



Annual Report 2025

Education For Life



President's Report

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is with great pleasure that I present my first annual report as President of the Northern Beaches Montessori Association, reflecting on 2025 at Karuna. Thank you for taking the time to attend the AGM today and for your continued support of the school.

Karuna continues to go from strength to strength, with full enrolment and an active waitlist, strong financial performance, and well-advanced plans for renovation and future growth. Much of this success is due to the continued strong leadership of Sabine Adigun, our exceptional Head Teacher and Principal. Building on a robust Montessori foundation that sits at the heart of our preschool's values and community, Sabine fosters an environment of warmth and curiosity, enabling our children to thrive and grow into confident, capable individuals.

Our school

Throughout 2025, we made many investments in both the classroom and outdoor environments at Karuna, including new learning materials, books, and workstations. These enhancements provide children with new and engaging opportunities to explore, learn, and develop their skills in alignment with Montessori principles.

We also commenced a more strategic planning process to address ageing bathroom and kitchen facilities, while exploring longer-term growth opportunities. This includes assessing the feasibility of additional classrooms to expand our preschool and kindergarten offerings, as well as considering options to extend education to older age groups. We hope to be able to share more detailed plans later in 2026.

Our program

In 2025, the school continued to build on its improved preschool attendance options with the introduction of a vacation care program. These initiatives have increased flexibility for families and contributed to growing interest from prospective enrolments.

For much of the year, the school operated at full capacity with 30 enrolled children and maintained a waitlist of prospective families. This strong demand has continued into 2026, further reinforcing Karuna's reputation within the community.

While robust enrolments are fundamental to financial stability, fee settings also play a critical role. At the end of 2025, the Board undertook a review of the fee structure to address the historically low base established during the COVID period and to bring fees more in line with comparable preschools. As a result, fees were increased by an average of 14% for the 2026 academic year and pre-school fees were standardised to a single day rate.

We recognise the financial impact these changes may have on families; however, they are necessary to support the long-term sustainability and continued quality of the school.

Our community

I am deeply grateful for our engaged and supportive parent community. This was evident across the many events held throughout the year, including Working Bees, Special Person Days, Open Classrooms, the Easter Hat Parade, and Parent Information Evenings. These moments strengthen our community and provide valuable opportunities for families to connect with their children's learning environment.

Karuna would not be the vibrant and thriving place it is without the generous volunteer contributions of its parents. I extend my sincere thanks to those serving on the Committee and Subcommittees, as well as those who contribute through events and working bees. I encourage all families to get involved in whatever capacity they can.

Our children

Karuna's purpose is to nurture each child's human potential—supporting them to become principled individuals, deep thinkers, lifelong learners, leaders, and compassionate members of the community. The school cultivates a love of learning, inspiring creativity, independence, problem-solving, and curiosity. It is truly heartwarming to see the children return from Karuna each day with new skills, new questions, and to see blossoming young friendships grow.

I would like to personally thank Sabine and all the Karuna staff team for their dedication and hard work in bringing this vision to life in 2025, as well as the Board for their ongoing strategic guidance.

David Coats
President
Northern Beaches Montessori Association

Principal Report

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

It is with great pleasure that I warmly welcome the Karuna community as I share our 2025 School Annual Report.

Thank you for taking the time to attend this year's AGM and for your continued support and commitment to our beautiful little school. Together, we create a nurturing and dynamic environment where our students can thrive, and I am proud to share the progress and achievements from this past year.

1. Leading Teaching and Learning

This year has seen a continued focus on enriching our teaching and learning environment. Within the classroom, aside from incursions and similar, we introduced new pets—guinea pigs—which have provided students with valuable opportunities to engage in the care of living things and to deepen their understanding of environmental responsibility. This hands-on experience has been both educational and highly engaging for the children.

We also held other incursions over the year, the Coastal Environment Incursion being one of them. This experience supported students' learning through real-world connections and interactive activities, further enhancing their understanding of environmental studies.

In addition, new classroom and outdoor materials were introduced, contributing to an improved and more stimulating learning environment that supports a range of learning styles and needs.

2. Leading the Management of the School

Significant progress has been made in strengthening the operational foundations of the school.

We have successfully completed our Kindergarten re-registration with NESAs for the next five years, reaffirming our compliance and ongoing commitment to high-quality education standards.

Enrolment numbers have remained strong, with our August census reflecting the highest numbers to date. This is a positive indicator of the confidence families have in our school community and high fidelity Montessori education standards.

We have also begun discussions and sourced initial quotes for the renovation of student bathrooms, an important step in improving school facilities.

To support our growing and evolving needs, new staff members have been employed to accommodate part-time requirements. Additionally, the Office Administrator and accounting roles were combined into a single position to streamline operations and improve efficiency.

Regarding HR, the Fair Work Commission has approved the new Enterprise Agreement for Karuna.

This also prompted increases in pay rates to show our appreciation and commitment to our staff community.

3. Leading Improvement, Innovation, and Change

Our focus on continuous improvement has led to several important initiatives.

Proposals have been introduced to further develop subcommittee roles, supporting stronger governance and fostering increased community engagement.

We also explored the possibility of additional premises to support future growth, ensuring we are planning proactively for the school's development.

To assist with enrolment planning, a Kindergarten Advance Fee has been introduced. This initiative is designed to provide greater certainty around student numbers, enrolment capacity, and projections.

Additionally, we have introduced a Vacation Care program, expanding the services we offer to families and supporting our community more broadly.

4. Developing Self and Others

We remain committed to the ongoing development of our staff.

Through continued mentoring and targeted professional learning, staff are supported in refining their practice and building their capacity. This investment in our team ensures that students benefit from high-quality teaching and a positive learning environment.

5. Engaging and Working with the Community

Our strong sense of community continues to be a cornerstone of Karuna Montessori School.

The Parent Education Sessions over the year were well attended and received very positive feedback, with many parents expressing how valuable they found the experience.

We enjoyed a number of well-supported community events, including the Easter Hat Parade, our Welcome Back Picnic (a new initiative this year), and our Working Bees. Each of these events provided meaningful opportunities for families to connect and contribute to the school.

Our Mother's Day AND Father's Day celebrations were also a great success, with a wonderful turnout from families.

The Open Classrooms for each term were again very well attended, reflecting strong parent engagement in their children's learning.

Conclusion and Acknowledgements

In closing, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our dedicated staff for their ongoing commitment and professionalism. I would also like to

acknowledge our board members for their guidance, commitment, and support.

Most importantly, thank you to our parents and volunteers. Your involvement, generosity, and partnership play a vital role in the life of our school. Whether through attending events, supporting initiatives, or contributing your time and energy, your efforts are deeply appreciated and make a meaningful difference to our community.

Thank you all for your continued support.

Kindest regards,

Sabine Adigun - Principal

Information about Karuna

Contextual information about the school

Student outcomes in standardised national literacy and numeracy testing N/A

Student performance in state-wide tests and examinations

N/A

Teacher professional learning, accreditation, and Qualifications

Staff participated in a range of professional development activities at Karuna which are planned according to specific needs for further learning and professional growth.

Description of the Professional Learning Activity	No of staff Participating
Montessori Curriculum Areas	4
Supporting Neurodiverse Children in the Classroom	
Behaviour Guidance and Management	4
First Aid, CPR, and Asthma Management Anaphylaxis Management training	3
Identifying and responding to children and young people at risk	4
QIP review	4
Montessori Philosophy	4

Teacher Accreditation

Level of accreditation	Number of Teachers
Proficient	1
Provisional	0

Category	Number of teachers
Teachers who have teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia.	1
Teachers have a bachelor's degree from a higher education institution within Australia, or one obtained overseas and recognised by NESAS.	1
Teachers not having qualifications as described in (i) and (ii) but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge to the teaching context. Such teachers must have been employed to 'teach' in NSW before 1 October 2004 (either on a permanent, casual or temporary basis) and as a 'teacher' during the last five (5) years in a permanent, casual, or temporary capacity.	0

Workforce Composition

Teaching Staff	2
Full-time equivalent Teaching Staff	2
Non-teaching staff	1
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	1

Senior secondary outcomes

N/A

Management of student non-attendance

The school implements policies and procedures for the management of non-attendance. Student absences from the school will be identified and recorded in a consistent manner using the school register. Unexplained absences from classes or school will be followed up in an appropriate manner with the student and /or their parent or guardian.

Average Attendance:

Year level Attendance rate %

Kindergarten 86%

Retention of Year 10 to Year 12 (where relevant)

N/A

Post-school destinations (secondary schools only)

N/A

Priority of Enrolment Policy

Introduction

Northern Beaches Montessori Association in running Karuna Montessori School accepts and acknowledges that the enrolment procedures followed may be discretionary in nature, giving preference to some individuals while possibly disadvantaging others.

The enrolment process must be seen to be, non-discriminatory on the basis of race, religion, beliefs, social position or sex (other than for the balance described above), and also with regard to physical or mental disabilities.

The procedures in this policy are designed to achieve the above enrolment balance while attempting to achieve placements resulting in a full enrolment.

This policy seeks to make the enrolment process more transparent.

The enrolment will not exceed thirty (30) children per day, being the maximum allowable under the ECEC license.

The following procedures deal with the enrolment issues of:

- Waiting Lists
- Placement Offers
- Open Days
- Parent Information Evenings
- Other Issues

Aim

To ensure a fair and equitable administration of the Enrolment waiting list, and to fill and balance (on gender and age) the student places.

Procedure

Waiting Lists:

- The Enrolments Administrator is responsible for keeping a waiting list of prospective enrolments. In the first instance, this list should be in chronological order, giving preference to potential families who have been on the list the longest and within the above parameters.
- Priority in offering placements go to:
- Children of families that are current or past members of the Association (i.e., they have or have had a child enrolled at the school). If at the time of a placement offer, it is known that a previous child of the family did not complete the three-year program at Karuna (as defined in their placement contract), then any preferential treatment is forfeited, and discretion may be exercised against making a subsequent placement offer.
- Children who are currently attending the Karuna Under 3 Program with the same conditions as above.
- The Enrolment Administrator will keep families on the Waiting List and families informed of events at the school through email and other publicity items, including invitations to Open Days, Parent Information Evenings, etc. The Enrolment Administrator is also responsible for communicating with these families to keep their contact details current.

Offer of Placement:

- Placement Offers will be made from time to time to fill vacancies and recruit a new cohort (a year's intake) by

the Enrolment Administrator. The Enrolment Administrator should discuss all planned placement offers with the Director to assess the child's suitability and when a new child will be attending the school.

- When making placement offers to a cohort, the first-round offers should be made by early May, as other schools make offers in this period and to avoid families on our waiting list accepting earlier offers.
- Offers are to be made with the above goals, priority and preference in mind i.e. age and gender balancing, chronological priority except for any preference given to current/past members. Families not committed to the full three-year cycle will be given a lower priority.
- History has shown (and it is common sense) that some members of a cohort will not complete a full three-year cycle – whether due to the family moving for work, financial difficulties, or other reasons. Thus, with some expected dropouts each year, a new cohort slightly larger than one-third of the class size can be accommodated.
- Children who have not reached their third birthday cannot be enrolled as per the ECEC license.
- The Agreed School Cycle for a child begins on enrolment (sometime after their 3rd birthday) and continues for approximately 3 years. The minimum time for its completion is determined as follows:
 - a) if the child's birthday falls on or before 30 June, then completion of the cycle means completion of Term Four in the year of the child's 5th birthday.
 - b) a child whose birthday is in the above category, is encouraged to stay for an additional year, being the end of Term Four in the year of the child's 6th birthday.
 - c) if a child's birthday falls after 30 June, then completion of the cycle means completion of Term Four in the year of the child's 6th birthday.
- A Placement Agreement is to be signed by the child's parents/ guardians, the Director and the Enrolment Administrator for each new child. This is to be accompanied by the payment of a non-refundable Placement Fee and a bond. The Agreement also needs to state the first year's membership fees for the Association (i.e. the amount of the fee in the year the child starts, not necessarily the year the agreement is signed). This amount should be checked with the Treasurer.

Open Days:

- One of the most important tasks of the year for the Enrolments Officer is the coordination of the Open Day. The Enrolments Officer in conjunction with the Promotions Officer and the Enrolments Administrator should provide overall coordination and oversight for the preparations for the day.
- A checklist for jobs to be done for Open Days is available.

Parent Information Evenings:

- The Enrolments Administrator is responsible for organising one information evening per term in consultation with the principal. This is an opportunity for prospective parents to hear more about Karuna and the Montessori Method. Invitations should be extended to current parents, families who have been offered a placement or are on the waitlist, and other prospective parents seeking information.

Other Issues:

- The Enrolments Administrator is to liaise with parents and the Director with regard to the pre-commencement interview/s and the coordinating of starting dates.
- The Enrolments Administrator is to liaise with the Director for the arranging of Observation Visits by current and prospective parents, and other members of the public.

Evaluation

Successful orientation and enrolment procedures promote smooth transitions between home and service. Information sharing and the signing of authorizations ensures a safe and secure environment for the child.



Enrolment and Orientation Policy

INTRODUCTION

Karuna Montessori Preschool is committed to ensuring that orientation and enrolment processes are planned and implemented to 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.

At Karuna Montessori Preschool, we will ensure:

- Children are provided with support and comfort to settle into the service and establish new friendships and relationships;
- A thoughtful process is planned in consultation with families, to assist in separating from their child;
- Educators are provided with a clearly explained enrolment process; strategies to support families in introducing children to our service, time to develop close professional
- relationships with families; and information about custodial issues if relevant.
- Home language, cultural background and family priorities are considered at all times during the process.

PURPOSE

Enrolment and orientation procedures form the foundation for strong relationships between families and early education and care settings and promote a quality experience of education and care for children.

Good procedures include consistent information around service operation and authorisations, promoting compliance and a safe and secure environment for children and families.

STRATEGIES

Karuna Montessori Preschool welcomes visits from prospective parents. Parents are invited to attend a tour/classroom observation. This provides them with the opportunity to view the classroom in action and meet the Principal and educators. Questions can be answered, and the Montessori pedagogy and philosophy more fully explained.

DEFINITIONS

The Student Population

The student population consists of children aged from 3-6 years of age. The cultural mix of the school is varied, and most families live locally.

SUMMARY OF ENROLMENT PROCEDURE

- Upon an enquiry, families are encouraged to book a school tour
- Families can then choose to be placed on the waiting list by completing the waiting list form.
- The preschool will send an email confirming receipt of the child's Waitlist form
- When a place is available, families are directed to complete the online Enrolment Application form. Following the completion of this form, an Interview is scheduled between the family and the principal.

- In instances where the family opts to bypass the waiting list and enrol, they are to complete the necessary online enrolment form.

Successful Applications

- Following the success of the interview, families are sent a placement agreement offering a position at Karuna Montessori Preschool along with the NBMA application form. Families must sign and return the placement agreement within 2 weeks. Upon receipt, an invoice will be issued for the placement and enrolment fees.
- Families will be provided with a Start Strong Fee Relief Declaration form that must be signed and returned to accounts.
- Families will be provided with a Start Strong Consent form that must be signed and returned to the Enrolments Officer
- Once all applicable fees have been paid by the family, their place at Karuna is secured and the family will receive a letter of offer detailing the child's orientation and start date. In some instances, the child may attend multiple orientation visits before their official commencement at Karuna Montessori.

APPLYING TO ENROL

The Enrolment Application Form must be completed by each family applying to enrol their child at Karuna. At enrolment, parents are encouraged to provide any further information about their child that will support the continuity of care between home and the service. The Enrolment Application Form will include the following information for each child and their parents/carers:

- Full name, date of birth and address of the child.
- Name, address and contact details of each parent of the child; any emergency contacts; any person nominated by the parent to collect the child from the service; any person authorised to consent to medical treatment or to authorise the administration of medication to the child; any person authorised to give approval for an educator to take the child out of the service.
- Visa information if applicable (for non-Australian citizens)
- Details of court orders, parenting orders or plans if applicable.
- Details of court orders relating to the child's residence or contact with a parent or other person if applicable.
- Gender of the child.
- Language used in the child's home.
- Cultural background of the child and the child's parents.
- Any special considerations for the child (e.g. cultural, religious or dietary requirements or additional needs).
- Authorisations for our service to seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service, and transportation of the child by an ambulance service.
- Authorisation for the service to take the child on regular outings.
- Name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service.
- Details of any allergies or anaphylaxis diagnosis.

- Any medical management plan, anaphylaxis/asthma/diabetic management or risk minimisation plan.
- Details of dietary restrictions for the child.
- Immunisation status of the child.
- Sunscreen and Tick Policy
- Privacy Statement
- Consent Authorisations relating to medical treatment, Publicity Authority

All information will be checked before enrolment is complete including the child's immunisation status. Applications for Enrolment will proceed with an interview between the child, parent(s) and the Directress/Principal. The interview is an opportunity to determine the child's suitability for the Montessori program.

The Privacy Statement details:

- the name and contact details of the service;
- the fact that enrolling parents/guardians are able to gain access to their information.
- why the information is collected;
- the organisations to which the information may be disclosed;
- any law that requires the particular information to be collected;
- the main consequences for not providing the required information.

Enrolment forms will be checked and updated annually by families, or when a family's circumstances change, to ensure information is current and correct.

PRIORITISATION

Karuna Montessori Preschool prioritises students in the following way.

- Children of families who are committed to completing the three-year cycle (with the final year being the Kindergarten year).
- Children who are at least 4 years old on or before 31 July in that preschool year and not enrolled or registered at a school;
- Children who are at least 3 years old on or before 31 July in that preschool year who are:
 - Children from low-income families
 - Children with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
 - Children with disability or additional needs
- Children who are at least 3 years old on or before 31 July in that preschool year with English language needs.
- Siblings of children currently enrolled at Karuna Montessori Preschool
- Transfers of 4- and 5-year-old children from other Montessori schools
- Children who are at risk of significant harm (from a child protection perspective).

NOTICE OF A PLACEMENT

Demand can often exceed the 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.

Following the Interview and providing the Directress/Principal is confident of the child's readiness and suitability to the Montessori program; a placement is offered and a commencement and orientation date is proposed. Parents have 2 weeks to confirm if they accept the offer of a placement before the placement offer lapses. Should a placement offer lapse, parents will need to resubmit a waitlist application.

ACCEPTANCE OF A PLACE

Upon accepting the placement offer, the family is to provide the following:

- A signed Placement Agreement
- A completed Enrolment Form including all authorisations
- The child's current immunisation record and a signed Immunisation Record form
- Birth certificate, passport or other identification accepted under the Children
- (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010.
- 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 information
- (This information will be kept at the school in accordance with the school's policies and the Education and Care Services and National Regulations 2011).
- A signed Fee Relief Declaration

DETERMINING READINESS

The decision to admit a child is discretionary and is taken only after the Directress/Principal has met with the family and conducted an assessment of the child's readiness and suitability to the program. Considerations may include the child's level of independence such as toileting (as required by Education and Care Services National Regulations) and separation from caregivers. In addition, all enrolments/placements are conditional following a successful 6-week trial period.

Very occasionally after commencement, the Directress/Principal may deem that the child is not settling well (e.g. separation anxiety, toileting problems). The Directress/Principal 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 a term's delay.

Karuna Montessori Preschool will endeavor to work with the family to support the child in attending school. However, if all support avenues have been explored and the situation has not been resolved, support will be given to find solutions outside of the services offered by Karuna Montessori Preschool.

Very rarely, the Directress/Principal may deem that the Montessori environment is not suited to a child and may therefore recommend that another educational philosophy be pursued.

INTAKE PERIODS

To deliver a holistic Montessori service, families need to be committed to completing the Montessori cycle, which is usually 2.5 to 3.5 years. Children are admitted to the school in Terms 1, 2 and 3. Children may be admitted to the school in Terms 3 however, children will need to be enrolled before the preschool census commences in early August or else families may not be eligible to receive fee relief. Children are rarely admitted in Term 4, and then only at the Directress/Principal's absolute discretion.

Children are usually admitted in the term when they turn 3 years of age. However, the Directress/Principal 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 other children. The start date is dependent on the Directress/Principal's assessment of the child, irrespective of whether the child is a sibling.

PROGRAM SESSIONS

Upon receiving a placement offer, your child's program session will be confirmed via the administrator. Your child's program is dependent upon session availability and readiness, as determined by the Principal during the interview stage and throughout the settling-in period.

To request a change to your child's program, a written request must be made to info@karuna.com.au and an appointment must be scheduled with the school Principal to discuss your child's readiness to increase their days. Session changes are subject to availability.

Requests to reduce program hours are not granted except for specific circumstances and must be discussed and approved by the Principal

ORIENTATION PROCESS

Prior to commencement, new families will receive the following documentation to assist in preparing the child for preschool.

- The family is sent a Welcome pack which includes the Parent Handbook, First Day Helpful Hints, Nut Awareness Policy and Procedure, KinderM8 Family Lounge User Guide as well as the school's Term and Calendar Dates. Families will have access to view more policies in the KinderM8 platform.

The child must attend the orientation visit(s) prior to their start date.

The Directress/Principal/principal will communicate any settling-in concerns with the child 'parents in the initial weeks of enrolment and is available for an informal chat if required.

The orientation and settling-in period will consider and respect the needs of both families and children.

We will always consider the feelings and time constraints that families may have in regard to participating in orientation processes and aim to make the experience a positive and welcoming introduction to the service.

Karuna Montessori Preschool will provide options for orientation for families which include:

- Inviting new families to visit the service with their child at a mutually suitable time, to familiarise families with the service prior to the child's attendance – visits may occur multiple times and until a child feels comfortable with their new preschool environment
- Providing all new families with a tour of the premises which will include introductions to other educators.
- Ensuring each family has a Welcome Pack.
- Providing the opportunity to have any questions answered.
- Ensuring all new families are encouraged to share information about their child and any concerns, doubts or anxieties they may have in regard to enrolling their child 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, via a meeting with the parents if deemed necessary.

The teacher will meet with the parent/s and child and 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 a visit/s during 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. During the first couple of weeks, parents are welcome to phone and check how their child is settling. The first two weeks of a child's enrolment will involve a build-up of hours until they are ready to attend the full duration of their program. The Directress/Principal/principal will be guided by the child and how they are managing at school and the Directress/Principal/principal will liaise with the parents to determine the best approach to helping their child settle to preschool.

A typical staggered start may begin with 30 minutes on the first day, 60 minutes on the second day and so on until the child is comfortable and settled. This transition typically spans from 1 to 2 weeks.

THREE YEAR CYCLE

Early withdrawal of a child from the 3-year learning cycle is disadvantageous for the child and for the school. The child misses the most fruitful part of the Montessori experience and later learning materials. 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/her understanding of the world. If a child is withdrawn prematurely, the remaining Kindergarten 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.

KINDERGARTEN

If a child is turning 5 prior to 31st July or will turn 6 at any time in the year, they will be eligible to be a part of the first year of the school program (kindergarten).

Access and accommodation adequacy for disabled children shall be provided in accordance with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (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

In all instances, Karuna Montessori Preschool will follow the AIS guidelines for Enrolling and Supporting Students with Disability.

The Disability Discrimination Act deals in broad terms with what is required of schools for compliance with the Act. The standards clarify, and set out in more detail, the obligations of schools in relation to students and prospective students with disability. The Standards impose positive obligations with which a school must comply. It is unlawful to contravene the obligations set out in the

Standards.

IMMUNISATION REQUIREMENTS

It is currently a requirement of admission at the school that the child's immunisation status is as prescribed by the NSW Department of Health. The school needs to keep a copy of the Immunisation Record for each child. Under the current NSW legislative requirements (Public Health Act 2010) 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 childcare 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 an immunisation provider

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

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

WITHDRAWAL

Parents/Guardians must give one full term's written notice to the Principal of their intention to withdraw their child from the school. The deadline for giving this notice is by 9.00 am on the first day of the term prior to the proposed withdrawal date. Failure to provide sufficient notice will incur a full terms fees.

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 Directress/Principal

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

CUSTODY ARRANGEMENTS

The Education and Care Services National Law requires our service to have details of all custodial and access arrangements. Enrolling family members are responsible for informing the Nominated Supervisor of custody and access arrangements on enrolment, and must advise the Nominated Supervisor immediately of any subsequent alterations to these arrangements. All relevant legal documentation is to be shown to the Nominated Supervisor and a copy will be maintained in the child's enrolment record.

THE STANDARDS OF EDUCATION

The standards address 5 areas: enrolments, participation, curriculum, development, accreditation and delivery; student support services; and elimination of harassment and victimisation.

In each area, the Standards set out:

- the rights of students – these are included to assist people to understand and comply
- with the standards set out in the obligation provisions;
- the legal obligations of schools – these are the standards with which the school must
- comply; and
- measures which, if implemented, will be evidence of compliance and provide a defence in the event of

litigation. However, the measures may not cover the needs of all students with disability, or all educational level and contexts, and full compliance with the standards may require additional or alternative actions. Schools may comply with their obligations in ways other than the measures.

More information is provided at education.com.au/disability-standards-education-2005

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT

An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with a disability to:

- apply for admission or enrolment;
- participate in courses or programs; and
- use facilities or services, on the same basis as a student without a disability. Adjustments may include administrative, resource and facilities, or procedural modifications, depending on the needs of the student.

An adjustment is reasonable if it achieves this purpose while considering the student's needs and balancing the interests of the student, the school, the staff, and other students. When assessing this, regards should be had to all relevant circumstances and interests, including;

- the impact of the student's disability
- the views of the student or the student's associate (this includes parents/carers)
- the effect of the proposed adjustment on the student, including on the student's:
 - ability to achieve learning outcomes;
 - ability to participate in programs or courses;
 - independence.
- the effect of the proposed adjustment on anyone else affected, including the staff, school, and other students; and
- the costs and benefits of the adjustment.

It is important to identify the adjustment before determining what is reasonable.

A key aspect of the Standards is that the School is required to consult with the student and/or his/her parent/carer about the proposed adjustment. This consultation can and should occur as part of the collaborative planning process.

UNJUSTIFIABLE HARDSHIP

When the DDA requires a school to consider all measures required to meet a prospective student's needs, it does not require schools to accommodate a student or prospective student where to do so would require making a reasonable adjustment that would cause unjustifiable hardship to the school. That is, required adjustments to enable a student with a disability to access education would impose an unreasonable burden on the school and are therefore not required to be made. The failure to make adjustments in these circumstances would not constitute unlawful disability discrimination.

It is important not to confuse the concepts of reasonable adjustment and unjustifiable hardship. It is necessary to first decide if the adjustment is reasonable and then decide if making the adjustment will impose an unjustifiable hardship.

The unjustifiable hardship defence is available, not only at the point of enrolment but also in relation to all aspects of a student's education throughout their enrolment at the school.

In determining what constitutes 'unjustifiable hardship, all the relevant circumstances of the particular case must be taken into

account, including the following factors:

1. The nature of the benefit of the detriment likely to accrue, to be suffered by, and the person concerned. This will involve weighing the benefits/detriments of the reasonable adjustment to all parties including the students and the school as well as the interests of the community at large.
2. The effect of the disability of any person concerned.
3. The financial circumstances and the estimated expenditure required to be made by the school to make the adjustment.
4. The availability of financial and other assistance to the school.
5. Any relevant action plans that address the reasonable adjustment and the impact it would have on the person or institution.

The threshold for successfully relying on the defence of 'unjustifiable hardship' is high. What is unjustifiable hardship will always depend on the particular extent of the student's needs and the circumstances of the school.
Disability Discrimination Act 1992, Section 11

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Enrolments Officer will oversee:

- Providing enrolment packages
- Maintaining a waiting list
- Maintaining an immunisation register
- Tracking placement fees
- Offering places in line with this policy and providing relevant paperwork for families in accordance with this policy.
- Storing completed enrolment forms in a lockable file as soon as practicable.

EDUCATORS

- 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 Principal / Business Manager, as required
- Ensuring that enrolment forms are completed prior to the child's enrolment at LMP.
- Ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, except where this may pose as 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 welcome 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
- to settle in at Karuna Montessori Preschool.

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 the 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 a 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.

Policies for Student welfare

Policies for student discipline

Karuna Montessori School aims to: provide a safe and supportive environment for its students to learn in; respect the philosophy and ethics of Montessori philosophy; provide student welfare policies and programs that develop a sense of self-worth and foster personal development.

To ensure that all aspects of the school's mission for providing for a student's welfare are implemented, the following policies and procedures are in place:

Policy	Changes	Access to the full text
<p>Student Welfare Policies encompassing the following procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision & support of Students • Code of Conduct for Staff & Students • Duty of care & Legal Liability • Legislative requirements • Behaviour Management • Anti-bullying • Anti-Bias Statement • Promotion of Respect & Responsibility within the student body • Child Protection 	<p>Updated Child protection policy, recruitment policy, safe environment policy around child safety</p>	<p>All Staff and members of the school community via the office, kinderm8, Family lounge and website</p>
<p>Communications encompassing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications – including complaints & grievances • Family Lounge/Kinderm8 communications • Procedure of parent and teacher conferences • Parent Information Evenings • Open Days 	<p>Updated to reflect new technology rules around children</p>	<p>All Staff and members of the school community via the office, kinderm8, Family lounge and website</p>

Full policy information for all the above can be accessed by the school community via our website as well as view a hardcopy on the premises which is always accessible.

The disciplinary model within the Montessori environment encourages self-discipline and positive approaches to misbehavior.

The Montessori approach alleviates many disciplinary problems by helping the child gain skills in self-discipline and mediation within a controlled environment. The mixed age group of the classroom allows the younger children to emulate mature behaviour in the environment.

Should disciplinary procedures need to be undertaken by the school, they will vary according to the seriousness of the alleged offence; however, these will always be based on

principles of procedural fairness. (Procedural fairness is defined by the NSW Department of Education to include a right of review of the decision made in response to allegations.) A full text of the school's Discipline Policy and associated procedures are accessible by all members of the school community through the school's website and a hardcopy is kept in the office.

Karuna Montessori 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 school.

Full policy information for all of the above can be accessed by the school community via our website www.karuna.com.au as well as view a hardcopy on the premises which is accessible at all times.

Complaints & Grievances

Karuna Montessori School has in place a policy for dealing with complaints and grievances raised by students and/or parents. These processes will incorporate, as appropriate, principles of procedural fairness.

A full text of the school's Grievance Policy and associated procedures are accessible to all members of the school community through our website www.karuna.com or Kinderm8 Family Lounge

2025 Priority areas for improvement:

Area	Priorities	Achievements
Marketing	Enhanced social media content	Regular social media posts
Facility	Bathroom Renovations	Quotes sourced for works to be carried out in 2026
Board/Committee	Further Governance training and an increased number of committee members	Additional board members were inducted into the committee
Risk Management	Regular risk meetings and further developing the risk framework	Regular meetings are scheduled and the risk framework is reviewed regularly
Equipment (Outdoors)	Additional play equipment	New outdoor equipment purchased
Equipment (Indoors)	Additional Montessori materials	Montessori materials
Vacation Care	Following a survey, discussion on introducing vacation care	Vacation Care established and held
Finance	Fee review	New fee schedule – increased fees to ensure financial viability

Promoting respect and responsibility.

The Montessori method helps children to build self-confidence, inner discipline and a sense of self-worth and guides them towards positive, desirable social behaviours. While encouraging independence, self-reliance, and a questioning mind, it also develops respect for other people and a caring attitude toward the child's environment. All of this is achieved in the orderly, prepared environment unique to the Montessori classroom, under the guidance of specially trained teachers.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

Parental involvement in the school is very high, with many parents holding a role on the Parent Committee. Parents are also involved with the school via working bees, fundraising, maintenance, and marketing and have a number of opportunities during the year to spend time with their children in the classroom observing their work.

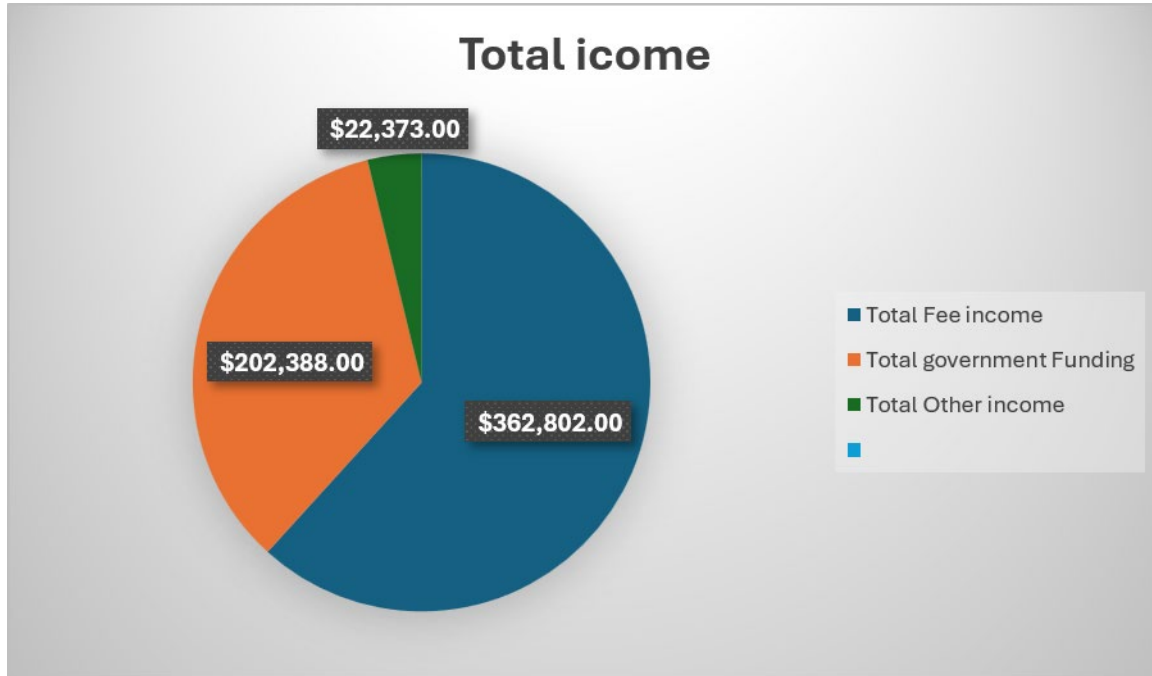
Parents are encouraged to provide feedback via email, during parent/teacher meetings, general meetings, and any other parent/school interactions.

Overall, parents continued to indicate that they were very satisfied with the facilities, the quality of the classroom materials and the quality of Montessori education provided to their children.

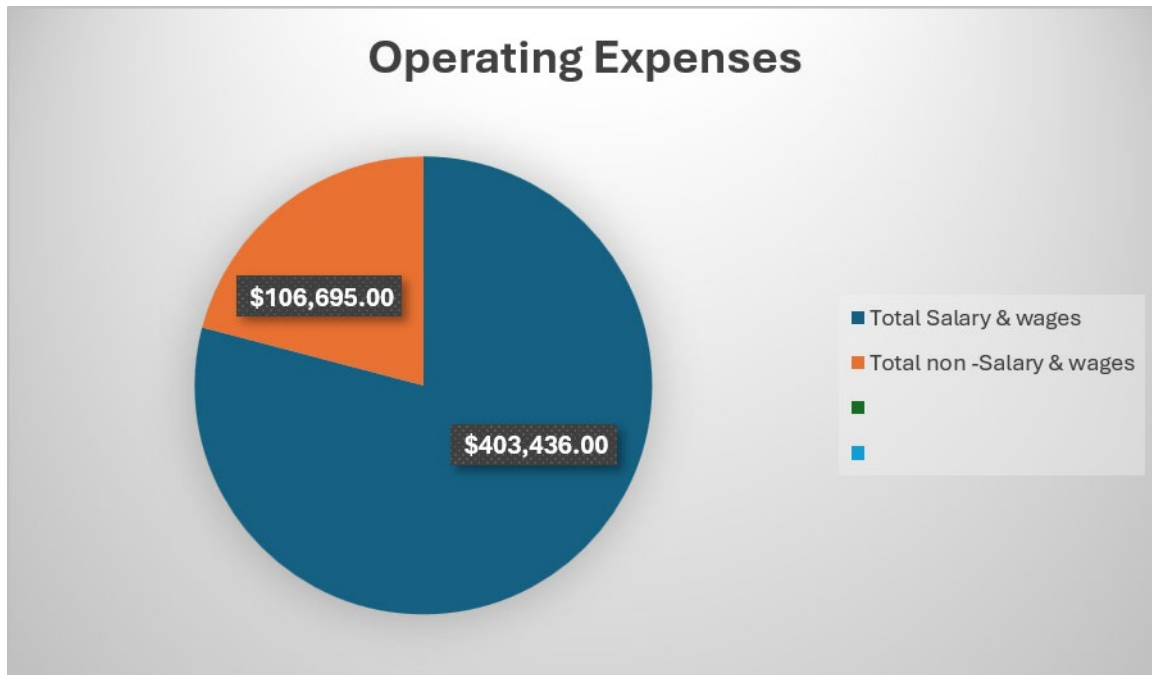
SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Summary financial information

Income:



Expenditure:



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