



cameragal
montessori
school
Help Me To Do It Myself

CAMERAGAL MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Annual Report 2017

No other education captures the passion and sheer joy for learning

JUNE 30, 2018

PO BOX 1742, NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2059

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Introduction

Cameragal Montessori School operates a primary school catering for Year 1 to Year 4 and three preprimary classrooms for students aged three years to six years old (Kindergarten).

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 state-wide tests and examinations

Professional learning and teacher standards

Workforce composition

Student attendance

Enrolment policies and profiles

School policies

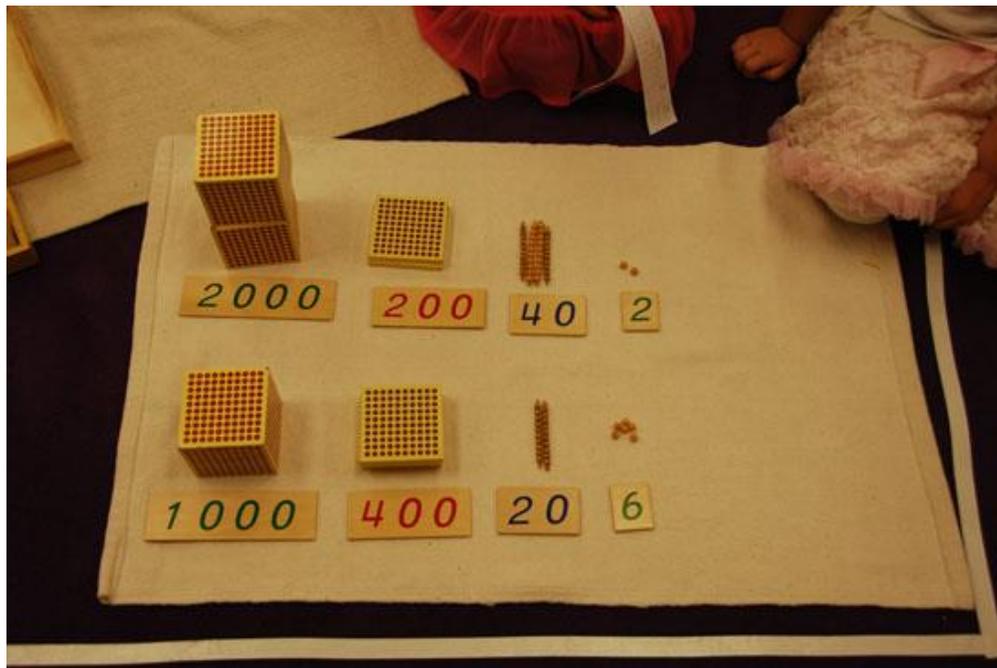
School determined improvement targets

Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility

Parent, student and teacher satisfaction

Summary financial information

This report covers the 2017 calendar year



Principal's message

Marietta E Courtney, Principal

Overview 2017

Cameragal continues to focus on the growth and stability of the School – enrolments, financial viability and consolidation of premises. This year our vision of a primary campus evolved to reality with permissions obtained from, St Peters Presbyterian Church to forge ahead with a development application for 10 Miller Street, the School Master's residence adjacent to the Primary School. Obtaining these premises has created a new space for the administration staff that offer offices with privacy, a front desk service to our clients, kitchen space for staff, Under 3s and primary plus a fitting entrance for the school. These premises will be used for Under 3s classes but ultimately it is our 9-12 classroom in 2020 or 2021. I thank Anna Ciliberto, our Property Director, for her vision, skills and energy to bring this project to life.

We have our sights on the carpark space that runs parallel to the primary school and ultimately envision this to be a primary school campus with three to four classrooms.

The School achieved another profit year in 2017 with a figure of \$89,235 and there was continued strengthening of the balance sheet with the security deposit liability reduced.

Child Safe Organisations

Child Safety – the focus and core of schools

Rightly so, child safety has expanded beyond being child protection, as something separate to the functioning of schools it is now an all-encompassing focus and drive for schools, as it should be and should have been. Child safety is now to be at the forefront of all organisations that deal with children, and everyone within that organisation, all stakeholders, are responsible. This shift puts child safety as a priority for all involved in a school from management & leadership, to staff, to contractors, to volunteers, parents, students, suppliers, visitors, observers, landlords the list goes on.

Child safety directs all that we do in a school and we all commit to this. It means a change in culture to put safety to the forefront of everything in a school from processes, procedures, activities, staff and events. This is something we as staff talk about regularly and there is so much more to be done, our internal culture has shifted to fiercely protect our students and that their safety is the utmost priority.

I ask that you all, in your capacity with the School, think about what child safety looks like in our school to transform our culture to one that puts children's safety first.

This resonates strongly it is important to children to feel safe and be safe is something that resonates strongly.

The safety of children and their rights are at the heart of Cameragal

The Office of the Children's Guardian produced Child Safe Organisation Principles were formed from the findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse to help organisations build their capacity to be safe for children.



Characteristics of child safe organisations were identified and outlined in principles:

Principle 1. The organisation focuses on what is best for children

Principle 2. All children are respected and treated fairly

Principle 3. Children's families and communities are welcome and encouraged to participate in the organisation

Principle 4. Children receive services from skilled and caring adults

Montessori education & community

At the end of 2017 saw the departure of our pioneering primary teacher, Rebecca Dallam. Rebecca is the only AMI Elementary Teacher Training in Australia and has left to pursue this role with full attention and time. We have been exceedingly fortunate to have her with us for many years and her continued support with the recruitment of a new teacher has been invaluable. Through our work together we have a sound and stable primary program that is meaningful to the teaching staff and meets the NES requirements.

Cameragal hosted an ACMS 6-12 Montessori assistant certificate course for a 10-session program in Term 3 2017 with 27 participants from Cameragal and other Sydney based Montessori schools. This show-cased our school as the trainer was our own primary teacher Rebecca Dallam.

We formally registered for the Montessori Quality Assurance Program with Montessori Australia Foundation where we will be rated to the Montessori Quality Standards.

To support attendance and the tracking of the Montessori curriculum for our students we launched Montessori Records Express at our Neutral Bay campus to ensure compliance to our attendance requirements and present our Montessori curriculum in compliance to the NSW Syllabus requirements in a format that is meaningful and purposeful for students and staff.

School Board

Our School Chair, Susan Vincent-Billing was the driving force behind a re-branding project for 2017/2018. This was an exciting time for the School where we created a new image, brand and School name for 2018/2019. The School board was strengthened by Anelida Pardini joining, who is experienced in marketing and media. With Susan's events and marketing skills saw the launch of the School's Annual Gala event in October. Susan at the end of the year with Audrey Lam taking on the Chair role. Audrey has a deep understanding and experience with Montessori education and is calm and stable influence. Audrey joins Grace Ho (Vice Chair), Paul Taylor (Treasurer), Anna Ciliberto (Property Director) and Catherine Sands (Company Secretary) into 2018.

I thank the board for their ongoing support, expertise, insight and drive to forge ahead with the School's strategic direction.

Primary

The primary students attended two camps in 2017. In March we headed to Milson Island on the Hawkesbury River and in October, to Berry on the NSW south coast for the first time. The NSW Sport & Recreation Centres are a valuable resource which offer students a fantastic opportunity to take responsibility, make good choices, problem solve together and work as a team! This has become a tradition for our school and the children, even the Year 1 students enthusiastically and bravely participate.

Primary continues to enjoy many sporting activities throughout the year – surfing, swimming, soccer, skipping (raising funds for Jump Rope for Heart) and bush-walking. The primary students visit Watt Park daily for a play before lunch and regularly visit other businesses and community services in the Lower North Shore, such as Stanton Library. The Year 1 students attend the library with a teaching staff member and an older child in their first or second term with primary, this is an important activity to learn how to manage your belongings, being polite in



public, choosing, borrowing and returning books. This also provides a leadership opportunity for a Year 3 or 4 student.

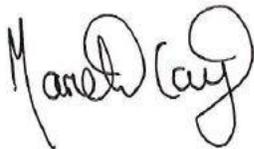
Thank you to the staff

The teaching staff, teachers and assistants, who are truly talented educators that bring more than just teaching to our students. The teaching staff create the environment that is respectful and responsive to each child's development and has their well-being – academically, socially, emotionally and spirituality as the foundation of the program. 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 Debbie Tong, Enrolments Registrar, Nikita Star, Finance Manager, who manage the complexities of an independent school with style 2017.

Also, thank you to the young people who put us back together again after the weekend - Phoebe, Bluey, Jasper D & Jasper E.

Another brilliant year at our fabulous small school!



Marietta E Courtney
Principal



Reporting area 2: contextual information about the school

As at Term 4 2017 there were 101 students enrolled between three to nine years of age, which was slightly lower than 2016 enrolment of 106. Most of the families are from the Lower North Shore and Mosman 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 which is an institution 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. Cameragal Montessori School holds an authority to fundraise under section 13A of the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 from 24 November 2016 to 23 November 2021.

The School is registered with NSW Educational Standards (NESA) for Early Stage 1 to Year 4 with renewal by the end of December 2018.

The pre-primary campuses at Neutral Bay and Lavender Bay are assessed and rated by the Department of Education & Communities and obtained the *Meeting the Quality Standard* rating.

The School has two tax deductible gift recipient funds – *Building Fund and Library Fund*. There is a compulsory donation upon enrolment to the Cameragal Fund, which is a fund to assist families in financial need.

Reporting area 3: standardised national literacy & numeracy testing

Cameragal Montessori School participated in Year 3 NAPLAN in 2017. 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 2017 was \$19,477.

Professional learning table 2017	Provider	Date	Staff attended
ACMS Montessori 6-12 Assistant Certificate	ACMS	April & July to September	7
AIS Governance Symposium	AISNSW	10 April 2017	6
Governance Workshop	MAF & AISNSW	20 May 2017	2
An Introduction to Creating Safer Independent Schools	AISNSW	26 May 2017	1
Designing Effective Scope & Sequence K-6	AISNSW	1 March 2017	2
NSW Education Standards Authority Registration Only Workshop: K-1	AISNSW	6 June 2017	2
NESA Registration & Accreditation Briefing 2018	AISNSW & NESA	25 & 28 August 2017	4
Mini-Lit	MultiLit	20 & 22 March 2017	1



		20 & 21 June 2017	1
Maintenance of Teacher Accreditation	IEU	20 March 2017	2
		24 November 2017	1
Supporting sexuality & gender diversity	IEU	3 May 2017	2
Interrupting & Challenging Homophobia	IEU	6 June 2017	1
Montessori Leadership Network	Montessori Australia Foundation	7 March 2017	1
Obligations in Identifying & Responding to Children & Young People at Risk of Harm	AISNSW	Online module at staff induction	2
Child Protection Legislation: Reportable Conduct & Allegations Against Employees	AISNSW	Online module at staff induction	2
Child Safe Organisation In-house session 1	Marietta Courtney, Principal	10 October 2017	11
Strategies for Managing Parent Complaints	AISNSW	19 July 2017	2
Provide an Emergency First Aid Response in an Education & Care Setting	Medilife	30 June 2017	8
CPR annual training	Medilife	30 June 2017	8
Meaningful Observations: Notice Recognise Respond	Gowrie NSW	6 July 2017	1
Mindfulness for Children	IEU	7 July 2017	1
Phonology Fitness K-10	Western Sydney Uni	21 July 2017	1
Sustainability	IEU	20 October 2017	1
The Business of Social Media in Schools	AISNSW	2 June 2017	1
The Mindful Project	Potential Project / AIS Leadership Centre	4 sessions August – November 2017	1
Transforming Conflict	AIS Leadership Centre	27, 28 & 29 March 2017	1
Education SEPP Seminar	AISNSW	18 September 2017	2

Reporting area 6: workforce composition

Teaching Staff	4
FTE Teaching Staff	0
Non-teaching staff	14
FTE non-teaching staff	11.2

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:

<i>Kindergarten</i>	94%
<i>Year 1</i>	97%
<i>Year 2</i>	98%
<i>Year 3</i>	96%

The Principal of Cameragal Montessori School 'School' maintains a register, in a form approved by the Minister, of the enrolments and daily attendances of all children at the school, which includes information for each student as required by Section 3.8 of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Registered and Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual.

Where the parents of a student of compulsory school age seeks an exemption from attendance at school or an exemption from enrolment, the Principal will process the parent's application in accordance with the guidelines from NSW Department of Education.

The Principal may exercise the Minister's delegation under Section 25 of the Education Act in relation to granting and cancelling a certificate of exemption from being enrolled and attending school in certain prescribed circumstances.

Cameragal Montessori School seeks to provide a child safe environment. Our School actively promotes the safety and wellbeing of our students, and our School staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in accordance with their legal and ethical obligations. Cameragal Montessori School's Child Safe policies and procedures and our Staff Code of conduct form part of this commitment.

Register of daily attendance, monitoring & follow up of attendance overview

- The Principal maintains a Register of Enrolments (preprimary and primary students).
- The Principal will monitor daily attendance and absence of students in the School by maintaining a daily attendance record for each class of students.
- Student absences from class or from the School will be identified and records in a consistent manner by the classroom teacher responsible (see NSW Minister codes).
- Unexplained absences from classes of the School will be followed up in an appropriate manner with the parent or carer – see below.
- The School will notify parents or carers in an appropriate manner where a student has a poor record of school or class attendance – see below.
- Where unsatisfactory class or school attendance is identified, the attendance issue and any action taken will be recorded, as appropriate, on the student file.
- Withdrawals – see below.
- Destination to be recorded on School roll and School Register of Enrolments – see below.
- If destination is unknown, the School will notify NSW Department of Education – see below.

Notification of absence

Parents are required to explain the absences of their children from school promptly and within seven days to the School. An explanation for absence must be provided to the School within seven (7) days of the first day of any period of absence. Parents are asked to call the School, write an excuse via email or using the Skoolbag App for their child's absence or late arrival/early departure. We are unable to take student's declaration.

The parents are required to fill in an absentee form on return with an explanation for the absence (via the School's Skoolbag App or email). An absence is unauthorised if parents have failed to provide an explanation to the School within seven (7) days.



Authorising absences

Students are expected to attend school unless they are unwell. Attendance is required, but the School has the discretion to authorise absences based on information available.

Authorised

The School may authorise absences when:

1. A child is ill, and the parent has informed the school
2. A child is attending medical appointments or specialist appointments with the parent providing this information to the School
3. A child is attending an education activity approved by the school (excursion, camp etc)
4. Exemption from attendance or exemption from enrolment approval has been given by Principal.
5. The School had requested a student does not attend school.

Our records will record all the above absences as “Authorised Absences”.

Unauthorised

The School does not authorise the following absences when:

1. A child has been absent with no explanation supplied from the parent within seven days.
2. A parent has requested an absence and the School has not approved the absence.

Our records will record these absences as “Unauthorised absences”.

Partial day absences are marked either as “Approved” or “Not approved” using the same criteria as above.

Exemption from Attendance & Enrolment

Where the parents of a student of compulsory school age seeks an exemption from attendance at the School or an exemption from enrolment, the Principal will process the parent’s application in accordance with the guidelines from NSW Department of Education.

The Principal may exercise the Minister’s delegation under Section 25 of the Education Act in relation to granting and cancelled a certificate of exemption from being enrolled and attending school in certain prescribed circumstance.

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

Exemption from school attendance includes:

- Exceptional circumstances
- Direction under Section 42D of the Public Health Act 1991 (infectious disease outbreak)
- Employment in an approved entertainment industry activity
- Participation in an elite arts or elite sporting event
- Extended Leave Travel

Exemption from school enrolment includes:

- Age (delayed start 6 years)
- Health, learning or social needs or disability

Certificate of Exemption

A *Certificate of Exemption* will be granted when it has been clearly demonstrated by the applicant that an exemption is in the student’s best interest for short and long term. Alternatives to exemption should have been fully explored.



A *Certificate of Exemption* will not be approved where the student has been the subject of contact with the Child Wellbeing Unit or a child protection report to Family and Community Services and/or there are unresolved issues concerning a risk of harm.

Prior to granting a *Certificate of Exemption* a risk assessment should be completed to identify and manage risk.

Extended Leave

The Principal is the sole authority to grant an authorised leave for travel of more than 20 school days. The parent must make the request in writing (*Application Extended Leave Travel*) and provide copies of travel documentation. Generally, leave is only granted where there is an obvious educational benefit to the child, which may include a holiday to locations offering learning opportunities.

The Principal to complete a *Certificate of Extended Leave Travel* for the parents and a copy kept in the student's file. The parents are to ensure the certificates is available at all time as it may be required by a government official, particularly when the student is leaving the country.

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 enrolment and daily attendance register using the code L. Absenteeism is also recorded on the student's bi-annual report.

Excessive or unexplained absences

All unexplained absences and poor record of school/class attendance will be reported to the Principal by the Classroom teacher for determination on the follow up required.

If a child is absence for more than 3 days without hearing from the parent, the Classroom teacher should call home to check. Any absence in excess of 3 days with no explanation is to be referred to the Principal.

If no suitable explanation for long term absences then this might include, but is not limited to, direct contact with parents or reporting to the Department of Education Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO). NSW Department of Education attendance@det.nsw.edu.au

Where unsatisfactory class or School attendance is identified the attendance issue and any action taken will be recorded as appropriate on the student file. Generally, the School would formally write to the parents or carer and meet with the parents or carer and the student to discuss strategies to improve attendance, using *Attendance Improvement Plan* if required.

The Principal must ensure that any matter relating to school attendance where safety, welfare or wellbeing concerns arise for all required reports are made to the Community Services Child Protection Helpline or contact made with the Child Wellbeing Unit (as required by the Mandatory Reporter Guide section of Keep Them Safe website www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au).

Student withdrawals

When a child ceases to attend Cameragal Montessori School on a regular basis, the child must be officially withdrawn from the class rolls. This withdrawal includes the following:

- a. A letter from the parent or carer requesting the withdrawal
- b. A declaration made by the parent or carer stating the destination of the student (specific school/education program)

School destination to be recorded on the class roll and the Register of Enrolments (pre-primary and primary).

Unknown enrolment destination

The School will contact the Department of Education Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) with the details where the enrolment destination of student of compulsory school age is unknown. Use the following document:

 [CMS_Student_enrolment_destination_unknown_notification_2018](#)



Responsibility of parents under the NSW Education Act (1990)

Section 22 of the NSW Education Act (1990) notes that it is the duty of the parent of a child of compulsory school-age to cause the child to be enrolled at, and to attend, a government school or a registered non-government school, or to be registered for home schooling under Part 7 and to receive instruction in accordance with the conditions to which the registration is subject.

Record-keeping attendance

The class roll books and/or MRX electronic register of daily attendance 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 is maintained by the Enrolment Manager and will be retained in the School office for minimum of five (5) years before archiving. The register of daily attendance (roll book and documentation substantiating absences) will be retained for a period of seven (7) years in the School's administration office after the last entry is made.

The NSW Educational Standards Authority (NESA) 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 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.

Parents are required to explain the absences of their children from school promptly and within seven days to the school. An explanation for absence must be provided to the school within seven (7) days of the first day of any period of absence.

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. A record of date and time of contact made will be kept in the student's file by the class teacher. The parents are required to fill in an absentee form on return with an explanation for the absence (via the School's Skoolbag App or email). An absence is unexplained if parents have failed to provide an explanation to the school within seven (7) days.

All unexplained absences, poor record of School/class attendance 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.) Where unsatisfactory class or School attendance is identified the attendance issue and any action taken will be recorded as appropriate on the student file.

The class roll books (register of daily attendance) 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 is maintained by the Enrolment Registrar and will be retained in the School office for minimum of five (5) years before archiving. The register of daily attendance (roll book and documentation substantiating absences) will be retained for a period of seven (7) years in the School's administration office after the last entry is made.

Exemption from Attendance

Where the parents of a student of compulsory school age seeks an exemption from attendance at the School or an exemption from enrolment, the Principal will process the parent's application in accordance with the guidelines from NSW Department of Education.

The Principal may exercise the Minister's delegation under Section 25 of the Education Act in relation to granting and cancelled a certificate of exemption from being enrolled and attending school in certain prescribed circumstance.

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



Exemption from school attendance includes:

- Exceptional domestic circumstances
- Other exceptional circumstances
- Direction under Section 42D of the Public Health Act 1991 (infectious disease outbreak)
- Employment in the entertainment industry for short periods of time, 1 to 2 days
- Participation in elite sporting events for short periods of time, 1 to 2 days
- Extended Leave – Vacation/Travel

A Certificate of Exemption will be granted when it has been clearly demonstrated by the applicant that an exemption is in the student's best interest for short and long term. Alternatives to exemption should have been fully explored.

A Certificate of Exemption will not be approved where the student has been the subject of contact with the Child Wellbeing Unit or a child protection report to Family and Community Services and/or there are unresolved issues concerning a risk of harm. Prior to granting a Certificate of Exemption a risk assessment should be completed to identify and manage risk.

Extended Leave

Where the reason for application for exemption includes long term travel arrangements of more than 20 school days, copies of travel documentation should be included in the application. The Principal to complete a Certificate of Extended Leave Vacation-Travel for the parents and a copy kept in the student's file. The parents are to ensure the certificates is available at all time as it may be required by official, particularly when the student is leaving the country.

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 enrolment register and daily attendance register. Absenteeism is also recorded on the student's bi-annual report.

The Principal must ensure that any matter relating to school attendance where safety, welfare or wellbeing concerns arise for all required reports are made to the Community Services Child Protection Helpline or contact made with the Child Wellbeing Unit (as required by the Mandatory Reporter Guide section of Keep Them Safe website www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au).

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 Kindergarten year 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 preprimary 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

2017 Student Population	Female	Male	Total	Kindergarten
Neutral Bay campus Preschool & Kindy	26	25	51	11
Lavender Bay campus Preschool & Kindy	15	13	28	10
Primary Year 1 to Year 4	11	11	22	
Total students	52	49	101	
% of total students	52%	48%		
Lower North Shore residents			52%	
Mosman residents			21%	
Other LGA			27%	
English as Second Language			15%	
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander students	0	0	0	



Departures

31 children departed at the end of Term 4, 2017. This figure does not include the four children who completed the Kindergarten year (early stage 1) at Cameragal and enrolled in Year 1 classes at the Cameragal Primary campus in North Sydney (Term 1 2018).

The following destinations were recorded for the 31 departures:

Local public school	17
Independent non-government or Catholic school	8
Montessori school	3
Other	3

Of our 4 departing primary students, two transfers to Year 3 and two to Year 4 for Term 1 2018. Other student departures enter Year 1 or Kindergarten in other school systems.

See Appendix 1 for Enrolment Policy.

Reporting area 10: school policies

Policies updated in 2017:

Date	Policy	Number	Changes	Text accessible
9 October 2017	Child Protection	POL-012	Legislation	Policy manual, Staff Google Drive, Class & Child Protection folders. Parents notified with letter of offer.
1 November 2017	Immunisation	POL-015	Public Health Act change January 2018	Policy manual, Staff Google Drive, Class & Immunisation folders. Parents notified at letter of offer.
29 June 2017	Excursion Policy	POL-020	Internal review	Policy manual & Staff Google Drive
1 November 2017	Enrolments & orientation policy	POL-031	Internal review	Policy manual & Staff Google Drive
1 November 2017	Attendance Policy & Procedure	POL-002	Internal review to write contextualised procedures for 2018 NESA renewal	Policy manual, Staff Google Drive, Class & Attendance folders, parent handbooks.



Student welfare policies

The welfare of the children is of paramount importance and we included child safety statements to all our policies in 2017 to reflect our commitment to children's safety.

Attendance

- Student attendance policy & procedure

Discipline

- Discipline policy
- Behaviour Management Guidelines & procedural fairness policy

Safe & Supportive Environment

- Child Protection policy
- Student code of conduct
- Providing a Child Safe Environment policy
- Interactions with Children policy
- Anti-Bullying policy
- Supervision policy
- Pastoral care statement
- Enrolments & orientation policy & procedure
- Family participation & communication policy
- Excursion policy
- Medical conditions policy
- Immunisation policy
- Water safety policy
- Emergency & evacuation policy & procedure
- Incident, injury, trauma & illness policy
- Hygiene & infection control
- Dealing with infectious diseases policy
- Medication & Health statement
- Sun protection policy
- Nutrition policy
- Security policy
- Social networking policy

Codes of conduct

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Student Code of Conduct
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Board Charter

Complaints & Grievances

Grievance policy & procedure
Procedural fairness guidelines

These policies are reviewed regularly and can be found in our "Cameragal Policy Manual" held at each campus and relevant policies are given to families upon offer of place.

The responsibilities of employees, including our Staff Code of Conduct, can be found in our Staff Handbook. The Board Charter document is signed annually by the School's board members.

Reporting area 11: school determined improvement targets

Cameragal's priority areas for improvement in 2017 were all successfully addressed throughout the year. They included;

1. Consolidation of campus / premises for administration & 9-12 program
2. Strengthen administration function in enrolments and appointment of Business Manager
3. Strengthen of the school board with appointment of new Chair.
4. Recruitment of 6-12 teacher for 2019
5. Child Safe Organisation culture change
6. Re-branding project



Reporting area 12: initiatives to promote respect and responsibility

Respect and responsibility are the foundation of the Montessori philosophy, teaching and learning 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.

The ultimate goal of our work with children is to help them develop into adults who have the intellect, integrity, compassion, strength of character, skill, and creativity needed to seek common ground with others of various cultures and religions in order to pursue a peace that ensures human dignity and respect, justice, and the wellbeing of the planet. The work is accomplished by providing a synergistic sequence of programs and experiences that aid the development of the whole child at each of the developmental stages.

As a Montessori school we recognise, value and celebrate the diversity among all people. Cameragal staff use strategies to guide children to recognise, manage and learn from their behaviours and express their emotions in positive and socially responsible ways. Rather than focusing on discipline from without, we seek to develop the child's inner discipline, so each child in our care becomes more able more able to regulate him or herself. We call this the Development of the Will. Development of the Will, Freedom Within Limits, and Choice and Responsibility are integral elements of Montessori practice that support the children's social, emotional, and intellectual development and that empower the children to self-develop and self-educate with love and joy. This is in contrast to traditional practices that seek to discourage the child from developing his or her own will, exercising freedom and choice, and taking on great responsibility.

The primary children holding weekly community meetings which are chaired by one of the students on rotation. Items are added to the agenda for open discussion either individually or anonymously. Children are encouraged to manage their interactions with each other with strategies learned in the classroom, for example 'face it, fix it, forget it'.

The primary school children, from Year 1, attend camp twice a year. The School utilises NSW Sport & Recreation Centres at Milson Island, Hawkesbury and Berry during the school year. Camp provides opportunities for students to challenge themselves, compromise, problem solve, work as a team, win, lose and persevere. There will be a couple of tears and disagreements, but we also witness empathy, children comforting others, helping each other especially when packing bags and clothes, resilience and immense enjoyment. The children leave camp feeling very proud of themselves.

Reporting area 13: parent, student and teacher satisfaction

Cameragal conducts bi-annual parent teacher conferences in Term 2 and Term 4 of each year. Parents continue to have many opportunities to discuss their child with the classroom teacher in addition to the bi-annual parent conferences, email and at the centre daily at arrivals and dismissals. The teaching staff also meet with families to discuss their child's progress if needed.

Staff and Principal meet annually to review performance and plan for the coming year and review the teaching standards and professional development for teacher accreditation and school needs.



The Principal and teachers of each classroom, including the coordinators of Under 3s and After School Care, meet on a fortnightly basis to review student, family and staffing needs. This communication and support enables them to actively influence their work environment and ensure that their students receive the best possible education. This forms part of our commitment to child safety and quality learning for students by reviewing child's progress, attendance and identify specific needs.

Teacher satisfaction is reflected in the excellent attendance rates and years of service with the School.

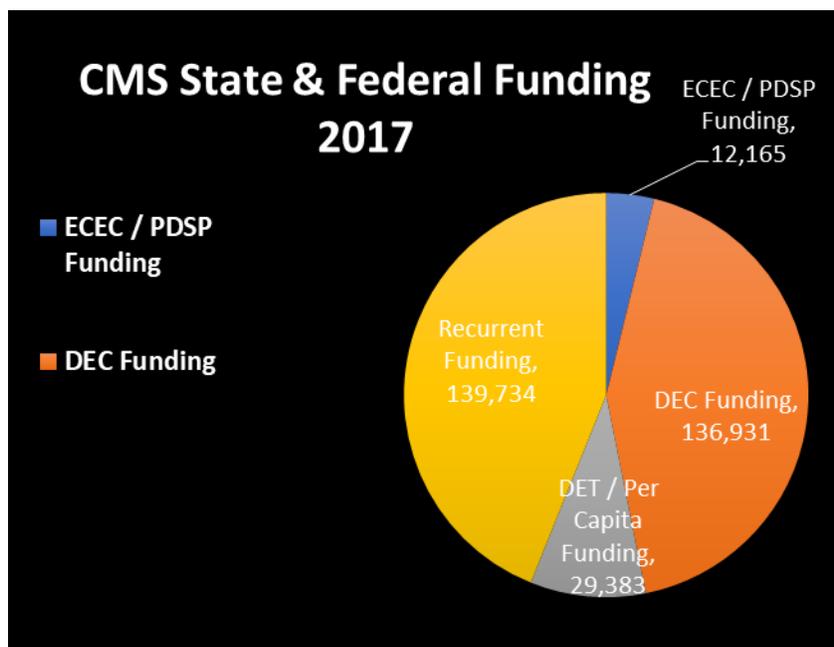
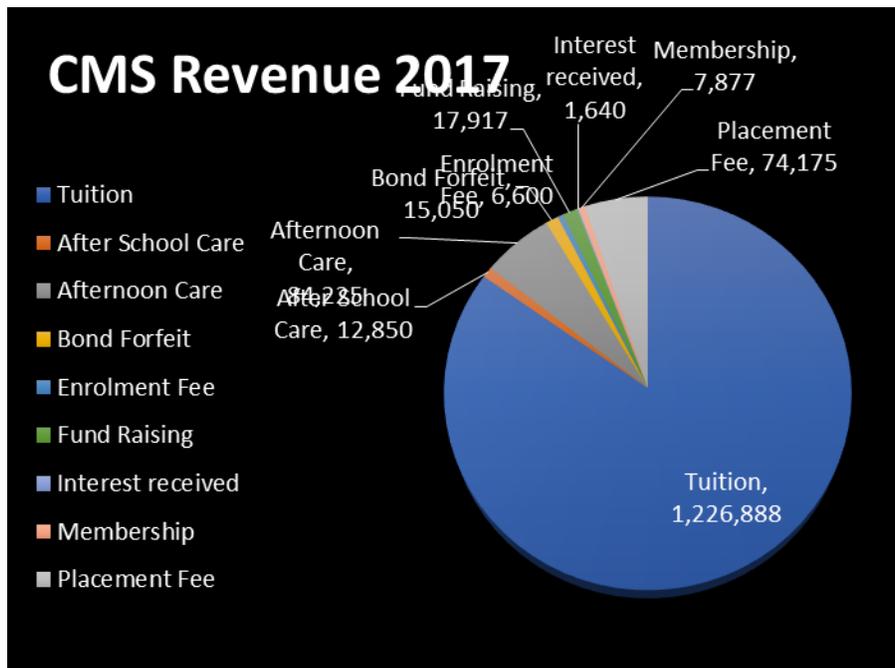
Exit surveys are not widely used this year however the board surveyed our parent body in 2017 and it was clearly identified that before and after school care would be a welcome addition to the School's offerings.

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.

As well as the regular campus meetings with the Principal plus all staff meetings termly and monthly, provide opportunities for staff to bond as a whole to become a cohesive unit. Our focus is Child Safety which has now become a regular in-house staff training session held on a termly basis.



Reporting area 14: summary financial information



POL:031 Enrolment and orientation policy

Cameragal Montessori School is a co-educational Pre-Primary and Primary school providing an education underpinned by the philosophy of Dr Maria Montessori and fulfilling the educational requirements of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). All applications are processed in order of receipt and consideration is given to the applicants' support for the ethos the School, siblings already attending the School and other criteria determined by the School from time to time. Once enrolled, students are expected to act concisely with the School's ethos and comply with the School rules to maintain enrolment. Parents are also expected to be supportive of the ethos of the School.

Child Safety School statement

Cameragal Montessori School seeks to provide a child safe environment. Our school actively promotes the safety and wellbeing of our students, and our school staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in accordance with their legal and ethical obligations. CMS 's child safe policies and procedures and our staff code of conduct form part of this commitment.

Procedures

- Process all applications are processed within the School's enrolment policy.
- Consider each applicant's supporting statement/interview responses regarding their ability and willingness to support the School ethos.
- Consider each applicant's educational needs. To do this the School will gather information and consult with the parents/family and other relevant persons.
- Identify any strategies which need to be put in place to accommodate the applicant before a decision regarding the enrolment is made.
- Inform the applicant of the outcome.

Subject to availability, offers of place will be made according to whether there are siblings of the students already at the School, the order of application, and the suitability of the applicant. Continuing enrolment is subject to the student's adherence to school rules (see enrolment contract, pastoral care policies and behavioural management policies and payment of all school fees.

Pre-primary – 3-6 program

Waitlist

To apply for admission to the School and to have the child's name included on the waitlist, a parent must hold current membership of Cameragal Montessori School and pay a non-refundable fee for first child. A parent must also attend a campus tour. The School follows the standards as determined by the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Standards). Detailed guidelines are available from the School office.

Selection criteria

The Principal offers places based on the following selection criteria:

- Sibling status (with conditions as set out below)
- Indigenous or Torres Strait Islander children, low income or disability (Pre-primary)
- Position on the waitlist.
- The age of the child when entered on the waitlist,
- Commitment to the 3-6 preprimary program, 6-9 and 9-12 primary educational programs and/or;
- Commitment to the preprimary educational program,
- Montessori overseas or interstate school transfer,
- Cameragal Montessori Under 3s attendance for minimum one year,
- Commitment of parents to the Montessori ethos.
- School to comply with Public Health Act 2010 in regard to immunisation standards.

When all other factors are equal, the date of registration determines priority. However, the School retains the right to consider specific enrolments on an individual basis. Offers for older children are subject to availability and dependent on a successful interview and orientation period.



Primary – 6-9 and 9-12 program

Waitlist

The School operates a separate waiting list for Primary (Years 1-6). There is no wait list fee for children already enrolled in preprimary program at the School. Students of Cameragal Montessori School pre-primary are given priority of place.

The School follows the standards as determined by the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Standards).

Selection criteria:

An offer of place is made based on the following criteria:

- Cameragal Montessori School pre-primary student priority
- The child's readiness, both academically and psychologically
- Sibling priority (please note that generally priority is only given if a sibling has completed pre-primary)
- Montessori overseas or interstate school transfer.
- Commitment of parents to the Montessori ethos.

Offers of place

Offers are made from June and July the year prior to student commencing. Parents of children on the waitlist are required to attend an interview with the Principal before an offer of place is made. During the year places may become available and are offered to the next child on the waitlist.

Students from pre-primary transitioning to primary will be observed in their pre-primary setting (if possible) and follow a transition procedure which involves three full day visits at the end of the term prior to commencing in primary. Transition visits to primary are typically held on week 6, 7, 8 on a Wednesday or Thursday.

Conditions of acceptance:

First child entering the school

Offers of place must be accepted within 14 days by returning the Letter of Offer which lists the following conditions:

- A non-refundable placement fee is payable on acceptance of the offer.
- A non-refundable donation is payable to the Cameragal Fund.
- Each child is expected to attend the School for the entire three-year pre-primary program OR entire nine-year program (pre-primary to primary). Withdrawing a child before the completion of the program may upset the child's educational development and disturb the balance in the class, creating a gap which is often impossible to fill.
- If an elder sibling is withdrawn from Cameragal before his or her minimum completion date, the School will withdraw priority consideration for any of his or her younger siblings and they will be placed on the general waitlist as at the date of their application.
- Parents agree to observe the School's policies and procedures.
- The child is completely toilet trained by the time he or she is due to commence at the School. If parents have concerns about their child's readiness the Enrolment Manager must be notified at least 4 weeks prior to the start date. Whilst the start date can be revised, the expectation is that payment will be made from the original start date for holding the place if this notice is not received.
- All students who are attending child-care and Kindergarten (at Cameragal) from 2018 are to provide proof of immunisation before enrolment by submitting an approved immunisation form that shows that the student is:
 - Is fully immunised for their age, or
 - Has a medical reason to not be vaccinated, or
 - Is on a recognised catch-up schedule if the child has fallen behind with their immunisation.



- All students who are attending Primary school (at Cameragal) from 2018 are to provide proof of immunisation before enrolment by submitting an approved immunisation form that shows that the student is:
 - Is fully immunised for their age;
 - Not fully immunised for their age; or
 - Has a medical reason to not be vaccinated, or
 - Is on a recognised catch-up schedule.
- There is a probationary period of one school term for the child and the School. If either the parents or the School considers that at the end of one term that the child should not continue at the School, the placement fee less an administration fee will be returned.
- Parents intending to withdraw their child from the School prior to the minimum completion date are required to provide one full term's notice, in writing, to the Principal. Where one full term's notice is not provided, the parents will be charged a full-term fee in lieu of notice.
- In the event that circumstances change after acceptance of a place and the payment of the placement fee the School requires written notice of four full weeks excluding school holidays, of intention to relinquish the place. If this notice is not received within this period, then the placement fee will not be returned. This provision provides some protection to the School against financial loss from non-starters and the subsequent revision of the class plan.
- Cameragal Montessori School membership must be kept current for the duration of the child's attendance at the School.
- Parents are requested to support and participate in the school community in a variety of ways and are encouraged to attend parent education evenings to deepen their knowledge of Montessori education at Cameragal Montessori School.

Siblings

Conditions of acceptance for siblings are similar to those for the first child. Sibling priority is only applied if the older sibling has completed or is completing the full School program (i.e. three-year preprimary or year 1 to year 3 or 4 primary program).

Priority of Access

All preprimary enrolments endeavour to comply with the *Priority of Access Guidelines* issued by the NSW State Government for state funded preschools to ensure equity and consistency for the community. In no particular order, these are:

- Children who are at risk of harm
- Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander children
- Children from low income families
- Children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Children with disabilities
- Children in their year before school (with highest priority given to children closest to school entry).

Timing of Entry – Preprimary

The School follows the Montessori principle of staggered entry to enable maximum attention to be given to each new child in the class and to assist each child in adjusting to their new environment. Commencement dates in any one term are determined and notified by the Enrolment Manager after places have been offered in collaboration with the Principal.

Timing of Entry – Primary

The child may transition to Primary by attending transition visits of the term prior to the term they commence, typically a Wednesday on Week 6,7 & 8. Primary families are to attend a meeting with the Primary teacher in addition to the Principal's interview.



Transfers

There is no automatic right to transfer between Montessori schools, but every attempt is made to offer a place to a transfer, subject to the enrolment criteria being met.

Once children have commenced in a class at the School, they will not be transferred to another class except in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Principal.

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 Principal.

The School may also advise a deferred start, in which case a place will be held without fees being charged until the entry date given by the Enrolment Manager.

Confidentiality and Privacy

The School respects the privacy of the families and staff who make up the School community. It is the School policy to ensure that all information obtained by the School in relation to personal circumstances of children and their families will be kept confidential unless:

- The family concerned authorises disclosure of the information; or
- The School is obliged to disclose the information pursuant to health regulations or other Commonwealth, State or Local Government laws or regulations.

Fee Policy

Payment of Fees

Tuition fees are set annually for all children in the School, with discounts available for younger siblings.

Tuition fees are due by the second Friday of term with the exception for instalment arrangements which provides for monthly billing from February to November with payment due 2 weeks from the date of invoice.

As of July 2018, the Child Care Subsidy is not available to families enrolled at the School as we provide Registered Care. Students who are 4 years old do however receive the Start Strong Funding Rebate of \$450 per term as of January 2017.

Fees for children commencing School after the commencement of term (at the request of the School) are reduced pro rata on a weekly basis after week 3. There is no reduction for absences due to holidays, illness or a late start to the term instigated by parents.

If families do not adhere to their instalment commitment and/or fall behind in their fees the School is obliged to consider withdrawing the child's enrolment.

Fees determined by School Board

School Fees are determined by the School Board, considering:

- Cameragal Montessori School's status as a non-profit organisation.
- Compliance with government funding and other regulatory requirements.
- The financial needs of the School.
- Application and enrolment levels.
- Other relevant criteria.

The School Board also determines the conditions that apply to fees including interest charged in relation to late payment, discounts, prepayment arrangements and other similar conditions.

Notification of fees and conditions

School fees are reviewed annually and are subject to change. Where a fee increase will occur, the School will provide a minimum of two terms notice of this increase.



Estimated costs of school excursions, incursions, camp and other school activities will be estimated and advised on the permission slip. An invoice will be generated and emailed for each activity a child attends.

The School Board may alter the conditions of entry at any time by providing not less than two terms notice and which will take effect from 1 January in the following year. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that parents of existing students and applicants are notified of fee changes and of conditions which may apply to fees. The Principal maintains current fee schedule which is available to all parents.

Fee Relief

The School Board may agree to provide families with relief in relation to fees. Families who have concerns about fees should approach the Principal and the Principal will meet with the family to ascertain the family's financial situation. The Principal will consider the appropriateness of fee relief having regard to:

- The length and nature of the family's involvement with the School, including the degree to which the family participates in and supports the School community.
- The financial affairs of the family.
- The needs of the School having regard to specific needs of classes
- The current level of enrolments and applications.
- Other relevant criteria.

In appropriate circumstances, the Principal may recommend to the Finance Committee (Principal, Business Manager, Treasurer and Chair) that some form of fee relief be provided and agree on, behalf of the Finance Committee to a solution acceptable to both parties.

Fee relief arrangements are made for periods of 12 months only. At the end of an initial 12-month period, arrangements are reviewed by the Finance Committee and extended only if appropriate. All fee relief arrangements must be documented by way of a letter signed by the Principal, Treasurer or Chair. All fee relief arrangements are dealt with in the strictest confidence.

The Cameragal Fund

The Cameragal Fund provides financial assistance to parents in time of genuine difficulty meeting the school fees. The main purpose of The Cameragal Fund is to assist families so that children are able to complete the full three-year Montessori program.

Applications for financial assistance are made directly to the Trustee of the Cameragal Fund who handle all matters on a completely confidential basis.

The financial assistance is made as an interest free loan from The Cameragal Fund with a repayment schedule to suit the parents' situation. The repayment of the loan means other children will be to benefit as the need arises.

Decisions to grant financial assistance are made by the Trustee and the Chair with best intentions to support the School and the Cameragal community; to maintain enrolments, to balance classrooms, to retain children for the full three-year program and for compassionate reasons.

The Cameragal Fund receives its main support from parent donations, in particular from those families who hold a bond, when leaving the School may wish to give all or part of their bond to The Cameragal Fund.

The School Board applies a small levy for each new enrolment on entry to the School.

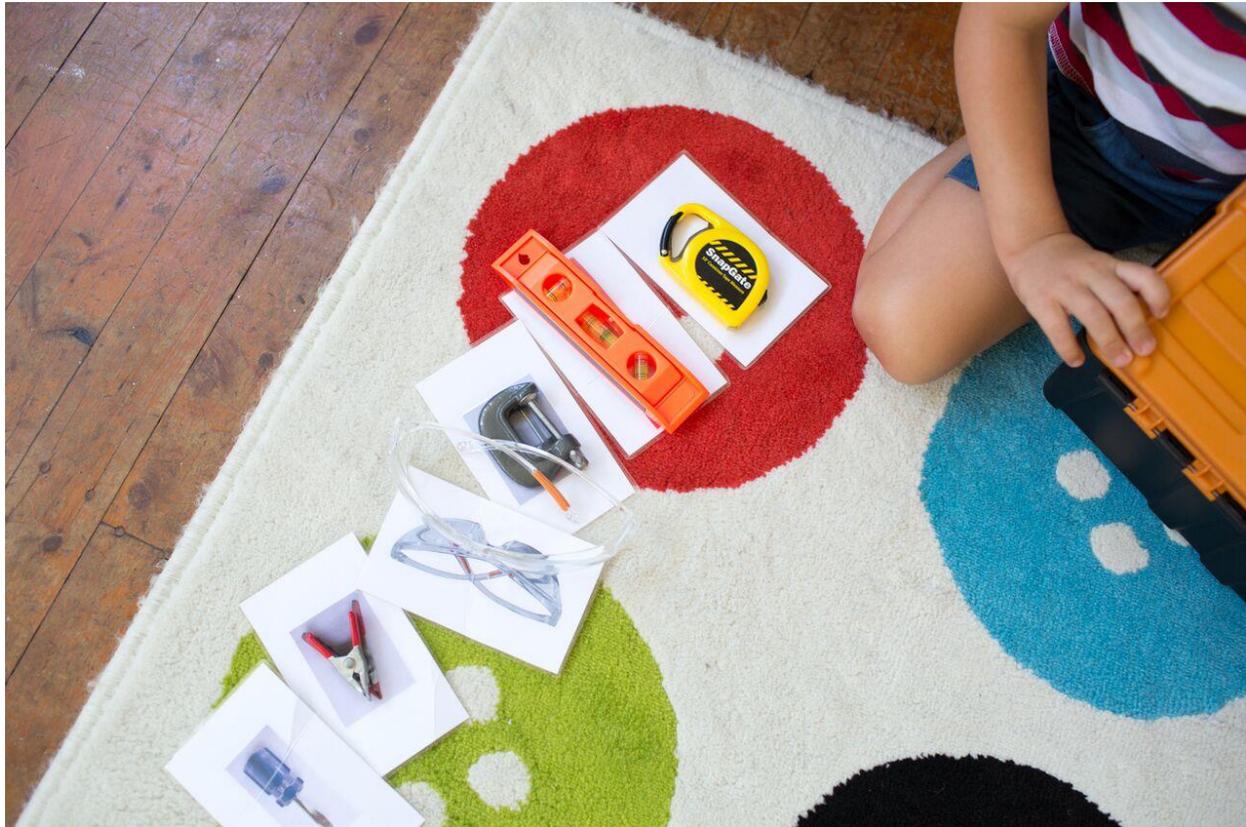
The Trustee works in conjunction with the Chair to maintain appropriate balance of funds. Unlike school fundraising, parents may contribute to The Cameragal Fund on voluntary basis.

To contact The Cameragal Fund Trustee please email chair@cameragal.nsw.edu.au



Relevant policies & procedures

- POL-002 Student Attendance Policy
- PRO. Transition to Primary Procedure
- POL-011 Behaviour Guidance Policy & Procedure
- POL-030 Family Participation & Communication Policy
- POL-062 Parental Code of Conduct
- POL-055 Pastoral Care Statement
- POL-034 Privacy & Confidentiality Policy
- POL-015 Immunisation Policy



Contact details

For further information please contact:

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