



*The*  
**ATHENA**  
**SCHOOL**

+

**ATHENA**  
**MONTESORI**  
EARLY EDUCATION

## 2018 Athena School **Annual Educational & Financial Report**

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## About this report

The Annual School Report is a record of the school's self-evaluation process and is part of the ongoing cycle of school planning and evaluation. The Annual School Report provides information to the school community on a range of areas.

The Annual School Report is an important component of a school's accountability requirements to its parents and community, to the NSW Department of Education and Training and to the Commonwealth Government's Department of Education and Training (Australia). This report has been prepared in consultation with the school's self-evaluation committee under the leadership of the Principal, Mrs. Fiona Milne.

## About The Athena School

The Athena School in leafy Newtown provides a stress-free learning environment for students from Prep-class (Kindy minus 1) to Year 10, teaching effective tools the students will be able to use for life. We are culturally and religiously diverse and our school is independent and co-educational.

Our approach to teaching is friendly and caring, and works to develop a passion for learning. We encourage developing each student's individual talents, leading to confident, self-motivated students with enquiring minds.

As part of their individual program, students here complete courses that teach them the tools of how to learn – as per the educational methods developed by L. Ron Hubbard. This is in addition to meeting the NSW Education Authority requirements.

We accomplish application of the study tools in the lower school by observing when a young child needs to see or touch or hear what he or she is learning about, incorporating lots of excursions and activities in early learning, watching a child's progress carefully so that he or she is moving forward at their own pace and ensuring that new words and terms are fully understood in a way that even young children can easily grasp.

Our Montessori Prep Class (Kindy minus 1) utilises the philosophy of Maria Montessori and provides a safe, nurturing environment as an introduction to school life for our students. Our aim is to guide the children to become confident and independent learners in preparation for Kindergarten. Students participate in exercises of practical life, sensorial activities, language enrichment, mathematic activities, and cultural studies. The Montessori philosophy aligns beautifully with traditional Athena values in regards to the treatment and respect of students. We also hold in common the friendly and unhurried approach to learning. Athena Montessori is a perfect start for children.



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## Letter from our Principal



*Dear Parents and Friends,*

As we create another year of valuable and enjoyable education for our students, it is always interesting to reflect on the challenges and achievements of the previous year. So many things which we now take for granted, such as our beautifully landscaped outdoor play areas and our delightful Montessori Prep class, took many hours of planning and hard work by a dedicated team.

A special thank you goes to the team of willing workers who assisted Sam Milne and Kuru Hunt with renovations in the lower school classrooms to a lovely result – and just in time for the start of the new school year! With our delivery spaces refurbished, Montessori equipment and materials were purchased.

At the commencement of 2018 we were delighted to welcome Bernardine Nathanielsz, an extremely accomplished and experienced Montessori teacher, to our wonderful team of teachers. To assist with the smooth integration of this new delivery, Viva Ma and Sarah Matara attended Montessori Professional Development, and I'm very pleased to report our Montessori Prep class is a great success.

Our landscaping team created a fun and aesthetic play area which students really enjoy for both play and outdoor study. There is wonderful use of decking under our heritage tree in the middle of the school yard, which has become a hub for many classes and activities. Sadly, we said goodbye to the huge old gum tree at our front gate, and our entrance has now been revamped with landscaping including a sapling flowering gum. I look forward to further development of this area.

We have welcomed many valuable staff to both our classrooms and office management. In 2018 we said goodbye and a huge thank you to Sarah Fogarty for her tireless work as Office Manager, and have welcomed Fiona Gallop into that role as of 2019.

A very special thank you and acknowledgement goes to Tarne Dirou who has volunteered her time and resources to work dedicatedly in the role of Business Manager. In particular, Tarne is focusing on building up our team of effective, talented staff, and promoting the very special qualities and opportunities which we have to offer our students.

Midyear we welcomed Rebecca Jones from Auckland who has boosted our delivery team in the capacity of High School Assistant as well as undertaking extensive work reviewing, improving and updating our checksheets in the Key Learning Areas of Maths and Science. Sasa Gason, an experienced teacher from Taiwan with a passion for Maths, has continued to enrich our delivery, writing Maths checksheets and creating fun resources.

Congratulations go to Andrea Parsons, our Lead Teacher in High School, who officially achieved the teacher accreditation status of Proficient Teacher, as required by NESA (NSW Educational Standards Authority). Gina Graham, Sarah Matara and I continued our Professional Development as teachers in accordance with NESA requirements, participating in a range of valuable educational activities and professional development.

We welcomed the return of Helen Dickenson and Jennifer Costello who have vital roles in Quality Assurance working with small groups and individual students. Helen completed two units in Linguistics with High Distinctions for Teaching English Second Language. Her expertise in the delivery of our Reading Courses is extremely beneficial to all who work with her.

An exciting resource upgrade was the installation of interactive whiteboards in every classroom. These give teachers access to amazing educational resources at the touch of a finger. For example, at Kindy level the interactive whiteboard gives children opportunities to play number games, reading and spelling games, to sing along with songs and to view short videos and images of whatever they are studying. In High School, the interactive white board is used to demonstrate land forms and geographical concepts, maps and interactive activities. Our students enjoyed a range of special

excursions, which included STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths). This is a cross curriculum course that is designed to inspire the students' imagination and creative design skills. Also High School had the opportunity to participate in studies in the Science Laboratory at PAL Buddhist School. They also had a great week at the Perisher Snowfields, learning skills and enjoying activities in the care of Sarah Matara and Joe Badran, both graduates of Athena School.

I personally had the pleasure of attending the Applied Scholastics International Annual Conference at Spanish Lakes in America. These conferences are a wonderful opportunity to meet, network and collaborate with like-minded educators from around the world who are committed to implementing L. Ron Hubbard's educational philosophy in schools and educational organisations. They are also a great chance to promote what we do here at the Athena School.

Part of our mission as an Applied Scholastics school is to share our knowledge and help others to learn and use our Study Technology. With the kind support of the Athena School, I was able to visit Timor Leste and deliver two courses – *Learning How to Learn* and *Study Tools for Educators* – to 38 university students and teachers. This project is the first stage of a grassroots program to introduce Study Technology into schools across Timor. For me personally, this experience reaffirmed the wonderful educational resources we have here to benefit our students.

Our educational philosophy is unique in the field of study and education, and it delivers results to students the world over. The emphasis is on ensuring each individual student attains full understanding of his or her materials. Our teachers define keywords ensuring that students know the words, are able to use them, and can demonstrate their understanding of the materials being studied. Our teachers are well trained to observe when their students have hit a barrier and to assist them so they both enjoy their studies and become competent in application. In addition to this care in the classroom, our Quality Assurance gives that extra attention to students when needed, under the very experienced eye of Rose Evans with her team of specialist tutors and teachers.

The education we offer is for the whole person, so that they develop life-long skills and friendships using knowledge of *How to Make Good Choices*, based on *The Way to Happiness*, a common sense guide to happy living written by Mr. Hubbard. In this way, students can evaluate for themselves how best to behave in order to be happy and actively contribute to the happiness of those around them.

Looking back, 2018 was indeed a landmark year with the completion of our beautifully landscaped grounds, the establishment of our Montessori Prep School, and an expansion of our educational services and resources. We are dedicated to delivering real and valuable education. We welcome students from our local community, from interstate and from overseas, and we look forward to continuing to expand our student numbers within our caring and nurturing educational community.

Looking at the plans and goals we have for the future years, it is exciting to watch the expansion and development of The Athena School.

Fiona Milne  
Principal

**‘PURPOSE:** *to educate each of the children so as to improve their survival in life, to make study seem desirable and to open the world of knowledge to them.*

— L. Ron Hubbard, *Teacher's Hat*, 20 March 1961

## Chairman's report

2018 was a very big year for Athena. Playground renovations, classroom renovations, opening our Montessori Prep class, and the reviewing and setting of new goals has been the focus for us.

Following on from the first stage of renovations in 2017, when the hard surfaces were replaced in our yard area, we commenced work on the upgrading of our green area. All planning done in 2017 was put into action in 2018. Jamie Miller Landscapes commenced work in January to completely rejuvenate the garden to a more usable, interactive and aesthetic playground. The designs done by Tessa Rose Landscapes came together beautifully and Jamie and his team did an exceptional job in bringing our yard to life. The excitement on the students' faces as they began to explore the yard on the first day of school was so rewarding for us all. Every day the students enjoy their play area and our school has never looked better.

Also in January, classroom renovations were undertaken to prepare for the opening of our Montessori Prep Class. With a lot of hard work and effort by some very dedicated friends of Athena and tradespeople, the classroom was transformed into a beautiful space fit for the purpose of our Prep classes requirements. Soft tones and neutral colours abound in this room and our students have multiple spaces in which to explore and discover the Montessori materials and activities. Our lovely Montessori educator, Bernie, brought the area to life. With over 25 years' experience in Montessori, Bernie helped all of our students thrive in this class and showed us by the end of the year through their own happiness and level of learning what a success this class has been.

Whilst we were undertaking the Montessori classroom renovations, our K-2 classroom also got a makeover. A new ceiling, new lighting and a new paint job gave the room a much needed lift and, with the installation of new ceiling fans, the room is also cooler for our hotter days. The upgrades were loved by all and later in the year saw the installation of a new interactive whiteboard, thanks to our Parents and Friends Committee's fundraising efforts.

With all of the renovations now completed we ticked off some goals that we have had for a very long time. Now we are full steam ahead on creating new ones. Our attention has turned towards expanding our numbers and making ourselves known, as well as focusing on staff training, academic excellence, and ever expanding the variety of activities available to our students to enrich their learning.

Thank you to our wonderful parents and students for your continued support. You are the foundation for our school and we truly appreciate each of you.

Thank you to our amazing teachers, assistant teachers, quality assurance staff, office staff, tuck shop staff and all members of our team. Awesome work this year!

2019 looks like it is shaping up to be an outstanding year for us at Athena, full of learning and fun.

We are ready for the fun to begin!

Best regards,

*Tarne Dirou*  
Chairman



# Board of Directors

## Athena School Board of Directors

Name	Role	Qualifications/ Experience
<b>Tarne Dirou</b>	<b>Chairman</b>	Project Management, 28 years Business experience, 16 years Accounts experience.
<b>Fiona Milne</b>	<b>D/Chairman</b>	Registered Nurse, Post Grad Degree in Education, APS Trained Educator, Founding Parent, Athena staff since 1991, Principal since 2005. 19 years of Board experience.
<b>Wayne Byrne</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>	41 years Accounts, Technical Writer, Business experience.
<b>Diane Gilbert</b>	<b>Secretary</b>	7 years at Athena – establishment and enrolments, 10 years Executive Director, 14 years Accounts, Marketing/Internet
<b>Kim FitzGerald</b>	<b>Public Officer</b>	Accounts experience – 31 years. Past Chairman P&F, past Chairman Board
<b>Helen Klæbe</b>	<b>Member</b>	11 years Accounts experience, Archaeology Degree, MYOB Accounting. Executive Training courses, Ethics Course
<b>Grant Jefford</b>	<b>Member</b>	Business Management, professional builder, Finance experience



# Parents & Friends Committee

## Message from the Chairman

This year saw the retirement of our long term P&F Chairman Megaera Fagan. Sadly, Megaera and her family moved out to the country and had to leave us – she has been very missed but does keep in touch.

So until we elect a new P&F Chairman, I have stepped in to hold the reins in the interim.

2018 was a fairly quiet year for our P&F, while all available members have worked on helping with the renovations that we have been undergoing. However, we did manage to run a few of our staple annual events and make some improvements with the proceeds.

Our first fundraiser this year was our annual Jogathon. With a huge effort and great participation by all, we managed to raise over \$5,000. This was a large increase on the year before and we were thrilled with all of the students' efforts and our families' support.

Our last fundraiser for the year was our Christmas Raffle. Many of our families donated generously to fill up our goodie hampers. With four huge baskets to raffle off our students worked hard to sell as many tickets as possible. Another huge success with over \$1,200 raised, again beating the amount raised the year before.

Well done to all of our students, and a huge thank you to all of our families and friends who help to support us via these fundraising activities!

Fundraising proceeds were mostly spent on a new Smart Whiteboard providing an interactive platform for our K-2 class. This was excitedly received by them and has been used daily to assist learning in this classroom. Our P & F Committee were thrilled our efforts contributed to this.

We are hoping to have many new members joining our group in 2019, so we can continue to support The Athena School through our various activities.

Thank you to all of our committee members this year. Your efforts are very appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

*Tarne Dirou*  
Acting P & F Chairman

## Members of the P&F Committee

**Tarne Dirou** – Acting Chairman

**Julie Nott** – Treasurer

**Monique Wright** – Secretary

**Sarah Milne**

## P&F financial overview of 2018

Fundraising activities	Income
Misc. donations	\$255.00
Jog-a-thon	\$5,949.45
Xmas Raffle	\$1,278.50
<b>Total income raised</b>	<b>\$7,482.50</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>\$677.75</b>
<b>Overall PROFIT</b>	<b>\$6,805.20</b>

Upgrades or purchases	Cost
<i>Carried over to 2018</i>	<i>\$928.35</i>
Concert / Christmas Party	\$600.00
Mothers' Group	\$86.15
SMART 65" Display System	\$5,324.00
<b>Total used</b>	<b>\$5,081.80</b>
<b>Carried over to 2019</b>	<b>\$1,723.40</b>



# Our mission

## Primary Purposes:

- Use the educational philosophy of author, educator and humanitarian L. Ron Hubbard to ensure that every child is able to understand and use their education, as well as being able to think, learn and research independently.
- Use the study methodology of L. Ron Hubbard to provide effective education services, training and materials to teachers and students, facilitating the fundamental skill of learning how to learn. In so doing, train them to apply the remedies to learning problems, so that students are able to turn data into knowledge, use it to solve real life problems and use what they have learned to advance their own life goals.
- Provide effective education services, training and materials to educators and parents, to facilitate the education of individuals by teaching them how to learn and become self-motivated lifelong learners.
- Use the NSW Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum and comply with the State and Federal education regulations and standards.
- Maintain the safe and harmonious atmosphere necessary for optimum teaching and learning by using the precepts contained in the booklet *How to Make Good Choices*, a non-religious, common-sense moral code based on L. Ron Hubbard writings. To encourage all students to have high values and integrity.
- Establish an authentic Montessori class, set up to deliver to Prep (Kindy minus 1 level), which includes hiring a fully trained and experienced teacher who can help us to set up the right learning spaces and can work with us to give our Prep children the ideal start in school with the Montessori philosophy.

## Strategy:

- Continue to create a stable position financially, that is fully compliant with requirements of regulating bodies and expanding.
- Implement the school organising structure with competently filled positions, thereby increasing the technical quality and increasing domestic student numbers.
- Develop and maintain marketing programs to expand student numbers.
- Improvements to both the student facilities and the school premises to facilitate this.

## Objectives:

- Increase the number of students in the Athena School at all stages.
- Make the school financially viable.
- Develop a marketing campaign to promote the school broadly.
- Upgrade the school front entrance to improve the image and be more sustainable.
- Expand the Prep Year as a feeder line to the school.



## Our school

The Athena School is located on the heritage premises of what used to be St Joseph's Primary School and Convent. The beautiful grounds with the huge camphor laurel, eucalyptus and jacaranda trees provide an aesthetic and naturally shaded environment in which the students can work and play. These trees harbour flocks of lorikeets, wattle birds and magpies and provide a home for our transient possums, adopted from WIRES.

Our classrooms are large and airy, with plenty of space to display artwork and projects. Attention is given to classroom layout to ensure an optimum learning environment.

In order to enhance the facilities we have here, we make regular excursions to libraries, local parks, ovals, the beach, snow fields, ice skating rinks, gyms, indoor centres and swimming pools, using our school bus.

Our past students often come to coach sports and give talks, and in addition to this we also have a large number of incursions – whereby sports and recreational individuals come to deliver sports and activities to us. Of note: over the last few years, we have had artists, musicians, karate instructors, circus performers, gymnasts – and many more.

We especially encourage participation in community activities, such as Harmony Day, Clean Up Australia Day and The Great Book Swap for the *Indigenous Literacy Foundation*.

### Our Montessori Prep Class is now open!

In this class, as in the rest of the school, our aim is to guide the children to be confident and independent learners. Exercises in Practical Life and Grace & Courtesy are an integral part of our Montessori philosophy and curriculum and through these the children are encouraged to become independent. In the classroom the children are given the freedom to choose, to move and to communicate at all times thus developing their confidence and self-esteem. They participate in activities covering learning in Practical Life exercises, Sensorial activities, Language enrichment, Mathematic activities and Cultural activities.

### Student outcomes and performances in standardised national literacy and numeracy testing

Each year the Athena students participate in the Government run NAPLAN testing for Years 3, 5, 7 & 9. Results of these are published on the My Schools website:

<https://www.myschool.edu.au/SchoolProfile/Index/107326/TheAthenaSchool/43988/2017>

#### NOTE:

For student privacy, when fewer than 5 students sit the Naplan, results will not be published.



## Networking with other schools and educational bodies

As we do every year, Staff from Athena network with many other educational bodies and groups to learn from and share our experiences in teaching. Attending seminars with the Association of Independent Schools, attending the Montessori Whole School Refresher, and attending Professional Development days for our teaching staff, where they network with other teachers from other schools to learn the newest techniques, are just to name a few.

## Promoting respect and responsibility

The Athena School prides itself on developing a culture of respect and responsibility among its student body. This is achieved in part through our personal development programs incorporating the precepts of *How to Make Good Choices*. As a school, we focus on different precepts every few weeks and each class takes turns presenting their own ideas of these precepts at weekly assemblies.

We have causes and events we support annually such as: Harmony Day, where we collect items for the Refugee Centre in Newtown; The Great Book Swap, where we raise funds for the Indigenous Literacy Foundation; or Clean up Australia Day, where our students get out and actively clean up areas in our community.

We happily provide low cost rental spaces for community groups to use our premises for anything from martial arts to music and film-making.

## Community impact and engagement

We maintain close liaison with our neighbours.

In everyday school operations we advocate for sustainability and recycling. The students enjoy these activities and enjoy the community interaction that comes with them.

We proudly provide at low cost rental, space for Martial Arts groups, spiritualists, musicians and the Sydney Film School on a long-term basis.

As part of the long-term maintenance plan for the school, the Athena School runs a community service program on Sundays to allow minor offenders to repay the community and also assist Athena with basic cleaning, maintenance and repairs. This is a well-recognised and effective program in the community.



30 November 2018



PATRON: The Hon Quentin Bryce AD CVO

ilf.org.au



011

Sarah Fogarty  
The Athena School  
28 Oxford Street  
NEWTOWN NSW 2042

Dear Sarah,

Thank you for your support in our national 2018 Great Book Swap campaign.

We had an overwhelming response from organisations, schools, libraries and other educational institutions, with donations still rolling in. So far, we have raised almost \$250,000, which will allow us to gift 25,000 new, cultural relevant books to remote communities across Australia.

Your commitment to social justice and to addressing the literacy gap has helped us achieve this – thank you. We are delighted to enclose a Certificate of Appreciation to acknowledge your dedication and donation.

The vision of our Foundation is equity of opportunity, and with your support this year we have:

- Expanded our early literacy Book Buzz program and gifted more than 7,000 books and learning resources.
- Gifted almost 90,000 new books to over 270 remote communities (40% by Indigenous authors or illustrators)
- Published seven Community Literacy Projects from the APY Lands to the Tiwi Islands.

In 2019, our goal is to raise \$300,000 to gift 30,000 or more books. Please put Wednesday 4 September in your diary to celebrate Indigenous Literacy Day with us and host a Great Book Swap (see brochure enclosed to register).

On behalf of all the communities we work with, thank you once again for your support and commitment to our vision and our programs.

Yours sincerely,

Karen Williams  
Executive Director

Put Wednesday 4  
September in your diary  
to celebrate Indigenous  
Literacy Day with us!

From: Eleni Smyrnis  
Date: Tue, May 22, 2018 at 12:38 PM  
Subject: Thank You Fiona - Working With The Athena School

Hi Fiona,

I hope you are well, and your busy school term is going well.

I'd like to say another **huge thank you** for your time, interest and support while working with your incredible students on the PHD project - *The Impact of Drama-Inspired Exercises on Mathematical Learning*.

The Athena School, including you, your staff members, parents and students, radiates a beautiful tight knit community. It has been most welcoming and pleasant to work with.

Your school is a place where every student is intimately known and well cared for. A place where your teachers and administrators care and work to make things happen and strive for ongoing success. A place where every student is supported and challenged to expand their talents and interests and motivations in their pursuit of knowledge. A place where students may develop into all rounded individuals intellectually, physically, creatively, spiritually, emotionally, socially and communicatively.

The nature of this PHD study is fascinating and most compatible with the essence of your school's environment and purposes.

I look forward to keeping you updated about how this research optimistically progresses.

Again, I really appreciate everything you have done to assist with the movement of this project.

If you have any further questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards,

Eleni Smyrnis | PhD Candidate and Tutor  
Centre for Research on Learning and Innovation (CRLI)  
Sydney School of Education and Social Work

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY  
Rm 237, Education Building A35  
The University of Sydney | NSW | 2006

Ms Fi Milne  
The Athena School  
28 Oxford St  
Newtown 2042

Dear The Athena School,

Thank you very much for your kind donation of groceries. This will allow the shelves of our "store" to be well stocked, so we can give out weekly parcels of food and monthly packs of toiletries to those in need. We are currently providing bags to over 250 asylum seekers every week. Generous practical donations serve to demonstrate to the asylum seekers that come to our centre that there are people in the local community who care about their well being.

The Asylum Seekers Centre in Newtown NSW is a place of hospitality and welcome. We currently provide direct **practical and social support to over 1500 people** who are seeking asylum while living in the local community. These women, men and children, from over 74 different countries, have commonly fled persecution, war and torture to seek a new life of peace and security.

Our professional staff and volunteers provide services including **health care and counselling, legal advice, accommodation and financial support, employment assistance, education, social activities, a Food Bank and daily meals**. These services respond to the needs, strengths and capabilities of each person seeking asylum - helping them to prosper in most difficult circumstances.

We will keep you informed about the work of the Centre, upcoming events and other ways you might like to get involved. Please contact Jamie Lee at [jamie.lee@asylumseekerscentre.org.au](mailto:jamie.lee@asylumseekerscentre.org.au) for any inquiries regarding donations of food and material items.

Thank you again for your donation.

Yours sincerely,

Frances Rush  
Chief Executive Officer

ASYLUMSEEKERS  
ADDRESS BECHTOLD



## CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

Your support has helped us gift new, carefully chosen books for children in remote communities who have none.

The Athena School



Artwork by Arabana woman, Kathy Arbon

ACTIVIST PUBLISHERS CO-OP

INDIGENOUS LITERACY FOUNDATION

asai

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

## Action plan and targets

Target	What was / needs to be done?	Target
<b>Overseeing and supporting the principal and senior executives:</b>		
Procure a prospective Principal and get them through training and apprenticeship.		In progress
Get full hat write-ups done for existing exec posts and get these reviewed and the functions assigned correctly if needed.	Some Exec Hats completed, some IP.	In progress
Get existing execs through their training and hatting programs to become more effective on their posts.	Review at all in house Staff Training Programs.	In progress
Maintaining and streamlining existing reporting requirements to ensure that the needed functions are being done resulting in affluences across the boards.	Done and continuing to monitor.	Ongoing
<b>Monitoring outcomes:</b>		
Develop systems to ensure that the School is meeting and/or exceeding the curriculum requirements as laid down by NESA.	In progress and continuing to monitor. Requirements met.	Ongoing
Ensure that the School is achieving all NESA Educational Curriculum Requirements for each student/year.	Programs being followed to ensure this.	Ongoing
Ensuring that LRH Educational Technology is in full use within the School resulting in every student developing a love of learning to the full.	Programs being followed to ensure this. Excellence in Education Program.	Ongoing
<b>Securing resources to carry out programs:</b>		
Review the staffing of the School to ensure that the resources needed are in place and effective to achieve our aims most cost effectively.	Review underway.	In progress 2019
Set up a fund-raising initiative that will support the School's expansion plans without eating into reserves.	P&F Committee becoming active again.	In progress
Research computerised resources for monitoring outcomes to facilitate the reporting requirements of teachers and, once successful, get this implemented (e.g. for lesson plans/ outcome reporting)	To be investigated. Program to be developed.	
Establishing a TAA operating within Athena School so as to provide cost effective access to Teacher Accreditation requirements	To be investigated.	2019
<b>Financial oversight:</b>		
Get the School's finances set up on a cloud-based system to make it easier for accountants and staff to manage the school's finances.	Have looked at converting from MYOB to Xero. To be finalised.	In progress 2019
Maintain the existing reporting systems to ensure that the legal and financial obligations are met and the School is compliant with these in a timely fashion, and streamline where needed.	Continuing existing protocols with this.	DONE
Standardise Pay Structure of the Teachers and Staff and establish a program for teachers to extend their qualifications through further training and a financial incentive to do this. Develop Directives to monitor this.	In Progress of review	In progress
Develop a system to ensure the viability of the school and each area.		In progress

Target	What was / needs to be done?	Target
<b>Legality:</b>		
Get all notifications and changes of agreement done for the new entity (The Athena School Limited) as soon as the bank accounts are finalised.	Bank Accounts finalised. Notifications in progress.	In progress
Regularly review and implement new changes to accreditation as published by NESA to ensure that we meet requirements and smooth out the next accreditation cycles.	In Progress. Review processes and recording of this.	In progress
<b>Enhance the brand:</b>		
Get a full inspection done on all areas (including Classrooms) of the School and develop an Estates Plan / Program for any identified refurbishment requirements or improvements.	Following recent renovations, further plans to be determined.	
Review all existing marketing and PR programs (both successful and unsuccessful) and work out a new program to increase the PR of the School in all areas (including local area, existing demographics, developing new demographics, etc.) – Keep all opinion off the lines when developing this.	Working off existing marketing plan. Review to commence in coming months.	In progress
Continue to create affiliates and networks to expand our reach.		
Continue to develop resources for export and get these actually being exported. Liase with other Applied Scholastics schools internationally ans strengthen ties with Principals.	Resources being refined.	In progress
<b>Develop the leadership:</b>		
Get all Board Members through all additional Governance requirements to ensure that they are operating as a Governing Board and not an Executive Board.	Board being encouraged to do this. Some additional completed.	In progress
Research and develop any additional training programs to expand on leadership abilities of all execs of the School.	Explored Delphian training programs so far.	In progress



# The staff at Athena

## Staff training programs

The Athena School is committed to Professional Development which is an integral part of the professional ethos at Athena. It is covered by three main areas: University studies, external professional development and in-house training. All teachers are focused on improving their quality of teaching and meeting NESI Standards of Competency.

## External professional development

Ongoing professional development is expected of all staff at Athena. Staff attend a range of seminars and workshops run by the Association of Independent Schools and other professional groups.

### All staff completed:

- Review of The Athena School Policy each Curriculum Day
- Anaphylaxis E – Training
- Asthma Management Training Online.

### New staff completed:

- Basic Study Manual
- How to Live and Work With Children.

### NESI Accredited:

- Planning & amp, Programming for the new NSW PDHPE K–10 Syllabus
- Familiarisation with the new NSW PDHPE K–10 Syllabus
- Montessori Review Conference
- Inner West Sustainable Schools Network Meeting
- Traditional Indigenous Games.

### University of New England:

- Introduction to Linguistics
- Foundations of Linguistics.

## In-house staff training

The Athena School is a member of the Applied Scholastics group. Applied Scholastics utilises the study methods and educational philosophy of L Ron Hubbard in its approach to education. It provides courses covering various aspects of teaching and administration and these courses are studied by our staff:

- Graduate of Study Technology (Student Hat)
- Applied Scholastics Educators Course
- Admin and Curriculum Course
- *How to Make Good Choices* Moral Code Familiarisation
- Fundamentals of Instruction
- How to Write a Checksheet Course.



## Current staff:

Position	Name	NESA Accreditation # and Level	Formal qualifications, training and strengths	Length of service (prior experience where applicable)
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Fiona Milne</b>	222048 Proficient Teacher	Registered Midwife, Registered Nurse, Post Graduate Degree In Productive Pedagogy (Education) at Newcastle University AIS Diploma in Business Compliance AIS Diploma in Child Protection APS Executive Administration Training	Athena School: 27 years teaching experience Prior experience: 18 nursing experience
<b>Prep Class Teacher</b>	<b>Bernadine Nathanielsz</b>	755266 Proficient Teacher	Bachelor of Teaching Associate Montessori International Diploma	20 years total teaching experience
<b>Stage 1 Teacher</b>	<b>Cassie Miliatis</b> (maternity leave)	275005 Proficient Teacher	Bachelor of Arts (Hist/Pol) Masters Degree in Primary Education APS Educators Course Graduate	Athena School: 12 years teaching experience
<b>Stage 1 Teacher</b>	<b>Sarah Milne</b>	220893 Proficient Teacher	Bachelor of Arts (Hist/Pol) Masters Degree in Primary Education APS Youth Specialist Graduate APS Educators Course Graduate	Athena School: 18 years teaching experience
<b>Stage 2 &amp; 3 Teacher</b>	<b>Gina Graham</b>	221387 Proficient Teacher	Bachelor of Arts APS Fundamentals of Instruction Graduate	Athena School: 14 years teaching experience
<b>Stage 2 &amp; 3 Assistant</b>	<b>Viva Ma</b>		Cert 3 Early Childhood Education	Athena School: 6 years experience Prior experience: 2 years experience
<b>High School Head Teacher</b>	<b>Andrea Parsons</b>	260327 Proficient Teacher	Bachelor of Education (Secondary) APS Fundamentals of Instruction Graduate	Athena School: 13 years teaching experience
<b>High School Curriculum Consultant</b>	<b>Helen Dickenson</b>	242605 Existing Teacher	Diploma of Teaching (High School)	Athena School: 26 years teaching experience
<b>High School Assistant</b>	<b>Rebecca Jones</b>		BCS of Natural Medicine	Doctor of Natural Medicine for 10y
<b>Tutor</b>	<b>Sasa Gason</b>		Bachelor of Information Management Post Bachelor Studies in Teaching	Athena School: 3y experience
<b>Office Manager</b>	<b>Sarah Fogarty</b>		APS Executive Administration Training Graduate	Athena School: 4 year experience Prior Experience: 17 years Managerial/Sales experience
<b>Quality Assurance Manager</b>	<b>Julie Crowhurst</b>		Pastoral Care Specialist Administrator	Athena School: 3 year experience 23 years experience as a Pastoral Care Specialist
<b>Bursar</b>	<b>Helen Klæbe</b>		Bachelor of Arts (Archaeology) APS Administration Training Graduate	Athena School: 18 years experience
<b>School Services</b>	<b>Rose Evans</b>		APS Basic Administration Training Graduate APS Fundamentals of Instruction Graduate	Athena School: 15 years experience
<b>Business Manager</b>	<b>Tarne Dirou</b>			Business experience: 28 years Accounts experience: 16 years

# Waiver

## The Athena High School

The *Registered and Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual* provides information about the requirements for registered and accredited non-government schools under the *Education Act 1990 (NSW)*.

Registration is a non-government school's licence to operate. The main purpose of registration is to ensure that the requirements of the *Education Act* are being, or will be, met.

Accreditation authorises a non-government school to nominate candidates for the award of the *School Certificate* and/or the *Higher School Certificate*. The main purpose of accreditation is to ensure that the requirements for the *School Certificate* and/or the *Higher School Certificate* are being, or will be, met.

Section 2.5.1.2 of the *Registration Manual* states:

'Registered secondary schools provide education for students in Years 7 to 12. Under Section 47 of the *Education Act* schools providing secondary education for Years 7–10 need to comply with the requirements set out in Part 3 that relate to the minimum curriculum for secondary education.

- Years 7–8 cover Stage 4 of the curriculum
- Years 9–10 cover Stage 5 of the curriculum

A secondary school that is registered but not accredited is not eligible to enter candidates for the award of the *Record of School Achievement* or the award of the *Higher School Certificate*. Section 93 of the *Education Act* requires a school that is not accredited to enter candidates for the *Record of School Achievement* or *Higher School Certificate* to notify parents of students in writing that students who complete their Year 10 course at that school will not be eligible for a *Record of School Achievement* or *Higher School Certificate*.'

The Athena School has registration but does not seek accreditation. Students at The Athena School will not receive the *Record of School Achievement*. However, we do provide certification that your child has achieved the outcomes of the Year 10 Syllabus.



# Enrolment policy

The Athena School educates students from Prep and Kindergarten through to Year 10. The school is non-denominational and students of any faith are accepted at the school.

## Pre-enrolment

The enrolment application process is run by the Office Manager.

Information is provided to the prospective student and their family, or agent, for overseas students. Overseas Students are provided with a Pre-Enrolment information pack and any questions are answered.

The enrolment of a student follows the steps of the applicable Routing Form. These are: the New Student Routing Form for Australian Residents and Non-Residents and the New Overseas Student Routing Form for Overseas Students.

If possible, have the student and their parents/nominated suitable relative attend the school for a tour.

Full documentation, as disclosed in the New Student/New OS Student Application Forms, must be provided and certified if they are a digital copy. Wherever possible, original documents must be obtained so they can be copied in the office. In such a case, the staff member doing the copying must sign on each of the copies that they have sighted the original.

**Note:** All copies of documents must be legible.

Such documents include:

- photo ID for each parent/suitable nominated relative
- photo ID for the student
- birth certificate of the student
- copy of current medicare card, or overseas student health care cover for overseas student
- Family Law or other court orders where relevant
- immunisation history or a letter of objection
- passport and travel documents (including visa) for any non-resident student
- student's NAPLAN results (Australian citizens only)
- academic transcripts from previous schools.

The student must have a fully filled out and signed application form. The overseas students must also have signed their Letter of Offer.

Ascertain that the student has the correct visa to be studying in Australia, or that they are making an application from offshore to have a student visa.

**Note:** Most non-resident students are only permitted to study for a maximum of 3 months during their entire visa period.

Ensure that the student will be staying in Australia with a parent or nominated suitable relative. Students staying with guardians, and who require the school to assume responsibility for their welfare, will not be accepted.

A student staying with a nominated suitable relative must have the *OS student – Parent approval for student to stay with nominated suitable relative* form fully filled out and signed by both parents where possible.

## Enrolment

All applicants attend an interview process and their responses are considered regarding their willingness to support the school's ethos. Overseas students applying from offshore are not able to be interviewed until they arrive (as per routing form).

All applicants attend an academic assessment so that the school can ensure that the

student qualifies for a position. This includes such things as sufficient English language ability (for overseas students). The assessment will also assist Quality Assurance to make an individual program for them.

Overseas Students are required to have sufficient English language ability for the course they are applying to enter.

**Kindy to Year 4:** no English language requirement.

**Years 5 – 6:** IELTS level 4 or equivalent.

**Years 7 – 10:** IELTS level 5 or equivalent.

Identify any strategies which need to be put into place either by the applicant or the school to accommodate the applicant, before a decision regarding the enrolment is made.

Inform the applicant of the outcome – whether they have been accepted or not.

For overseas students, final approval of enrolment is dependent on them paying the fees laid out in their Letter of Offer. These fees are:

- 1 term's fees
- Application Fee
- Enrolment Fee
- Security Deposit

**Note:** The school does not accept payment of more than one term's fees at a time.

Once the overseas student has paid the invoice on the Letter of Offer, they or their agent are provided with a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) via the PRISMS website, allowing them to make an application to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) for an overseas student visa.

## Orientation

Upon arrival at the school, and in accordance with the New Student Routing Form/New OS Student Routing Form, the student and their parents/nominated suitable relative should be shown around the school, if this has not already been done. Overseas Students newly arriving in Australia should be assisted with coordination to ensure they have no troubles departing the airport and arriving in Sydney.

Information is to be provided to the student on:

- Emergency procedure, evacuation and lockdown.
- Any health, safety and/or emergency issues.
- VISA requirements.
- Course progress and attendance requirements.
- Course timetables.

The student is to be sold a school uniform.

## Non-commencement, deferral, cancellation

Any non-commencing student should be contacted to verify why this is. If necessary, defer or cancel their enrolment, and liaise with the Bursar for any refund arrangements.

### For overseas students:

Report any student on PRISMS who has not canceled their enrolment and does not complete the orientation program within 14 days of their enrolment day.

Facilitate a deferment in the case that a student can provide genuine reasons for non-attendance.

Enrolments will be accepted according to the outcome of the enrolment process and the availability of places. Continuing enrolment is subject to the willingness of the students and parents to participate in the application of the school rules and ethos (see enrolment contract, pastoral care policies and behaviour management policies) and payment of school fees.

*Executive: 3.8 Enrolment policy*

*Approved by Executive Council, The Athena School*

# Student welfare

## Child protection

The focus of this school's duty of care is the protection of children from abuse.

The procedures followed are in accordance with all relevant legislation and will take into account other appropriate practices and guidelines aimed at the protection of children. The school follows the Association of Independent Schools *Child Protection* policy guidelines, and these are amended as required, to remain abreast of changes to legislation and regulations. Full details may be obtained from the Principal or the Association of Independent Schools.

## Code of conduct

Athena school, by virtue of the philosophy upon which it is founded, does not promote nor condone behaviour by students, staff, parents, nor visitors, which vilifies any other person, present or not, in any way.

Staff and students alike have the right to work in an environment where they are treated with courtesy and respect, without fear of violence or invalidation.

Guidelines to acceptable behaviour will be found in:

- *The Athena School rules*,
- *How to make Good Choices* booklet,
- the policy *Duties of a Teacher*,
- and in *The Parent's Hat* booklet.

It is the responsibility of students and parents to know, understand and follow the rules and guidelines set out in the Athena School Rules, both the Primary School and High School. In this way, they are aware of their responsibilities and rights and may exercise them.

It is the responsibility of teachers and school staff to know, understand and follow the code of conduct for staff and the code of conduct for students (*How to make Good Choices* and the Athena School Rules) so that they may exercise their rights and responsibilities within the school environment.

## Senior students

The Athena School does not operate a leadership program, such as a Prefect system. As the Athena School is based on egalitarianism, all senior students are expected to follow *The Way To Happiness* precept No. 6, *Set a Good Example*, by knowing and following the school rules and all 21 precepts of *The Way To Happiness*.

## Security of students and staff

### Internal

The school has in place certain rules to protect students whilst in the care of the school and its employees.

These rules are to be found in the policy *The Athena School Rules*. Each staff member is required to study and understand 'Duty of Care'.

### External

During excursions, staff are to ensure that there are sufficient staff/parent student ratios. Staff are also to follow the excursion checklist to ensure the safety of all during excursions.

## Complaints and grievances

Grievances by students or parents are addressed within the Parent's Information pack. The first communication begins with the teacher. If this is not satisfactory, the grievance is then addressed to the Quality Assurance Manager. The communication line then follows up the chain of command to the Principal.

Grievances regarding the administration of the school should be addressed primarily to the Office Manager, then follow through to the Principal.

At all times grievances will be addressed using the philosophy upon which the school is based. These policies – and assistance in locating them – are available to parents and students from the Office Manager.

Should parents or students wish to take the matter further, they may contact the Continental Office of Applied Scholastics in Sydney.

All grievances should be in writing to the party addressed.

## Reporting to parents

It is Athena School policy that teachers and staff be, at all times, approachable and willing to listen to and help parents and other stakeholders with regard to the education and pastoral care of our students.

While it is preferable that an appointment is made, parents and stakeholders are welcome to visit the school and speak with the teachers out of class time.

In this way, parents may be kept abreast of their children's progress through school on a regular, informal basis.

More formal reporting, by way of Report Cards, is carried out at the end of Terms 2 and 4 every year. We endeavour to ensure that all relevant parties receive copies of Report Cards (as in the case of separated families).

## Student discipline

### Exclusion, suspension, expulsion

It is policy of The Athena School not to exclude students from being admitted to other schools. Students may be suspended from school if their behaviour is violent or dangerous or creates an unsafe environment for others. A child who creates a dangerous situation will be dealt with per the *Exclusion, Suspension, Expulsion procedure* (Student to Quality Assurance Routing Form).

### Procedural fairness

The Athena School's policy regarding procedural fairness is based on its ethos of fairness and openness and ensures that students, their families and the school's staff are guaranteed the right to face their accuser, to be made aware of any claims against them and to be given the chance to defend themselves in an unbiased arena.

Should a student, parent or staff member feel that the school's dealings with them have violated these policies, they will find recourse through Applied Scholastics.

*Executive: 3.6 Student welfare*

*Approved by Executive Council, The Athena School*



## Attendance

The Athena School will monitor the daily attendance and absence of students in the School by maintaining a daily register for each class.

A log book is kept at Reception and telephoned explanations for absences are logged and a note passed to the teacher.

Student absences from classes or from the school will be identified and recorded in the student log in the office by the appropriate school office personnel.

Unexplained absences from classes or school will be reported to office staff for follow up. Details are then entered into the Student Absences Log. In the event staff are unable to contact parents, a letter is sent home, requesting a phone call or letter of explanation.

Sickness or unexplained absences are followed up by sending the student to Quality Assurance, when they return.

Student absences are recorded on the student's report card twice yearly and a copy placed in the student's file. Absences are also recorded in the student's IEP file each term.

If students have been absent for more than five (5) days in one term the Office Manager sends a letter to parents to advise them of the unsatisfactory attendance record. If a student displays a pattern of unexplained absence, or continuing poor attendance of over ten (10) days in one term, the Office Manager contacts parents to arrange a meeting with school staff to resolve the situation.

If the situation is unable to be resolved, or the student continues to demonstrate an attendance record that fulfills the definition of neglect education in the *Education Act (1990)*, then the school has a responsibility to report the matter to the *Department of Education and Communities*. All steps taken by the school to resolve the situation should be recorded in the student's IEP file.

*Executive: 3.8 Attendance*

*Approved by Executive Council, The Athena School*

### **NOTE:**

Student attendance level information is collected by schools and reported on My School twice yearly for Semester 1 (Terms 1 and 2) and Term 3.

Athena student attendance rate 2018:	
Semester 1	91%
Term 3	91%

# Pastoral care

## Counselling and the wellbeing of students

All staff are responsible for the well-being of students within the school and the reporting of problems. If a staff member either sees a student who appears to have a problem or who receives information from a student about another student, it is the staff member's responsibility to either investigate the situation themselves, or refer the information to the Quality Assurance Division.

The Quality Assurance Division is responsible for the counselling of students.

Parents are to be informed of any problems encountered by their children and are welcome to meet with school staff in order to remedy the situation.

## Students with special needs

It is the policy of The Athena School to provide support to students with special needs, whether those needs are academic or emotional. Through teacher observation, regular classroom assessment and a clear and welcoming communication line with parents, we are able to detect those students with special needs. These students are referred to the Quality Assurance Division, where they are interviewed by a trained Youth Specialist who can help the student define the area of concern. The situation is then discussed with the parents, with the staff acting as mediators, if the child wishes. Tutoring is available in the Quality Assurance Division to address academic problems. Should counselling be requested, this will be arranged through the Secretary.

## Illness

Should a student become ill during the day, they are to be referred immediately (escorted, if necessary) to the front office. Either the Quality Assurance Manager or the School Nurse should check the child and ascertain their condition and take the necessary steps, while the parent/caregiver is telephoned and informed of the situation. Students are not permitted to take themselves home if they have reported sick but must be collected by a responsible adult. Upon arrival, the parent/caregiver should be briefed on the situation and given all available information.

Should a child be found to have a contagious disease, the steps listed by the NSW Health Department must be activated immediately. Parents of unimmunised children should be informed and advised to keep their children at home until the situation has resolved.

## Medication

If a student requires the administration of medication during a school day, both student and a parent/caregiver must report to the school nurse and the relevant Medical Administration Form must be completed. These forms are found at the First Aid station in the staff room. It is then the responsibility of the school nurse to decide whether she or the teacher will hold and administer the medication. All completed forms are to be kept on file at the First Aid station.

## Serious incidents and emergencies

Serious incidents and emergencies are to be handled per the policy *Management and Reporting of Serious Incidents*.

## Homework

It is up to the individual teacher to set the criteria for homework. However, homework is not to be used punitively.

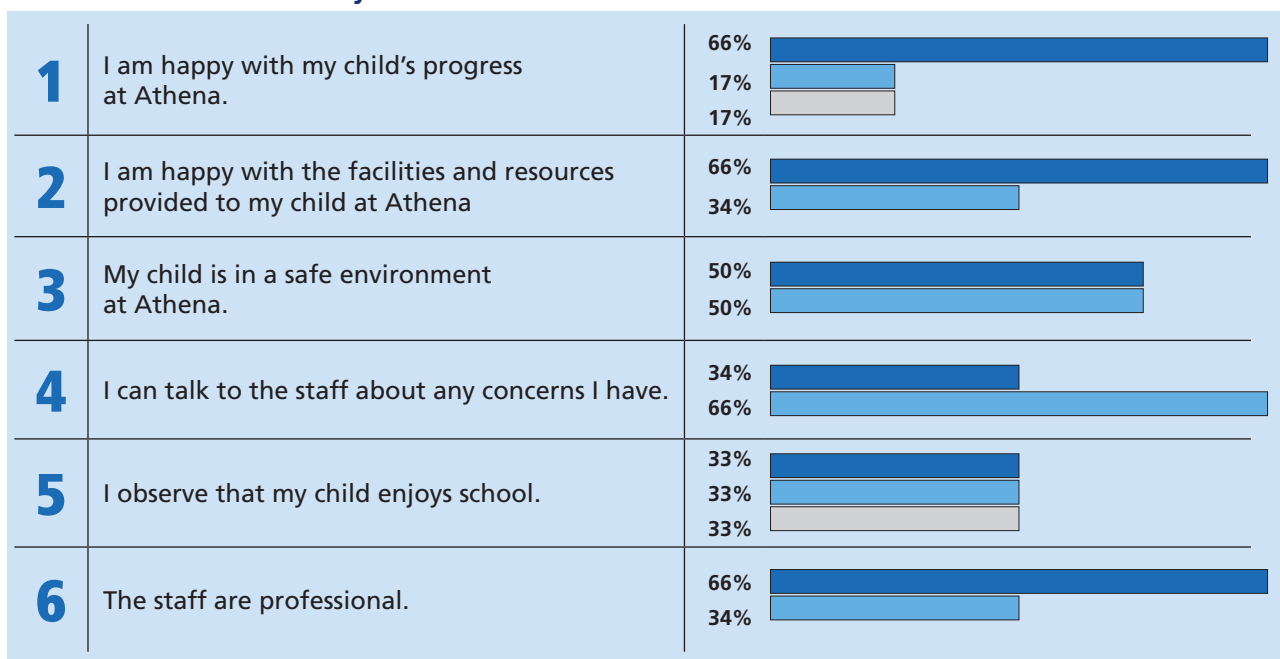
*Executive: 3.6.2 Pastoral care*

*Approved by Executive Council, The Athena School, 2016*

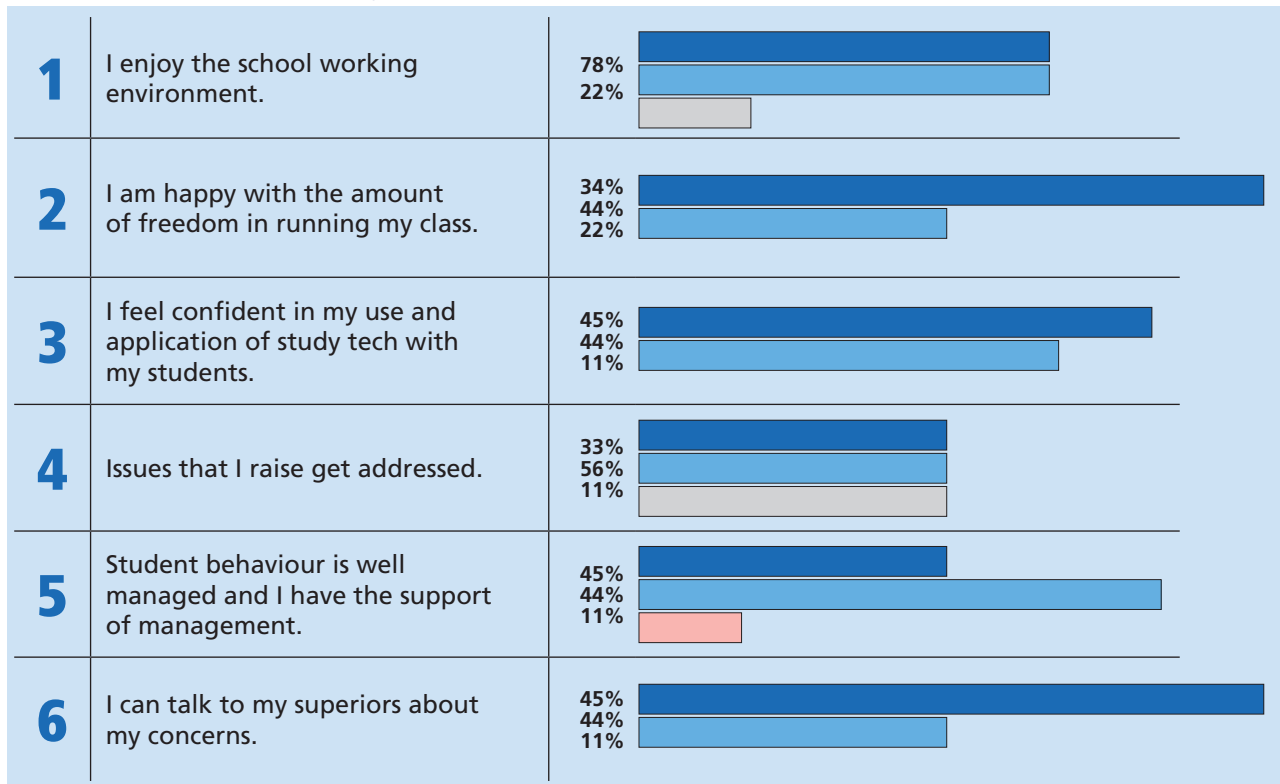


# Surveys

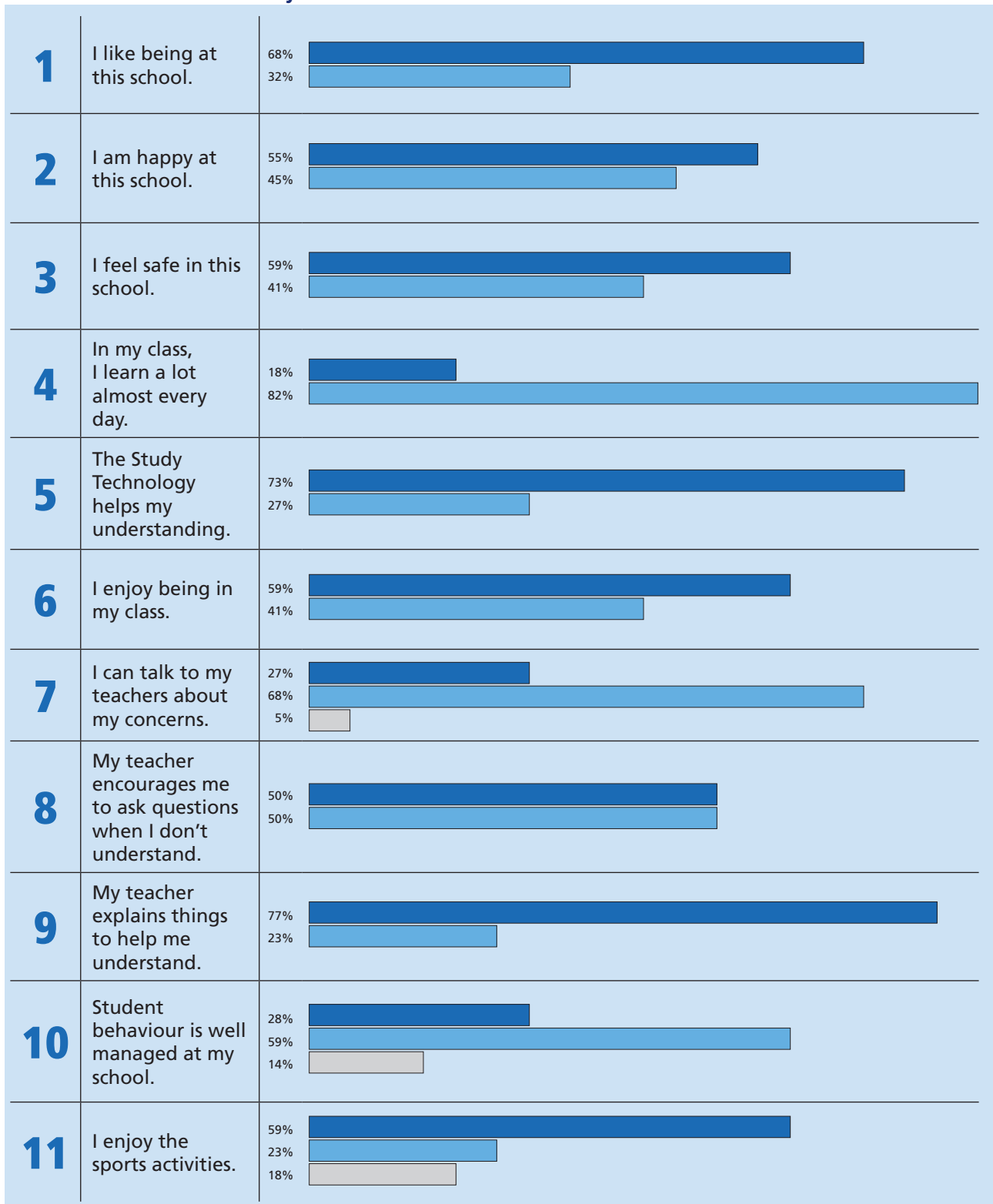
## Parent satisfaction survey







## Teacher satisfaction survey



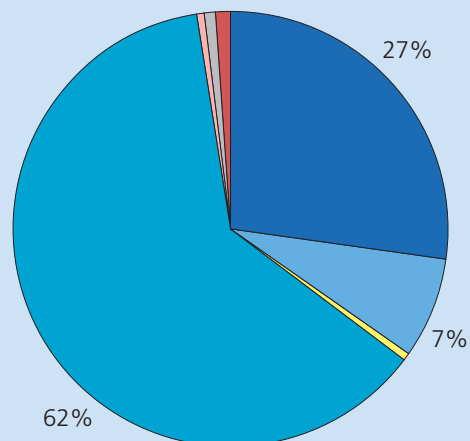
## Student satisfaction survey



 Strongly agree
  Agree
  Neither agree or disagree
  Disagree

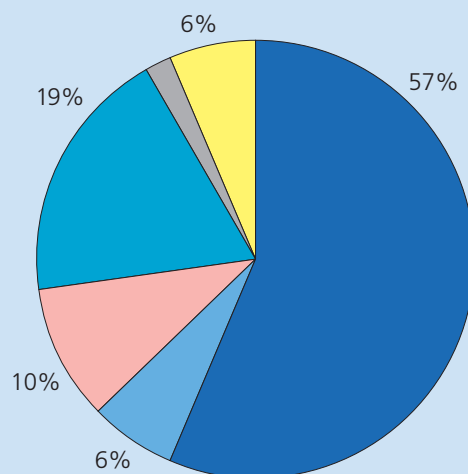
## Financial overview

Income 2018



- Commonwealth Govt recurrent funding
- State/Territory Govt recurrent funding
- Other grants
- Fees, charges & parent contributions
- Private income – includes use of property
- P&F Fundraising
- Bookshop & uniform trading

Expenditure 2018



- Salaries – all staff
- Super, Worker's Comp & LSL
- Maintenance, building & grounds
- Operational expenses
- Finance, insurance & legal
- Depreciation



## Testimonials



### Isaac V.

Howdy. I am a year 10 graduate of the Athena School. As a kid I was always moving schools and (I didn't know it at the time) I was actually missing out on a lot when it came to my education. When I arrived at the Athena School, that all changed – and the way in which I viewed education completely flipped. I needed to fill in the gaps and so the Athena School stepped in.

I was only at The Athena School for about 2 years but my experience was unique. I have left with knowledge that I can apply in my life, fantastic memories that I will keep with me on my journey and the best of friends that I know I can count on. I am not only feeling more energetic about my future but I'm ready to face any obstacles that come my way.

There's really only one thing more that can be said about my experience at The Athena School, which is, I LEARNT. I learnt for myself, not to pass a test or to get through another day but I actually learnt to make myself more able and to understand the world around me. I learnt more in those two years than I did in my whole schooling, which I didn't even know was possible!

I want to give a big thank you to everyone at Athena for supporting me as well as all the other students. It is truly a family that I am so proud to be a part of and will never forget. Thank you so much!

### Jett F.

Most of my life was spent at The Athena School, and those were without doubt some of the happiest years of my life. I went to Athena for many years and there is not a single thing I can think of to complain about. It taught me everything I know to this date and onward, and with its excellent teachers and teaching methods I never had any trouble understanding the data I was being taught. Most of the friends I made at Athena, whom I spent the younger years of my life with, I still talk to today. I have made friends for life at this school and I am so happy to have them.

The Athena School taught me responsibility, to be caring, and to have respect. It has had a major influence on me and my life, and formed me into who I am today. I will be forever thankful for what Athena has provided me with to get me started in life, and what I will proceed with. I will hold happy memories of this school forever. I want to thank all the teachers that taught me over the years, all the office staff and last but not least the Principal, Fiona Milne. Thank you for making my childhood great.



### Ella F.

All of my education was done at Athena and I will always treasure my many great experiences there.

I would like to take this opportunity to convey my appreciation to all of the great teachers and staff at Athena. I am completely grateful for your hard work and the dedication you put into your students. What I would really like to acknowledge is that even when there was a classroom full of students I would always find myself being able to get personal help. So thank you for creating this place where I felt very comfortable to address any problems I had and for helping me to become the person I am today. Truly, thank you all.



## RM

When our daughter first came into the Athena school 5 years ago, she had very little English and was very shy, as she grew up in a non-English speaking country (Indonesia). But it didn't take her very long to adopt the language – 2 months and she could sometimes correct my words!

Now she is 9 years old. I am watching her become a determined person with her ability to study and her ability in reading (500 pages a day) with full understanding. It leads her to a bright future.

She is now making books with the help of her teacher in the class room as well as her father at home. Her goal is to become an author and a professional artist.

I feel in a lifetime of debt with the school because of the knowledge that my daughter gets. It is such a treasure. Thank you so much.



## KJ

My son loves to study!

He has been at the Athena School for 7 years now and he looks forward to going to school each day. On the last NAPLAN tests he did great and surprised us with his high scores.

At the beginning of this term he said to me: "I am enjoying Maths, mum! Our teacher asks us what's the meaning of maths words and makes sure we really understand them. If I start to go slow, she helps me to go back and clear up anything I didn't fully get, and then I start to feel good and go faster!"

Thank you to the teachers, Gina & Sasa and also all of the Athena teachers that have interacted with him up to this point. I am very happy with my son's progress at this fantastic school.

*A good, stable adult with love and tolerance in his heart is about the best therapy a child can have.'*

— L. Ron Hubbard

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