



Southern  
Montessori  
School

# Annual Report

2024



# VISION

.....  
Future leaders and problem solvers, contributing to a more peaceful and sustainable world.

# MISSION

.....  
Inspiring brave hearts and curious minds in an academically excellent Montessori environment.

# PURPOSE

.....  
Empowering learners to flourish in life.



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FOUNDED IN 1983

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# HISTORY

The history of Southern Montessori School is the story of our commitment to offering an authentic Montessori education in Adelaide's southern suburbs.

Founded as a Preschool in 1983 by a group of parents seeking a Montessori education for their children, enrolments quickly grew and a primary school was established in 1989 moving to our present location in 1995.

In 2014, an Adolescent Program (Years 7 and 8) was offered for the first time as our community worked to establish a Montessori Middle School in the southern suburbs.

Finally, in 2019, after considerable searching, we were very excited to be able to open our new, purpose built Middle School for Years 7 to 9 in Woodcroft. Co-located with Kalyra Aged Care this move provides us with the unique opportunity to form an intergenerational partnership benefiting both students and Kalyra residents.

ABOUT US

OUR SCHOOL  
TODAY

Today, Southern Montessori School provides an authentic, highly regarded Montessori education for children from 8 months of age to Year 9 across the following programs: Baby Steps, Toddlers, Preschool, Primary and Middle School. We educate approximately 250 students.

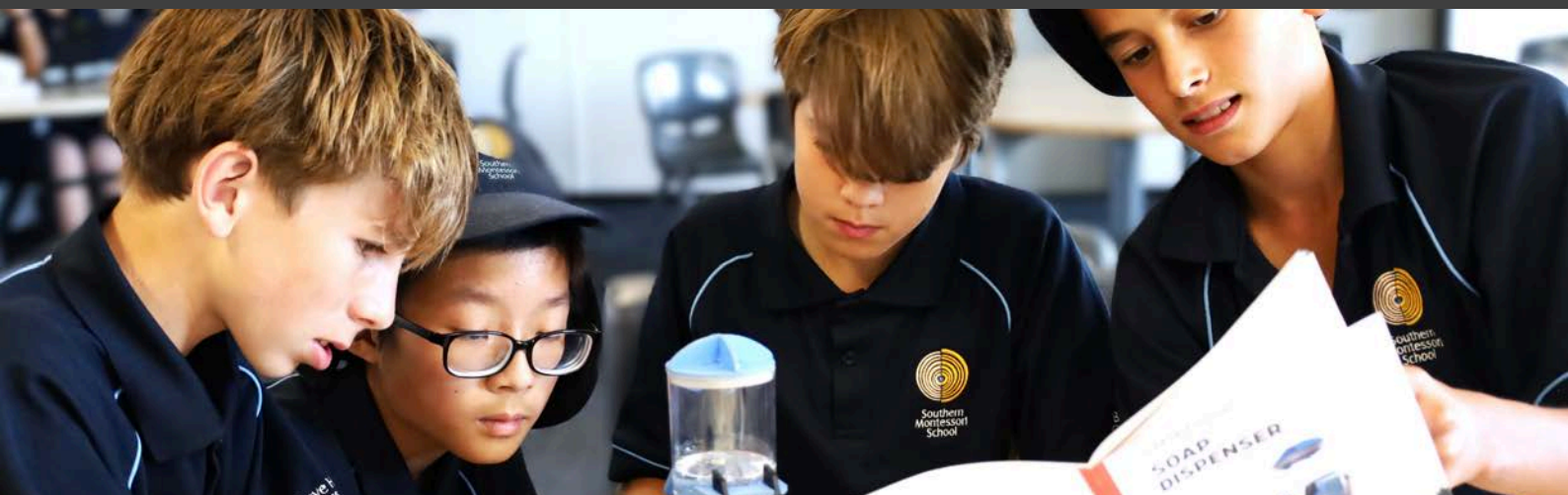
The Montessori approach provides children with enduring intellectual capabilities, achieved through the framework of social and emotional learning. A vibrant community of learners, we are part of a close, supportive community and the future is looking bright.

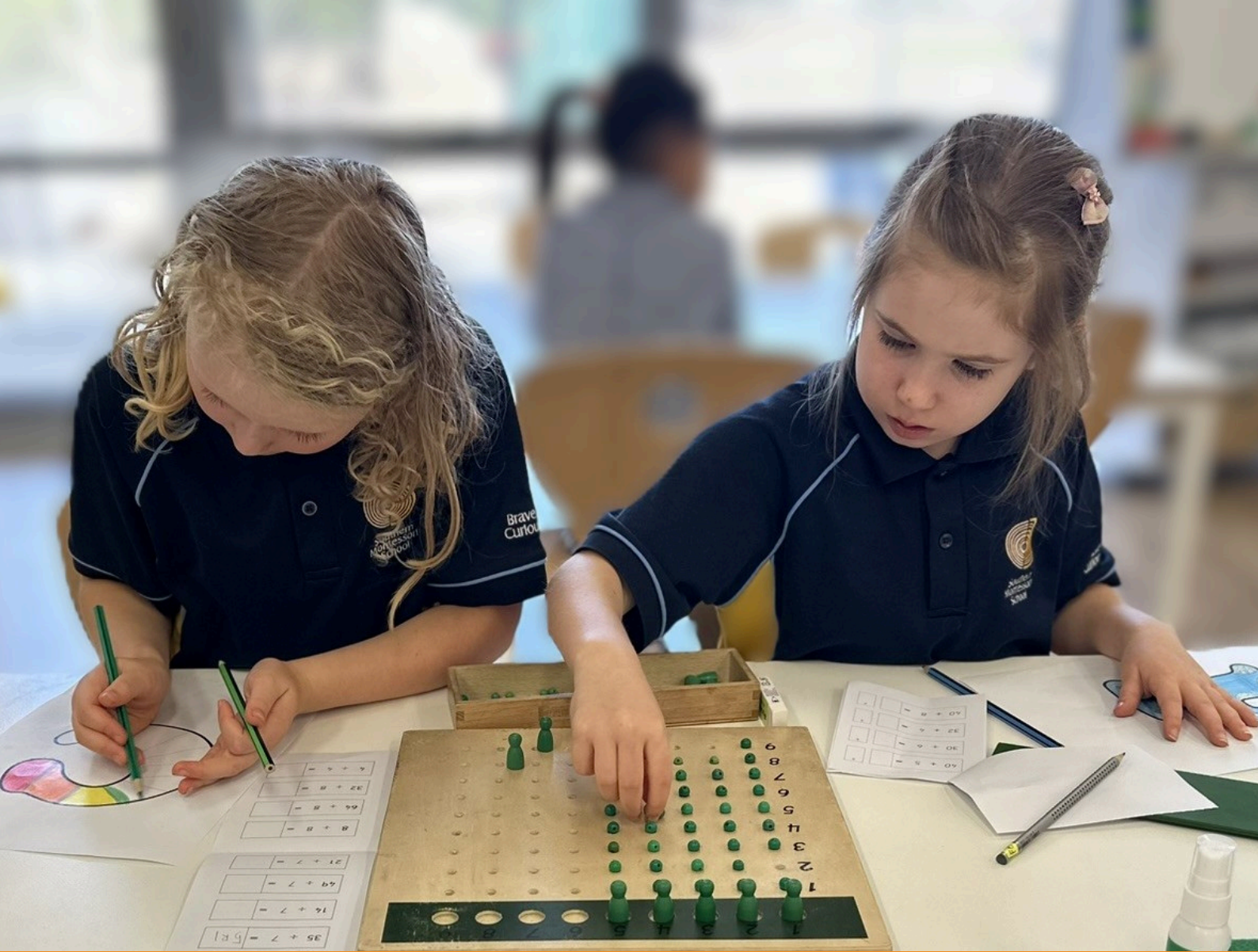
OUR VALUES

“The aim of Montessori education is to foster autonomous, competent, responsible, adaptive citizens who are life-long learners and problem solvers.”

(Montessori Education: Key Concepts and Practices, American Montessori Society, 1990)

It is expected that staff, students, and families will model our school values. Our values will guide our thoughts, words, and actions to help us create the future we want.





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# CURIOSITY

Driving student-led learning through developing the ability to ask questions, to challenge, to inquire and to investigate independently and in cooperation with others.



# SCHOOL BOARD 2024



**Matt Fossey**  
President



**Michelle Emmerson**  
Vice President



**Tiffany Newman**  
Treasurer



**Matthew Greenhough**  
Board Member



**Megan Falzon**  
Board Member



**Phillip Hammond**  
Board Member



**Heather McNerney**  
Principal



**Alison Fish**  
Assistant Principal



**Skye Shoubridge**  
Secretary



**David Anderson**  
Business Manager

# BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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

Firstly, it is important that the Board of Governors of the Southern Montessori Education Centre acknowledge that our school is built on Kaurna land, and on behalf of the Board we acknowledge and pay respects to the Kaurna elders past, present and emerging.

Serving as a Board member for Southern Montessori Education Centre is a rewarding experience. I encourage all community members to consider nominating for the Board while you are involved with the school. As a Board member you build long lasting networks and connections in the community and learn more about the many reasons for the school's success.

The role of the Board of Governors is to provide oversight of the financial management, risk management and strategic management of the school. The Board consists of elected volunteers from our community, the school Principal, and a Board secretary. The school's Deputy Principal and Business Manager regularly attend Board meetings as standing guests. The 2024 Board of Governors was a collaborative group, with a mix of Board experience and professional experience. It was a pleasure to work alongside all of them.

One of the key achievements of the Board in 2024 was oversight of the school's building improvements. More building works are planned for 2025, as the school continues to benefit from growing student numbers and effective financial management from the school's leadership team.

An important role of the Board is upholding responsible school governance, ensuring the school meets all compliance requirements. In 2024, the leadership team and the Board continued to deliver on this commitment to the community.

After many years on the Board in various roles, I am having a break from the Board of Governors, and I wish the incoming members continued success in 2025 and beyond.

Lastly, thank you to the Southern Montessori staff. Having been fortunate to get to know many of the staff personally through my children's education and my involvement with the Board, I am thankful for their contribution to the school and the care and attention they provide to the students. They make our school a special place.

**Matthew Fossey**  
Board President





## TREASURER'S REPORT

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The attached audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 are presented as a true representation of the financial position of Southern Montessori Education Centre Inc. ("the Centre") as at that date. Primary and Secondary student enrolments at Census Day (August 2024) were 229 compared to 199 at the same time in 2023. As of December 2024, the Centre employed 15.7 full time equivalent (FTE) teachers and 10.5 FTE non-teaching staff.

I am pleased to advise that the Centre continued to operate with a surplus in 2024, providing a sound financial basis to allow for the continued capital investments of \$869,820 in building and grounds improvements in 2024.

2024 was another busy year for the Centre with Practical Completion of construction of Phase 3 of the 2020 Master Plan which included upgrading of toilets. Phase 4 of the 2020 Master Plan, which includes the update of our Cycle 3 classroom, will see the construction of two brand new classrooms and a new breakout room. Work is scheduled to commence towards the end of 2025.

The Board of Governors approved a School Fees increase of approximately 3% which was similar to recent past year increases which have averaged 3%.

Thank you to the Finance Committee for their diligent work and to all the staff for their support throughout the year.

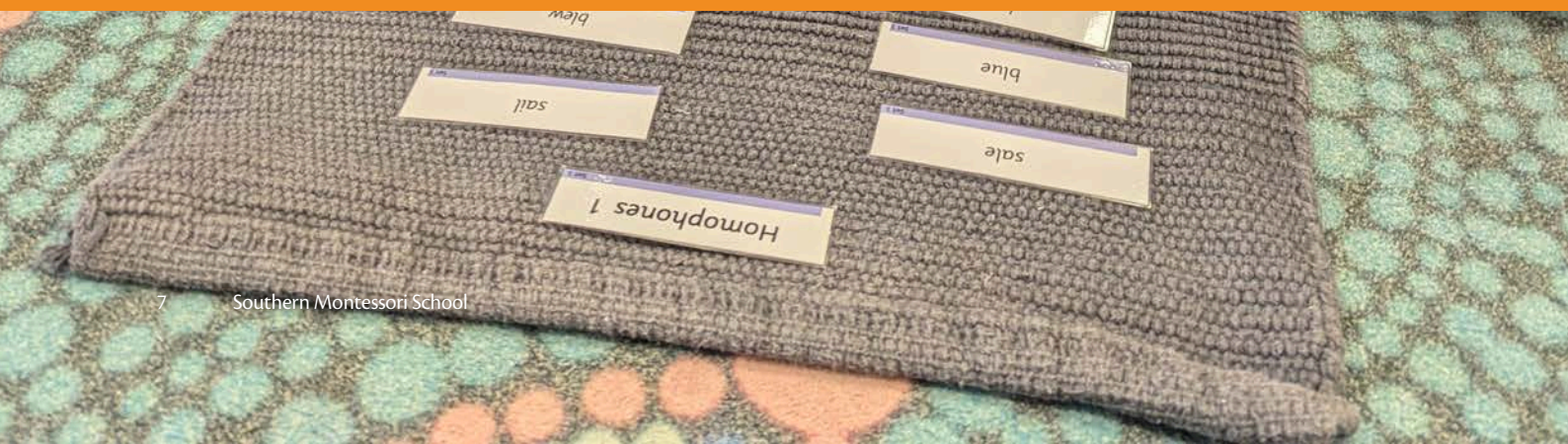
Tiffany Newman  
Treasurer



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# CHOICE

Enhancing wellbeing and personal growth by encouraging children to make productive choices and feel a sense of control over their learning and their lives.





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# CARE AND COMPASSION

Nurturing the development of children's social and emotional intelligence in an environment of trust and mutual respect which values each child's unique strengths and needs and encourages acceptance of self and others.



# PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

"THE GREATEST GIFTS WE CAN GIVE OUR CHILDREN ARE THE ROOTS OF RESPONSIBILITY AND THE WINGS OF INDEPENDENCE."  
*Maria Montessori*

As I reflect on the 2024 school year, it is with immense pride and deep gratitude that I present this report. This year has been marked by inspiring learning, meaningful partnerships, and significant growth — not just in our infrastructure, but in the hearts, minds, and capabilities of our children, young people and staff.

## FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

In September, we began exciting building works to enhance our Primary School amenities, including the renovation of the inside toilets and rebuild of the outside toilets and new library veranda. The new library — Pirrkunga (Story Place) — has quickly become a hub of learning and connection, with older students taking impressive ownership of borrowing systems and maintaining the space with pride.

Our outdoor play areas also received upgrades with a new rubber play surface installed during the October holidays, along with ongoing maintenance to bark and sand levels across all play spaces. We welcomed Tristan to the grounds team, whose work with Shane has immediately improved the presentation and functionality of our outdoor environments.

Our Baby Steps and Toddlers Programs continued to thrive at the Roopena site and so we were delighted when following a presentation to the City of Onkaparinga Council in October, the Council agreed to amend the proposed revocation of community land at 2 Roopena Street to allow for the property to be sold through direct negotiation with Southern Montessori School in the first instance.

## CURRICULUM AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Professional learning continued to thrive throughout 2024, underpinning our commitment to reflective practice, innovation, and educational excellence. Alison and I had the privilege of attending the Head to Head Montessori Principals Forum in WA which seeks to build relationships, share professional knowledge and experiences and promote collaboration amongst Montessori leaders from across Australia. Of great value was the opportunity to visit four Montessori Schools and view Montessori education in practice in diverse settings. We also had the opportunity to attend the Australian Council of Educational Leaders Conference: Reimagining Education – A Future Beyond Boundaries. This event offered rich opportunities to engage with national and international thought leaders, and sparked forward-thinking dialogue within our leadership team about how we can continue to shape a future-focused, inclusive, and resilient learning environment.

Mathematics was a core focus in 2024. Teachers worked collaboratively with the goal to support the intentional implementation of the Montessori Maths Curriculum and we saw strong progress with early data indicating promising improvement in mathematics outcomes. Improvements included:

- Alignment of our documents to the Australian Curriculum Version 9
- Development of scope and sequence working documents for Cycle 2 and 3
- Development of progressions in problem-solving complexity
- Enhancement of our assessment and reporting practices
- 

We were also delighted, to co-host the adolescent program forum, Meeting in the Middle, welcoming educators working in Montessori Adolescent Programs throughout Australasia to our Middle School. This was a great opportunity for delegates to unite and interact in person, examining and discussing a range of topics relevant to the Adolescent Program.

Our commitment to Child Protection saw all teaching staff update their Child Protection Curriculum training and review our scope and sequence documents for this critical curriculum area. Whilst Governance training supported strong leadership and transparent decision-making throughout the year.

Professional development is not just a compliance measure — it is a vital part of our school culture. It allows us to stay connected to contemporary educational research, refine our Montessori practice, and ensure that every decision we make is grounded in what is best for children. These experiences also strengthen our leadership, foster collaboration across teams, and help us build a shared vision of education that honours both the child and the world they are growing into.

We believe that when educators are inspired and empowered, they in turn inspire and empower the students in their care — and this was evident in the many ways new ideas and insights are carefully considered and may become embedded into daily practice.

# PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

## PRINCIPAL'S REPORT CONTINUED...

### STAFFING

Early in 2024 our new Enterprise Agreement was approved ensuring our staff have access to highly competitive salaries and working conditions. In 2024 also saw a number of staffing changes:

In Term 2, James Mingorance stepped down as Middle School Coordinator to pursue the next stage of his leadership journey. We thank James for his dedication, passion, and the positive impact he has had on the development of our Middle School program and the young people within it. We thank Siobhan Curran for acting in this role with skill and care whilst we advertised this position. We thanked, farewelled and wished Kate Ball (ELC Director) all the best as she embarked on her new venture, to open her own childcare centre.

We congratulated Naomi Kelly, School Counsellor, on her retirement and welcomed Danielle Hayes into this crucial role. And we farewelled and congratulated Danielle Johncock as she moved on to her dream job at Monarto Safari Park, and wished best of luck to Hannah Oates for her maternity leave whilst welcoming Skye Shoubridge to the Administration team and Cheryl Lee as Marketing Coordinator.

Finally, we welcomed Clay Jones to the position of Middle School PE and Health teacher and welcomed back Renee Pereira as she returned from maternity leave.

### THE ARTS AND SPORTS

2024 saw further blossoming of our Arts Program with the introduction of Drama Club led by our highly experienced drama teacher, Elley Hassiotis. Highlights of the year included joyful performances of Alice in Wonderland, Drum Corp performance at Sports Day, Instrumental Concerts and inspiring choir performances at the Primary School and Kalyra. Assemblies were enriched by musical performances showcasing our students' skills development and their love of the music program. Thank you to our exceptional music teacher, Jenny and to Sam (Drum Corp, school bands, guitar and ukulele), and Cherry (piano).

Our sports program also grew in both size and impact this year. Fun and Fitness mornings and Sports Day (30 October) were wonderful community events and we received glowing feedback, especially for Middle School and Year 6 student leadership.

The number of tournaments and carnivals our children and young people participate in continues to grow based on their interest and enthusiasm. In 2024 these included Rugby Tag and Rugby Tackle, a wide range of SAPSASA events, and Hot Shots Tennis. Swimming, aquatics and tennis lessons remained a key component of our PE program. Thank you to Amelia Rance for always endeavouring to follow the children's interest in providing new opportunities for increase participation in sport and fitness, and to our Middle School PE teacher, Clay for encouraging our young people to explore and enjoy physical activity in their lives.

Bike Ed, the After School Sports Program and School Soccer Competition provided additional opportunities for children to develop motor skills, teamwork and listening skills whilst having a lot of fun. Our optional lunchtime activities programs were once again popular with children particularly dance club which was led by our very capable Cycle 3 students. Thank you to all parents who supported the soccer program – we couldn't do this without you!

We're incredibly proud of the compliments our students receive for their sportsmanship and collaboration. Our ever-growing trophy collection is a joyful testament to their efforts.

### KALYRA PARTNERSHIPS

In 2024 our intergenerational program continued to grow authentically. We were thrilled to celebrate Kalyra's Asia Pacific Eldercare Innovation Award for Intergenerational Social Engagement — a recognition of the outstanding work done by our students in building meaningful relationships across generations. Their empathy and commitment to active citizenship shine through in every interaction. You can watch the video presentation made to the panel on our website. Thank you, Abby, for your leadership in this area.

### LEARNING HIGHLIGHTS, EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS

Learning experiences in 2024 were rich, varied, and meaningful.

# PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

## PRINCIPAL'S REPORT CONTINUED...

Incursions and excursions enriched the curriculum including visits to The Space Centre, SA Museum, Central Market, Adelaide Zoo, Urbrae Wetlands, AFL Max; participation in Clean Up Australia Day and RAA Safety Workshops; and visits from Nature Education, Old McDonald's Farm and Little Mother Earth.

Our 2024 camp experiences provided rich opportunities for personal growth, leadership, and connection with nature. Cycle 3 students embraced challenge and teamwork during their Willow Creek Adventure Camp, developing resilience and strengthening peer relationships. Year 3 students took their first steps into leadership at the Adelaide Zoo Leadership Camp, where they explored responsibility and collaboration in a supportive environment. Meanwhile, our Middle School students ventured to Kangaroo Island, engaging deeply with the natural world while building independence, initiative, and community spirit. These immersive experiences are an integral part of our Montessori program, offering meaningful opportunities for students to develop confidence, character, and a sense of belonging.

Learning highlights included Amanda Rishworth's Kindy Art Show and the Middle School Mock UN Conference in collaboration with The Hills Montessori School showcasing collaboration and global thinking.

Community Events included a Combined Film Night at Mitcham Cinema with The Hills Montessori School. Staff and interested families watched the documentary *Buckskin*, a look at the sole teacher of a once extinct Indigenous Australian language, passed down to him by his ancestors. We were honoured with Jack Buckskin's presence and willingness to share his tale of community, family, and upholding traditional culture as well as answer questions.

We were also very grateful to wonderful parents, Michelle Billie and Kylie Lee for organising a Cycle 3 Family Park Event and Inflatable World Night. Our largest community celebration in 2024 was the Bush Dance – a joyful celebration of community and culture in Term 3.

Finally, we ended the year with graduations, picnics, open classrooms, and the Cycle 3 Showcase. These were deeply meaningful and well-attended events that closed our year with joy and pride.

## ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

We celebrate our continued academic excellence, highlighted by our 2024 NAPLAN results — with our Middle School ranked as the top-performing secondary school in South Australia. This outcome reflects our holistic, child-centred approach and dedication to developing the skills for life-long learning.

## THANK YOU

To our Board – Good governance is essential for Southern Montessori to flourish. Thank you for your clear vision, strategic leadership, and unwavering commitment to the future of our school.

To our Leadership and Non-Teaching Team – Your warmth, capability, flexibility, and tireless support underpin so much of what makes our school a thriving nurturing environment. Thank you for leading with heart and purpose.

To our Teachers and Assistants – Your dedication, expertise, and passion shape the lives of our students every single day. Thank you for creating classrooms where curiosity, independence, and joy in learning can flourish.

To our Parents and Caregivers – Thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your belief in the Montessori approach. Your support enriches our community and strengthens our shared vision.

And most importantly, to our students – You are the reason we do what we do. You are our purpose, our inspiration, and our joy. Thank you for bringing your whole selves to learning and for showing us, every day, the power of possibility.

Together, we are building a future where each child is empowered to flourish in life.

Heather McInerney  
PRINCIPAL



.....  
**COURAGE**

Teaching children to be brave when facing the unknown, to embrace challenges, to view failure as a learning opportunity, and to act with integrity.



# EARLY LEARNING

Embodying the Montessori philosophy, our Early Learning programs, Baby Steps and Toddlers, provide the ideal preparation for inquiring young minds and offer a unique opportunity for parents and children to learn together in a Montessori environment, guided and supported by a trained coordinator.

CLASSROOM: Baby Steps & Toddlers

BABY STEPS EDUCATOR (ages 8-24 months): Cherie Lee

TODDLER EDUCATOR (24-36 months): Cheryl McGaffin

Our Baby Steps and Toddler Community thrived as a nurturing and engaging space for exploration, connection, and growth.

We began the year embracing the joy of summer through sensory-rich experiences centered around the theme “Summertime and the Beach.” The children explored shells, water, sand, and sea creatures while also learning about Sun Smart safety. Our science display table became a shared space for discoveries, enriched with contributions from families. This term emphasized outdoor play and environmental awareness, aligned with our status as a registered Sun Smart School.

Our focus shifted inward as we explored “Our Body” during Term 2. Circle time was filled with songs, rhymes, and movement games that helped the children learn about their bodies and how to care for them. Practical Life activities supported independence and self-care, with a strong emphasis on hand washing, hair brushing, dental hygiene, and dressing skills. These foundational experiences support both physical and emotional development in early childhood.

Term 3 celebrated the joy of food through the theme “Food.” Children engaged with food-related songs, crafts, and hands-on food preparation activities. Emphasis was placed on hygiene, nutrition, and tasting new foods. Materials from the Montessori Practical Life curriculum gave children the opportunity to prepare, serve, and clean up food, fostering autonomy and healthy habits. Families were reminded to update allergy information to ensure a safe and inclusive experience.

With the arrival of spring, our program blossomed alongside our garden. The theme for Term 4 was “Spring Gardens,” where children explored the beauty and biodiversity of our outdoor environment. From observing sprouting seeds and buzzing bees to tasting fresh mulberries and watching silkworms hatch, the children were immersed in nature’s cycles. Flower arranging with garden-grown blooms offered daily opportunities for creativity and care of the environment.

Our Babies and Toddlers embraced their environment across the road, enjoying the outdoor climbing equipment and their growing confidence in physical play. Messy play and creative arts flourished in the undercover area, providing endless opportunities for sensory and artistic expression.

We thank all families for their ongoing support and involvement, which truly enriches the Montessori experience. It has been a wonderful year of exploration, learning, and joyful discovery.



# EARLY LEARNING

CLASSROOM: Preschool (ages 3-5)

PRESCHOOL EDUCATORS : Kate Ball and Bishuang Teng

PRESCHOOL ASSISTANTS: Cheryl McGaffin, Shixin Li, Cherie Lee, Louise Brady, Jodi Foyle, Demi Grant and Helen Robinson

During 2024, the preschool settled into the new rhythm of running a short and long day program. The children and educators were incredibly resilient, resourceful and adaptable anytime changes occurred and the program has been successful. We find there was a different feel to each part of our day and we were provided with times to work at a slower pace, welcoming families and children gradually in the mornings before entering the productive work cycles of the day.

Helen Robinson took on the role of food coordinator and made this a valuable and engaging part of our afternoon program. Many children looked forward to staying to make and eat their afternoon tea together. This program was a great opportunity to show practical life skills in action.

The children and educators also found joy in the holiday program, which Demi Grant took the lead in. The program offered different experiences and a relaxed pace in which relationships and wellbeing were prioritised.

We embraced opportunities in 2024 to explore diversity with the children with our excursion to "Rock the Spectrum", a local all abilities children's gym space, and our engagement with learning more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

The children have continued to amaze us with their thoughtfulness, sense of community and responsibility to each other. As new children come in, we see our older children embrace them and support the transition into our space, leading with kindness and care.





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# CREATIVE AND CRITICAL THINKING

Providing a stimulating learning environment that supports children to realise their full potential as intelligent, imaginative thinkers who see solutions rather than problems.



# CYCLE 1

CLASSROOM/S: Reception

CYCLE ONE TEACHERS: Michelle Bradbury, Karen Vianello, Amelia Faulkner and Olivia Thoday

CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS: Demi Grant and Helen Robinson

2024 saw three new faces to our teaching team. Whilst Rachel enjoyed maternity leave with her baby daughter, we welcomed Michelle and appreciated her beautiful calming nature. Amelia's joyous energy and Olivia's eagerness to learn about our Montessori pedagogy contributed to the success of our second reception class.

The Better Buddy program is always so helpful for both our Cycle 1 and 3 children. The friendships that develop between the oldest and youngest children in the school is authentic with the Year 6's providing safe and nurturing companions in the playground and wider school for the reception children. A favourite event had to be the Teddy Bears Picnic.

The excursion to Central Markets and SA Museum was the year's highlight. This excursion provided children with a wealth of hands-on experiences in a real-world context and brought their learning to life. With lots of smelling, tasting, touching and listening to the array of sights and sounds, it made for a bountiful sensorial experience.

We were so proud of how well the children settled into their first year of school and into their learning – showing us how self-motivated they can be when provided with an enriching environment.



# CYCLE 2

CLASSROOM/S: Years 1, 2 & 3

CYCLE TWO TEACHERS: Patricia Thompson and Wendy Humphreys, Kristy Dunstan, Emma Russell and Brie Hourigan, Judy Pemberton and Anne-Marie Cummings, Joanna Buick and Maria Neidorfer

CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS: Raelene Barclay, Liarne Chicco, Timothy Ross and Jane Bristow

Cycle 2 welcomed some new faces to the teaching team. Maria worked with Jo, and Emma and Brie shared Kristy's class. We appreciated their ideas and enthusiasm they brought to the teaching programs and their contributions to the children's learning.

The teaching and learning programs were dynamic and child focused. One of the highlights was the inquiry project the students undertook about the work of bees. This was a wonderful opportunity for students to investigate how they can make a difference to their world. Their beautiful artwork and fascinating information reports were enjoyed by us all during the open classroom event.

In addition to the sustainability project, children enjoyed working on a variety of real-world mathematical problems throughout the year. We were impressed by their persistence when working and their progress in reasoning. As well as vital skills such as developing plans and reasoning, the work provided an authentic platform for children to practice their grace and courtesy in listening to each other and turn taking.

We reflect on the past year and feel proud of the growth and development our children have made. It inspires our commitment to provide a holistic education that encourages our children to make a difference in their world.



# CYCLE 3

CLASSROOM/S: Years 4, 5 & 6

CYCLE THREE TEACHERS: Luke Swindells, Michelle Young, Michelle Pinto, Brie Hourigan, Renee Pereira

CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS: Alex Bigg, Desiree Santos and Jodie Milde

In 2024, we were pleased to see our Cycle 3 students demonstrate strong leadership across a range of opportunities within our school community. Many passionate students nominated themselves to represent their class on the student council, also taking on key roles such as Chair and Secretary. Others chose to contribute through our environmental committee, showing initiative and care for sustainability.

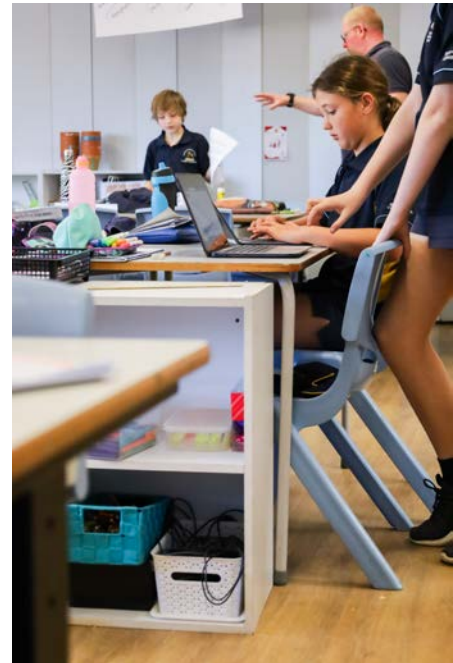
Year 6 students embraced intergenerational learning through visits to Wakefield House Positive Ageing Centre during Terms 3 and 4. Each week, they engaged in activities with older members of the community and assisted with various projects at the centre, strengthening their connection with the wider community.

Within the school, Year 6 students took on weekly responsibilities to support the smooth running of school life. These included tasks such as assisting in the library, managing the bin timetable, and organising sports equipment. They also led a Fun and Fitness Morning for Cycle 1 students and supported Reception students through our Buddy Program, collaborating on projects such as personal timelines.

Cycle 3 students enthusiastically engage in a wide range of outdoor education and sporting opportunities, which they consistently embrace and excel in. Participation in SAPSASA competitions—both individually and as part of school teams—allows our students to represent the school with pride. Events such as aquatics (a joint excursion with the Middle School), and multiple tag and tackle rugby carnivals throughout the year were especially popular. Students regularly received awards for their sportsmanship and positive participation.

The school is always represented with excellence at these events, with facilitators frequently commenting on the respectful, enthusiastic, and team-spirited nature of our students.

Throughout the year, Cycle 3 and Middle School students collaborated on a range of activities designed to strengthen connections between the two campuses, build friendships, and support a smooth transition for those moving into Middle School. One key event saw Cycle 3 students spending time learning in the Middle School environment while the older students were away on camp—an experience that helped them feel comfortable and confident in the new setting. STEM mornings hosted at the Middle School further supported this connection, allowing students to explore new ideas and work alongside their future peers. At the end of the year a shared outdoor excursion brought both groups together again for team games, volleyball skills, and a spirited soccer match.



# CYCLE 3

The Cycle 3 school camp at Willow Creek was a memorable highlight of the year, offering students a rich mix of challenge, fun, and personal growth. With a unique combination of tent and dormitory accommodation, students experienced both comfort and adventure. The camp featured a variety of problem-solving and team-building activities that encouraged collaboration, creativity, and resilience. Highlights included billy cart construction followed by exciting team races, as well as a raft-building challenge where teams competed to see whose raft could stay intact the longest while keeping its crew dry! Students also took part in a local version of The Amazing Race around Victor Harbor and enjoyed a scenic walk to Granite Island. The camp provided not only many new experiences but also lasting memories that strengthened friendships

We wrapped up the year with an engaging Science Fair evening that was enthusiastically attended by many families. Students proudly showcased a wide range of impressive science projects, reflecting their curiosity, research skills, and creativity. From hands-on experiments and interactive demonstrations to detailed models and vibrant posters, the displays covered topics such as the growth of crystals, forces and motion and environmental sustainability. It was wonderful to see students so passionate about their learning, confidently explaining their findings and engaging visitors with thoughtful questions and discussions. The evening celebrated not only the students' scientific knowledge but also their ability to communicate their learning effectively.



# CYCLE 4

Adolescence is an important formative time in our lives. Characterised by rapid physical, emotional and social development, adolescents are searching for their place in the world. Our Adolescent Program is designed with this in mind, providing students with a platform to be creative, self-expressive, passionate learners and problem solvers.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

CLASSROOM: Years 7,8 and 9

TEACHERS: James Mingorance, Siobhan Curran, Abby Schultz, Joaquin Santos, Clayton Jones and Natalia Slight

CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS: Raelene Barclay and Amanda Flood

In 2024 we farewelled Middle School veteran and Coordinator, James Mingorance and welcomed Clayton Jones (PE) and Natalia Slight (Maths) to the team. Siobhan competently took on the role of acting Middle School Coordinator.

The Middle School Team focused on creating a Democratic Classroom and introduced a Student Voice Committee so students could be represented in meetings with teachers and suggest improvements to the school.

As a result, students petitioned for the painting of the classrooms, fixed a broken fence, created community-building initiatives like 'Spooky Thursday' and suggested new outdoor furniture which arrived earlier this year. Since this time, connection to the space has increased and students are furthering this connection by initiating gardening projects this year that we will see coming to fruition soon.

Other highlights of the year included:

- Our wonderful camp to Kangaroo Island.
- The introduction of a regular Coffee Corner at the PS – this provides business training and customer service skills for our students
- A student-led Poetry Unit that culminated in their presentations at The Box Factory.
- Another amazing Market Day that helped students design their own small businesses and consider profit and loss.
- A successful Graduation Ceremony where our Middle School Band performed.
- Visits from many specialists in their fields: computer game coders; Moira Were, Mayor for the City of Onkaparinga; graphic designers, architects and marine biologists.
- Our ongoing program with the residents at Kalyra including Carpet Bowls and other activities like baking, lawn games and chess.
- A Model UN Conference held with the students from The Hills Montessori allowed students to work together to explore and present their solutions to global challenges.
- The successful student-led Sports Day at the Primary School, run by Middle School students and hosted by the charismatic Jack Stephenson.
- And finally, our fantastic NAPLAN results, that saw us leading in the state.

It was a wonderful year of learning. In particular, we commend our 2024 Year 9 students for their leadership, optimism, care of each other and drive which saw them thrive.





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# CONNECTION

Building the relationships and community now that will connect children to their world and teach them to care for and shape it for a brighter future.

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Staff members completed Professional Development as follows:

- CPR Training
- Staff Working towards their Montessori Diploma
- AMI Montessori Administrators Certificate
- Introduction to Montessori Theory and Philosophy
- RRHAN-EC
- Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum
- Health and PE Curriculum
- Authentic Problem Solving into Math Lessons
- The Montessori Flourishing Learner
- Coaching and Performance Review
- Writing: Using Brightpath to help children learn
- Using AI
- Observation and Record Keeping
- Meeting in The Middle (Southern Montessori Middle School Hosted)





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# CURIOSITY

Driving student-led learning through developing the ability to ask questions, to challenge, to inquire and to investigate independently and in cooperation with others.



# STAFF PROFILES

Principal: Heather McInerney

Assistant Principal: Alison Fish

Business Manager: David Anderson

Preschool Director: Kate Ball

Middle School Coordinator: James Mingorance

Administrators: Danielle Johncock, Hannah Oates, Monica Berg and Skye Shoubridge

Student Wellbeing Counsellor: Naomi Kelly

Preschool Teaching Staff: Kate Ball and Bishuang Teng

Preschool Assistants: Cheryl McGaffin, Shixin Li, Cherie Lee, Louise Brady, Jodi Foyle, Demi Grant and Helen Robinson

Toddlers Program Coordinator: Cheryl McGaffin

Baby Steps Program Coordinator: Cherie Lee

Primary Teaching Staff:	Michelle Bradbury Amelia Faulkner / Olivia Thoday Wendy Humphreys / Patricia Thompson Kristy Dunstan / Emma Russell / Brie Hourigan Judy Pemberton / Anne-Marie Cummings Joanna Buick / Maria Niedorfer Luke Swindells Michelle Young / Alison Fish Brie Hourigan / Renee Pereira	Cycle 1 - Reception Cycle 1 - Reception Cycle 2 - Years 1/2/3 Cycle 2 - Years 1/2/3 Cycle 2 - Years 1/2/3 Cycle 2 - Years 1/2/3 Cycle 3 - Years 4/5/6 Cycle 3 - Years 4/5/6 Cycle 3 - Years 4/5/6
Middle School Teaching Staff:	Siobhan Curran Abby Schultz Michelle Pinto Joaquin Santos Natalia Slight Clayton Jones	Cycle 4 - Years 7/8/9 Cycle 4 - Years 7/8/9 Cycle 4 - Years 7/8/9 Cycle 4 - Years 7/8/9 Cycle 4 - Years 7/8/9 Cycle 4 - Years 7/8/9
Specialist Teachers:	Anna Golab Maria Niedorfer Amelia Rance Jenny Chilvers	Inclusive Education Coordinator Italian Physical Education Music
School Assistants:	Jane Bristow Timothy Ross Desiree Santos Jodie Milde Raelene Barclay Liame Chicco Helen Robinson Alexandra Bigg Demi Grant Amanda Flood	Cycle 2 Cycle 2 Cycle 3 Cycle 3 Cycle 2 and 4 Cycle 2 Cycle 1 Cycle 3 Cycle 1 Cycle 2 and 4
Gardens / Grounds: Teacher / Library Coordinator: Kitchen / Garden Coordinator: Drum Core & Band:	Shane Lee Alison Fish Raelene Barclay Sam Werner	

# PRIMARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS

## KEY STUDENT OUTCOMES

### 2024 NAPLAN

As required by government legislation, the percentages of students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 achieving the National Minimum Standard in literacy and numeracy for the 2024 school year are:

#### YEAR 3

23 Students participated in five strands

0 students were exempted.

0 student was absent

0 students were withdrawn

#### YEAR 5

22 Students participated in five strands

0 students were exempted

0 students were absent

1 student was withdrawn

#### YEAR 7

11 Students participated in five strands

0 students were exempted

0 students were absent

2 students were withdrawn

#### YEAR 9

12 Students participated in Reading & Writing, 12 Students participated in Spelling and Grammar & Punctuation

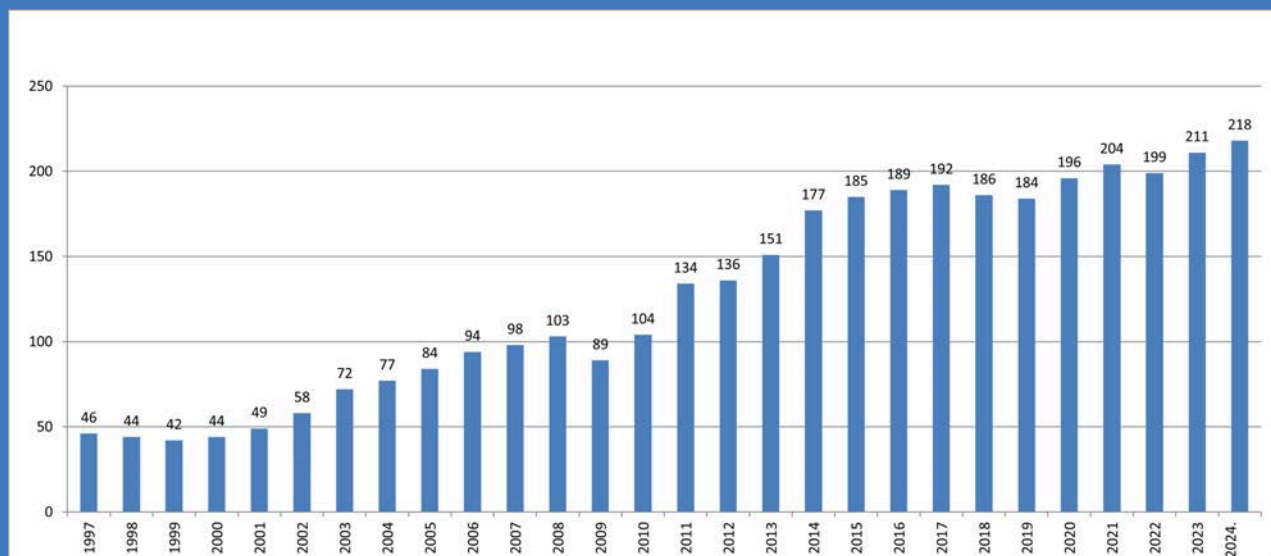
11 Students participated in Numeracy

0 students were exempted

0 students were absent for Spelling and Grammar & Punctuation, and 1 Student was absent for Numeracy

The mean proficiency level for each assessment at every year level was STRONG.

# ENROLMENT TRENDS



Enrolments continued to grow during 2024 and projections show, together with wait list numbers, that this trend is likely to continue in coming years.



# Southern Montessori School

Annual Report

2024