No other education captures the passion and sheer joy for learning
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Introduction

Cameragal Montessori School operates a primary school catering for Year 1 to Year 3 and three preprimary classrooms for three to six year olds. The primary school is located in North Sydney. The Lavender Bay campus has one preprimary classroom and Neutral Bay has two preprimary classrooms.

In accordance with the Registered and Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual, this annual report contains a summary of the following documentation on Cameragal Montessori School:

A message from key school bodies
Information about the school performance in national and statewide tests and examinations
Professional learning and teacher standards
Workforce composition
Student attendance
Enrolment policies and profiles
School policies
School determined improvement targets
Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility
Parent, student and teacher satisfaction
Summary financial information
This report covers the 2014 calendar year.
Reporting area 1: message from key bodies

Principal’s message
Marietta Courtney, Principal

2014 was my first year as Principal of Cameragal Montessori School. A small, yet dynamic, Montessori school which has taken the brave leap into primary school education with a long history of a successful preschool program.

During this year I was appointed the task of undertaking the school’s strategic projects and progress was made – increased and retained enrolments, commencement of a birth to 3 years program, streamlining administration and the continuing growth of the primary 6-9 program (Year 1 to Year 3) and further planning for the 9-12 program (Year 4 to Year 6).

Preprimary
The preprimary program is strong and continues to be popular with the families in the Lower North Shore area and families looking for quality Montessori preschool education.

Children’s Education and Care services under the Education and Care Services National Law are assessed and rated against the National Quality Standards. The focus of the National Quality Standards is to promote continuous improvement in quality for children in their early educational and development years with improved educator to child ratios, greater individual care and attention, educators with increased skills and qualifications and better support for children’s learning and development.

The Lavender Bay campus, Tiddalicks, was assessed and rated in February, 2014 and obtained the “Meeting the Standard” rating. Within this report we earned ‘Exceeding’ in Quality Standard 5, Relationships with Children. Robyn Reeve and her team are compelling, engaging and active in early childhood education and care and this is clearly apparent upon observation of the classroom. Information regarding the National Quality Framework and Education and Care Law and Regulations can be found at www.acecqa.gov.au

Preprimary continues to support the children’s learning and enrich parents experience with Cameragal. We offer STePs Vision screening for the four year old+ students, Hatch n’ Grow ducklings (which was a new experience for me) and the Taronga ‘Zoomobile’ Taronga Zoo’s Outreach Program. The Zoo incursion supported the opportunity for all the preprimary children from both campuses got together at Forsyth Park for a morning of fun and friendships. Thank you to Robyn for bravely undertaking the project of transporting 30 preschool students on a coach!

The Department of Education & Communities delivered an operational support program to preschools and day care centres to help with the preschool funding model changes and advice on planning, marketing and budgeting. A Small Biz Advisor was assigned to talk to us about marketing of the preschool model – which is simply that we offer a preparation program for school and the focus on providing the education and skills needed for school life.

Cameragal 6-9 Primary
The 6-9 primary classroom is an energetic and dynamic environment. Rebecca Dallam was joined this year by Claudia Wright as assistant. Claudia comes to us with many years experience in the Montessori 6-9 environment and with the 6-9 age group.
The primary school commenced in 2013 and has continued to grow in 2014 to thirteen students, 10 girls and 3 boys.

Year 1: 8
Year 2: 4
Year 3: 1

The next round of building works were completed and we have functioning amenities with a wonderful outdoor decking area and accessible ramps and walkways.

The Going Out program commenced with small groups going to the local library, Stanton Library and an overnight excursion to ZooSnooz at Taronga Zoo.

We are intrepid travellers in primary, with the students travelling to other Montessori schools for a sister school visit and a literature festival.

Our sport of choice for term 4 is surfing. Students travel via ferry to North Steyne, Manly to join this weekly lesson. This gave students the opportunity to gain confidence in the water and also build on our Going Out program with much to be responsible for on this outing!

The primary students participated in the North Sydney Council event ‘The Children’s Art Exhibition 2014’, the theme was ‘Once Upon a Time’. One of the primary students received a special prize for her winning entry.

Parent Education
Parent education continues to be an essential component of school life. Engaging current and prospective families to learn about Montessori education and what it can offer for your child and your family is an ongoing mission.

Our teaching staff are talented and eloquent speakers who guided parents through the Montessori mathematics and language materials this year. Usually we offer a guest speaker and this year the topic was ‘Anxiety in Young Children’.

We hosted a Montessori Australia Foundation Workshops on Music and are continuing to support Montessori nationally and internationally. Plus showcasing our school to the greater Montessori community.

Our new parent information evening – ‘Montessori for Beginners’ attracted prospective, new and current families. This annual event gives parents the opportunity to understand the Montessori philosophy and how it translates in practice.

Cameragal Montessori Under 3s
In Term 2 we opened Cameragal Montessori Under 3s with classes for toddlers and infants at Mosman Baptist Church hall in Mosman.

Stephanie Rigopoulos has transformed the environment, against great odds, into a thriving community. She was joined in July by Peta Gibson, who is teaching the infants classes. Peta brings her extensive knowledge and experience both as an educator and as a parent (5 children through Montessori). Stephanie and Peta have formed
an impressive team, and the wisdom imparted to our families is invaluable. The Under 3s parent education evenings are popular, particularly ‘Montessori in the Home’ and of course the famous ‘Toilet Learning’.

**Staff**
The staff are the foundation and creators of the wonders that occur at the school and the magic that happens every day in the creation of the Prepared Environment. Their drive to provide our students with an excellent Montessori education is outstanding and I thank them for their dedication, ingenuity and expertise.

Thank you to the administration staff, enrolments and finance, who are the back-bone of the school and supporting us all, staff, students and parents. They are a wealth of information and knowledge and for this I am truly grateful.

Marietta Courtney
Principal

*Once Upon a Time*
Reporting area 2: contextual information about the school
As at Term 4, 2014 there were 99 children enrolled in the School between three to nine years of age of boys and girls. Most of the families are from the Lower North Shore catchment area.

Cameragal Montessori School is an Australian Public Company Limited by Guarantee. The School is therefore regulated by the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth). The School is a Charitable Institution ie. an institution that is established and run to advance or promote a charitable purpose and is endorsed to access the following tax concessions, GST Concession, Fringe Benefit Tax Rebate and Income Tax Exemption.

Reporting area 3: standardised national literacy & numeracy testing
Cameragal Montessori School participated in Year 3 NAPLAN in 2014. Data not published due to low student cohort.

MySchool website link for more information: http://www.myschool.edu.au/

Reporting area 5: professional learning & teacher standard
All four teachers have qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines (“category 1”).

Annual expenditure on Professional Learning for 2014 was $8,189.

Staff attended the following professional development:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Development Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Montessori Australia Foundation, Music Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Safety in Primary Schools, AIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iPads in Action, Primary, AIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals of Small Schools, AIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety &amp; Learning Difficulties, LDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in Educational Leadership Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGA Capital Grants Program, AIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montessori Australia Conference – 3-6, 6-12 &amp; Administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify &amp; Respond to Children &amp; Young People at Risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACWA Responding to Child Protection allegation against employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide an Emergency First Aid Response in an Education &amp; Care Setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Partnerships, Autism Spectrum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Improvement Plan Briefing, AIS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocacy Masterclass</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Reporting area 6: workforce composition

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Staff</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTE Teaching Staff</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-teaching staff</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTE non-teaching staff</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cameragal Montessori School does not record or request to know the ethnicity of staff. As a Montessori school we embrace all faiths and backgrounds of both our staff and students. We are not specifically aware of the employment of Indigenous staff.

**Reporting area 7: student attendance**

The average attendance for the School population:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW requires that the Principal of a registered non-government school must keep a register, in a form approved by the Minister, of enrolments and daily attendances of all children at the School.

Cameragal Montessori School ('School') will monitor the daily attendance and absences of students in the School by maintaining a daily register for each class of students. Marking the roll each day is the responsibility of the class teacher. Contact from parents advising of absentees, via email or telephone will be provided to the School office.

Student absences from classes or from the School will be identified and recorded in a consistent manner by the class teacher. The School will contact the Department of Education & Communities, Learning Engagement Officer in the unlikely event of a child leaving the School without providing information about their enrolment at another educational provider.

Unexplained absences from classes or School will be followed up by the class teacher via telephone or email with the parent or guardian. In the event of no parental advice with regards to absences the class teacher will initially contact by telephone after 1 day and then by email. Record of date and time of contact made to be kept in the student’s file by the class teacher. The parents are required to fill in an absentee form on return.

All unexplained absences will be reported to the Principal by the class teacher for his/her determination on the follow up required. (This might include, but is not limited to, direct contact with parents or reporting to the Department of Education and Communities Learning & Engagement Officer.)

The School, class teacher will notify a parent and/or guardian by telephone or email where a student has a poor record of School or class attendance.

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

The class roll books are archived in the School’s administration office at the completion of each School year and can be accessed by the Principal, or delegated authority, at the request of parents or by Court Order.

The register of enrolments will be retained in the School office for a minimum of 5 years before archiving. The records of daily attendance (roll book and documentation substantiating absences) will be retained for a period of 7 years in the School’s administration office.
The Principal has the Minister’s delegated power to grant and cancel a certificate of exemption to the parents of children of compulsory school age from the requirement that they be enrolled at and attend school (Section 25, Education Act 1990).

The Principal has the delegated authority to grant an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12 month period for any one student.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that such leave approvals and certificates are documented and located in the student's file and entered on the student enrolment register. Absenteeism is also recorded on the student’s biannual report.

Principal will collect data for absences where the student is absent for 30 days. Principal to access the mandatory reporter section of Keep Them Safe website www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au to determine whether a report is required.

Reporting area 9: enrolment policies & characteristics of student body

Our students commence at the School when they turn three. Prior to commencement, at least one of the parents would observe a class, attend a school tour or the annual open day and parent education evenings. On commencing, there is a probation period during which time either parents or teaching staff may determine whether the environment is suitable for that particular child. (This is a rare event.) Once through the probation period, it is expected that all children will proceed to the Montessori Kindergarten programme known as the ‘Extended Day’ when they turn five, provided all the School fees are up-to-date. There are no entrance requirements or exam for entry into our Kindergarten year.

At the age of six years, the Stage 1 Montessori graduate transitions to the 6-9 classroom at the North Sydney campus. This may be the start of year or the start of the new term closest to their sixth birthday.

Student Population: In 2014 there were 99 children aged three to eight years attending the School. Of these, 28 were attending the kindergarten program and 13 were attending Year 1 to Year 2 program by December 2014.

Out of the 99 number of students at our School, 60% are of boys and 40% are of girls. Most of the students are from the Lower North Shore area. 7% of the student body are from families that speak another language in addition to English at home. There are no Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders students currently enrolled at Cameragal.

Thirty one children departed at the end of Term 4, 2014. Twenty were moving to local public schools; seven children to independent non-government private or catholic schools and four children were entering Year 1 at the Cameragal Primary campus in North Sydney.

Of the departing children, 10 completed Early Stage 1 at Cameragal and enrolled in Year 1 classes while the remainder enrolled in kindergarten at their destination schools.

See Appendix 1 for the full enrolment procedure.
Reporting area 10: school policies

Policies updated in 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Changes in 2014</th>
<th>Text accessible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/11/2014</td>
<td>Transition procedure</td>
<td>Revision for a comprehensive and relevant policy/procedure for CMS students</td>
<td>Policy Manual &amp; Google drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>preprimary to 6-9 program.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2/2014</td>
<td>Medical conditions policy</td>
<td>Assessment &amp; Rating visit – Lavender Bay</td>
<td>Policy Manual &amp; Google drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2/2014</td>
<td>Immunisation Policy</td>
<td>Assessment &amp; Rating visit – Lavender Bay</td>
<td>Policy Manual &amp; Google drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2/2014</td>
<td>Accident, Injury, Trauma &amp; Illness Policy</td>
<td>Assessment &amp; Rating visit – Lavender Bay</td>
<td>Policy Manual &amp; Google drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2/2014</td>
<td>Emergency &amp; Evacuation Policy – Lavender Bay</td>
<td>Assessment &amp; Rating visit – Lavender Bay</td>
<td>Policy Manual &amp; Google drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2/2014</td>
<td>Determining Responsible persons policy</td>
<td>Assessment &amp; Rating visit – Lavender Bay</td>
<td>Policy Manual &amp; Google drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2/2014</td>
<td>Dealing with Infectious Diseases policy</td>
<td>Assessment &amp; Rating visit – Lavender Bay</td>
<td>Policy Manual &amp; Google drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2/2014</td>
<td>Excursion Policy</td>
<td>Assessment &amp; Rating visit – Lavender Bay</td>
<td>Policy Manual &amp; Google drive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student welfare policies

The welfare of the children is of paramount importance. This is covered in several of our existing policies including:

Safe & Supportive Environment
- Security Policy
- Staff Interaction with Children
- Children with additional needs – inclusive
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Emergency & Evacuation Policies
- Rest & Sleep Policy
- Excursion policy
- Accident, injury, trauma & illness policy
- Pastoral care statement
- Anti-bullying
Discipline
Behaviour Management Policy
Code of Conduct – staff and students

Complaints & Grievances
Reporting complaints and resolving grievances policies are covered in the following:
“Conflict Resolution for Employees” in our Roles, Policies and Procedures Manual
“Grievance Procedure” in Employee Handbook

These policies are reviewed regularly and can be found in our “Roles, Policies and Procedures Manual” held at each campus.

The responsibilities of employees, including our Code of Conduct, can be found in our Staff Handbook.

A full review of all policies took place in 2014 due to DEC assessment and rating visit and BOSTES Year 3 registration visit.

Reporting area 11: school determined improvement targets
Camерagal’s priority areas for improvement in 2014 were all successfully addressed throughout the year. They included;
1. Enrolment – new and retention in all stages
2. Streamline administration processes to offer customer service to parent body
3. Continue to market, grow and develop Primary school 6-12

Reporting area 12: initiatives to promote respect and responsibility
Respect and responsibility are the founding stones of the Montessori philosophy and teaching principles. Central to Montessori philosophy is giving the children the freedom for spontaneous activity. The materials are self-correcting and the child can gauge his or her own performance. Children develop independence, responsibility, persistence and confidence in their own abilities.

They use a special set of educational materials, choosing their activity themselves as well as how long they will engage in that activity. They learn to enjoy learning, mentor younger children and explore their world in a cheerful atmosphere of orderliness, calmness and purposeful work.

Reporting area 13: parent, student and teacher satisfaction
Camерagal conducts exit surveys in the last term of the calendar year to determine the satisfaction levels of parents and their children with the program.

The Montessori approach to education is consistently seen as a positive experience and most parents cite the acquisition of independence and self-esteem as a wonderful grounding for life.

Teacher satisfaction is reflected in the excellent attendance rates and years associated with the School as well as their involvement at Committee level. This involvement allows them to actively influence their work environment and ensure that their students receive the best possible education.
Regular campus meetings with the Principal plus staff meetings termly, provide opportunities for staff to bond as a whole to become a cohesive unit.

**Reporting area 14: summary financial information**

**CMS Revenue 2014**

- Tuition: 846,356
- After School Care: 68,620
- Fundraising: 12,582
- Membership: 7,604
- Enrolment: 6,747
- Membership: 88,505
- Enrolment: 18,873
- Enrolment: 256,852

**CMS Expenditure 2014**

- Salaries & Wages: 935,015
- Recurrent Expenditure: 402,194
- Capital Expenditure: 238,119
State & Federal Funding 2014

- C'wealth Recurrent, 46%
- DEC (Pre-Prim), 43%
- NSW DET, 10%
- Sundry Grant, 1%
Appendix 1: enrolment procedure

1. A parent makes an initial enquiry.
2. The School Administrator provides the necessary information and application form and sends out the Prospectus, and the Membership application.
3. Returned forms with fees go to the School Administrator. The School Administrator formally acknowledges the application to be on the Waiting List.
4. The parent is placed on the mailing list for newsletters, information about fundraising and Parent Education Nights.
5. The parents of children who attend Cameragal Montessori Under 3s are required to fill in an application form (0-18 months) in order to be placed on the Waitlist and will receive priority of entry to school after one year of attendance in the Under 3s program
6. The School Administrator reviews and revisits the Wait List every term and communicates with the parents.
7. The Principal and the School Administrator discuss the applicants and their suitability for each class.
8. The Principal and the School Administrator decide which children would provide the best balance for each class.
9. The School Administrator contacts parents in the year preceding their child turning three years of age and provide them with the 18 to 3 years application form if needed. Parents are invited to attend a classroom observation and New Parent Afternoon session which is held in the second term of that year.
10. Places are offered in writing approximately two weeks after the New Parent Afternoon session, considering:
    - Children Services requirements in so far as they are consistent with Montessori philosophy
    - the age and sex balance of the children in the school
    - time on the waiting list
    - commitment to the full three year program
    - commitment to the primary program
    - special needs children
    - North Sydney Council residents and workers
11. Priority is given in the following order:
    a. Siblings of children already at the school provided they are formally enrolled by their second birthday. If the elder sibling has left the school, that child must have completed the full three year program. (Refer to the Sibling Return Policy.)
    b. Aboriginal children
    c. Children of staff
    d. Children enrolled in the Cameragal Montessori Under 3s
    e. Children enrolled with intention of attending primary program
    f. Children transferring from overseas and interstate Montessori schools provided the age and sex balance of the school is maintained. (See Transfers from Other Montessori Schools.)
12. Parents are given two weeks from the date of the letter to return the confirmation/acknowledgment portion of the letter that has to be signed and dated by both parents along with the bond.
13. If parents do not respond in the given time, the place is offered to the next child on the waiting list.
14. The Directresses and the School Administrator confirm the starting date. The School Administrator advises the Parent Liaison.
15. The Parent Liaison will follow up with a phone call a few days prior to the child commencing.
16. The Directress meets the child at a convenient time, usually the day before he/she commences at the school. Parents are encouraged to discuss any queries with the Directress so they fully understand the
way their child will fit into the Montessori environment. Parents receive the New Parent Pack at this meeting.

17. There is a probationary period of one term for the child and the school. If the Directress or the parents, in consultation with the Principal, consider at the end of the term that the child should not continue at Cameragal, the balance of that term’s fees and the bond will be refunded less the Administration Levy.

18. Applications for Primary are accepted from Cameragal Montessori preschools and from other Montessori preschools. As there should be no more than 10% of children without previous Montessori experience in a class, applications for Primary from non-Montessori schools are only accepted after consultation with the Principal and Primary Directress.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Contact details</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For further information please contact:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact:</strong> Marietta Courtney, Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Address:</strong> Cameragal Montessori School 181 Blues Point Road North Sydney NSW 2060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phone:</strong> (02) 9954 0344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email:</strong> <a href="mailto:admin@cameragal.nsw.edu.au">admin@cameragal.nsw.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Website:</strong> <a href="http://www.cameragal.nsw.edu.au">www.cameragal.nsw.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Postal address:</strong> PO Box 1742 North Sydney NSW 2059</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>