

Strategic Plan

2022-2027



The Hills Montessori School

ESTABLISHED 1978



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PERAMANGK COUNTRY (WARTA)

Yungalya - Nia Poona? (Hi are you good/well?)

We acknowledge that we work and walk upon the ancient lands of the Peramangk Nation across the Mount Lofty Ranges shared with the Kurna people around Stirling and Aldgate. We pay our respect to Peramangk Elders past and living today as the traditional custodians of this ancient land.

We also acknowledge they have cared and nurtured it through innovation and natural science so we can enjoy it today, learn upon it and teach people to work with the living Peramangk, and together care for Country as it has been done for thousands of years for future generations.

We pledge to work closely with the Traditional Custodians of the Warta to empower the young people of this land, in the Spirit of Reconciliation.

*Wording guided by Ivan-Tiwu Copley
(Peramangk and Kurna Senior Elder) February 2019*

OUR PURPOSE

To guide, inspire and empower young people to live a culturally rich life and contribute positively and ethically to society.

OUR MISSION

To offer a Montessori education from birth to adolescence that guides students in developing their independence, resourcefulness, self-confidence, inner discipline and love of learning by providing them with a caring, respectful, enriching and challenging learning environment.

OUR VISION

A thriving learning community offering comprehensive, rich, challenging and developmentally designed Montessori programs grounded in excellent pedagogy.

Building on established foundations we will strengthen partnerships and local engagement, enhance existing facilities, challenge and support our educators to innovate and further enrich the learning experiences of our students.

Strategic Plan

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INTRODUCTION

The Hills Montessori School has come a long way since its inception in 1978 and we continue to have a clear vision for our future.

This includes the way we think and act in the areas of our place-based learning, STEM science, technology, engineering and mathematics frameworks and personal and social capabilities.

Like the spiral curriculum approach that features in Montessori education, this strategic plan is focused holistically on our school environment and constantly loops back to our vision as we develop knowledge and make meaning of our goals.

The plan continues to be organised under five key strategic pillars: Values and Culture; Engagement, Work and Learning; Place and Space; Business and Governance; and Connection and Communication.

Our strategies and actions over the next five years will focus our energy and resources, strengthen our operations and support our culture.

We know our community flourishes when we live our values. We are committed to nurturing the endless possibilities of our students, tending to the talent of our educators and growing the strengths of our parent community.

We invite and encourage you to help us deliver on this Strategic Plan 2022-2027.

Cathy J. Crathern

Cathy France
Principal

Jade Crathern
Board President

Explanation of terminology

This strategic document refers to **parents** and acknowledges that this terminology also encompasses carers, families and guardians.

The term **educators** in this document refers to teaching and support staff.

The term **pedagogy** in this document refers to the theory and practice of teaching, and how this process influences, and is influenced by, the social, political and psychological development of learners.

HOW WE'LL DO IT

The Hills Montessori School Board with school leaders, educators and parent representatives, is responsible for mobilising the Strategic Plan. The reporting and review of achievement against the Strategic Plan actions will form part of the regular work of the Board, school leadership and educators and at all levels will be communicated to parents.

The School Board, committees, school leaders, educators and parents will share the various responsibilities in the preparation and delivery of operational actions that underpin the delivery of the Strategic Plan.

Delivering on our strategic actions will achieve our vision and the whole school community has a role to play.



THANK YOU

To all of the parents, educators, staff and students who took the time to contribute to the development of this Strategic Plan, we say thank you.

VALUES AND CULTURE



The Montessori philosophy is values-based and our school values guide all decisions. Self-respect, respect for others and respect for the environment lie at the core of all that we do. We value inclusivity, individuality and diversity. Strong relationships and a caring, non-competitive environment are the cornerstones of our school community. We foster a culture where all students feel safe, connected, heard and appreciated. We nurture the love of learning and a sense of interconnection with the world. Our students are supported and guided to become curious, capable, self-motivated learners who embrace the future confidently, actively and responsibly.

STRATEGY 1

Uphold Montessori philosophy, principles and pedagogy

ACTIONS

- Prioritise Montessori training and attainment of Montessori qualifications to hone the talents of our educators
- Invest in school facilities, resources and play spaces in ways that align with Montessori principles
- Draw the richness and expertise in the wider community into the flexible curriculum
- Apply Montessori values, ethics and enterprise to our decision making and futures planning

STRATEGY 2

Continually invest energy in replenishing this vibrant, inclusive, joyful and unique community

ACTIONS

- Recruit and foster passion, commitment, knowledge, professionalism, respect and approachability in our staff
- Proactively support the wellbeing of all members of the school community
- Celebrate the school community as a passionate collective committed to the positive education and wellbeing of young people and their families

STRATEGY 3

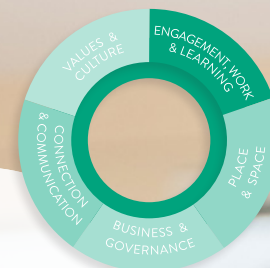
Build and embed First Nations cultural learning opportunities for the school community

ACTIONS

- Implement our Reconciliation Action Plan and commit to reviewing and developing our actions annually
- Purposefully take every opportunity to increase understanding, value and recognition of First Nations' cultures, histories, knowledge and rights



ENGAGEMENT, WORK AND LEARNING



Montessori education is an aid to life. We support and guide the development of social, intellectual and ethical independence in each child, through an environment that is respectful, responsive, enriching and challenging. We cultivate the skills of self-directed work and learning. We nurture our dedicated and capable staff by providing quality professional development, supporting enrichment initiatives, and enabling collaboration, professional discussion and personal reflection. We value working with parents as partners in the education of their children.

STRATEGY 1

Deliver a rigorous, authentic Montessori curriculum

ACTIONS

- Ensure all staff confidently engage with the Montessori National Curriculum and the updated Australian Curriculum R-10
- Resource the development and use of diagnostic tools, moderation practices and reporting processes to more effectively monitor student growth and progress, improve transfer of longitudinal information, and inform ongoing practice
- Place peace, justice and sustainability at the heart of learning

STRATEGY 2

Implement a rich, holistic program

ACTIONS

- Embed the school's wellbeing framework in the curriculum
- Strengthen age-appropriate information and communication technology (ICT) capabilities
- Activate the creativity, technology and problem-solving aspects embedded in the Montessori cultural curriculum
- Maximise opportunities to explore diverse identities, perspectives, ideas and issues
- Extend age-appropriate 'place based learning' as an organising principle - including outdoor, bushland, local community and First Nations opportunities

STRATEGY 3

Cultivate dedicated, professional, highly-skilled staff

ACTIONS

- Encourage and support staff materially and flexibly to achieve their Montessori qualifications and to undertake ongoing Montessori professional development and training
- Develop staff capability to support students with diverse needs - including structures, routines, tools and staff education

STRATEGY 4

Strengthen parent engagement in Montessori education and student learning

ACTIONS

- Use diverse, innovative methods to facilitate understanding within the school community of Montessori principles, and school practices and undertakings
- Utilise diverse communication channels to deliver engaging Montessori content as a resource for parents

PLACE AND SPACE



Environment plays a significant role in the development of the child. Our indoor and outdoor environments are prepared to nurture children’s love of learning and natural tendency to work. Caring for, enhancing and appreciating our place is fundamental to our sustainable practice and says much about who we are. Natural bush areas and outdoor spaces across both campuses nurture wellbeing, fun and curiosity. ‘Place’ provides a primary resource for learning and our programs offer real and meaningful hands-on work.

STRATEGY 1

Optimise the natural bush areas

ACTIONS

- Conserve, regenerate, enhance and resource optimum use of the bush areas at Yultiwirra campus
- Develop facilities to extend outdoor learning experiences and nature play opportunities

STRATEGY 2

Contemporise school facilities in alignment with Montessori principles

ACTIONS

- Prioritise the capital development initiatives of the 2022 Yultiwirra master plan
- Incorporate the priorities of the 2022 Yultiwirra master plan in the school’s financial forecasts (including but not limited to a Cycle 1 and Infant Program Precinct, and games courts, cultural resources and wellbeing spaces)
- Prioritise and allocate costed, capital development initiatives at Wairoa (including the outdoor facilities, games court and surrounds)

STRATEGY 3

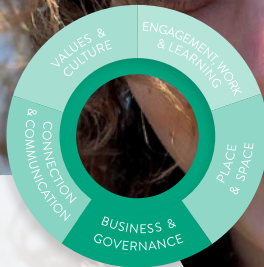
Develop infrastructure and technology for a sustainable future

ACTIONS

- Develop and implement an ICT master plan
- Develop and implement a sustainability strategy



BUSINESS AND GOVERNANCE



We apply Montessori values, ethics and enterprise to our decision making in an ever-changing and complex world. Our school governance is representative, transparent and delivers on the promises of our mission statement. We draw on the skills, experience, passion and energy of our community and encourage parents to participate at all levels. We endeavour to promote the Montessori vision for a better world.

STRATEGY 1

Ensure the financial sustainability of the school

ACTIONS

- Achieve optimum student numbers in cycle and class arrangements that facilitate effective learning communities
- Provide competitive yet sustainable fees to foster and maintain a diverse community
- Establish a sustainable financial model to attract and retain staff as well as facilitate staff acquisition of formal Montessori qualifications (in addition to other professional development activities)

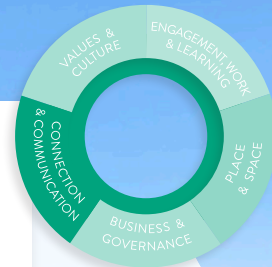
STRATEGY 2

Position the school strongly for future decisions and directions

ACTIONS

- Formulate, model and implement a staged plan to establish authentic Montessori Cycle One classes (3-6 year olds)
- Inaugurate and promote a School Foundation to strengthen the financial future of the school
- Invest in comprehensively scoping and planning for significant future-focussed projects

CONNECTION AND COMMUNICATION



We cherish our community and pay attention to developing deep connections within and beyond. Adaptability and clear intention are keys to embracing and leading effective and rich communication. We aim to inspire and enable students to connect with and actively contribute to their communities now and in the future. Our alumni, both students and families, connect us for lasting impact and fellowship.

STRATEGY 1

Strengthen connections within and beyond the current school community

ACTIONS

- Reinforce the pathways for new families to join and be engaged in the school community
- Provide opportunities for the school community to connect and collaborate in learning, in contribution and socially
- Strengthen platforms to stay connected with old scholars to build Montessori fellowship
- Showcase the benefits of a Montessori approach and the connections to home, school and wider life

STRATEGY 2

Further develop open and effective lines of communication

ACTIONS

- Lead transparent, nimble communications in a world of constant and unpredictable change
- Customise communication for new and existing families
- Maximise our marketing reach by activating a variety of communications tools and new engagement platforms