



# Annual Report 2023

*Education For Life*



# Principals Report

It is with great pleasure that I warmly welcome the Karuna community as I share our 2023 Annual Report. This report is as much a reflection of the challenges and opportunities of the last year but more so of the successes that we are celebrating and the anticipation for the future.

Over the past year, our school community has shown positivity, support and adaptability, as we embarked on necessary changes and improvements to secure the ongoing viability of our school and the high-quality educational offering.

This report also serves as a testament to the collective efforts of our staff community, some of which are new, and their commitment and support, which ultimately ensured reaching new heights of achievement and quality improvement.

As we review the achievements and new strengths of the past year as well as the current year, let me not forget to express my gratitude to the parents and carers who entrust us with the education and well-being of their young children. Your partnership, encouragement, and involvement via events, volunteering and parent committees are invaluable pillars of our harmonious little school community. Looking ahead, we stand at the threshold of further possibilities and opportunities. The Karuna vision is our commitment to excellence, inclusivity, and lifelong learning. Let us continue to nurture a culture of curiosity, collaboration, and compassion that empowers every member of our school community to thrive.

## Leading Teaching & Learning

To ensure a stimulating and vibrant Montessori environment for the children, we added a significant amount of classroom materials, Montessori and others, and furniture, both indoors and outdoors. We purchased a cubby house, sports and recreational equipment, new bikes and scooters, and arts and crafts materials, to name a few. Our garden beds and composting area received a makeover, and we were able to plant and grow wonderful fruit and veg with the children.

A good workflow and functioning Montessori work cycle are paramount to the Montessori classroom – we reviewed the morning and afternoon session routine and made some creative and useful changes there. The morning includes a short play at the end of the morning session and the afternoon has a significantly improved and structured program. Whilst children can still access the Montessori curriculum, particularly our kindergarteners, we have added yoga, gardening, cooking, and arts and crafts to the pm sessions. Children are also exposed to relay games and other fun sports activities.

After reviewing documentation of student learning and progress tracking, we have made some important improvements in this area. Students' individual progress is tracked and reflected upon regularly and learning plans are individualised and meaningful.

Student progress reports are issued twice per year and lovely portfolios are created and sent home each term.

## Leading Management, Improvement & Change

Compliance was a particular area of focus and over the last year all policies were reviewed, updated and/or changed – we also added some new ones. In preparation for the Assessment and Rating visit from the Department of Education, the Quality Improvement Plan and other compliance documents were either reviewed and updated or created.

The Parent Handbook and School Brochure underwent a review process, with new information and images added to ensure all school information is current and relevant.

A further achievement was the launch of an entirely new and vibrant website for Karuna Montessori late last year. We proudly presented a fresh and informative website that created a more immersive user experience and extended Karuna Montessori brand awareness. To expand on our intention to intensify our advertising and marketing efforts, better and more frequent media content is issued regularly and with encouraging feedback.

Karuna's most important improvement was expanding our enrolment/program, offering a much larger variety of attendance options and new schedule of school fees.

Karuna now offers a much wider range of program options to better cater to families' ever-changing needs. This has undoubtedly improved our enrolment numbers and increased interest in our wonderful little school.

### **Engaging & Working with the Community**

Engaging and working with the parent community is crucial for the success of our preschool. In 2023, we have aimed to implement some effective strategies to engage and collaborate with parents better and many different opportunities were created for parents to be involved and participate in school life.

#### ***Open Communication Channels and Collaboration:***

We established open lines of communication through various channels such as email updates, newsletters, social media, and parent-teacher conferences. We made sure parents felt comfortable reaching out with questions, concerns, or suggestions.

#### ***Regular Updates:***

We provided regular updates on school events, children's activities & progress, and important calendar dates. This was done through newsletters, emails, the KinderM8 app, the school website and the parent information board.

#### ***Parent Education Workshops & School Events:***

At Karuna, we organised workshops on topics relevant to parenting and education. Topics could include child development, curriculum and pedagogy specific to Montessori, mental health, teaching methods, and ways to support children's learning and well-being at home.

We also had plenty of social and feel-good community events on our calendar with end-of-the-term open classroom visits being popular with our families.

#### ***Parent Volunteering & Participation:***

Volunteering is an important way of getting involved in school life and various activities have been made available to our families. Parents can assist in class or on open days, come to working bees, organise fundraising events, or support the school on advisory and governance committees. Parents can also get involved in maintenance and parent liaison. These opportunities provide a sense of belonging, help parents feel valued and create a sense of ownership in the school community.

In closing, I extend my sincerest thanks to every one of you for your unwavering support, dedication, and enthusiasm. Together, we will continue to write the next chapter of our preschool's success story, guided by our shared vision of compassion, and responsibility and our unwavering belief in the potential of every child.

Kindest Regards,

**Sabine Adigun, Principal**

# Information about Karuna

## Contextual information About the school

For contextual information (our School's philosophy) and the characteristics of our student body, please refer to the My Schools website:

<http://www.myschool.edu.au>

### Student outcomes in standardized 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 Theory and Practice	2
Supporting Children's Neurodiversity	2
Documentation & Record Keeping	3
First Aid, CPR, and Asthma Management Anaphylaxis Management training	4
Identifying and responding to children and young people at risk	4
QIP review	3
Setting up the Montessori prepared environment	2

### Teacher Accreditation

Level of accreditation	Number of Teachers
Proficient	1
Provisional	0

Category	Number of teachers
Teachers having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia.	1
Teachers having 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 relevant 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	1
Full-time equivalent Teaching Staff	1
Non-teaching staff	1
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	0.5

### 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	92%

### Retention of Year 10 to Year 12 (where relevant)

N/A

### Post-school destinations (secondary schools only)

N/A

# Priority of Enrolment Policy

## Introduction

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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

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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

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### 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.

### Placement Offers:

- 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.

## Aim

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..

## Prioritization

During enrolment, 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 that are:
  - o Children from low-income families
  - o Children with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
  - o 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).

## Enrollment Form

The Enrolment Form must be completed by each enrolling family.

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 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.

- Details of court orders relating to the child's residence or contact with a parent or other person.
- Gender of the child.
- Language used in the child's home.
- Cultural background of the child and child's parents.
- Any special considerations for the child (e.g. cultural, religious or dietary requirements or additional need).
- 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.
- All information will be checked before enrolment is complete including the child's immunisation status.
- Sunscreen and Tick Policy
- Privacy Statement
- Consent Authorisations relating to medical treatment, Publicity Authority

## **A Privacy Statement which 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.

## Procedure

Upon an enquiry, families are encouraged to book a school tour/observation.

- 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 along with enrolment details consisting of Fees Schedule & Start Strong Funding details, About Montessori information, Frequently Asked Questions and the Karuna Montessori Preschool brochure.
- When a place is available, families are directed to complete the online Enrolment form. Following the completion of this form, an Interview is scheduled between the family and the principal to review the child's enrolment details prior to a place being offered.
- In instances where the family opts to bypass the waiting list and enrol, they are to complete the necessary online enrolment form.
- 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 conditionally refundable placement fee of \$2000.
- Families will be provided with a Start Strong Fee Relief Declaration form that must be signed and returned to accounts.
- 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 prior to their official commencement at Karuna Montessori.

- The family is sent a Welcome pack which includes the Parent Handbook, First Day Helpful Hints and details of Kinder8 Family Lounge along with their Kiosk Pin/Any authorised collectors pins.

- Prior to the agreed start date for the child, the family is to provide the following:

- o A signed enrolment agreement
  - o A completed Enrolment Form including all authorisations
  - o Completed photograph permission forms
  - o A signed Privacy Statement
  - o The child's current immunisation record and a signed Immunisation Record form
  - o Birth certificate, passport or other identification accepted under the Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010.
  - o Information on the child's additional needs (including medical conditions, health and developmental concerns), and any medical/risk management plans
  - o 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).
  - o A signed Fee Relief Declaration
- The child attends the orientation visit(s) prior to their start date.
  - The Directress/principal will communicate any settling-in concerns with the child's
  - parents in the initial weeks of enrolment and is available for an informal chat if required.

### Orientation

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 completing the full 3 hours of the morning work cycle. The directress will be guided by the child and how they are managing at school.

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.

### 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.

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 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.

### Determining Readiness

The decision to admit a child is discretionary and is taken only after the Directress has met with the family and conducted an assessment of the child's readiness. 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.

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

### Notice of Placement

Demand can often exceed 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 the parent and the Principal/Directress is scheduled.

Providing the Principal/Directress is confident of the child's readiness, a classroom visit is arranged, and a place is confirmed. If it is deemed that the child is not ready, a more suitable start date will be found.

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

Karuna Montessori Preschool will endeavour 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.

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 are



rarely admitted in Term 4, and then only at the Directress' absolute discretion.

Children are admitted usually in the term which they turn 3 years of age. However, the Directress 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' assessment of the child irrespective of whether or not the child is a sibling.

### Immunisation

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.

### The Three-Year Cycle

The Montessori philosophy works in three-year cycles and the Montessori classroom is structured accordingly.

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/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.

### Readiness for Kindergarten

During the third year at Karuna Montessori Preschool (the Extended Day program, which aligns with the NSW Kindergarten curriculum), children attend five full days per week from 8.30 am to 3.00pm.

If the 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.

### The Standards of Education

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

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 defense 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](http://education.com.au/disability-standards-education-2005)

### Reasonable Adjustments

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 person concerned. This will involve weighting 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 Nominated Supervisor will oversee:

- Providing enrolment packs
- 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 Iar (Regulation 157).
- Developing strategies to assist new families to:
  - o Feel welcomed into the service
  - o Become familiar with service policies and procedures
  - o 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 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

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</p> <p>encompassing the following procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervision &amp; support of students</li> <li>Code of Conduct for Staff &amp; Students</li> <li>Duty of care &amp; Legal Liability</li> <li>Legislative requirements</li> <li>Behaviour Management</li> <li>Anti-bullying</li> <li>Anti-Bias Statement</li> <li>Promotion of Respect &amp; Responsibility within the student body                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Protection</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Updated Child Protection Policy according to AIS.</p>	<p>All Staff and members of the school community via the office, Kinderm8 Family Lounge and website.</p>
<p>Communications</p> <p>encompassing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications – including complaints &amp; grievances</li> <li>Family Lounge/Kinderm8 communications</li> <li>Procedure of parent and teacher conferences</li> <li>Parent Information Evenings</li> <li>Open Days</li> <li>]</li> </ul>	<p>Updated to reflect new communications channel on Kinderm8 platform.</p>	<p>All Staff and members of the school community via the office and Kinderm8 Parent Handbook</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.

## Policies for student discipline

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](http://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](http://www.karuna.com) or Kinderm8 Family Lounge

**2023 Priority areas for improvement:** \_\_\_\_\_

Area	Priorities	Achievements
Administration & Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve record keeping of and student learning &amp; progress.</li> <li>• Digitizing of enrolments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student learning tracked in Kinderm8.</li> <li>• Student progress and learning plans tracked in Transparent Classroom.</li> <li>• All enrolment information is tracked in Kinderm8.</li> </ul>
Communication & Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve communication with families.</li> <li>• Increase social media activities</li> <li>• Student portfolios</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular news updates</li> <li>• Improved social media via Facebook and Instagram</li> </ul>
Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of a new website</li> <li>• Regular updates on Facebook &amp; Instagram</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wider outreach and positive engagement and feedback from the community</li> </ul>
School Promotional Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New School Handbook</li> <li>• New School Brochure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Published</li> </ul>
New enrolment program & fee schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional enrolment options in addition to the current program</li> <li>• New fee schedule</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in enrolments and general interest in the school</li> </ul>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase of new classroom resources and outdoor recreational material</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better outdoor activities in increased interest in the school from outside families</li> </ul>
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment of a Montessori qualified principal</li> <li>• Recruitment of additional, new classroom assistants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Montessori qualified principal appointed</li> </ul>

## **Initiatives 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 behaviors. 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.

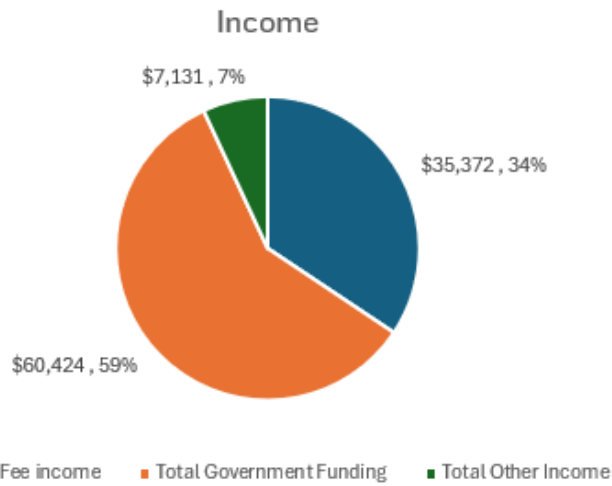
Overall, parents indicated that they were very satisfied with the facilities, the quality of the classroom materials and the quality of education.

# SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

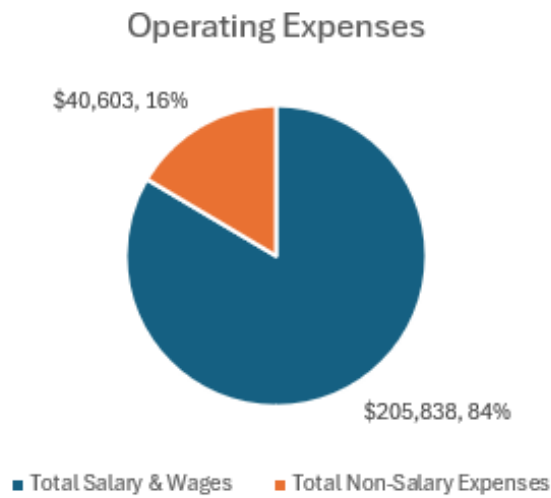
## Summary financial information

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Income:



Expenditure:



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