

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



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SCHOOL CONTEXT

Banksia Montessori School is an independent school located in the friendly suburb of Dianella in Perth. We run a quality driven Montessori program for children between 3 and 6 years of age.

All our children are given the opportunity to learn in a nurturing and inviting environment. Our goal for each child is to realise their unique potential. We provide an enriching environment where our teachers guided by Montessori philosophy, encourage independence, creativity and mindfulness in a non-competitive, non-judgemental environment.

Banksia Montessori School is governed by parents through an appointed School Council comprising of up to 10 members, including the Principal and Business Manager of the School.

Banksia relies on the goodwill and active participation of all parents to govern it so parents are encouraged to become a member of the Council during their child's enrolment at the School.

Council meetings are held monthly among the Council members to preview and discuss strategic priorities of the School. Parent Council meetings are held once per term between the Council and the Parent body to provide updates and inputs on the School's progress.

The dates of Parent Council meetings for the year are included in the School Calendar and posted on the blackboards a few days before a meeting, as well as being placed in the school's newsletter. One Annual General Meeting (AGM) is held in Term 2 every year.

2020 Staff

Principal	Fleur Van Butzelaar
Teachers	Fleur Van Butzelaar Sharon Kirton (on parental leave) Kathryn Gurr
Education Assistants	Razina Karani Anjum Iqbal Asami Blackshaw (casual) Sujatha Abeywickrema (casual)
Administration Officer	Belinda Johnston
Finance Officer	Christine Tng
School cleaner	Oriya Lapidot

ENROLMENTS AND ATTENDANCE

2020

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Enrolments	27	25	34	34	21
Number of Families	25	21	29	28	19

Age	*	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
5 years	Pre-Primary	96%	95%	94%	95%
4 years	Kindergarten	96%	97%	97%	94%
3 years	Pre-Kindergarten	92%	94%	88%	86%
	Total	95%	95%	93%	92%

* Student numbers are not included in this table, percentages stated are based on actual students enrolled in each Term in 2020.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

2020 Statutory Annual Report

The Australian Government Programs for School Quadrennial Administrative Guidelines require all schools to make a commitment to ensure that School Performance Information is made available within 6 months of the completion of the program year.

This is Banksia Montessori School's Annual Report for the 2020 year.

School Profile

Banksia Montessori School is an independent school offering education for children aged from 3 to 6 years based on the Montessori philosophy. In 2020, the school year ended with 21 students; 9 students in the Pre-Kindy group aged 3 or 4, 6 students in the Kindy group aged 4 or 5 and 6 students in the Pre-Primary group aged 5 or 6.

Permanent Staff Numbers

Teaching Staff

Teachers: 2 part-time positions

Assistants: 2 part-time positions

Principal: 1 part-time position

Administrative staff

Office Administrator: 1 part-time position

Finance Officer: 1 part-time position

Maintenance Staff

Cleaner: 1 part-time position

Staff attendance

The average number of days absent per staff member over the year was 2.1 days.

No long service leave was taken.

One staff member went on maternity leave at the start of Term 3, 2020.

Principal's report cont.

Staff retention

Average years of service:	4.6 years
Maximum years of service:	7.3 years
Minimum years of service:	< 1 year

Teaching staff standards and qualifications

All staff are qualified. Staff have the following qualifications:

Montessori Diploma:	3
Bachelor of Arts Degree:	2
Bachelor of Science Degree:	1
Diploma of ECE and Care:	1
Graduate Diploma in Education:	1
Graduate Certificate of ECE:	1
Certificate III:	1

3 staff members were registered with the Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia and were financial members.

All staff members held a valid Working with Children Clearance Card.

Staff Professional Development:

Fleur van Butzelaar

- Protective Behaviours - Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum
- Physical Education workshop
- Language of Arts
- Nutrition
- Mandatory Reporting
- Tradition and Change in the Montessori Method today - The week of the Italian Language in the World (presents the life and work of Maria Montessori) 20/10/20

Sharon Kirton

- Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum

Razina Karani

- Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum
- New WHS Act – Implications for Schools
- First Aid, CPR, Anaphylaxis training

Principal's report cont.

Asami Blackshaw

- Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum
- First Aid, CPR, Anaphylaxis training

Anjum Iqbal

- First Aid, CPR and Anaphylaxis training

Christine Tng

- Montessori Business Managers network meetings
- Salary Sacrifice Webinar
- Inclusive Education Funding Process
- AISWA Small school's business managers meetings

Belinda Johnston

- Introduction to Montessori Theory and Philosophy Workshop
- Effectively manage fees and debtors in schools
- Zoom Meetings for Education
- Microsoft Office Live Event
- Online School Marketing Training

All teaching and administrative staff were subject to annual Performance Appraisals.

School Council Member Professional Development:

None.

Student Information

Student attendance for 2020 was 94%.

Management of attendance

Staff attendance is marked every morning.

Student attendance is marked every morning and afternoon by a teacher.

Teachers and administrative staff record explained student absences.

Unexplained student absences of all children are reported to Administration by 9:30am.

Administration follows up this information with a phone call to parents/guardians seeking an explanation as to the absence.

Principal's report cont.

The Principal receives percentage attendance rates for each student at the end of each term. The Principal follows up excessive absences with parents/guardians.

Parent information evenings/sessions

There were 3 parent information evenings/sessions in 2020. These were:

1. Physical Education by Rhian, held at Dianella Community Centre - Term 3
2. Packed with Goodness Session by Nicole, held via Zoom - Term 3
3. Nutrition for young children by Tas, held at Banksia - Term 4

Complaints

There were 27 complaints from parents during 2020. Nine of these complaints were from one family and these were all resolved. 3 complaints related to issues in and around changes from the Covid Pandemic. These complaints were primarily dealt with by the incoming School Council. The remaining complaints related to a diverse range of concerns. All complaints that followed proper process were recorded with their resolutions, filed and now reported to members of the Association.

On-line, on-entry testing

On-line, on-entry testing was carried out on the Pre-Primary children in March, 2020. The results released to the Principal by the West Australian Department of Education were used to identify what the students knew and what they were still required to learn. Parents of Pre-Primary children were briefed with the results and given information to assist their children with further learning at home.

Student learning and progress

At the start of the school year, learning continued to be based on four curriculums. The Montessori Curriculum, Early Years Learning Framework, Kindergarten Curriculum and the West Australian Curriculum Framework. The learning environment for 2020 was updated with a number of new materials when school reopened.

There was an emphasis in literacy on vocabulary building materials for children whose second language was English. A number of rhyming materials were also incorporated into the literacy area, with materials becoming progressively more abstract in their use. A variety of new fiction and non-fiction reading books were purchased and incorporated into the children's library.

The mathematics area of the environment was supplemented with materials that are normally found within Cycle 2 of a Montessori environment. These new materials included division and square number apparatus. Having mastered addition and subtraction in thousands, many of the older children required these supplementary materials to maintain interest and focus. Supplementary materials were primarily required for the pre-primary students. These materials are not usually required for Cycle 1 students. The materials were ordered online from Holland and arrived at the start of the year.

Principal's report cont.

The cultural area of the classroom was reinvigorated by recycling some of the materials in the school storeroom, however, a large number of new materials were created by the staff prior to the first day of school, once again to maintain interest and the integrity of the cultural learning area. Life cycles of both plants and animals combined physical objects and 3 part reading cards.

Materials within the Sensorial area were refurbished with coats of paint as were some of the shelving. Materials that increased the skills of the students were added to those of a more basic nature. This included the sphere matching bags and cards imported from Germany extending the use of the knobbed cylinders, knobles cylinders, pink tower and brown stair.

The practical life materials were also refurbished, updated and exchanged to extend and enhance the student's ability to concentrate, their finer and gross motor co-ordination and to encourage their working from left to right. Cooking was a highlight across all the age groups, especially amongst the pre-primary students who cooked every Friday afternoon. The feedback with regard to cooking from the parent community was very positive.

Parent teacher interviews were held at the end of Semester 1 and Semester 2. All parents were able to go through their child's portfolio, identifying some of the work done throughout the year. These portfolios captured a snapshot of activity within the classroom. The Kindy and Pre-Primary students also received written reports identifying how each child performed in the different areas of learning. The portfolios of children at work were shared with parents at interviews. Some students worked with an Individual Education Plan and these were revised either biannually or annually.

Students participated in the following incursions and excursions during 2020. These were:

- Term 1 Malaga Fire Station Incursion
- Term 2 *due to COVID – Incursions were rescheduled*
- Term 3 Scitech Incursion
- Term 3 Better Beginnings Dianella Library visitor Incursion
- Term 4 Constable Care Puppet Show Incursion

The Covid Pandemic in March of 2020 had a significant impact on the school. Many of the annual community events such as Mother's Day had to be cancelled. Although these events were missed, the students still celebrated these special days by making cards and gifts. Parent information evenings had to be delayed and Harmony Day celebrations did not take place. Instead of the usual Harmony Day celebrations, the students dressed up and learnt about other cultures.

For a brief period of time, learning went on-line to cater for 3 students. This was a monumental task for the staff because of the hands-on nature of Montessori. That being said, the learning with regard to on-line learning was very informative and allowed for the establishment of new policies and procedures managing future learning under trying circumstances.

The uncertainty around Covid also impacted on the school's numbers. The school lost a small but vital number of pre-primary and kindergarten students, all of whom contributed to our small school community. Their absence was sorely felt by the community as a whole and especially by the teaching staff who realized the full implications of not completing Cycle 1.

Principal's report cont.

Fortunately, as the year progressed numbers built up again with a renewed interest in what Banksia had to offer.

In 2020 Banksia was fortunate to host for the very first time a work experience student. Our young students enjoyed having Hannah Fitzpatrick in the classroom and particularly liked spending time working with her. The school also hosted a student teacher from MWEI, who too, contributed her knowledge and expertise towards the students learning.

The school year ended with graduation and the annual concert and school picnic. Each graduating child received a certificate and book prize and parents posed with their children for memorable photographs. Families brought a share plate to the picnic and athletic games were organized for the children. The graduation ceremony, concert and picnic marked the end to a troubled year, but heralded the coming of a bright new year.

Fleur Van Butzelaar

Principal

Banksia Montessori School

Footnote :-

Satisfaction

The parents' satisfaction survey had a total of 10 responses. This is less than 50% of the current number of students enrolled at the School. The results are still being collated by the School Administrator and the results and comments will be shared at the next Parent Term Meeting, and will include any late responses to the survey. A summary of the survey will be added to the School's 2021 Annual Report as an annexure.

Christine Tng

Finance Officer

CHAIR'S REPORT

2020 was a year of challenges and who could of thought that there were shortages in toilet paper! Luckily each family donates a small supply and we managed to survive the mayhem J

The school year started off with the usual Busy Bee, run successfully on a hot summer's day with excitement in the air of a new school year. It was nice to meet new families and contribute to the community and culture of the school. Special thanks must go to the Sferco family who helped to restore the decking stage area and provide the correct materials to preserve it going forward. Whoever thought maintenance of a deck was that hard!

At the AGM we introduced new Council members and that's when all the fun began. The world as we know it was turned upside down by this little virus with no legs and disrupted our way of life. The biggest change was not being able to go into the classroom to see what our little one's love doing each day. I'm sure that we all miss the ability to watch the kids happily share what jobs they are doing each morning with us. The school family numbers were reduced throughout the year as a few families departed with issues related to the pandemic. We thank them for their various contributions to the school community.

Communication also became a challenge as everything was moved into the digital space with apps like zoom. This has a bigger impact than we realise with so much communication being nonverbal, and this affected the ability for Council to communicate effectively with Fleur and staff. I'm glad to say that as time went on with the resumption of face to face meetings that things smoothed out as communication improved. I would like to thank Fleur in particular, for being an integral part of the school and for her contributions. Not only for her work as head teacher of which she does an amazing job, but also for her role as principal considering the forever changing legislative requirements and having to liaise with new Council members who in themselves are trying to understand their role.

The school year carried on as we learned how to adapt to many changes that were required, including drop offs at the front, elbow bumps and that a Montessori education was extremely hard to deliver at home online despite the amazing efforts of education packs. It was a massive relief to be able to go back to school and a realisation of how lucky we are to be in this State and Country.

Big thanks to Olivia in organising the sausage sizzle in such short notice given the year we had thus far. It was a huge success and I would like to acknowledge everyone that helped make it happen. An amazing effort by all involved, it was great to see our community spirit.

The school year rounded up with an amazing concert performed by our children where we were had the privilege to view some wonderful instrumental performances. We were introduced briefly to Bernice, who since has entered our classroom with, kindness, ease and brings a wealth of experience.

After the Christmas holiday break, who could forget the start to the school year? Another successful busy bee in the morning followed by a scramble for masks and lockdown that afternoon with the news of postponing the school year start. What a crazy year it's been!

Chair's report con't

I would like to show gratitude to the Council for their dedication, ideas, and discussion. It certainly hasn't been an easy year and we have all learnt so much from one another. I would also like to acknowledge the teachers, admin staff and Fleur for their absolute commitment to their students and the school, 2020 was NOT an easy year.

Finally, thanks to you – the parents for trusting the Council and school staff to make the decisions necessary to keep the school moving forward and educating your children.

David Tran

Chairperson

Banksia Montessori School Council

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