

"We shall walk together on this path of life, for all things are part of the universe and are connected with each other to form one whole unity."

# ANNUAL REPORT 2017



## Welcome

This Annual Report provides an overview of the achievements and progress of the Central Coast Montessori Primary School and an opportunity to bring into focus our **vision, mission and purpose**.

CCMPS is a young school, with a passionate, supportive and committed community. In little over a year and a half, together we have realised a dream....to make a Montessori Primary Education possible on the Central Coast.

An exciting future lies ahead, one of collaboration, innovation and contribution.... as we strive to be in the service of humanity whilst trying to remain as true and authentic to ourselves as possible.

We come into primary school education at a very interesting time. Much is being written and said about the role of education, of teachers and schools. Life is dynamic and ever changing, the future our children and their children will experience will be vastly different to the one we know.

The question we must always consider is –

*"How can we prepare an environment and develop a culture that offers each individual the guidance, support and opportunity to realise their true potential?"*

Together with reverence, work, respect and love, we form a committed network "a village" ready to promote holistic wellbeing, a strong sense of self, free-thinking, creativity, mindfulness and connection.

Each of us will make mistakes, we will all face challenges, these both present great opportunities for further growth...in fact how we respond will define us.

The School's governing body is focussed on – cohesion, stability, future planning, quality....and to the promotion of an authentic, rich and innovative Montessori program.



*Dimitri Nicolaou  
Principal*



*Brad Twynham  
Board Chair*



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## Theme 2

### About the Central Coast Montessori Primary School contextual information about the school and characteristics of the student body

#### General

CCMPS is a non-denominational and co-educational Montessori primary school currently registered for children in K - 3. Over the next three years we will seek registration for years four, five and six. Our school is based on and inspired by the educational model (pedagogy) developed by Dr. Maria Montessori. The school is located in the beachside suburb of Bateau Bay in a residential area. We have transformed a community centre into an educational space and are fortunate to back onto a reserve. In 2017 we opened our doors with 17 students, ended the year with 23, 43% of whom were males. We are expecting to have 35 by the end of 2018.

Whilst we strongly believe in the principles Montessori puts forth as a philosophy for life, we are strong advocates for on-going exploration. We strive not to be limited by our interpretation and understanding of said pedagogy but approaching it always as a dynamic, creative process...a process that values and respects that other beautiful ideas exist and that we must collaborate, innovate and grow to truly thrive.

CCMPS is comprised of a diverse range of people which sees cultures from five continents represented through family heritage. We take the approach (in keeping with Montessori pedagogy) that each child is an individual and thus learns differently. We strive to prepare an environment and develop a culture that is not only respectful and supportive of these differences but celebrates them.

CCMPS is registered with NESA (New South Wales Education Standards Authority) and is a member of (AIS) the Association of Independent Schools.

#### Our History

CCMPS was founded in 2016 and opened its doors for the first time in February 2017. The demand for a Montessori Primary school on the Central Coast had been present for numerous years. Finally, a committed group of people came together to pioneer this initiative. Through the work and support of a relatively small community, their extended family/friends and Central Coast Council, a space was found and enough money raised to set up the school.

#### Our Goal, Vision, Purpose - Our "Why"

Our goal is to prepare an environment rich with stimulus that supports the developmental needs of each individual. A place where mindfulness, compassion and reverence are deeply valued... where the commitment to growth is ever-present. A place that helps children understand the interconnected nature of life and the responsibility we have to ourselves, to one another and to our environment. Our aim is to create a space within which children will grow in size, in mind and in heart...a place where they will understand the notion of service, be free to innovate, be supported to sing their own song and dance their own dance.

*"Who you are shouts so loudly in my ear I can't hear what you are saying." Emerson*

#### Central Coast Montessori Primary School

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### Theme 3

## NAPLAN Assessment Program

student outcomes in standardised national literacy and numeracy testing

### National Assessment Program – (NAPLAN) 2017

The National Assessment Program (NAPLAN) is a test that provides a measure of students' performance against pre-established standards and against other students in Australia. The purpose of this test is to provide information to parents and teachers about the achievements of students in aspects of Literacy and Numeracy. The Commonwealth Government sets minimum acceptable standards for literacy, numeracy, reading, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling at particular ages. For primary aged children the ages are Year 3 and Year 5. Each year the results from these tests can be analysed by schools to inform teaching staff of student performance in literacy and numeracy.

In May 2017 students across Australia participated in the National Assessment Program, however, CCMPS did not have any children in Year 3 participate in this assessment program.



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### Professional Learning

Staff participated in fortnightly professional learning sessions in conjunction with staff meetings. Discussions included but not limited to, Workplace Health & Safety, child protection, communication and curriculum. Each teacher is involved in classroom observations where feedback to improve is given.

In addition, staff undertook the following professional development activities throughout 2017.

Description of the Professional Learning Activity	Number of Staff
AMI Montessori Assistants Certificate 6-12 course	1
Introduction to Montessori Theory and Philosophy	1
Observation, Assessment & Record Keeping	1
Central Coast Area Health PEHPE workshop - gymnastics	1
Central Coast Area Health PEHPE workshop – fundamental movement skills	1
Central Coast Area Health PEHPE workshop – football, soccer and AFL	2
MAF Business Managers Forum	2
AIS & MAF Curriculum Workshop	2
AIS Accreditation Seminar	1
Montessori Independent School Conference	2
MWEI – Diploma of Early Childhood and Primary Education in Montessori (ongoing)	1

### Teacher Accreditation

Level of Accreditation	Number of Teachers
Provisional	1
Proficient Teacher	1

### Teacher Qualifications\*

Teacher Qualifications	Number of Teachers
<i>i. Teachers having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines or;</i>	<b>1</b>
<i>ii. Teachers having a bachelor's degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications.</i>	<b>1</b>
<i>*Note that the number of teachers falling within these two categories may not sum to the total number of teachers as reported in the previous accreditation table as some teachers with Conditional accreditation may not be included.</i>	



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### Workforce Composition

School Staff 2017	
Teaching Staff	3
Full-time equivalent teaching staff	1.6
Non-teaching staff	3
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	1.5
Indigenous staff	0



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### Student Attendance Rates

Kindergarten	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Whole School
81%	88%	83%	86%	84.5%

For whole school student attendance rates please refer to the school's data on the My School website:  
<https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/52434/attendance>

### Management of Non-Attendance

Regular attendance at CCMPMS is important and essential to assist students to maximise their potential. Parents of children from K – Yr 6 must ensure their children attend school every day. On occasion children may need to be absent from school. Justified reasons for student absence may include;

- i. Being sick or having an infectious disease
- ii. Having an unavoidable medical appointment
- iii. Exceptional or urgent family circumstances eg. attending a funeral

CCMPMS must be notified **in writing** within 7 days from the first day of any period of absence. This can be done by sending an email to [stage2@centralcoastmontessori.nsw.edu.au](mailto:stage2@centralcoastmontessori.nsw.edu.au) or sending a letter with your child when they return to school (providing it is within 7 days). Where an explanation has not been received within the 7-day timeframe, the school will record the absence as unjustified on the student's record.

The CCMPMS Absence Requirements Policy is provided as part of each students Enrolment Agreement and is updated and re-signed annually.

**Maintaining Rolls:** All class attendance rolls are marked daily in the classroom. Guides complete the roll each morning and mark all absences at 10am. Notes excusing a child's absence are filed in the students file, either electronic or hardcopy. The Guide is responsible for declaring the absence on the roll, reason for the absence and ensuring the reason is legitimate. Mandatory reporting procedures apply when absences are extended, or the student may be at risk.

**Follow-Up of Unexplained Absences:** Sound attendance monitoring practices and regular follow-up of unexplained absences supported by contacting parents promptly. Resolution of attendance difficulties may require a range of additional school-based strategies including student and parent meetings.



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## Enrolment Policy

CCMPS is a small non-denominational and co-education school for children from K to Year 3 (in 2017). It currently offers a three-year Primary Montessori Program for children commencing at or close to 6 years of age. In 2017 the program offers a Montessori Stage 2 environment, a class for the 6-9 year age group. Commencement at the Primary level at 6 years of age is similar to commencement in Year 1 of a traditional school.

All applications are processed in order of receipt, with the exception of current siblings, children transitioning from a Montessori stage 1 environment or transferring from other Montessori schools. Consideration is also given to the applicant and families support for the Montessori pedagogy and the applicant and families desire to commit to a 6-year Montessori primary education. Other criteria such as gender and age to maintain balance in the classroom and whether the school is able to best support the applicant's needs are also considered. Children with additional needs are considered on an individual basis keeping in mind the standards of the *Disability Standards for Education Act 2005*.

The application process for children transitioning from a Montessori stage 1 environment differs slightly to children applying from non-Montessori schooling. All the requirements are the same, however the order of some of the stages differ due to the families already having a sound knowledge of the Montessori pedagogy and the applicant already having experience in a Montessori environment.

The application process for entry into CCMPS includes, but is not limited to, the review and analysis of the Application Process and each of the requirements. Each requirement is considered an individual part of the Application Process. An Offer of Place Letter cannot be sent out until all of the requirements have been met, however, if CCMPS is unable to offer a place for the applicant they can be notified in writing at any stage of the Application Process.

Once enrolled, students and parents are expected to support the Montessori pedagogy, keep up to date with tuition fees, comply with the school's rules, policies and procedures, including the applicant attending on each day that instruction is provided, to maintain their enrolment.

## Application Process

### Applying from non-Montessori Schooling:

- 1) Attend a CCMPS *Parent Information Session*.
- 2) Complete and return an *Application for Enrolment* form along with required attachments (school reports, teacher references, specialist/medical reports and assessments, educational support reports, student and family questionnaires) and payment of the application fee. Applicants aren't able to proceed to the next stage without receipt of a complete Application for Enrolment, which includes all of the above.
- 3) Parents are invited to attend a *Classroom Observation*.
- 4) Parents and the applicant to attend an *Interview* with the Principal.
- 5) Pending places being available, the applicant is then invited to attend *Trial Visit* days at CCMPS.
- 6) Pending review and analysis of the above and once CCMPS are able to offer a place for the applicant, an *Offer of Place Letter and Enrolment Agreement* are sent out. Complete and return the Enrolment Agreement along with a photo of the applicant, birth certificate (original will be required to be sighted) and payment of the Enrolment Placement fee. The Enrolment Agreement, attachments and Enrolment Placement fee are required to be returned within 14 days of receipt of the Offer of Place Letter. If the school is unable to confirm a place for the applicant, they will be notified in writing.





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**Policies**

Policy	Changes in 2017	Access to full text
<p><b>Student Welfare</b></p> <p>CCMPS seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment to support the mental, physical and emotional wellbeing of students.</p> <p>The school is committed to providing a nurturing and supportive environment where children are able to continue the natural process of their growth and development.</p> <p>The school provides a safe and supportive environment by having in place policies and procedures that provide for student welfare.</p> <p>CCMPS school policies that provide for student welfare include, but not limited to, attendance policy, lockdown and evacuation procedures, excursion procedure and risk management plans, code of conduct for students and staff, positive peer relations policy and pastoral care statement.</p>	<p>All the school's safe environment and student welfare policies and procedures were created in conjunction with the school's initial year of operation (2017).</p>	<p>The full text of all the school's Safe Environment and Student Welfare policies and procedures are included as part of the schools Policy &amp; Procedures Manual which is on public display and can be accessed in the school office.</p>
<p><b>Anti-bullying</b></p> <p>At CCMPS we have an expectation of respect for others. All students and staff at CCMPS have the right to learn and to teach in a supportive and caring environment. This right also carries with it the responsibility that nothing done, felt or said interferes with the learning and teaching of others.</p> <p>The school policy provides strategies to maintain systems of appropriate behaviour that enable students and staff to feel safe and valued. It also provides processes for responding to and managing allegations of bullying.</p>	<p>The schools anti-bullying policy and procedures were created in conjunction with the school's initial year of operation (2017).</p>	<p>The full text of the school's Anti-bullying Policy is included as part of the schools Policy &amp; Procedures Manual which is on public display and can be accessed in the school office.</p>
<p><b>Discipline</b></p> <p>CCMPS actively seeks to provide students with a stimulating environment that is safe. It is a fundamental right of everyone in our school community to feel safe.</p> <p>The school's policy outlines definitions of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, the</p>	<p>The schools discipline and appropriate behaviour policy and procedures were created in conjunction with the school's initial year of operation (2017).</p>	<p>The full text of the school's Discipline and Appropriate Behaviour Policy is included as part of the schools Policy &amp; Procedures Manual which is on public display and can be accessed in the school office.</p>





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2017 was our inaugural year. Our main priorities were -

Priority Area	Target	Indicators for Growth/Comments
<p><b>Policies and Procedures</b></p>	<p>Begin reviewing and refining CCMPs policies and procedures.</p>	<p>As the year progressed our practical understanding of our site and clearer understanding of our goals in practice led to the commencement of an informed review process. This will be on-going throughout our development, however in these early years it is a priority.</p>
<p><b>Compliance and Regulatory Requirements</b></p>	<p>Deepen understanding of all compliance and regulatory requirements...review approach to meeting the above.</p>	<p>Once again as we settled into clearer roles, routines and procedures we have begun to establish greater fluidity in this area. Management staff attended leadership forums etc...a management schedule/dashboard is developing.</p>
<p><b>Refining Curriculum, Programming, Tracking, Reporting</b></p>	<p>Review and refine scope and sequence documents...embed revised programming practice, establish efficient tracking and observation recording. Reporting to be achieved via a conferencing system.</p>	<p>Educators worked collaboratively to refine our curriculum documents for all KLA's. We are working to create a more dynamic, real time and collaborative reporting/conferencing system. The foundation was laid for this.</p>
<p><b>"Going-Out" Program</b></p>	<p>A crucial part of the Montessori Primary program. Break down how we can make this an accessible/functional extension for the students.</p>	<p>This Montessori initiative specific to children in the second plane of development was explored in terms of practicality and functionality. Initial discussions began with the students, maps and directories sourced. Some were beginning to see the possibilities. We went on a few whole group outings for the experience...this evolved to some choosing to remain at school. This will continue to develop as we look to purchasing a mini-van to support students interests.</p>
<p><b>Establish ourselves at the site – Settle in/Tidy/Plant-out</b></p>	<p>To beautify the school site...overall appearance.</p>	<p>A part-time groundskeeper/maintenance man was contracted to ensure the school and its surrounds were kept clean and safe for students and their families. As we settled into the site minor adjustments were made.</p>



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## The Pedagogy/Cosmic Education

Maria Montessori's goal was Education for World Peace. She saw the child as the "hope and promise" for the future. This was her life's work and fundamental purpose. The curriculum she developed revolved around the holistic development of the human being through a process that saw each and every person not only as part of an interconnected whole but as a valuable individual with a cosmic contribution to make. The Pedagogy of Dr. Maria Montessori in modern day parlance is, in essence a practice in daily mindfulness. At the core of the philosophy is a sense of reverence and responsibility, of value and connection.

## The Adult/Guide and The Prepared Environment

The adult/guide not only prepares themselves to act as a role model, aware of their attitudes to life, use of thoughtful language, they also prepare the environment ready to cater to the development needs of the growing human being, an environment rich with stimulus (materials) that represent keys to the greater world.

The adult in this prepared environment is in effect "in the service of" the child/student who in turn learns that each of us, is in fact in the service of humanity and on a life long journey striving to realise our potential and ultimately make the "cosmic contribution" mentioned above.

## The Method and Material

The method is about supporting the growth of each individual and the development of their understanding of community. Children are presented exercises in Grace and Courtesy from a young age to bring their awareness to positive social interaction and then we pick up this thread in later years during a time of sensitivity to morals, to justice and to community. We look at Fundamental Human Needs, tell Great Stories and use impressionistic charts that highlight the interconnected nature (interdependence) of life. The stories set the scene for students to begin to develop a sense of existence over time and the importance of all things. This process offers not only the opportunity for students to gain perspective, but more importantly to develop a deeper sense of gratitude.

## A Respectful Culture

Education of the Individual is the basis for Montessori in practice. The very way that each day is approached sees students within a mixed age classroom actively supporting and guiding one another. Each member is involved in decision making and planning. The environment is a dynamic microcosm of the world that sees some exploring, others reinforcing, groups experiencing new ideas and socialising. Together in the classroom we form a family...a family that supports and challenges one another,



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## Theme 12

## Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

At this early stage, being a small school with 23 enrolments direct communication is regular and manageable with all community members. Discussions/conferences formal and informal take place with students, their families and with teachers as and when required.

Being our inaugural year, all the families (including the children) along with the staff that are here represent our "pioneering" community members. They have supported the school in its set up phase from concept, through fund raising, putting together furniture to set up our first classroom space right up to our opening. Parents have come in to set up the garden, worm farm and compost bin and will continue to be involved in time.

As mentioned earlier in this report, "we"....(the students, educators and parents) will inevitably make mistakes, life is comprised of ebbs and flows....however the manner with which we collectively choose to address challenges that arise will in effect determine who we are, our identity.

Our responsibility is not to please others, but to learn to respect others perspectives/world views, to understand that we are all on a unique journey and that if we come from a place of compassion and honesty, if we are committed not only to growth but to self-reflection then ultimately the culture we will create, will support self-expression and an acceptance that there will be times of dissatisfaction. However, through understanding, cohesion and collaboration we can work through challenges....accepting that the culture at CCMPs will resonate for some but not for others and that makes one neither right nor wrong.

### Staff Satisfaction

CCMPs Staff are all either previous staff of the preschool who have spent numerous years with the school or in fact ex-parents of the school.

*"Work is love made visible...." Kahlil Gibran*

### Parent Satisfaction

Families have been integral to the conception of the school. It is as a response to community need and an interest in what a Montessori offers humanity that saw the school come into being.

### Student Satisfaction

Students at CCMPs have the opportunity to not only be involved in decision making daily, but scope to direct their learning and the extensions that come from that. They can arrange outings...we call 'going out' to support an interest, call for conferences or suggest ideas. During the year students collaborated together to write a song that they recite with a beautiful sense of ownership and pride. Students happily show visitors around along with younger transitioning peers. They manoeuvre in the environment with great comfort and sense of belonging.

The idea of satisfaction is multi-layered and not a permanent state. It may be influenced by many things. Most importantly for the goal of community satisfaction to be achievable, there must exist a culture of openness, inclusivity, understanding, acceptance, humility and reflection.

In years to come, we will have greater capacity to look at staff and student retention, community participation and results of community surveys carried out.

*"To go fast, go alone. To go far, go together." African Proverb*

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Graphical representation of income and expenditure using percentages only.

