

ANNUAL REPORT

2019



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MSCA 2019 Annual Report

On the 6th September 2019 Montessori Schools and Centres Australia Ltd (MSCA) was registered as a company limited by guarantee. MSCA has been established to grow and protect Montessori education within Australia, and support Montessori educators, leaders, schools and centres.

MSCA was borne from an expressed need articulated by school Principals of Montessori independent schools from around Australia at a gathering of Montessori leaders in Adelaide in May 2019. MSCA is the result of collaboration with the community where leaders called out for a direct say and control over their representative body. Through consultation the community mandated its minimum requirements of their national representative body triggering dedicated action by a delegation of Montessori leaders to establish a national representative body that is not for profit and truly membership based and owned by the community.

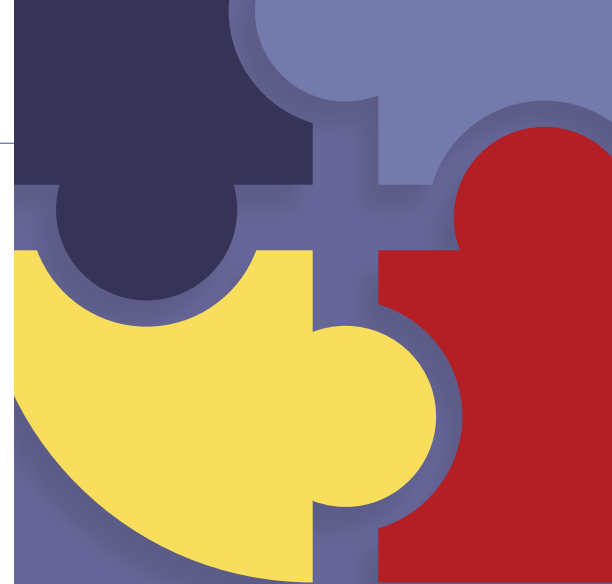
This has been achieved by a structure of a not-for-profit public company where the intention is for a democratic entity where our members have a voice, a vote and their input is valued as owners of the organisation. The core values of MSCA are transparency, accountability, consultation and collaboration and we are dedicated to reflecting these values in all that we do and undertake. Our mission is to connect, unite and serve the Montessori community.

Sincere gratitude needs to be expressed to the Consortium of Montessori schools and centres from around Australia that have financed the start-up of MSCA. The \$50,000 that has funded the establishment of the entity, has been offered as an interest free loan from each school or centre with the intent for MSCA to repay these financial supporters over the next five years. The generosity, support and trust that the Consortium has given and placed in MSCA is greatly appreciated.

Representatives from the Consortium have made up the interim MSCA Board during our founding stage. Starting a new national organisation from scratch is no mean feat! The enormity of the job is quite daunting however my fellow directors have shown passion, dedication and allegiance as we have worked together for a common cause.

Our first major task was to draft the MSCA Constitution which would become our guiding document and embody our rules, principles of the organisation and reason for being. It is such a crucial document for a not for profit organisation and we valued the input as we consulted with our community to ensure our direction and object was 'on point'. We greatly appreciate the pro bono legal advice that we received from Pete Kupniewski and the many hours of work that was awarded to the task by Paul Maginnity. We proudly disseminated the final version of the MSCA Constitution to our community in addition to submitting it to the ACNC.

At a two day Board meeting held in Melbourne in October 2019, the Directors came together to diligently work on the Object and Purpose of MSCA, the values that we wanted to embrace and be reflected in all that we do and the MSCA Mission and Vision.



MSCA Purpose & Object

to assist, strengthen, represent and promote the collective interests of its members;

to support and encourage quality Montessori pedagogy in Australia;

to foster, promote and sustain a climate in which Montessori education becomes or remains pre-eminent in early childhood, primary and secondary education;

to support and encourage the establishment and sustainability of bodies delivering Montessori education and programs to ensure more children have access to Montessori education in Australia;

to represent in a professional manner the collective interests of members to Government at all levels, other regulatory bodies, other relevant peak bodies, media, and the general public.

to do all such other lawful things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of any of the above objects.

MSCA Values

Respect & caring

Trust, Integrity & Patience

Transparency & Accountability

Collaboration & Consultation

Inclusive & Openness

MSCA 2019 Annual Report *continued...*

It is a goal of the MSCA Interim Board to ensure from the outset that the organisation operates with professionalism and integrity. Subsequently, the Interim Board has promoted good governance practices from the beginning. A Code of Conduct for Board Directors was drafted and ratified along with a Board Annual Calendar, an annual Board Action plan, Board Skills Matrix and Conflict of Interest policy. Board meetings are held monthly via Zoom to enable MSCA Directors to discuss and deliberate the numerous decisions that need to be made in a start-up entity. It was particularly pleasing to have AMI Executive Director, Lynne Lawrence comment and acknowledge our good governance practices. This certainly will stand us in good stead as we await the outcome of our AMI affiliation application that has been submitted.

The MSCA Board has achieved a great deal regarding the establishment of the entity such as registering a domain name and creating a website which incorporates events, resources and news. Time has also been spent on designing a logo and brand, writing policies, developing sound financial systems and building a database encompassing our Australian Montessori community and Australasian neighbours. One of our most important tasks in this early initial stage has been to garner support from our national community and encourage MSCA membership. The Board determined that in our inaugural year it was important to keep membership fees low. We have been pleased with the support that our community has shown for MSCA and thrilled with the number of schools and centres who have joined, but we will continue to work hard in the future to acquire further members, developing a robust membership base which we can serve, unite and represent.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the assistance given by Paul Maginnity during the establishment and early stages of MSCA. Paul's knowledge, skills, expertise and passion have proved invaluable and we have greatly appreciated the work he achieved and his wisdom and counsel.

It is fulfilling to work with like-minded people and I thank each and every one of the interim Board Directors for their generosity in giving graciously their time, skills and expertise. I have truly enjoyed working with Gay, Bill, Vanessa, David and Yan and believe we have worked effectively and professionally as a team all striving for the same outcome.

With the founding details near completion, the exciting and important work begins. The new MSCA Board elected in 2020 will be able to draft a Strategic Plan and work towards fulfilling the goals of uniting, serving and representing our wonderful Montessori community.

I feel very proud to be a part of this dynamic and truly collaborative organisation. The foundation has been set for MSCA to achieve great things moving forward and into the future.



Cathy France

MSCA Board Chair

MSCA Values

To unite & serve the Montessori community in its endeavor to educate for peace.

MSCA Mission

To advance education by promoting the pedagogical principles and practice formulated by Dr Maria Montessori for the full development of the human being.

MSCA Interim Board

Cathy France PRINCIPAL - **CHAIR**

Gay Wales PRINCIPAL - **DEPUTY CHAIR**

Yan Wu CHILDCARE OWNER/OPERATOR - **SECRETARY**

David Anderson BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR - **TREASURER**

Bill Conway PRINCIPAL - **DIRECTOR**

Vanessa Aikins PRINCIPAL - **DIRECTOR**





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