



School No. 2042

2012 Annual Report to the School Community





BEECHWORTH MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Vision, Values and Goals

Vision

A sustainable learning centre providing excellence in child-focused Montessori education for 0-12 year olds.

Our Values

- We value relationships within and between all members of our school community including students, staff, parents, COM and the broader community.
- We value a connected and cohesive school community and appreciate the valuable contributions and support provided.
- We value the philosophy and principles of Montessori education and endeavour to deliver our education program with honesty and integrity.
- We value excellence in Montessori education that caters for the needs of the individual student in a peaceful and respectful learning environment.

Goals

- 1 - To maintain excellence in Montessori education and foster every child to reach their full potential.
- 2 - To provide access to affordable Montessori education for families in our region.
- 3 - Planning for a sustainable future.
- 4 - Stay connected with our school and broader community.

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This Annual Report reflects the operations of Beechworth Montessori School for the 2012 school year and is a requirement of registration with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). The Annual Report is publicly available on the VRQA website.

The operations of Beechworth Montessori School across the kindergarten and primary school sections have been included although only the operations of the primary school are required to be reported on. Many of the sections in this report have information that is relevant to Cycles 1, 2 and 3 classrooms, not just prep - Year 6 and this information has been included in the interests of clear communication and transparency.

Heather Gerrard
Principal

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School Overview

Beechworth Montessori School (BMS) is currently located in three buildings at LaTrobe University, Beechworth. It is the only Montessori Educational facility in North East Victoria. The group commenced operations in 1997 as the Beechworth Montessori Children's Group to provide a Montessori preschool program for three and four year old children. In 2006 the preschool program expanded to include five year old children. Tiny Tots program was established in 2002 for children aged up to three years and this acts as an introduction for both parents and children to the Montessori philosophy.

In 2007 a primary school for children aged 6-12 years old opened in the Emerald Building enabling children to complete their early childhood and primary school learning within the Montessori educational philosophy.

Beechworth Montessori is an incorporated body with a voluntary, parent-operated Committee of Management. All members of Beechworth Montessori are welcome and encouraged to join our committee or Parent & Friends group.

In 2013 the organisation will relocate to a purpose renovated building in Gilchrist Ave. The existing building will be remodelled into a purpose designed Montessori school with established gardens and atriums.

Committee of Management

Beechworth Montessori School is run by a volunteer Committee of Management. Committee members are members of the wider community and parents of children at BMS who have volunteered their time and skills to the organisation. They may have experience in the areas of administration, business management, strategic planning, marketing, finance, law, education health or fundraising. Or they may be enthusiastic parents with skills from another field altogether who are happy to contribute in another way to their child's education.

In 2012 the Committee of Management was composed of the following positions.

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- General Members - Five

The Committee oversees the growth and evolution of BMS and supports the Principal who manages the day to day operations. In addition the Committee works with the Principal to develop strategic plans and policies.

Members are nominated and elected by other parents in the organisation at the Annual General Meeting held in Term 1. Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at Beechworth Montessori, commencing at 7.30pm. All members of the community are welcome to attend the meetings and new members are always welcome.

Beechworth Montessori Principles

The school logo depicts a peacock which in many cultures represents kindness, compassion, wisdom and patience. For a period of time, a wild peacock adopted our school as its home and spent several years as a free bird that chose to live within our grounds. One year after the summer break we returned to find that it had gone, however its legacy remains. When the school rebranded in 2009 the children were involved in redesigning the logo. They chose the image of a peacock!

Beechworth Montessori provides an enriching, holistic education for children, guided by Montessori philosophy and curriculum, in a peaceful and harmonious learning environment. Our philosophy is

“Fostering the Potential of Every Child - Education for Life”

Beechworth Montessori School aims to encourage respect for one’s self, respect for others, and respect for property, including the environment. A safe, secure and cooperative environment is provided through a climate of active listening and communication, positive role modelling, human relations education and through adherence to a fair and effective set of procedures. These are basic principles of behaviour to be practiced by ALL members of our school community.

Beechworth Montessori School follows the principles of:

Rights of the child

- to feel safe
- to be accepted as an individual
- to expect personal property to be safe from destruction or theft
- to be spoken to quietly and with respect by everyone
- to learn in an attractive, well prepared environment
- to work without disturbance
- to be shown courtesy, kindness and respect by everyone

Responsibilities of the child

- to express themselves appropriately
- to accept others as individuals
- to respect the personal property of others
- to choose appropriate work
- to work without disturbing others
- to show courtesy, kindness and respect to everyone
- to cooperate and act in a friendly manner
- to listen to others, and to allow them their thoughts and opinions
- to help with caring for the environment, both internally and externally

Committee of Management - President's Report

President's AGM report – 2012– Pamela Walpole

The main work of the Beechworth Montessori Board has this year again centred around the relocation project, and there have been many milestones including:

- Establishment of a commercial bank loan with our preferred lender which includes a 2 year interest only period
- Receiving \$200,000 funding support from the Independent Schools Block Grant Authority to support the property purchase of the new Gilchrist Avenue campus
- Receiving a total of \$885,000 in grants from Independent Schools Block Grant Authority towards stages 1a of the refurbishment project, plus an additional \$150,000 to fund removal of all hazardous materials from the site and to complete some external works
- Attracting \$300,000 funding under the Early Learning Facilities Upgrade program from the Department of Early Education and Childhood Development to partly fund building works associated with the Beechworth Montessori kindergarten (stage 1b)
- During the year, Beechworth Montessori School's master plan for Gilchrist Avenue was reviewed and modified to include a second Cycle 3 classroom (formally we had included a dedicated Library facility and only 1 cycle 3 room)
- Beechworth Montessori made an appointment of R&D Designs Plus to act as an independent consultant to the building project
- After an extensive tender process, contracts were signed with our preferred builder, Ultra Project Services, from a strong shortlist of local companies

Settlement on the new Gilchrist Avenue property occurred at the end of 2012, with the actual refurbishment project commencing early in January 2013. As could be expected with the refurbishment of an existing building, there have been a few surprises revealed since the project commenced – some of which have been significant structural and design issues. If left unresolved these issues would impact on the longevity and liveability of the school building. They include some roofing design flaws, inadequate slab treatment and poor drainage (all from time of construction).

So while we have had to compromise on some internal elements of the build (such as selection of floor coverings), we are confident that resolving the building fundamentals will provide much better long term outcomes. Probably more importantly, we are very encouraged that these hurdles haven't been insurmountable and that the working relationship between the School Board, our school representative, Rachel Bohm of R&D Designs Plus, and the building contractor, Ultra Project Services, has developed quickly and the parties have demonstrated that they can work collaboratively and constructively together to achieve the end goal.

Another significant achievement this year was a facilitated strategic planning day to reaffirm our organisation's vision, values and key goals for the upcoming 5 year horizon. Attended by parents, staff and Board members, our discussions focused on the major strategic issues and opportunities over the coming 5 years, and in a broad sense how we will meet these challenges to achieve the mission of being '*a sustainable learning centre providing excellence in child-focused Montessori education for 0-12 year olds*'.

Some of the important outcomes of the day were commitments to bring our Principal and Administration Officer positions from part time to full time, and striving for pay parity with the public sector for our teaching staff.

Significantly, we reiterated that it is our ability to deliver an authentic Montessori education which can distinguish us from other educational offerings. Central to this are small class sizes, highly skilled and qualified teachers with full time classroom assistants, together with high rates of retention across all cycles. This model is, by nature quite resource intensive, and our fees and enrolment

policies must continue to support the 'educational' aspirations we have for the classroom learning environment.

We also identified strategies for strengthening our capital fund raising capacity, including the introduction of a Building Fund to support the maintenance of our new building and grounds.

The draft Strategic Plan 2013-17 is now available and the feedback is welcomed.

Our school's leader, Heather Gerrard, completed the second of her 3 year contract in the position of Principal in 2012. Heather's strong commitment to systems, policy/curriculum development and continuous improvement has resulted in many important and tangible outcomes this year. These include successful school re-registration with the Victorian Qualifications and Registration Authority and meeting and exceeding Australian National Quality Framework standards for our early years' programs.

Heather has also worked tirelessly to champion our organisation throughout the local and broader community, and has assembled a professional team of highly skilled and experienced teaching and support staff at a time of great organisational growth.

On a final note, I would like to thank all members of the current Board for the role they have played this year:

- Kim Haebich, our Vice President who has taken a strong interest and role in school policy development;
- Lara Block, Treasurer and driver of bank loans and property settlement;
- Jacqui Leslie, our proficient Secretary;
- Anne Duncan, our OH&S specialist;
- Mark Ladbrook, who has most recently taken on the leadership task of design and development of the new grounds at Gilchrist Avenue;
- Jade Miles, who has championed the schools business planning and strategic vision; and
- Seane Pieper who coordinated the vacating of the new school building prior to commencement of building works.

Rachel Bohm, though no longer a member of the Board, continues to provide exemplary leadership for the relocation project and has worked uncompromisingly on our behalf to ensure that the new campus meets the high aspirations we hold for our organisation.

We begin the 2013 year with a high level of confidence about the future success of Beechworth Montessori and look forward to the journey.

Principal's Report 2011

Principal's AGM report – 2011- Heather Gerrard

Montessori in Australia

2012 was a year of moving forward towards the relocation of the school to our permanent home at Gilchrist Ave. A committed and focused Committee of Management provided consistent support in my role of managing the day to day operations to enable continued growth and consolidation. I must acknowledge in particular the support of Pamela Walpole, Lara Block, Howard Russell and Feona Roscouet who worked collaboratively and professionally with me to ensure that we could achieve this. Rachel Bohm as a committee member and later project manager has largely driven making the dream of relocation become a reality through her tenacity, vision and single minded approach to ensure that we stay on task. It is a pleasure to work with her.

The three major areas of operations were in the areas of enrolments, staffing, funding, and compliance requirements from the governing bodies, both State and Federally. Compliance requirements saw the school due for re-registration with the VRQA and this required the submission of documents and a desk audit. We had our assessment under the National Quality Standards and met National Standards, with exceeding on two areas: Relationships with Children and Leadership and Service Management. Compliance requirements continue to be a focus of operational issues with minimum standards increasing across all sectors. Funding applications and compliance were a predominant component of operations in 2012 and the success of obtaining grants was due to efforts of many people – staff and committee. A great result.

Enrolments

There have been strong and consistent numbers in Tiny Tots and Transition. This enabled us to run Transition every Wednesday of the term with a Director and Assistant. This program operated as a rostered playgroup and was lead by Michaela with the assistance of Melanie. Transition has supported the enrolment process of new children from 2.5 years to 5 years of age through determining best fit for the child for the rooms they were attending and preparing the child with the protocols and procedures for independent learning. Some parents elected to have their 2.5 year old children undertake two terms of transition. The length of time per child in this program varied according to the needs of the child. This program was cost neutral.

Cycle 1 enrolments steadily grew in terms of unfunded children in the 3 and 4 year old category. This kept admin busy with the necessary changes and resulted in Feona moving into a more dedicated enrolment officer role. Our focus with enrolments this year in Cycle 1 was to create consistency across the two classrooms with an equal gender split across the three age groups. Our funded four year old children were steady at 24. Prep numbers were 14 and there were 77 enrolments in the primary school. There were two Cycle 2 classrooms and one Cycle 3 class.

In the 6 years of primary school attendance our enrolment numbers have grown from:

2007, 13 – 1 Year 6 student

2008, 18 – 1 Year 6 student

2009, 33 – 2 Year 6 students

2010, 53 – 1 Year 6 student

2011, 65 – 1 Year 6 student

2012, 77 – 8 Year 6 student sand our graduating class from the first class since the creation of the primary school.

Staffing

21 staff were employed in the roles of Directors, Assistant and support staff. As enrolment numbers increased the Turquoise Assistant was increased from a part time role to full time. Transition, Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 classes all enjoyed staffing of a Director and Assistant. Cycle 3 had a part time assistant due to numbers.

Changes in staffing in 2012 were many – all due to the personal situation of the staff.

Terie Quealy had moved from the role of Cycle 3 Director to the Cycle 3 Assistant however due to a family relocation and child in year 12, she decided to resign at the end of term 2. Melanie Lunden advised that her family was moving to Tasmania and Dee Murrell was appointed to the Art position for a term. After the term staff decided to integrate Art into the classroom curriculum – this was partially due to Gilchrist Ave campus no longer being available for classes and insufficient space at the LaTrobe site to run the classes. Sarah Colquhoun was employed as a Cycle 1 Amethyst Director part time – she was offered a job as a teacher librarian at Scots School Albury. With two daughters attending there and as this was her major qualification and interest, Sarah was not in a position to decline the offer. This resulted in the hiring of Toni Payne (a relief teacher) on a short term contract for the remainder of the year and Shaneen Mills moved to a full time Director position.

At the end of the year further staff members advised of their resignation:

Christos Miliankos – family heading overseas to live.

Susi Allen advised that she was relocating to Vanuatu as her family was establishing a Social Enterprise oil distillery with the local people.

Dina Vayenas found the commute to work untenable and advised she would be only available for relief teaching.

Kat Beaton was successful in being appointed to the Cycle 3 Director's position – an additional position due to growth in student numbers. This necessitated the advertising of a replacement Music Teacher.

We had specialist programs for Acro and Drama – offered by parents with expertise.

Positions were advertised for the vacancies. As usual there was a very limited pool of available teachers who also have training, understanding and willingness to teach according to the Montessori pedagogy. We finished the year with replacement teachers for all positions.

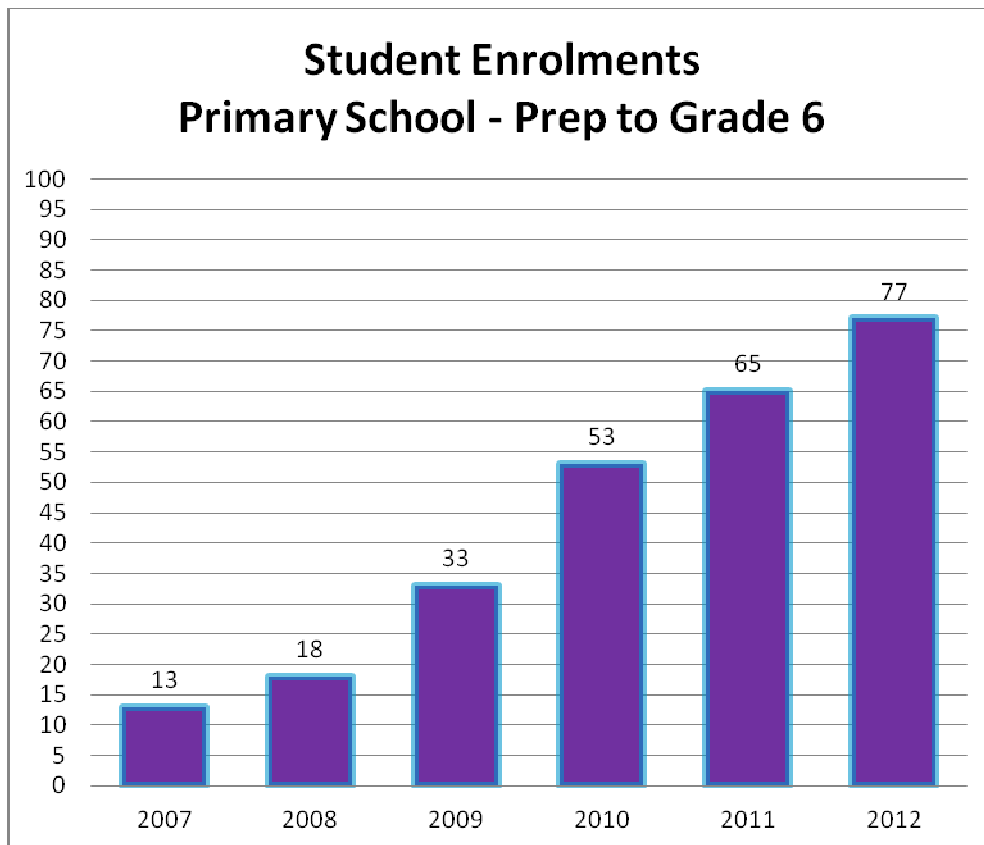
The future

The relocation, staffing, enrolments and compliance will continue to be major factors for operational issues. As always it is the priority that what we do and how we do it be carried out keeping our values, mission and the children as the priority.

Student Progress & Achievements

Student Enrolments

The student enrolment graph below refers to the number of students enrolled in the primary school from levels Prep – Year 6. It does not include children enrolled in the Tiny Tots, Transition and Kindergarten programs. There are approximately an additional 50 children in the early years programs. Primary School census occurs twice annually and the number of students represented refers to the February census date. There is typically some variation in numbers throughout the school year.



Student Learning

In 2012 96% of eligible students sat the NAPLAN tests at both the Year 3 & 5 levels. 4% of eligible students were withdrawn at the request of the parents. Sixteen children in Year 3 and 8 children in Year 5 sat the tests.

Detailed school results in the test areas of Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy may be found at

<http://www.myschool.edu.au/SchoolProfile/Index/68038/BeechworthMontessoriPrimarySchool/46382/2012>

Year 3 Naplan Summary 2010 - 2012

Beechworth Montessori School Year 3 results in comparison to average all Australian schools results. These students were:

Year	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
2010	substantially above	close to	close to	close to	close to
2011	substantially above	close to	close to	below	close to
2012	substantially above	above	above	above	above

Note: With relatively small numbers of children sitting NAPLAN each year, results can be significantly impacted upon by the abilities of a few.

Analysis of these results

- The results indicate that these cohort of students were close to, or substantially above the Australian school average in all included data with the exception of Grammar and Punctuation 2011.
- The results indicate that the Year 3 students at Beechworth Montessori School are always above or substantially above statistically similar schools in all areas of testing.
- Enrolments have increased dramatically across this time with continued improvement across all Year 3 students.
- Following 2010 data, specific programs were put in place for 2011 and beyond, specifically punctuation and grammar lessons and persuasive writing lessons.
- Gains in numeracy have been attributed to increased rehearsal and practice with sample NAPLAN tests as they present material in a manner very different to which our children are accustomed - however we do not compromise on the pace at which abstract concepts are presented which can disadvantage some of our students with numeracy assessment.
- Changes in the spelling program included implementation of different ways of presenting spelling such as identifying misspelled words as this is common in NAPLAN. A concerted effort was also put into the further implementation and use of THRASS across Cycle 2, followed by Cycle 3 in 2012 and Cycle 1 in 2013.

Future intentions we will continue to:

- Pursue improvements in the writing processes of the children.
- Utilise THRASS in conjunction with the Montessori materials to improve spelling.
- Present special punctuation and grammar material to children when ready.
- Maintain the current reading program.
- Increase the use of measurement in the maths curriculum.

Year 5 Naplan Summary 2010 - 2012

Beechworth Montessori School Year 5 results in comparison to average all Australian schools results. These students were:

Year	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
2010	No grade 5 students sat NAPLAN tests				
2011	substantially above	close to	substantially below	close to	above
2012	above	below	below	close to	below

Note: Due to the small numbers of children sitting NAPLAN in Year 5, comparisons with like schools is statistically irrelevant as individual students can affect outcomes.

Analysis of these results

- The net loss in data in the area of reading is due to small numbers of students sitting the test and individual students substantially influencing outcomes.
- Students who have not been through the Cycle 1 and 2 programs entered the Cycle 3 classroom sat the tests and without the background in Montessori curriculum they tend to perform at a lower level, academically. With small numbers, results can quickly change.
- Reading in Cycle 2 is a structured program. At Year 5 level reading is integrated into the curriculum as a pleasurable activity rather than a structured lesson.
- Persuasive writing was the writing style used in the 2012 NAPLAN test. This changed from narrative in previous years. Persuasive writing is more demanding as it requires more sophisticated reasoning and structuring than narrative writing.
- Spelling improvement is due to adopting THRASS schoolwide. Continuous improvement is anticipated because THRASS is now being used with children from the age of three years and retention rates of children moving through the cycles is high.
- Grammar is explicitly taught in the Montessori curriculum. With greater numbers of children moving through the cycles, consistent improvement is anticipated.
- Grammar and punctuation data is likely to be influenced by punctuation difficulties for children.
- Numeracy results are skewed as previously a gifted individual has altered the outcome. With small numbers of students, results are dramatically altered.

Future intentions we will continue to:

- Explicitly teach all writing genres.
- Provide different text types and media to enhance reading and responding to questions regarding text.
- Implement strategies to revitalise our approach to teaching explicit spelling skills.

Student Attendance

Primary School student attendance is represented in the table below.

Term 1	94%
Term 2	96%
Term 3	92%
Term 4	93%
Average	94%

In Term 1, six students were absent for extended periods between 1 - 3 weeks.

In Term 2, seven students were absent for extended periods between 1 – 3 weeks.

In Term 3, 13 students were absent for extended periods between 1 – 6 weeks.

In Term 4, three students were absent for extended periods of 1 or 2 weeks.

These extended periods of absence were largely due to family holidays.

Attendance at school is marked twice daily. Parents may notify absence in person, through phone calls or emails or in writing. All unreported absences are followed up by the classroom teacher and confirmation is required in writing. Truancy is not an issue at the school.

The school participated in an audit of student attendance of a census period. The Post Enumeration School Report concluded that we had met all requirements for student attendance and that our systems were very well run, with detailed knowledge by Administration of students, their attendance and all details of the record keeping. The school's standard of record keeping was very high with hardcopy and electronic back up of all important documents and details.

Post-school destinations

At the end of 2012 eight students graduated from Cycle 3, Level 6 at Beechworth Montessori School. Destinations included:

Wangaratta High School SEAL Program - 2 students

Galen Catholic School - 1 student

Beechworth Secondary College - 4 students

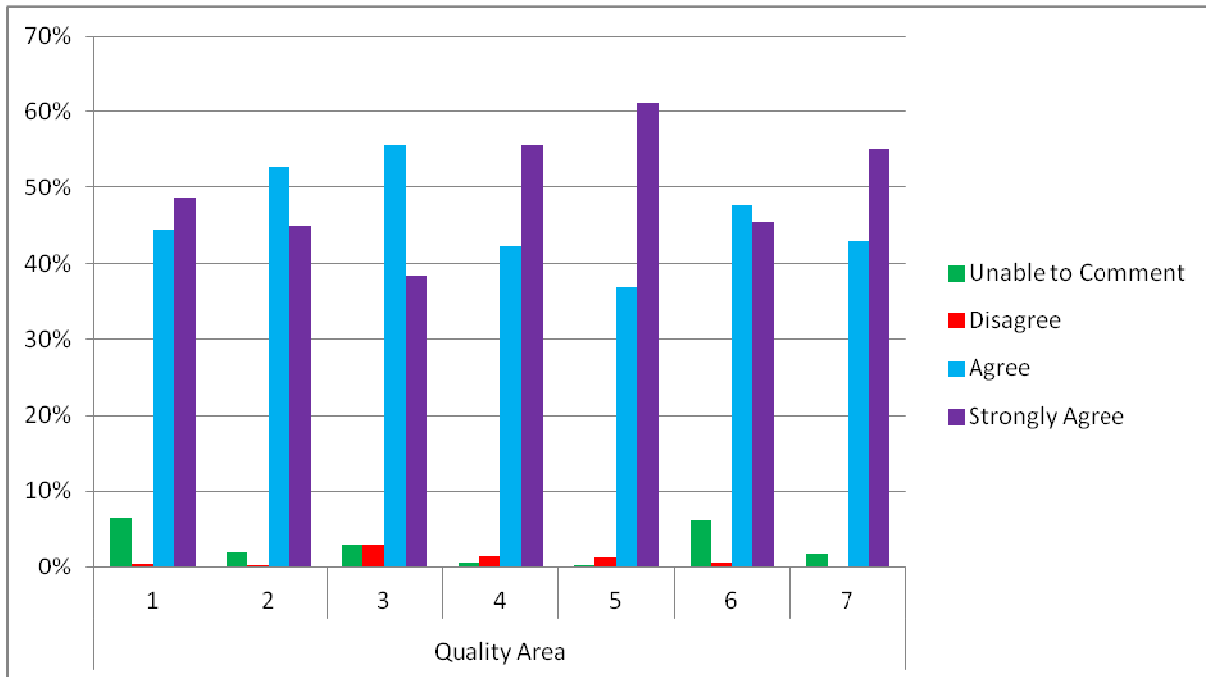
Wangaratta High School - 1 student

Transition included students attending a number of visits to the schools to participate in organised classes and activities. Staff from the destination schools were invited to observe the Montessori students in their classroom environment.

The students transitioned with ease and are enjoying their secondary education. On several occasions students have returned to the school to see students and staff, and in some instances, stayed for sessions in the classroom.

Parent Satisfaction

Parents annually receive a paper based satisfaction survey and are asked to return this to the school. The survey requests parents to rate quality areas according to the responses of strongly agree, agree, disagree, unable to comment. Approximately 35% of all families enrolled at the school - kindergarten and primary - responded to the survey. Tiny Tots parent/toddler program responses were not included in this data collection.



Quality Area 1 – Education Program and Practice

Quality Area 1 included 19 statements of satisfaction around teaching and learning in the classroom, children's abilities, curriculum, the role of the teacher with the child, reporting and opportunity to further knowledge of Montessori philosophy. The satisfaction indicators were expressed in positive terms.

Unable to comment	6.5%
Disagree	.5%
Agree	44.5%
Strongly agree	48.5%

Text comments from parents were requested where a response of unable to comment or disagree was selected:

"wasn't aware Cycle 1 children's learning was documented, marked in class when we are not present, would like to see more technology ie. computers, more info is always welcome, artistic/creative work unseen or either avoided by child, would like more feedback on our child's activities and learning in the class"

Quality Area 2 – Children's Health and Safety"

Quality Area 2 included 13 statements of satisfaction around food and hygiene, safety, grace and courtesy, OH&S, and supervision of children. The satisfaction indicators were expressed in positive terms.

Unable to comment	2%
Disagree	.3%
Agree	52.8%
Strongly agree	44.9%

Text comments from parents were requested where a response of unable to comment or disagree was selected:

"issue of limited/no hot water may be a potential issue for washing up."

Quality Area 3 – Physical Environment

Quality Area 3 included 5 statements of satisfaction regarding school location and environment, sustainability, maintenance and presentation. The satisfaction indicators were expressed in positive terms.

Unable to comment	3%
Disagree	3%
Agree	55.6%
Strongly agree	38.4%

Text comments from parents were requested where a response of unable to comment or disagree was selected:

"some areas/facilities externally and internally look a little tired and need updating, looking forward to new grounds, hoping for good outside play equipment too, staff do an amazing job to present their rooms well but the foundation is poor, everybody does a great job with limited (sometimes) resources/buildings available, given the circumstances the building is maintained as best as possible, don't ever hear about sustainable practices, Cycle 3 space is of concern lighting, supervised space and overcrowding will all be issues."

Quality Area 4 – Staffing Arrangements

Quality Area 4 included 6 statements of satisfaction around confidence in staff, communication, staffing arrangements, consistency, and accessibility. The satisfaction indicators were expressed in positive terms.

Unable to comment	6.8%
Disagree	1.3%
Agree	42.3%
Strongly agree	55.6%

Text comments from parents were requested where a response of unable to comment or disagree was selected:

"I know it is sometimes beyond the schools control but the changes and number of different teachers in the Amethyst room over the year hasn't been ideal and has had an effect on my child, very impressed with some teachers, great educators"

Quality Area 5 - Relationships with Children

Quality Area 5 included 7 statements of satisfaction around respectful relationships, sensitivity, warmth and friendliness, guidance, and creating independence. The satisfaction indicators were expressed in positive terms.

Unable to comment	.5%
Disagree	1.3%
Agree	37%
Strongly agree	61.2%

Text comments from parents were requested where a response of unable to comment or disagree was selected:

Nil

Quality Area 6 - Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

Quality Area 6 included 12 statements of satisfaction around support of parenting role, respectful relationships between school and family, other organisations, feelings of welcomeness, opportunity to meet with educators, enrolment process, timely and variety of communication, opportunity for involvement . The satisfaction indicators were expressed in positive terms.

Unable to comment	6.1%
Disagree	.6%
Agree	48%
Strongly agree	45.3%

Text comments from parents were requested where a response of unable to comment or disagree was selected:

"the policies and procedures could be more readily available and clearly communicated, never looked at the website, the website is out of date, policies and procedures are clearly documented"

Quality Area 7 – Leadership and Service Management

Quality Area 7 included 10 statements of satisfaction around leadership, organisational performance, confidence, recommendations, communication. The satisfaction indicators were expressed in positive terms.

Unable to comment	2%
Disagree	0%
Agree	43%
Strongly agree	55%

Text comments from parents were requested where a response of unable to comment or disagree was selected:

"more hours given to those in leadership would be worthwhile"

Other comments and what are the best things about Beechworth Montessori in these quality areas?

- would like to see a garden initiative such as the Stephanie's garden programme
- I appreciate the respect given to me when my ideas or values may be different to others. I never feel judged or uncomfortable to express an idea or concern
- focus on individual child who can excel in what they are comfortable with
- Best Montessori and at Beechworth, is a lifelong learning model that fosters a love and natural thirst for knowledge and learning in the children. With this children just thrive as they learn, grow, develop in all areas of life from cooking to eating, to reading and writing, to maths and spelling, to world science, geography, art. It is amazing.
- maybe implement more tracking for preps so they can't easily dodge things they don't enjoy so much.
- bridge the gap between supermarket shelf and food producers. Is there room/option/want to develop an animal breeding program for the Cycle 3 children/
- staffing, very happy with communication and interaction with family and child.
- I know the kids will be appropriately cared for, nurtured and attended to. I don't worry about them while they are at school. I know that they will be allowed and even encouraged to be themselves and rested as real people.
- very supportive of the addition of a sports teacher to the Montessori staff. This is an exciting edition. I also think this is an extra benefit that Montessori now offers.
- BMS has very enthusiastic and supportive teaching staff.
- education materials, staff and support by staff for my child to grow and develop to the best of his ability.
- thoughtful staff. The daily little bits of feedback are so wonderful.
- learning that adapts to the child, not the reverse.
- the teaching philosophy, materials and friendly staff.
- the enthusiasm and commitment displayed by all staff to creating a rich and respectful learning environment is obvious and refreshing.
- child's experiences are positive and independence encouraged.
- the teaching philosophy, materials, and friendly staff are the best things.
- strong leadership via principal.
- the wonderful level of professionalism, care and commitment shown to my child and our family.
- staff very respectful of each individual child, communication via directors and admin staff is excellent.
- children are protected but also able to take risks and learn about their physical abilities ie. Cycle 3 hike and camp at Woolshed Falls

What could be changed to improve Beechworth Montessori in any of these quality areas?

- very little. Keep up the good work.
- examples clarified of how parents could be involved in helping out in daily classroom operations.
- where to find curriculum, programming etc. to better understand child's current learning/participation, etc.
- we could probably benefit in helping our children more at home if we had more time with teachers to discuss or had access to their file to see what our children are concentrating on.
- not really. Moving to the new school will be great.
- employing an arts or drama teacher would be a great addition to the curriculum for Cycle 2&3.
- more group work in classrooms.
- Cycle 1 - A bigger outdoor space - more focus on physical movement, sport activities and materials to support this.

Parent Education/Information and School Events

Have you attended any parent education/information/school events during the year?

Yes 70%
No 22%
No response 8%

If yes, did you feel that these sessions provided you with information about how your child learns in a Montessori environment?

Yes 95%
No 0%
No response 5%

What types of sessions and times would you like to see offered in 2013?

- no change needed
- session times after 7pm
- more observation of classes
- Montessori in the home
- explanation on how the curriculum is developed for the individual child and then managed as the term goes by
- both the THRASS and Maths evening were very useful and very much appreciated
- after school
- more sessions working through the Montessori materials to show /give more detailed understanding of what the kids do and how it teaches them
- THRASS sessions offered twice a year
- Maths sessions offered twice a year
- evening sessions
- same as 2012
- sessions on weekends

Newsletter Comments

- I am happy with the newsletter
- great as is
- all good
- less ads that aren't related to the school
- I enjoy reading weekly newsletters and find it helps me stay connected with what is going on at the school.
- newsletter is well balanced
- lots of great info
- community news section needs clear guidelines as to what can be included and these need to be published for the community to understand

- very happy, thank you. Our children love going to school. The proof is in the pudding.

What would you like to read more of?

- Montessori principles, history and methods
- Montessori case studies/practical information
- weekly happenings in my child's classroom
- individual children's learning. Given an idea into the different types of learning taking place across the cycles and offers a glimpse into how the child learns
- classroom news
- individual children achievements
- contributions from pupils

What would you like to see included in the newsletter that is not already included?

- a section for the kids to contribute
- more summarised and point form
- a little selling spot for members of Montessori community to sell or give away children related items. Promoting re-use.
- more photos

Staffing

Staffing Qualifications

All teachers in Victorian schools are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. The requirements for registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching can be found at; <http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/registration/registration-policies/Pages/default.aspx>

Additional teacher qualifications include Montessori education.

Qualifications of teachers and assistants across the Tiny Tots, Transition, kindergarten and primary school programs in 2012 were as below.

Teacher & Assistant Qualifications	Number of Staff
Bachelor of Early Childhood	1
Bachelor of Education	4
Certificate 3 in Children's Services	1
Master of Education	1
Associate Diploma of Social Science in Childcare	1
Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood Teaching	1
Graduate Diploma of Education	5
Bachelor of Arts (Visual Arts)	1
Bachelor of Arts (Sociology)	1
Bachelor of Economics	1
Graduate Diploma in Applied Science	1
Bachelor of Science	2
Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood)	1
Montessori Qualifications	Number of Staff
International Montessori Teaching Diploma (NAMC)	7
Diploma in Montessori Education (MWEI) 2 years	1
Montessori Leadership	1 In progress

Workforce Composition & Retention

Fifteen staff were employed to deliver programs and offer teaching support to the staff of the kindergarten, primary school, prep - grade 6. An additional three staff worked in the Tiny Tots parent/toddler and Transition programs.

Ten staff were employed to deliver the early childhood program for the 0 – 6 year olds.

Eight staff were employed on a full time basis.

The Admin team comprises a part time Principal, part time Administration Assistant and a part time Finance Manager.

Staffing changes during the year were due to a variety of reasons.

- Cycle 3 assistant resigned at the end of Term 2 due to family relocation and needs.
- Art specialist moved to Tasmania at the end of Term 1. A replacement was made for Term 2 replacement and then the program was integrated program into classrooms due to space restrictions.

- A part time Cycle 1 Amethyst Director relocated to Albury during Term 3 and the job share Director moved to full time.
- Specialist Italian director moved overseas at the end of the year.
- Cycle 2 Moonstone Director moved to Vanuatu at the end of the year.
- Cycle 2 Assistant resigned at the end of the year due to travel difficulties.
- Music specialist was appointed to a newly created Cycle 3 Director's position for 2013.

Staff Absence

The average number of days absent per staff member due to illness, carer's leave or personal business was 6 days per year. There were however variations within the classrooms, with some staff absent for more than 6 days term and some staff never absent. All absences were replaced with qualified staff. Wherever possible staffing absences are filled with part time staff who are already employed at the school. These staff already know the children, understand the day to day operations and in many cases, have Montessori training.

Directors were also involved in professional development days that were conducted during school hours. Participation in these events has not been included in the average number of days absent.

Staff Participation in Professional Learning

All teaching staff have participated in professional learning throughout the year, such as THRASS, Montessori Australia Foundation sessions, qualification updates, National Quality Framework, Non Violent Communication, workshops at Independent Schools Victoria, mentoring. In addition to this the school has supplemented the professional learning by holding internal workshops and meetings. Staff also observe in other Montessori schools throughout the year.



The Manager
Beechworth Montessori Children's Group Inc
PO Box 208
Beechworth VIC 3747

March 13, 2013

Dear Sir / Madam,

RE: AUDIT MANAGEMENT LETTER

I wish to advise that the audit of the Beechworth Montessori Children's Group Inc for the year ended 31 December 2012 has recently been completed.

Auditors are encouraged by the Australian Auditing Standards to issue management letters at the completion of each audit as a means of advising the members of any matters noted during the course of the audit.

My audit work involves examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report in order to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial report is fairly stated in accordance with the accounting policies described in the notes thereto. Further, my audit work involves examination, again on a test basis, of evidence supporting compliance with certain requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 2009.

I advise that I have not encountered any matters during the course of the audit that I believe should be brought to your attention.

Should you wish to discuss the above, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully,
Tony Hyndman Accountants & Auditors

Tony Hyndman
Principal

WARRAGONG
514 Sand Street, PO Box 687, Warragong NSW 2244 Phone 02 4752 0254
WAGGAWAGGA
2/151 St. Andrew Street, Elizabeth Street, PO Box 1413, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650 Phone 02 6924 0222
TEL: 02 6924 0222 0222 0222 0222 0222
Email: tony@hyndman-accountants.com.au Web: www.hyndman-accountants.com.au



Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc

ABN 50 110 481 830

Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 December 2012

PO Box 308
BEECHWORTH VIC 3747

Phone: 03 3728 2940 Fax: 03 3728 8028

Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc
ABN 60 110 461 030
Committee's Report
For the year ended 31 December 2012

Your committee members submit the financial accounts of the Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc for the financial year ended 31 December 2012.

Committee Members

The names of committee members at the date of this report are:

Pamela Walpole
Kim Haebleh
Lara Block
Jacqui Lottie
Anne Hansen
Jade Miles
Sara Piper
Mark Ladbrook

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were day to day running of a Montessori School.

Significant Changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

Operating Result

The profit from ordinary activities after providing for income tax amounted to

Year ended 31 December 2012	Year ended Prev Year/ind
\$	\$
571,847.13	54,534.18

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Members of the Committee on:

President: 

Treasurer: 

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc
ABN 50 110 401 030
Income and Expenditure Statement
For the year ended 31 December 2012

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
Income		
School fees - Cycle 1	109,430.87	110,696.00
School fees - Cycle 2	90,127.46	81,877.90
School fees - Cycle 3	62,291.80	52,733.00
School fees - extended days	33,327.10	24,917.90
School Fees - Transition Program	8,130.00	3,545.00
School fees - Tiny Tots	5,130.00	5,254.00
Childcare Transfer Fee	745.00	1,650.00
Excursion income	10,790.57	11,062.16
Fund raising income	11,812.94	12,477.98
Fund raising levy	3,250.00	2,925.00
Maintenance levy	7,030.00	3,573.00
Membership fees	1,700.00	2,100.00
Uniform Sales	99.54	
Donations	2,905.27	2,377.89
Donations - Building Fund	1,100.00	325.00
Interest received	2,772.41	0.04
Other income	307.76	
Other income - trainee teacher	381.60	848.00
State Grant - recurrent	171,943.27	136,440.77
State grant - EMA	2,467.50	1,838.50
State grant - Cycle 1	53,862.03	52,346.28
State grant - conveyance allowance	28,825.20	18,018.00
State Grant - Developing Resiliency	1,040.00	1,040.00
Commonwealth Grant - recurrent	401,280.10	310,551.00
Commonwealth Grant - Literacy & Numeracy	9,172.00	8,440.00
Commonwealth Grant - Country Areas	21,860.00	16,090.00
Commonwealth Grant - Languages BCC	2,340.00	2,490.00
Commonwealth Grant - Per capita		5,733.00
Commonwealth Grant - Indigenous Supp	2,001.91	1,900.00
Commonwealth Grant - Principal Develop	2,000.00	
Total Income	1,030,347.33	871,283.02

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc
ABN 50 110 401 030
Income and Expenditure Statement
For the year ended 31 December 2012

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
Expenses		
Advertising and promotion	909.09	
AGM Expenses	205.13	91.83
Amortisation - Borrowing Costs	268.38	
Art & Craft Supplies	3,881.97	3,512.93
Audit fees	2,000.00	1,900.00
Bad Debts	668.73	
Bank Fees And Charges	169.62	160.60
Bookkeeping expense	34,570.88	28,158.20
Books	3,682.13	2,307.57
Bus Travel	26,328.28	16,527.60
CAP Funding expenses	20,230.24	16,090.50
Cooking expenses	3,715.51	2,650.33
Cleaning expenses	26,856.67	29,425.16
Computer related expenses	327.48	142.62
Debt collection	217.30	
Depreciation - plant	15,040.00	14,714.00
Depreciation - buildings	2,511.60	2,183.00
Depreciation - other	986.00	872.00
Electricity	1,200.00	848.19
Equipment purchases < \$1,000	13,845.77	19,645.66
Excursions	9,482.02	7,366.49
Filing Fees	493.00	861.80
Freight & couriers	27.27	7.50
Fundraising expenses	5,045.80	4,094.87
Gifts	529.03	303.13
Insurance	18,749.36	7,944.74
Lease payments	2,120.00	1,200.00
Literacy & Numeracy Funding	8,828.88	8,230.86
Long Service Leave - Payments	15,470.44	
Long service leave - provision movement	(8,800.00)	(8,907.20)
Music Equipment	962.76	88.18
O, H & S	1,223.62	2,048.12
Photocopy costs	5,121.75	5,178.85
Photo's - Children	408.18	58.23

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc
ABN 60 110 481 830
Income and Expenditure Statement
For the year ended 31 December 2012

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
Playgroup Victoria Fees	5.00	(5.00)
Postage	851.27	849.89
Printing & Stationery	8,971.64	6,845.84
Recruitment expenses	229.84	597.33
Rental expenses	47,728.70	44,142.27
Repairs & maintenance - rooms	400.93	514.40
Repairs & Maintenance - Buildings	947.18	3,715.19
Repairs & Maintenance - Office Equip.	220.40	322.96
Repairs & Maintenance - Grounds	317.23	
Rubbish Removal	333.25	432.24
Sick Leave - movement in Provision	(6,643.39)	11,679.07
Staff Amenities	668.11	630.09
Staff Training	6,784.33	7,115.63
Subscriptions & Memberships	8,257.19	6,047.67
Sundry Expenses	3,478.27	3,218.93
Superannuation	54,220.72	44,732.66
Targeted Programs Languages	2,340.00	2,006.94
Telephone	934.81	2,093.43
Travel & accommodation	1,133.55	414.34
Uniforms	81.36	(5.45)
Wages	612,143.96	502,526.36
Web & internet expenses	1,332.89	405.70
Workcover Insurance	10,614.43	7,914.44
Total expenses	978,500.20	816,708.84
Profit from ordinary activities before capital income	71,847.13	54,574.18
State Grant - Early Learning Upgrade	10,000.00	
Commonwealth Grant-Land & Buildings	200,000.00	
Net profit attributable to the association	281,847.13	54,574.18
Total changes in equity of the association	281,847.13	54,574.18
Opening retained profits	156,055.51	101,481.33
Net profit attributable to the association	281,847.13	54,574.18
Closing retained profits	437,902.64	156,055.51

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc
ABN 50 110 481 830
Statement of Financial Performance
For the year ended 31 December 2012

	Note	2012	2011
		\$	\$
Revenues from ordinary activities		1,260,347.33	871,283.02
Borrowing costs expense		(2,120.00)	(1,200.00)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses		(18,537.00)	(17,471.00)
Other expenses from ordinary activities		(957,843.20)	(798,037.84)
Profit from ordinary activities before income tax		281,847.13	54,574.18
Income tax revenue relating to ordinary activities			
Net profit attributable to members of the association		281,847.13	54,574.18
Total changes in equity of the association		281,847.13	54,574.18
Opening retained profits		156,055.51	101,481.33
Net profit attributable to members of the company		281,847.13	54,574.18
Closing retained profits		437,902.64	156,055.51

Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc
ABN 50 110 481 830
Statement of Financial Position As At 31 December 2012

	Note	2012	2011
		\$	\$
Current Assets			
Cash assets		430,883.95	128,348.16
Receivables		411.45	250.00
Other financial assets		500.00	500.00
Total Current Assets		<u>431,795.40</u>	<u>129,098.16</u>
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment		481,869.69	129,177.99
Borrowing Costs		7,270.63	
Total Non-Current Assets		<u>489,140.32</u>	<u>129,177.99</u>
Total Assets		<u>920,935.72</u>	<u>258,276.15</u>
Current Liabilities			
Payables		9,378.10	1,480.00
Current tax liabilities		22,594.00	23,203.79
Provisions		50,479.97	52,292.85
Other		319,455.00	16,740.00
Total Current Liabilities		<u>411,907.07</u>	<u>93,716.64</u>
Non-Current Liabilities			
Financial liabilities		100,000.00	
Provisions		1,084.00	8,504.00
Total Non-Current Liabilities		<u>101,084.00</u>	<u>8,504.00</u>
Total Liabilities		<u>512,991.07</u>	<u>102,220.64</u>
Net Assets		<u>407,944.65</u>	<u>156,055.51</u>
Members' Funds			
Retained profits		407,902.64	156,055.51
Total Members' Funds		<u>407,902.64</u>	<u>156,055.51</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc
ABN 50 110 481 830
Statement by Members of the Committee
For the year ended 31 December 2012

In the opinion of the Committee the Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Financial Performance, Statement of Cash Flows and Notes to the Financial Statements:

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc as at 31 December 2012 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, mandatory professional reporting requirements and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:



President

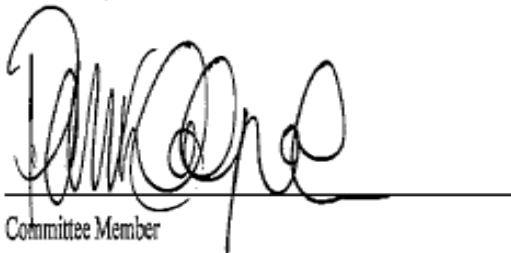


Treasurer

Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc
ABN 50 110 481 830
Certificate by Member of the Committee
For the year ended 31 December 2012

I Pamela Walpole, of 300 Flat Rock Creek Road, Beechworth certify that:

1. I am a member of the Committee of Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc.
2. I attended the annual general meeting of the association held on the 20th March 2013.
3. I am authorised by the attached resolution of the Committee to sign this certificate.
4. This annual statement was submitted to the members of the association at its annual general meeting.



Committee Member

Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc
ABN 60 110 461 830
Certificate by Member of the Committee
For the year ended 31 December 2012

Statement of Economic Dependency

The funding of the Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc depends on the continued support of various Government bodies in the form of grant income.

This funding is received on a period-by-period basis or on an as applied for basis. The Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc. is required to meet certain conditions required by the Government bodies in relation to individual grants, subsidies and income received.

The Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc. requires continued future funding support from the Government bodies as well as support from the community and its members in order to maintain its present levels of activities and commitments.


President

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc
ABN 60 110 401 630
Independent Audit Report to the Members

Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc (the association), which comprises the Statement by Members of the Committee, the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Cash Flows, Statement of Changes in Equity, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes for the financial year ended 31 December 2012.

Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Committee of the association is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (including Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the , and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In Note 1, management also states in accordance with Accounting Standard AASB 101: Presentation of Financial Statements, that the financial report complies with International Financial Reporting Standards.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical requirements.

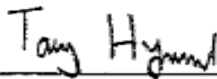
Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc
ABN 50 110 481 830
Independent Audit Report to the Members

Auditor's Opinion

In our opinion:

- (i) The financial report gives a true and fair view of the financial position of Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc as 31 December 2012, and of its performance and its cash flows for the year ended in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards and the ; and
- (ii) the financial report also complies with International Financial Reporting Standards as disclosed in Note 1.

Signed on: 13th day of March 2013



Tony Hyndman,
Tony Hyndman Accountants & Auditors
53a Reid Street, WANGARATTA VIC 3676

Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc
ABN 50 110 481 830
Compilation Report to Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc

We have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements of Beechworth Montessori Childrens Group Inc, which comprise the Income and Expenditure Statement and Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2012, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes. The specific purpose for which the special purpose financial statements have been prepared is to provide financial information to the committee of management.

The Responsibility of the Committee of Management

The committee of management is solely responsible for the information contained in the special purpose financial statements and has determined that the basis of accounting adopted is appropriate to meet the needs of the committee of management for the purpose of complying with the association's constitution.

Our Responsibility

On the basis of the information provided by the committee of management, we have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements in accordance with the basis of accounting and APES 315: Compilation of Financial Information.

Our procedures use accounting expertise to collect, classify and summarise the financial information which the committee of management provided, in compiling the financial statements. Our procedures do not include verification or validation procedures. No audit or review has been performed and accordingly no assurance is expressed.

The special purpose financial statements were compiled exclusively for the benefit of the committee of management. We do not accept responsibility to any other person for the contents of the special purpose financial statements.



Howard Russell
Finance Manager
PO Box 306
BEECHWORTH

9 March, 2013