

mic

Montessori
International
College



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A Message from the Principal

It gives me great pleasure to present the 2018-19 Annual Report for Montessori International College (MIC). Its primary purpose is to inform the College and the wider community of our progress during the year, as well as our directions in both the immediate and more distant future.

The College continued to create successes across a range of endeavours during the 2018-19 reporting period. Our learning community continues to build a reputation which places us as one of the top Montessori schools in Australia. Internationally, the College is gaining attention as an innovative educator. While it was affirming to receive these recognitions, we know we must continue to focus on testing the robustness of the new education model before sharing on a wider platform.

The growth in enrolments together with staff and student retention reflect the broad satisfaction felt by the community towards the College and its ongoing provision of a Montessori education as it is applied at MIC.

It is a source of great pride to be able to say I work at Montessori International College and it continues to be a great source of personal and professional pride for us all. The Annual Report provides us with the opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments and focus on the next stage of our progress.

Chiray Fitton
Principal



Who We Are

MIC is an independent, non-denominational Montessori and IB World school developing a reputation for providing ways of working that ensures students have the skills to shape their own futures and the futures of their communities. The school caters for children from pre-kindy to Year 12.

Situated on 22 hectares of bushland on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland, MIC is a green school with a campus like no other. The natural environment is rich in biodiversity and provides the context for discovery, inspiration, research and problem solving.

Students at MIC enjoy a learner-centred education. They experience hands-on, independent and purposeful learning as well as the support of a caring and inclusive community.

Surrounded by nature, learning occurs in beautifully designed eco-friendly learning spaces under the guidance of highly skilled teachers. These learning spaces provide nurturing, aesthetically pleasing environments for MIC students to engage their intellectual curiosity and realise their creative potential.



Our Philosophy

The Montessori approach to learning is grounded in the knowledge that children are individuals with their own strengths, weaknesses, interests, temperaments and learning styles.

Learning at MIC fosters personal liberty and independence. The task at hand sees our students shift effortlessly between independent, interdependent and collaborative problem solving, work and study. Embedded in our philosophy is the recognition of the successive stages of human development from birth to adulthood. This knowledge informs how the teachers support the development of social, intellectual and ethical independence. Our approach enables and inspires our students to become passionate learners and independent thinkers and prepares them to take their place as active, effective world citizens and leaders.



Prep students in the 'My First Year' Sunshine Coast Daily photo shoot



The Early Years outdoor gardening program



Junior Primary students on Cultural Fair Day 2019

2018-19 Highlights

Entering our fourth year of operations at the Forest Glen campus, the College is pleased to report a 14.8% growth in enrolments.

In September 2018 the College was approved as an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School delivering the IB Career-related Programme in Years 11 and 12, The first IB students commenced the programme at the start of the 2019 school year.

The Community Engagement Strategy was implemented to develop, engage and foster community relationships with external organisations. Since its implementation in 2018 the College has hosted meetings and workshops for organisations such as Anywhere Festival, Intuition Plus, International Dawn Chorus Day, Sunshine Coast Live and Sunshine Coast Open House.



2019 Senior Primary Camp



2018 Year 6 Canberra Trip

Our students have been making their mark on our world again this year. Our Senior Phase students travelled to Cambodia in December 2018 to provide assistance to a primary school where they built furniture, taught English and established a working farm. MIC also sent its first delegation to the Montessori Model United Nations Conference (MMUN) in Rome in May 2019. Eight students attended along with Senior Primary Guide Aleisha Aroa, and parents. Our second delegation will attend MMUN in New York City in March 2020.

The playscape for the Primary College was completed over the 2018-2019 Christmas break. Stage 1 of the 5-stage plan was funded by grant monies received from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund.

Music and Creative Arts Coordinator Nick Aggs joined the College community at the start of the 2019 school year and established a music and creative arts program including instrumental music lessons. Students can undertake individual music lessons and join ensemble groups. Students have gained experience in performing through the Afternoon Delight Concert series with concerts held at the end of each term.

Ellen Newman also joined MIC in 2019 as Adolescent Guide and Micro-economies Manager. A parent cafe has been positively received and the MIC-RO group also launched a website to sell sushi, honey and flowers to the MIC community. Markets are also held regularly in the car park to sell coffee and produce to parents and staff.

In early June 2019 we held a Caring for Country Working Bee as part of National Reconciliation Week. It included a Cultural Walk along Eudlo Creek by Gubbi Gubbi traditional custodians as well as a community working bee and a variety of art and culture activities. The event concluded with a special performance by the Gubbi Gubbi dance troupe.

On Friday June 7 MIC held its second annual Whole School Open Day which also coincided with the launch of the new MIC brand. A total of 61 families attended, which equated to 143 people. Our student tour guides and parent ambassadors assisted on the day and our Secondary College students provided morning tea in the Pavilion. Feedback was very positive with many visitors saying they were very impressed by our beautiful College, student guides and our inspiring staff.

We also received positive feedback on our new brand. It was a significant undertaking for the College and involved a new website, billboard, flags, printed collateral (including Enrolment Handbook and enrolment forms) for Open Day, rebranded social media channels, email signatures for staff, press advertising, pull up banners and letterhead and stationery. A video describing the branding journey - commencing with the Futures Visioning Workshop in May 2017 - was created and was also positively received.

During the year we also moved forward at pace with the Arts and Culture Program with Nicole Veovodin-Cash joining the College part-time as Art Curator. This program will continue our Artist in Residence Program and is also supported by an MOU which was entered into with Feral Arts during the year and has seen a series of pilot projects commence including the MADE Walking Billycan Project and the Eudlo Creek Project with future projects planned for the coming months.

On the last day of Term 2 this year MIC held its inaugural Sport and Family Fun Day. Organised and run by the Adolescent Community, the day saw early years and primary students participate in a variety of activities including ball games, obstacle courses, a gumboot toss, rainforest run and a tug of war. A highlight of the day was the primary skipping competition which raised funds for Jump Rope for Heart.

Community outreach and social responsibility was lived in a number of activities. The senior primary students continued their work on the Koala Fodder Forest on campus. They also participated in the Sunshine Coast Council's Kids in Action project. Work was undertaken to plant the 300 native trees and shrubs provided by Land for Wildlife and Year 10 students continued their volunteer work at the Shak Community Centre.



The Adolescent Community

Extra-curricular Activities

The College offered a broad range of extra-curricular activities this year. These include Abstract Art, Clay Workshop, ChessMates, Film and TV Acting, Improvisation and Theatre Sports, Laughter Yoga, Magical Journey Within - Crystals and Chakras, Rhee Taekwondo, Superminds (Fitness), Tie Dye and Yoga.



Yoga and Taekwondo classes

Community Engagement

The College hosts many community events and hires our facilities to local organisations. Community events include Anywhere Festival Performance - 'High School Never Ends: A Double Bill', International Dawn Chorus Day and Sunshine Coast Open House.

Our facilities were used by Intuition Plus, Kinesiology Australia, Sunshine Coast Live and Tangible Heartworks.

Our Senior Phase students had the opportunity to work with Peripheral Arts on the 'Women of Stories' Exhibition as part of International Women's Day. Our Artist in Residence and Montessori+ Tutor, Tam Sainsbury launched her new Web Series which features MIC students and our beautiful landscape. College representatives and students attended the special VIP Red Carpet event for the Time and Place Launch in February 2019.

Also, the College and the Imagineers Festival partnered with the Horizon Festival and Buderim Youth Theatre of Excellence.



Imagineers Festival 2018

Imagineers Festival

Imagineers is an innovative community engagement festival with creativity at its heart. It is a celebration of culture to community.

Attendees are transported to various other worlds via the mediums of art, music, performance and sensory expression. MIC invites festival goers on this special day, to experience,

participate, adventure, celebrate and connect to country, to story, to our children, to our community and to our imaginations.

In September 2018 MIC hosted its third Imagineers Festival which was for the first time open to the public and saw 1,800 visitors and 266 magic makers bring the festival to life.

The festival attracted media coverage from the Sunshine Coast Daily and Stories from the Red Couch before the event and Seven News did a story at the event.

There was positive feedback from attendees and magic makers. Much of the feedback reflected that the people of the Sunshine Coast highly value this event and look forward to the next one.

As the festival is run and hosted by MIC as part of its community engagement program, the festival and the college has agreed this will be a biennial event with the next one scheduled for September 2020.

The 2018 edition of Imagineers showed the amazing capacity of arts engagement in the community and we look forward to delighting young and old for the next event in 2020.

“What an amazing immersion into the land of what can be imagined. Beautifully done and wholly enjoyed! Thank you for your richly creative minds that help stimulate my two little evolving ones.”

~ Clair Pinks, parent of two little Imagineers in the making.



MMUN delegates at the Rome Conference May 2019

Parent involvement

Building relationships and engaging our parents is essential to developing community at MIC. We have continued our focus on the Parent Ambassador program this year with ambassadors attending regular meetings with the Principal. The Parent Ambassador Program is dedicated to building community spirit and providing opportunities for families to enjoy activities together. Parent Ambassadors serve as classroom parents, coordinate family events, and assist the administration in meeting the school's logistical needs.

The Parent Ambassadors provide an essential service to the school leadership and school community. They volunteer to support our school community and extend the 'village' which helps nurture the growth and learning of families at MIC.

The College continued to provide parent education sessions for parents on various topics. These sessions were hosted by staff and experts from the field.



The Senior Phase Cambodia Trip 2018



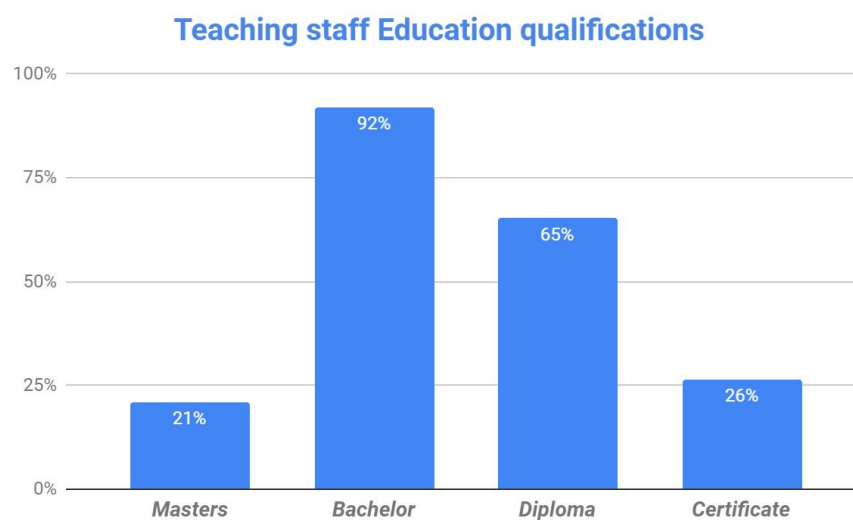
The Senior Phase Cambodia Trip 2018

The College also encourages parents to visit classrooms and observe their children at work. In addition to these initiatives, Open Afternoons provided parents and VIPs to visit their children's classrooms.

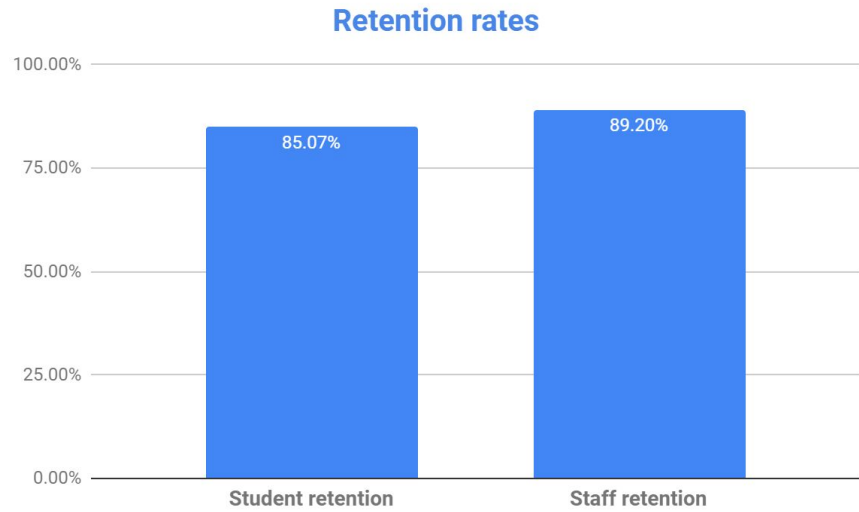
Staffing

In 2018 MIC employed the full time equivalent of 42.6 staff, of whom 26.0 were teaching staff (inclusive of part-time staff).

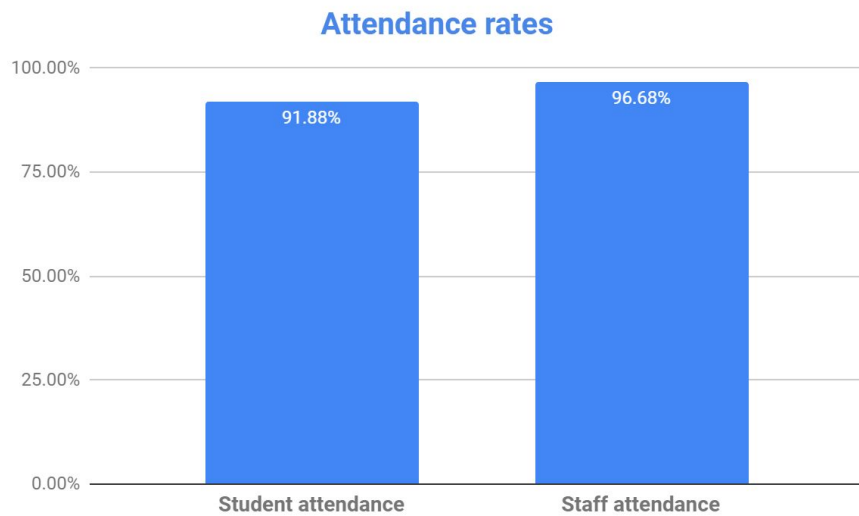
The following table lists the qualifications of MIC teaching staff.



The following graph shows retention rates for staff and students during the reporting period.



The graph below shows attendance rate for staff and students during the reporting period.



NAPLAN Results

We re-iterate as we do every year, MIC will never 'teach to the test'. Deep and profound learning does not occur via a homogenous schedule. The Montessori approach is an attitude to learning not merely an acquisition of knowledge. Academic excellence is not the prime objective, but rather an attitude to learning as a part of life itself. The College does its best to minimise the interference to learning caused by the NAPLAN tests each year. Our small cohorts sitting the tests make any generalisation about the results meaningless. A summary of the results is available via My Schools Website.

Our Students

Our student retention rate averaged across the whole school was 85.07% and our student attendance rate was 91.88%. Surrounded by nature, our students are happy; they feel connected to and proud of their school community. Under the guidance and care of their teachers, students at MIC become valuable contributors to their own learning and look to the future with confidence and optimism.

Fewer than five responses to the 2018 Next Step survey were received from students who completed Year 12 at MIC. Consequently, information on the post-school destinations of Year 12 completers from 2018 is not available for reasons of data confidentiality.



Senior Phase students volunteering at The Shak Community Centre.

Our Staff

At MIC, we believe our teachers are one of our greatest assets. MIC teachers maintain the highest standards of practice and mirror to a far greater extent ways of working that can be found among today's most innovative and vibrant organisations in the creative industries.

Individual talent and working together is the dominant paradigm. Our teachers, often holding multiple degrees, are talented and empowered to respond to the individual needs of their students. They model respect and work tirelessly to serve the children and adolescents in their care. We are very proud of our staff and recognise their commitment to creating meaningful learning experiences for their students.

The average staff attendance rate for 2018 was 96.68% and the retention rate of staff to 2018 was 89.2%.



Early Years Staff - Sundowner 2019

The Professional Learning attended by staff was part of the School's Professional Learning Plan which aims to provide staff with opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and their craft while at the same time encouraging participation in broader areas of interest.

Staff attended a wide range of professional learning sessions many of which were held in-house and related to curriculum and staff development. Others included the EduTech Conference, Learn, Relaunch and Launch program, Future of Farming workshop, ACER Research Conference, Ministerial Infrastructure Designation Seminar, HALT Certification for Assessors program, Restorative Practices, Emerging Leaders, QIP Workshop, Child Protection, Seven Steps, Assessment and Ratings Workshop, Autism Workshop, Self Assessment Workshop, Meeting the Needs of Today's Child (International Montessori Council), Effective Reading Instruction, STEM Project Planning, Governance and Leadership, Musical Futures Australia, IB Registration Coaching and Mentoring, Autism and Montessori, Parenting Puzzle, Weaving Technology into the Fabric of the Classroom, Building Assessment Communities and IB Category Workshops.

The College has developed a professional learning program for staff to ensure the ongoing improvement of teacher quality at MIC. The program has been named Learn, Relearn and Launch and all teaching staff commenced this work at the start of 2018.

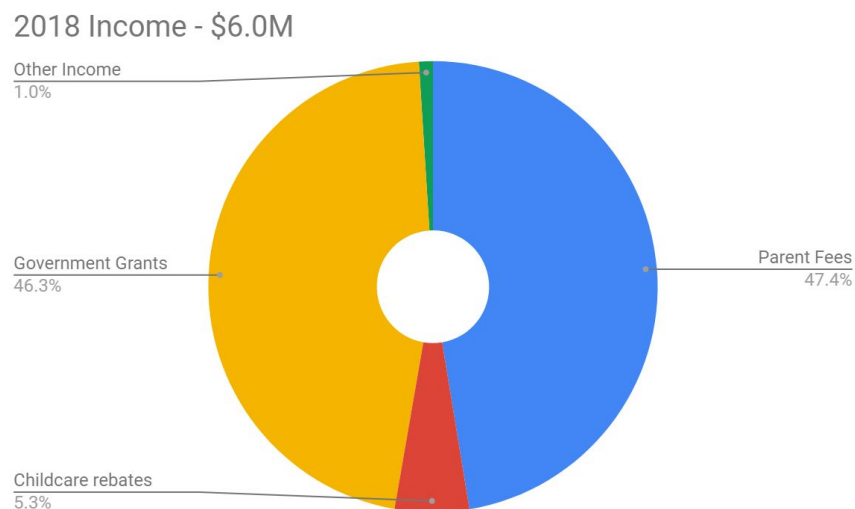
One of the College's goals, is to assist teachers who have been teaching for seven years to be assessed and identified as Highly Accomplished 1 (ie Step 7) and teachers who have been working for nine or more years to be working as Highly Accomplished 2 (ie Step 9) and for exceptional teachers to be recognised at Lead Teacher level as described by the Australian National Professional Standards and as measured by our appraisal systems.

The standards articulate what teachers are expected to know and be able to do at four career stages: Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead. The College continued its mentoring program this year to further support career progression, and the Assistant Principals completed certification to support staff to complete their validation process, based on the professional standards demonstrated by individual teachers.

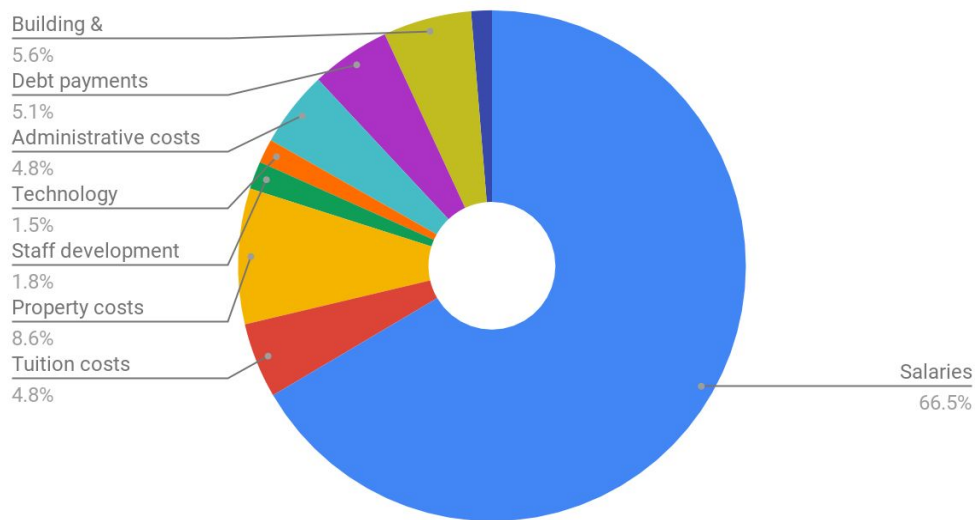
Financial

The Finance and Administration team is responsible for providing information and process systems to all layers of the College and they continually strive for efficiencies to best utilise the resources available to the College whilst meeting all statutory and compliance needs.

The College experienced further growth in its financial position within the 2018-19 reporting period which was underpinned by growth in enrolments and careful management of college finances. In 2018 the College's income received was \$6.0m. The diagrams below provide information regarding the College's major sources of funding.



2018 Expenditure - \$6.0M



Due the size of our campus, managing Grounds and Maintenance continues to require significant attention. The College manages its own water supply and wastewater treatment plants as well as fire control systems. Asset management is another area of operations which has required attention.

Risk Management has also become a priority. The College has implemented an online compliance program to support the staff in their understanding and knowledge of policies and procedures affecting them as educators. The College is committed to further developing the online Risk Management system into the future.