If a child is withdrawn prematurely the remaining extended day students lose one of their peers and the younger children lose a potential leader, teacher and role model. The older child cannot simply be replaced with a younger child and hence the age and gender balance of the class is disturbed.

#### Eligibility Guidelines for Extended Day (Kindergarten)

Castlecrag Montessori School has approval from the NSW Education Standards Authority to educate children up to and including the kindergarten year. The extended day program is equivalent to the Kindergarten year and we use the same cut-off date for enrolment in Kindergarten in a public school, which is July 31st. Children with birthdays in August to December do not participate in the

extended day program unless they are staying the following year and completing 5/6 terms of extended day.

#### Readiness for Extended Day (Kindergarten)

The Director will determine when a child is ready to commence extended day. This will usually, but not always, be on or around the child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. In assessing whether a child is ready to commence extended day the Director will take into account a number of factors including the following:

- the child's social, emotional and learning needs;
- the child's capacity to remain at school for the longer day;
- the needs of the extended day group;
- the needs of the classroom as a whole.

#### Completion of the Three Year Cycle

The Director will determine whether a child has completed the three year cycle. Usually, but not always, this will involve completion by the child of between three and seven terms of extended day, with completion occurring at the end of the school year. Extended Day is defined as a minimum of three terms. By then the Director and parents of the child will have consulted regarding the child's readiness to move into another environment.

The following table illustrates scenarios for start and end dates for completion of extended day as per academic requirements. This table is not a reflection on when a child is eligible to start extended day but simply a reference for the completion of the cycle.

STARTS ED	MAY FINISH	MAY GO TO
2019 Term 1	2019 Term 4 (4 terms)	
2019 Term 2	2019 Term 4 (3 terms)	2020 Term 4 (7 terms)
2019 Term 3	2020 Term 4 (6 terms)	

Castlecrag Montessori School has approval from the NSW Education Standards Authority to educate children up to and including the kindergarten year.

Failure to complete the three year cycle will result in a loss of priority for siblings on the school's waitlist.

#### **Prior to formally commencing at the service:**

- Prior to the child's first day of school, educators and staff will familiarise themselves with information about the child from the enrolment information provided. They will ensure they are aware of any medical conditions and how to manage them if required.
- The teacher will meet with the parent/s and child and complete the new starter checklist. The teacher will engage with the child and provide activities for him/her to complete, should he/she wish to do so, whilst chatting with the parent/s and answering any questions they may have.

- If the parents are concerned about separation difficulty, the child is invited to come for playtime the week prior to commencement. A family member will remain on the premises during these orientation visits. The child cannot be left at the service until they have formally commenced at the service.

### **Upon Commencement**

On the first day of attendance educators and staff will welcome the family and the child. Educators will reassure the family and assist with separation if required. Parents are welcome to phone and check how their child is settling.

### **Deferrals**

Requests by parents for deferred entry are generally not granted but each case will be considered on its merits. Requests for deferred entry must be made in writing to the Director.

The School may advise a deferred start in which case a place will be held without imposition of fees until a commencement date.

### **Director's Discretion**

The Director has the discretion to consider the individual application of an enrolment in extenuating circumstances.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Approved Provider**

- Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011 with regard to the delivery and collection of children at all times.
- Providing opportunities (in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and staff) for interested families to attend the service during operational hours to observe the program and become familiar with the service prior to their child commencing in the program.
- Ensuring that enrolment forms (refer to Definitions) comply with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162.
- Ensuring that enrolment records (refer to Definitions) are stored in a safe and secure place, and kept for three years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service (Regulation 183).
- Ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or staff under the Law (Regulation 157).

#### **Administrator**

- Providing enrolment application forms.
- Maintaining a waiting list.
- Collecting, receipting and banking waitlist and enrolment fees.
- Offering places in line with this policy and criteria for priority access, and providing relevant paperwork to families in accordance with this policy.
- Providing a report each term to the approved provider regarding the status of enrolments.
- Storing completed enrolment application forms in a lockable file (refer to privacy and confidentiality policy) as soon as is practicable.

### **Early Childhood Educators / Nominated Supervisor / Certified Supervisors**



- Acting in accordance with the obligations outlined in this policy.
- Responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process, as required.
- Ensuring that enrolment forms are completed prior to the child's commencement at the service.
- Ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or staff under the Law (Regulation 157).
- Developing strategies to assist new families to: » feel welcomed into the service; » become familiar with service policies and procedures; » to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child.
- Providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members.
- Sharing information with parents/guardians regarding their child's progress with regard to settling in to the service.

### **Families**

- Reading and complying with this policy.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every two years. Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

### Relevant Legislation

Children (Education and Care Services National Law Act Application) 2010: 175  
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2018  
Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)  
Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)  
Family Assistance Law [www.dss.gov.au](http://www.dss.gov.au)

### Related Guidelines, Standards, Frameworks

National Quality Standard: 4.2, 6.1, 7.3

### Related Policies

Confidentiality  
Privacy  
Fee  
Family Participation and Communication  
Anti Bias  
Cultural Diversity

### Sources

Community Early Learning Australia  
Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations – [www.deewr.gov.au](http://www.deewr.gov.au)  
Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 – <http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/NQF02-Guide-to-ECS-Law-and-Regs-130902.pdf>

## Theme 9: Other school policies

### A. Student Welfare

The school seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which:

1. Minimises risk of harm and ensures students feel secure
2. Supports the physical, social, academic and emotional development of students
3. Provides student welfare policies and programs that develop self-worth and foster personal development

To ensure that all aspects of the school's aim to provide for a student's welfare are implemented, the following policies and procedures were in place (or developed) during 2016:

Policy	Changes/Proposed Changes in 2019	Access to Full Text
Policies Relating to Student Welfare		
Pastoral Care  The school aims to create an atmosphere in which children feel secure, valued and encouraged in their learning, growth and social development. Pastoral care is an approach to education which attempts to value and develop each	No changes were made in 2019.	The full text of the school's pastoral care statement can be accessed in the policy manual that each parent receives via email. Parents may request a hard copy by consulting the office administrator.

Policy	Changes/Proposed Changes in 2019	Access to Full Text
<p>member of the school community. It addresses the social, cognitive, emotional, spiritual and physical needs of the students so that each child has the opportunity to reach his/her potential, and acquire the skills to cope with life.</p> <p>The school aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a safe and healthy environment in which the children feels secure and nurtured;</li> <li>• Promote the development of the whole child;</li> <li>• Help children grow in self-worth, confidence and independence of thought;</li> <li>• To protect children from physical, social, emotional and intellectual harm</li> <li>• To encourage tolerance, empathy and sensitivity to the needs of others;</li> <li>• To promote warm, positive and respectful relationships between children, staff and parents.</li> </ul>		
<p>Child protection policy encompassing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goals</li> <li>• Definitions</li> <li>• Strategies</li> <li>• Mandatory Reporting</li> <li>• Documentation</li> <li>• Disclosures of Abuse</li> <li>• Allegations of Abuse against staff etc.</li> <li>• Informing the educator, volunteer, student</li> <li>• Rights of all parties</li> <li>• Confidentiality</li> </ul>	<p>Adopted AISNSW Child Protection Policy.</p>	<p>Issued to all staff members and members of the Executive committee. Staff sign policy annually. Full text in policy manual. Policy manual issued to all parents via email.</p> <p>Parents may request a hard copy by consulting the office administrator.</p>
<p>Appropriate Behaviour Policy</p>	<p>No changes made.</p>	<p>Policy manual and parent handbook emailed to</p>

Policy	Changes/Proposed Changes in 2019	Access to Full Text
		parents. Hard copies are available in the office.
<p>Work Health and Safety Policy and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General safety procedures</li> <li>• Emergency and evacuation procedures</li> <li>• Cleaning and Maintenance Procedures</li> </ul>	<p>No changes made to the WHS Policy in 2019.</p> <p>WHS guidelines (including procedures and workplace instructions) reviewed.</p>	<p>Full text in WHS guidelines. The WHS guidelines are kept in the office. Parents may request a copy by consulting the office administrator.</p> <p>Policy manual and parent handbook emailed to parents. Hard copies are available in the office.</p>
<p>Risk Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervision Policy</li> <li>• Excursion Policy</li> <li>• Safe and Supportive Environment</li> <li>• Sun Protection Policy</li> <li>• Accident Prevention</li> </ul>	<p>No changes made in 2019.</p> <p>No changes made in 2019.</p> <p>No changes made in 2019.</p> <p>Policy reviewed and approved by SunSmart.</p> <p>No changes made in 2019.</p>	<p>Full text of risk management procedures in WHS Guidelines. Parents may request a copy by consulting with the office administrator.</p> <p>Parents received soft copy of policy manual via email. Parents may request a hard copy by consulting the office administrator.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children with Additional Needs</li> <li>• Student Attendance</li> </ul>	<p>No changes made in 2019.</p> <p>No changes made in 2019.</p>	<p>Full text in policy manual which was issued to all parents via email.</p>

Policy	Changes/Proposed Changes in 2019	Access to Full Text
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrival and Departure</li> <li>• Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations</li> <li>• Transition to school</li> <li>• Medical Conditions</li> <li>• Nutrition policy</li> <li>• Anti-Bias</li> <li>• Aboriginal awareness</li> <li>• Inclusion/Cultural Diversity</li> <li>• Lockdown Procedure</li> <li>• Immunisation</li> <li>• Code of Conduct for Staff</li> <li>• Code of Ethics</li> </ul>	<p>No changes made in 2019.</p> <p>No changes made in 2019.</p> <p>No changes made in 2019.</p> <p>No changes made in 2019.</p> <p>No changes made in 2019.</p> <p>No changes made in 2019.</p> <p>No changes made in 2019.</p> <p>No changes made in 2019.</p> <p>No changes made in 2019.</p> <p>No changes made in 2019.</p> <p>Replaced with updated Code of Ethics written by Early Learning Australia</p>	<p>Parents may request a hard copy by consulting with the office administrator.</p>
<p>Communication Procedures encompassing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Participation and Communication</li> <li>• Formal interviews</li> <li>• Informal interviews</li> <li>• Observations</li> </ul>	<p>No changes made in 2019.</p>	<p>Information available in Parent Handbook</p> <p>Full text in policy manual. Parents may request a hard copy by consulting with the office administrator.</p>

Policy	Changes/Proposed Changes in 2019	Access to Full Text
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent Education Evenings and Committee Meetings</li> </ul> <p>Management and Operation of the School Policies and procedures encompassing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confidentiality</li> <li>• Recruitment</li> <li>• Privacy</li> <li>• Educational and Financial Reporting</li> </ul>	<p>No changes made in 2019.</p> <p>No changes made in 2019.</p>	<p>Documents in Governance Folder in Office. Parents may request a hard copy by consulting with the Office Administrator.</p>

#### **B. Summary of Anti-Bullying Policy**

Castlecrag Montessori School rejects all forms of bullying. All children and staff have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity in an environment free from intimidation, victimisation, harassment, disruption and discrimination.

All members of Castlecrag Montessori School community contribute to preventing bullying by promoting and modelling appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships. The policy provides a definition of bullying and the responsibilities of the staff and school community in relation to this issue. Full text of the school's anti-bullying policy is available to all members of the school community through the policies manual via email or in hard copy from the school administrator. No changes were made to this policy in 2019.

#### **C. Summary of Policies for Student Discipline**

Students are required to abide by the school's rules and to follow the directions of teachers. The disciplinary model within the Montessori environment encourages self-discipline and positive approaches to misbehaviour. Conflict resolution techniques are employed to resolve conflict in the classroom and on the playground. In extreme cases contact is made with parents of the student. No changes were made to the policies for student discipline in 2019. Full text of the school's disciplinary policy and associated procedures is available to all members of the school community through the policies manual.

The school expressly prohibits corporal punishment and does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school. All behaviour management actions are based on procedural fairness and involve parents in the processes of procedural fairness.

#### **D. Summary of Policies for Complaints and Grievances Resolution**

The school's policy for dealing with complaints and grievances includes processes for raising and responding to matters of concern identified by parents. All reported complaints remain confidential

and are dealt with in an unbiased manner taking into account the principles of procedural fairness. Parents are welcome to call the school, email, or make an appointment to see the teacher to communicate their concerns. If dissatisfied with the outcome from the initial meeting, subsequent meetings are scheduled with the teacher and the Principal (2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting) and President (3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting) in attendance. If the matter remains unresolved the parent may make a written request to have the matter discussed by the Executive Committee and Principal. Formal complaints are to be made in writing and will be investigated and acted upon by the Principal and President.

The full text of the school's policy and processes for complaints and grievances resolution is provided in the school's parent handbook and school policy manual. The manual was issued to all parents via email. Parents can request a hard copy from the office administrator. No changes were made to these policies and procedures in 2019.

## Theme 10: School determined improvement targets

Achievement of Priorities identified in 2018 Annual Report

Area	Priorities	
<b>Policies</b>	Write a staff immunisation procedure.	Not achieved.
	Updated policy manual emailed to parents.	Not achieved – posted on website.
	Updated staff manual distributed to staff	Achieved.
<b>Staff Development</b>	Increase assistant's knowledge of Montessori materials and extension activities etc. they can do with the children.	Achieved and ongoing.
	Further discussion on guiding children's behaviour.	All staff attended a course entitled 'Developing Emotional Regulation Skills in Children with Anxious, Oppositional and Aggressive Behaviours'.
	Each educator to observe at a different Montessori school.	Achieved.
<b>Staff Welfare</b>	Continue with birthday celebrations and Christmas lunch.	Achieved. Staff feeling valued and working as a cohesive team.
	Provide staff with admin time to complete reflections and observations on a weekly basis.	Achieved in terms 1 and 2, more challenging in Terms 3 and 4 as enrolments grew.

Area	Priorities	
<b>Work Health and Safety</b>	Review work, health and safety guidelines. Fire Drills and Lockdown drills with new staff and children.	WHS guidelines reviewed.  Achieved.
<b>Facilities and Resources</b>	Purchase large mirror for easier application of sunscreen by the group.  Rearrange classroom furniture to cut down on running and inappropriate play on central mat.	Mirror purchased but not hung due to possible end of lease.  Achieved.
<b>Administrative</b>	Apply for Start Strong Funding for 3 year olds.  Source relief staff.  Secure premises for the school in 2020.  Apply to ACECQA for provision of early childhood care and education licence at new premises.	Achieved.  Achieved.  Achieved – given another year at current premises.  Not needed.
<b>Parent Involvement</b>	Provide parent education meetings based on the different areas of learning in the classroom. Familiarise parents with the Montessori materials to increase their understanding of what the children do in the classroom.	Achieved with one session only; ongoing.
<b>Curriculum</b>		
<b>English</b>	Greater emphasis on rhyming words and opposites. Use of capital letters and full stops.	Achieved.
<b>Maths</b>		
<b>Science and Technology</b>	Implementation of the new Science and Technology syllabus (K-6).	Achieved.
<b>Creative Arts</b>	Ongoing learning about composers and their compositions.	Not achieved.



Area	Priorities	
	Ongoing learning about artists and their compositions.	Achieved and ongoing.
	Source new songs and dances.	Achieved.
	Better use of percussion instruments.	Ongoing.
<b>PDHPE</b>	Exploration of own feelings and ways to manage feelings. Exploration of other people's feelings and how they impact on us. Managing difficult situations. (Me and My Friends).	Achieved. A 6 week resilience course was conducted on the premises in addition to classroom activities.
	Greater emphasis on safety: road safety, water safety and personal safety.	Ongoing. Street Sense performance on road safety excellent.
<b>History</b>	Greater involvement of family in communicating their family heritage to the class.	Achieved.
<b>HSIE</b>	Organise at least 3 excursions into the community.	Achieved.
	Invite members of the community to speak to the children.	Not achieved.
<b>Geography</b>	Deeper investigation of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander site, country or place and its importance.	Not achieved.
	Increased use of spatial technologies such as Google Earth and Google Maps to explore familiar and non - familiar environments.	Partial achievement – ongoing.
	Jenny and Anniebelle to share their experiences of growing up in the Philippines.	Achieved.

### Achievement of Other Priorities for 2019

Area	Priorities	Achievements
Staff Welfare		
Parental Involvement	Greater support with fundraising activities.	Almost all of the parent body involved in fundraising.

Area	Priorities	Achievements
Administrative	ACECQA assessment and rating visit. Enable administrator to better support Executive Committee and Director by providing more time to do so.	Achieved rating of 'meeting'. Administration Role divided into a book keeping/accounts role and a school administrative role with each role performed by a different person.
Facilities and Resources	Purchase new sustainability resources. Organised working bees to be more accessible to parents.  Purchase materials from Earn and Learn fundraiser.  Purchased new wicker chairs for kindness table.	New recycling bins purchased for the school. Parents encouraged to help with tasks whenever it suits them rather than attend at a specified time.  Achieved  Achieved.

## 2021 Areas for Improvement

Area	Priorities
<b>Policies</b>	Write a staff immunisation procedure. Create a template for recording the immunisation status of staff.  Review Policies and Procedures.
<b>Staff Development</b>	Further discussion/attendance at course on guiding children's behaviour.  Each educator to observe at a different Montessori school.  Attendance at Montessori conference or preferred course/s of own choosing.
<b>Staff Welfare</b>	Celebrate staff birthdays, end of year.  Continue to promote a sense of wellbeing amongst staff, perhaps through
<b>Work Health and Safety</b>	Review work, health and safety guidelines.  Staff to renew CPR certificate.

Area	Priorities
	Fire Drills and Lockdown Drills with new staff and children.
<b>Facilities and Resources</b>	Determine longevity of school before purchases.
<b>Administrative</b>	<p>Secure premises for the school in 2021.</p> <p>Apply to ACECQA for provision of early childhood care and education licence at new premises.</p> <p>Notification to NESA of new premises.</p> <p>Increase enrolments to ensure sustainability of school into 2021.</p> <p>Re-establish marketing presence on social media.</p>
<b>Parent Involvement</b>	<p>Provide parent education meetings based on the different areas of learning in the classroom.</p> <p>Familiarise parents with the Montessori materials to increase their understanding of what the children do in the classroom.</p>
<b>Curriculum</b>	
<b>English</b>	Greater use of computer for writing name, words and sentences and creating books with the book creator app.
<b>Maths</b>	Greater use of baric tablets, equal arm balance and scales in exploring mass.
<b>Science and Technology</b>	Greater use of experiments and provide more opportunities for cooking.
<b>Creative Arts</b>	<p>Ongoing learning about composers and artists and their compositions.</p> <p>Better use of percussion instruments.</p> <p>Greater emphasis on role play and drama.</p>
<b>PDHPE</b>	Exploration of own feelings and ways to identify and manage feelings. Exploration of other people's feelings and how they impact on us. Managing difficult situations.
<b>HSIE</b>	<p>Organise at least 3 excursions into the community.</p> <p>Organise visitors from the community to visit.</p>
<b>History</b>	Greater involvement of family in communicating their family heritage to the class.

Area	Priorities
<b>Geography</b>	<p>Deeper investigation of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander site, country or place and its importance.</p> <p>Increased use of spatial technologies such as Google Earth and Google Maps to explore familiar and non - familiar environments.</p>

## **Theme 11: Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility**

It is of vital importance that all of the children experience and understand that they are valued and important members of the school community. Staff and parents work together to care and provide support for the children that will foster self-esteem, mutual respect and a sense of responsibility.

The Montessori environment is structured to promote respect and responsibility in the daily life of the classroom. For example, one of each activity in the classroom fosters patience and respect; activities are replaced in the correct position and in the condition in which they were found to enable others to find and use the activities; tables are cleaned and spills dealt with so that no-one slips; chairs are pushed in to prevent others from stumbling; snack plates are washed and dried so that they are ready for use by another; materials are used in an appropriate way because they belong to everyone. The children also care for the classroom by washing windows, watering plants, dusting shelves, sweeping the playground and mopping the floors. The mixed age group (3-6 year olds) provides the kindergarten children with the opportunity to assist and teach their younger peers and take on a leadership role within the community.

Respect for the child is at the heart of Montessori philosophy. The role of the teacher is to model the behaviour desired in the children taught. As the teacher shows respect for others, the environment and self the child learns to respond in a similar way.

## **Theme 12: Parent, student and teacher satisfaction**

As a parent run and funded school, we not only welcome and encourage parent involvement but depend upon the participation of all families for the continued operation of the school.

The Executive Committee is responsible for matters of school management. Members of the executive committee are volunteer parents elected annually by the parent body at the annual general meeting or elected by a majority committee to fill casual vacancies. The executive committee (President, two Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Administrator and Treasurer) is responsible for managing the non-teaching affairs of the school: staffing, finances, enrolments, building and grounds maintenance, school policies (non-teaching) etc. The stability, dedication and regular reports of the Executive Committee indicated a high level of satisfaction with their roles within the school and satisfaction with the school itself.

Parent meetings occur once a term on Wednesday evenings from 7:30pm. All parents are welcome at these informal meetings, which provide an opportunity for parents to have a say in the running of the school. Monthly accounts and correspondence are presented, enrolment levels discussed and any other matters worked through. These meetings were well attended during 2019, and discussions throughout the year indicated that parents were very happy with the school and willing to donate time, expertise, money and resources. Parents' concerns were related to the expiration of our lease at the end of 2020 and the need to find new premises.

Parents also participate in working bees, home tasks, bread and laundry rosters and excursions. Parents are also responsible for fundraising. With \$14,096 being raised and the generous donation of Montessori

materials, parent satisfaction is obviously good. Feedback from classroom observations and parent interviews continued to be very positive with many parents registering their appreciation and commenting on their child's love of school. Comments from prospective parents during observations have also been positive, with many impressed at the students' level of independence, concentration and high standard of work.

In Term 1, a Parent Education meeting held in conjunction with a Parent Meeting at 7pm was well attended. It was entitled, 'Become your Child for the Evening' and parents had fun as they explored the Montessori Materials and environment for themselves, discovering what their children undertake on a daily basis.

The morning Parent Education events included an observation of the classroom in action and were held in conjunction with Mothers' and Fathers' Day celebrations. Morning tea was provided to the mums and dads with an opportunity for questions. Another 2 parent education events were held in conjunction with the Resilience Course that was run for the children by the company 'Resilience in Kids. These were well attended and parents found them beneficial.

The children demonstrated their satisfaction and enjoyment of school through their eagerness to contribute to the classroom community. They maintained order in the environment by cleaning shelves, tables, chairs and windows; washing cloths and dishes, sweeping indoor and outdoor areas and ensuring activities were replaced on the shelves correctly. They also assisted the new children in their transition to school by helping them with activities, turning on taps, locating materials, keeping them company at playtime etc. All of this was done of the children's own accord and initiative. The children's satisfaction was also evident in their happy demeanour, strong work ethic and developing skills and knowledge. Parents regularly commented on the children's enthusiasm for school and devastation if they were unwell and unable to attend.

In response to a survey all of the extended day children agreed that their teachers knew a lot about what they teach, that they help everyone learn, that they kept learning new things, that they learned how to work with their friends, that the teachers listen to what they say about their work and think it is interesting, that they could talk to the teachers and get help if they were worried or upset, that they were good at learning things, that they learned how to solve problems, that they could help other children because they knew what to do and that the classroom was a nice place to work. Words used to describe school included fun, friends, teachers, playing, garden.

Informal feedback from teachers and assistants indicated a high level of job satisfaction. The staff enjoyed their relationships with each other and believed they worked well as a team. Part time staff were very willing to support each other and the full time colleague whenever the need arose and all staff worked beyond their paid hours each week without being asked to do so. They noted that they felt well treated and respected by the parent body and particularly the executive committee, who maintained a supportive, understanding and flexible attitude to all.

## **Educational and Financial Reporting**

### Policy

Castlecrag Montessori School has procedures in place to maintain the relevant data and will comply with reporting requirements of the NSW Minister of Education and the Australian Department of Education. This reporting includes participation in annual reporting to publicly disclose the educational and financial performance measures and policies of the school and requirements related to the provision of data to the

Minister that is relevant to the Minister's annual report to Parliament on the effectiveness of schooling in the State or data that may be requested by the Minister from time to time.

### Procedures

The Director is responsible for coordinating the final preparation and distribution of the annual report to the Board and other stakeholders as required.

The Director is responsible for the collection, analysis and storage of educational data and the Administrator is responsible for the collection, analysis and storage of financial data.

The Director determines the specific content to be included in each section of the report and reviews this each year to ensure ongoing compliance, relevance and usefulness.

The Director ensures the report is prepared in an appropriate form to send to the New South Wales Education Standards Authority.

### **Timetable**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Person Accountable</b>
April 1	Review requirements of Annual Report and identify all policies and procedures that need to be revised.	Director (Principal)
May 1	Financial data to be tabled.	Administrator
May 1	Revised policies and procedures to be presented to the Executive Committee.	Director
May 21	Policies and procedures to be signed off.	Executive Committee
June 20	Annual Report to be written.	Director
June 28	Annual Report to be submitted online to NESA, posted on school noticeboard and posted on school website.	Director

### **Requests for additional data**

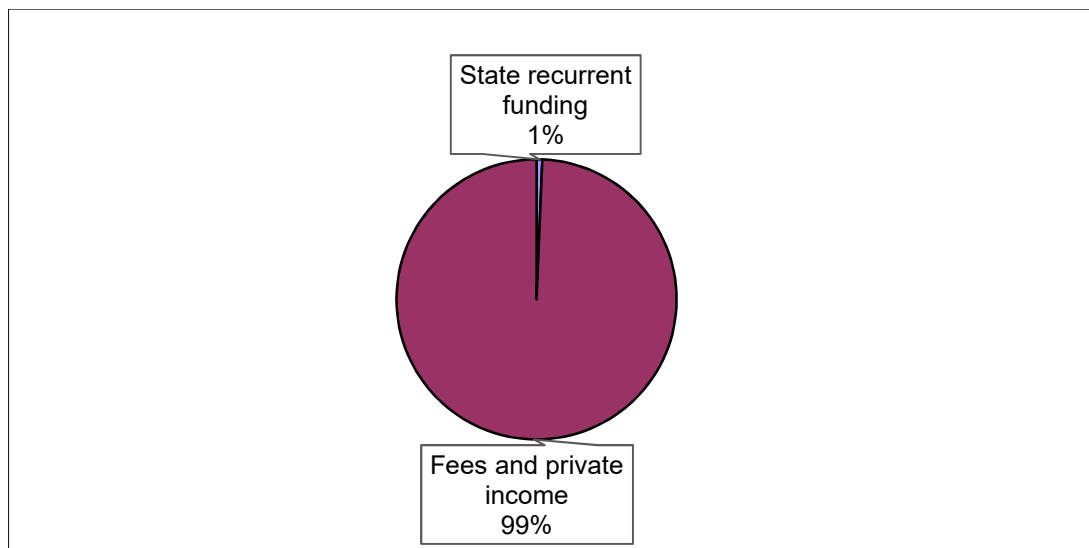
From time to time the Commonwealth Government, through the Minister for Education, and the NSW Government, through the Minister for Education, may request additional information. To ensure that such requests are dealt with appropriately, the School Director (Principal) is responsible for coordinating the

school's response. The Director is responsible for the collection of the relevant data and for ensuring the provision of data/information requested by Minister(s) through the specified authority in an online or appropriate electronic format by the due date.

## Theme 13: Summary of Financial Information

### CASTLECRAIG MONTESSORI SCHOOL SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT FOR YEAR END 31 DECEMBER 2019

#### (a) Recurrent/Capital Income



#### (b) Recurrent/Capital Expenditure

