



The
ATHENA
SCHOOL

+

ATHENA
MONTESORI
EARLY EDUCATION

2021 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 Acting Principal, Mrs. Sarah Matara.

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 Standards 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 regard 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.

The Athena School is a registered Overseas Student Provider
– CRICOS Provider Code 02266B.



Letter from our Principal



Dear Parents and Friends,

This is my first Principal's Letter and I write it with both loss and excitement. Early in 2022, our dearly loved Principal of many decades and my mother, Fi Milne, tragically passed away. Fi had become synonymous with Athena – she lived and breathed for this school. She would, however, not want us to spend our time in sorrow but to rather give our best to continue creating our wonderful school. It is a great honour to be able to continue her legacy as Acting Principal and these are the biggest shoes I will have to fill. Fi was a one-of-a-kind person who could work 70 hours a week with a smile and still have time for anyone who needed help or support in the community. I hope to do her proud. I will oversee this Financial Report on Fi's behalf.

And with that, phew, what a year we've had! Just when we thought we had been through the worst of Covid, more Covid came. Nevertheless, we at Athena did not give up on our number one goal:

'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

Despite the children learning from home and staff shortages, we completed the year with students and teachers still smiling – proud of their personal and academic growth. We are all committed to say that nothing will stop our desire to empower young people who can learn anything they wish to learn and who can think for themselves.

We've had some staffing changes which include welcoming Sarah Carter on as the Deputy Principal. Sarah is a past Athena student like me. With Sarah moving into the office, her previous position in the Montessori Prep Class has been filled by Isabelle Munro – a new staff member. Isabelle has proven to be a wonderful asset to the school and is willing to go the extra mile that is often needed. She works wonderfully with our lead Prep Teacher Bernie Nathaniels, who is both Montessori and university trained – Bernie has such a wealth of knowledge on young children and how to guide them to be their best. We've kept the Prep Class full and have many keen parents who have heard about our school through word of mouth. This is certainly something to be proud of!

The K-2 Class has been gradually expanding to capacity and is again full of happy students who are proud of their new skills in Reading, Writing and Numeracy. Kindy students beam when they can sound out and read their own books, and by Year 2 they can all read smoothly – it is an absolute joy to listen to them demonstrating their skills. Complete and systematic phonics* teaching – including using our very own Athena Reading Courses – is what ensures all students learn to read very well at Athena. The Year 1 and 2 students also moved over to the *Maths U See* program which is proving to increase certainty in numeracy to a whole new level. We have also added 6 iPads with keyboards for getting familiar with using technology in the classroom.

In the Year 3-6 Class, Gina had been missing the usual joys of the Choir and School Concert but despite not being in the physical classroom, Gina and Sasa found creative ways to engage and connect with their online students. Gina had the Choir members record themselves singing, as well as presenting their Science experiments through video recordings; and Sasa's daily challenges helped to connect Maths skills to real life.

The High School students really enjoyed their "Dream Team" of Andrea as the lead teacher, Georgia assisting her whilst completing her Masters of Primary Education, Sasa as the Maths specialist and Enrico, our star practical student of 2021. Due to the way the Athena High School is run, where

* Phonics – a method of teaching reading by teaching the sounds of individual letters, letter pairs, and so on.

students work at their own pace, they continued to take their individual learning programs home and then back to school again, as was needed by the circumstances of the lockdowns. This required students to take a higher level of personal responsibility for their learning; while the teachers were on call as well as delivering Zoom lessons for class discussions and where interaction was required. The High School added 6 new desktop MacBook computers to their teaching tools.

A special mention to our very valuable Quality Assurance team, who daily Zoomed and called students who needed extra help and support. They had students reading aloud over video calls and continued to expand the vocabulary of every student they worked with.

I would like to personally acknowledge all the staff, students, and parents of Athena for their willingness and ability to switch back and forth from online learning as was required. Everyone did an amazing job! What a wonderful team we have here at Athena – I am grateful for each and every one of you.

Looking ahead, we are excited to conquer whatever 2022 throws at us and we know that we CAN, and we WILL make it work no matter what. Thank you all for your continued support!



Yours Sincerely,
Sarah Matara
Acting Principal



Chairman's report

Many good things occurred in 2021, despite the Covid-19 pandemic continuing to wreck havoc with schooling across Australia and the world. The Athena staff and students just adapted to the changes and got busy in spite of all obstacles and reasons not to. Because of this, Athena has come through the 2021 year in good form with our students continuing to learn and pursue their academic goals.

As was set out originally in 2019, The Athena School has continued to work to increase our student numbers consistently across all year levels and over the ensuing years since then, we have slowly but steadily been achieving this goal. However, as we have not quite yet reached the final goal set, we will continue to actively work on increasing our student numbers through a variety of methods including: social media marketing, word of mouth and advertising in relevant publications.

Continuing other long-term plans for the school, many renovations have been completed in 2021, including the long-awaited Tuck Shop renovation at the beginning of the 2021 year. A complete overhaul of the tuck shop was done in the January school holidays and was greatly welcomed by all. This was possible thanks to the fundraising activities that were generously supported by our families. A big thanks to our fabulous P&F committee and the events they hold which make these renovations possible!

Upgrades have been prevalent in 2021 for Athena. New air-conditioners, new computers and iPads, and the installation of our science sink, to name a few – all increased the resources available to our students.

Covid-19 and the subsequent lock-downs and health restrictions that resulted, saw us return to online learning for a large part of the school year. Our teachers, already prepared for this occurrence, adapted quickly, and supported our students and families to make a smooth transition from classroom to lounge room. Most of our students fared well with this and all students were happily welcomed back in Term 4, once the restrictions were lifted.

Looking forward to 2022, we are excited for a more normal school year with full attendance and the end of the home learning. Whilst we coped well and our students did continue to learn, there is nothing like being in the classroom, interacting with their teachers and friends, and enjoying the full school experience. Learning comes not just from books but also in the human interactions each child gets to experience being at school.

Thanks to our staff, students, parents, and caregivers for all their efforts in 2021 – we know it wasn't an easy year for anyone due to the pandemic and what that entailed but we are confident that 2022 is going to be better for us all.

Best regards,

Tarne Dirou
Chairman



Board of Directors

Athena School Board of Directors

Name	Role	Qualifications/ Experience
Tarne Dirou	Chairman	Project Management, 31 years Business experience, 19 years Accounts experience.
Fiona Milne	D/Chairman	Registered Nurse, Post Grad Degree in Education, APS Trained Educator, Founding Parent, school staff since 1991, Principal since 2005. 22 years of Board experience.
Wayne Byrne	Treasurer	Accountant – 44 years. Technical Writer, Business experience.
Diane Gilbert	Secretary	10 years at Athena – establishment and enrolments, 13 years Executive Director, 17 years Accounts, Marketing/Internet
Kim FitzGerald	Public Officer	Accounts experience – 34 years. Past Chairman P&F, past Chairman of Board
Michael Gordon	Ordinary Member	



Parents & Friends Committee

Message from the Chairman

Again, our P&F revival plans were put on hold due to the Covid pandemic. A very slow year and very little to report regarding events held and funds raised.

But 2021 did see some of our long-held renovation and upgrade plans put into action. At the beginning of the year the Tuck Shop was renovated. New cabinets, new sinks, a fantastic new wrap around bench and splash back, and a lot of fresh paint makes it look better than ever. With improved functionality and a crisp clean look, everyone was excited to use it.

P&F also contributed to the purchase of several new computers and iPads. These were very needed, and our students have been enjoying using them for the many facets of their studies.

Due to Covid, we have not been able to hold our annual events such as the Jogathon, Christmas raffle, fund raising dinner or any events where we can welcome our families into the school. We really look forward to being able to hold these again and plan on returning to our fun and successful events in 2022.

A sincere thank you to anyone who has contributed in 2021. We really value our community and the involvement of our parents and friends, and we can't wait to be actively helping our school again.

Yours sincerely,

Tarne Dirou
Acting P & F Chairman



P&F financial overview of 2021

Fundraising activities	Income
Easter raffle	\$1,627.00
Computer School Funds	\$6,290.99
Total income	\$7,917.99
Expenses*	\$15,708.43
Profit	- \$7,790.44
Carried over from 2020	\$22,870.61
Carried over to 2022	\$15,080.17

*Expenses	Cost
Tuck Shop Renos ¹	\$1,746.45
Computers	\$13,841.98
Bank charges	\$120.00
Expenses TOTAL	\$15,708.43

¹ Tuck Shop renos paid from Building Fund: + \$5,316.00

Purchase plans for 2022

- Concrete/ pave front entrance: Jan 2022
- New school bus: to be researched and fundraised



Our mission

Primary Purposes:

- To use the educational philosophy of author, educator and humanitarian L. Ron Hubbard so that every child is able to understand and use their education, as well as being able to think, learn and research independently.
- To use the study methodology of L. Ron Hubbard for providing effective education services, training and materials to teachers and students, facilitating the fundamental skill of learning how to learn. In so doing, to 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.
- To 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 life-long learners.
- To use the NSW Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum and comply with the State and Federal education regulations and standards.
- To 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.
- To provide an authentic Montessori Prep class (Kindy minus 1) to give our Prep students an ideal start in school, utilising the Montessori Philosophy.

Strategy:

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

Objectives:

- To increase the number of students in the Athena School at all stages.
- To make the school financially viable.
- To develop a marketing campaign to promote the school broadly.
- To upgrade the school front entrance to improve the image and be more sustainable.
- To 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, police, firemen, dental technicians, circus performers – and many more.

Montessori Prep Class

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. The Montessori start to school sets the children up perfectly to commence Kindergarten.

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 per year 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.

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.

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.



Action plan and targets

Target	What was / needs to be done?	Status
Overseeing and supporting the principal and senior executives:		
Get all staff at executive level to develop their Admin Scales and Job Descriptions to meet requirements. Develop this further to cover all existing staff. The purpose being to expand the School with full teamwork and understanding.	Some Exec Hats completed, some in progress. Most staff positions are completed and being implemented.	In progress.
Get existing execs through their training and hatting programs to increase effectiveness on their posts.	Review of 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 affluence across the board.	Done and continuing to monitor.	Ongoing.
Monitoring outcomes:		
Continue to monitor and improve the systems that ensure the School is meeting and/or exceeding the curriculum requirements as outlined 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 in full.	Programs being followed to ensure this.	Ongoing.
Securing resources to carry out programs:		
Continually monitor the staffing to ensure that all necessary resources are in place to ensure top quality delivery. Implement programs to develop the qualifications of staff to meet key staffing positions.	Review underway.	In progress.
Set up a fund-raising initiative that will support the school's expansion plans, maintaining our 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. lesson plans/outcome reporting).	To be investigated.	
Establishing a TAA operating within Athena School so as to provide cost effective access to Teacher Accreditation requirements	Investigated – TAA is AIS NSW and will remain so for foreseeable future.	Done.
Financial oversight:		
Maintaining 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.
Set targets for the number of students and with these targets met, review the pay structure and implement increases/bonuses as appropriate.	In review.	In progress.
Maintain the actions that monitor the School's viability and implement new actions to increase this.	In progress.	In progress.

Target	What was / needs to be done?	Status
Legality:		
Regularly review and implement new changes to Registration as published by NESA to ensure that we meet requirements in preparation for the next Registration.	Review processes and recording of this.	In progress.
Enhance the brand:		
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. Ensure that the plan/program is written up in full and approved by both the Board and Executive Council.	Estates plan developed. Most renovations completed. Renovations to Tuck Shop completed in 2021. More to come.	In progress.
Keep all existing successful marketing and PR programs in use. Review all new marketing and PR opportunities to improve the Brand. Monitor the enquiries/responses received and how successful they are to determine the effectiveness of the programs in increasing 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.	In progress.	In progress.
Inspect classrooms with regard to how they are furnished and work out a plan to improve our image.	Some areas have been improved, some to be done.	In progress.
Create affiliates and networks to expand our reach.	To be created.	In progress.
Continue to develop resources for export and get these actually being exported.	Resources being refined.	In progress.
Develop the leadership:		
Ensure all Board Members meet and maintain Governance Requirements.		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.
Research Principal induction programs and teacher advancement programs through AIS NSW to facilitate leadership development.	More detailed investigation in availability of programs through AIS and the funding of these through school resources.	In progress.

The staff at Athena

Staff training programs and professional development

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 NESA 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. Some of the areas covered in the last twelve months are:

- Adjusting Teaching During COVID-19
- Reportable Conduct and other changes
- Webinar on Safe Series Disclosure of Risk
- Analysis and Impact of Everyday Objects
- Create Change That Lasts
- Fit Sustainability into the Secondary Curriculum
- Investigate How Animals Are Impacted by Their Environment
- Listen and Understand with Sketchnoting
- Teach Caring for Country Using Fire
- Teach Indigenous Land Management Using Fire
- Teach the Big Picture of Sustainability
- Geography 101: Concepts, Part 1
- Maths U See Seminar
- Maths U See Seminar (2 Day)
- Testing 321 What Australian Schools Can Learn from Finland
- Maths Australia Webinar
- Governance Module 1: An introduction to Independent Schools
- Governance Module 2: Critical Priorities of the Board
- Governance Module 6: Risk Management
- Governance Module 9: Reputational Risk
- Governance Module 11: Financial Governance A
- Governance Module 12: Financial Governance B
- Preparing for Renewal of Registration in 2022
- School Registration Policy Requirements
- Primary Curriculum Requirements for School Registration.

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:

- How to Live and Work with Children
- Basic Study Manual
- Graduate of Study Technology
- Education Essentials
- *How to Make Good Choices* Moral Code Familiarisation
- How to Write a Checksheet Course.

The Athena School also has its own courses, based on the Hubbard Method Teacher Training. More information can be provided as needed.



Current staff:

Position	Name	NESA Accreditation # and Level	Formal qualifications, training and strengths	Length of service (prior experience where applicable)
Principal	Fiona Milne	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: 30 years teaching Prior: 17 years nursing
Prep Class Teacher	Bernie Nathanielsz	755266 Proficient Teacher	Bachelor of Teaching Associate Montessori International Diploma	Athena: 4 years teaching Prior: 20 years teaching
Prep Class Assistant/ Dep Principal	Sarah Carter		Montessori 3–6 Years Diploma	Athena: 2 years
Prep Class Assistant	Isabelle Munro			Athena: commenced 2021
Stage 1 Teacher	Sarah Matara	220893 Proficient Teacher	Bachelor of Arts (Hist/Pol) Masters Degree in Primary Education APS Youth Specialist Graduate APS Educators Course Graduate	Athena: 21 years teaching
Stage 1 Assistant	Viva Ma		Cert 3 Early Childhood Education Montessori 3–6 Years Diploma	Athena: 9 years Prior: 2 years
Stage 2 & 3 Teacher	Gina Graham	221387 Proficient Teacher	Bachelor of Arts APS Fundamentals of Instruction Graduate	Athena: 17 years teaching
Stage 2 & 3 Assistant	Sasa Gason		Bachelor of Information Management Post Bachelor Studies in Teaching	Athena: 8 years Prior: 2 years
High School Head Teacher	Andrea Parsons	260327 Proficient Teacher	Bachelor of Education (Secondary) APS Fundamentals of Instruction Graduate	Athena: 16 years teaching
High School Teacher in Training	Georgia Bellamy		Bachelor of Business Masters Degree in Primary Education (currently undertaking)	Athena: 2 years
High School Assistant	Kecia O'Sullivan		Study Technology Graduate	Athena: 3 years Prior: 10 years HR
Tutor/ Curriculum Consultant	Helen Dickenson	242605	Diploma Of Teaching (High School)	Athena: 29 years teaching
Quality Assurance Manager	Rose Evans		APS Basic Administration Training Graduate APS Fundamentals of Instruction Graduate APS Educators Course Graduate	Athena: 18 years
Quality Assurance Assistant	Jennifer Costello		Bachelor Degree in Social Studies Athena Reading Basics for Teachers Teaching Reading at Athena	Athena: 7 years
Business Manager	Tarne Dirou		Study Technology Graduate	Business: 31 years Accounts: 19 years
Office Manager	Fiona Gallop		Diploma in Business Management Certificate IV in Asset Maintenance	Athena: 4 years Prior: 22 years in Management
Bursar	Helen Klæbe		Bachelor of Arts (Archaeology) APS Administration Training Graduate	Athena: 21 years
Receptionist	Pharhyn Edwards		Basic Study Manual Graduate	Athena: 2 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 Pre-Kindergarten (for Australian Residents) and Kindergarten through to Year 10 (for Australian Residents and Overseas students).

The school is non-denominational, and students of any faith are accepted at the school.

Applications for enrolment may be made at any time by the parent/carer(s) of students to commence at The Athena School.

The Athena School will base any decision about offering a place to a student on:

- The student and family hold attitudes, values and priorities that are compatible with the School's ethos.
- The School's ability to meet the special needs or abilities of the student

The Athena School has absolute discretion in determining the weight of each of the factors it takes into account in determining whether to offer a place for the student.

Continued enrolment at the School is dependent upon the student making satisfactory academic progress, attending consistently, and the student and the parent/carer(s) observing all behavioural codes of conduct and other requirements of the School which are applicable from time to time.

Pre-enrolment

1. The enrolment application process is run by the Office Manager.
2. 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.)
3. The enrolment of a student follows the steps of the applicable Routing Form. These are the *New Student Enrolment Routing Form for Australian Residents and Non Residents* and the *New Overseas Student Enrolment Routing Form for Overseas Students*.
4. If possible, have the student and their parents/ nominated suitable relative attend the school for a tour.
5. 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.
6. The student must have a fully filled out and signed application form. The overseas students must also have signed their *Letter of Offer*.
 7. For non-resident students: 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.
 8. For non-resident students: 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

9. 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.)
10. 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.
11. 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.
 12. Inform the applicant of the outcome – whether they have been accepted or not.
 13. 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.
 14. 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 Home Affairs for an overseas student visa.

Orientation

15. Upon arrival at the school, and in accordance with the *New Student Enrolment Routing Form/New OS Student Enrolment 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.
16. 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.

17. The student is to be sold a school uniform.

Non-commencement, deferral, cancellation

18. 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.

A copy of the school's *Enrolment Policy* is available from our website, or a copy can be obtained from Reception in the Office.

Executive: 3.8 Enrolment Policy
Approved by Executive Council & Board of Directors,
The Athena School



Student welfare

Child protection

The primary 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 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.

Our *Child Protection Policy* is available on our website or a copy can be obtained from Reception in the School Office.

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* booklet 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 *Make Good Choices* precept No. 6, *Set a Good Example*, by knowing and following the school rules and all 21 precepts of *How to Make Good Choices*.

Copies of *Athena School Rules* and *Athena School Staff Code of Conduct* are available on our website or a copy can be obtained from Reception in the School Office.

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 *Athena School Rules*. Additionally, each staff member is required to study and understand the *Duty of Care Information Sheet*.

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.

A copy of our *Security of Students and Staff Policy* is available on our website or a copy can be obtained from Reception in the School Office.

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 Deputy Principal. The communication line then follows up the chain of command to the Principal or the Business Manager.

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

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 at all times from Reception in the school office.

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.

Our *Complaints and Appeals Process Policy* is available on our website or a copy can be obtained from Reception in the School Office.

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.

A copy of our *Pastoral Care and Discipline Policy* is available on our website or a copy can be obtained from Reception in the School Office.

Executive Directive: 3.6 Student welfare
Approved by Executive Council, The Athena School



Attendance

The Athena School 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 NSW Department of Education. All steps taken by the school to resolve the situation should be recorded in the student's IEP file.

A copy of *Attendance Policy* is available on our website, or a copy can be obtained from Reception in the School Office.

Executive: 3.8 Attendance

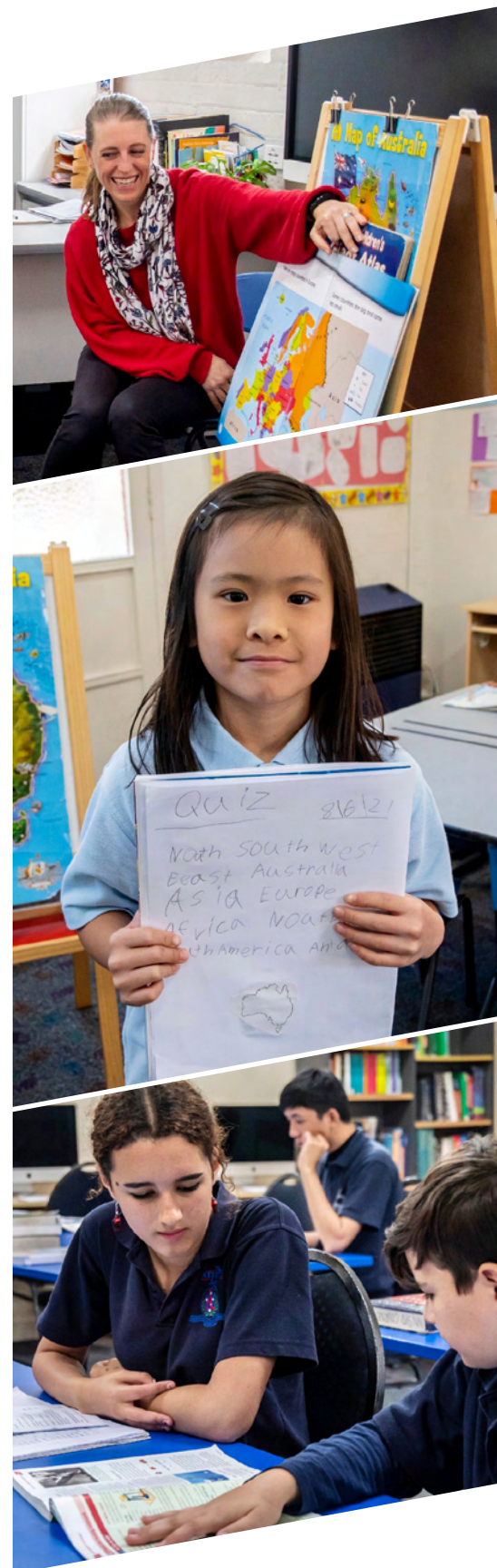
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Athena student attendance rate 2021

	Whole School	Y K-2	Y 3-6	Y 7-10
Semester 1	92%	91%	91%	94%
Term 3	School attendance data for Term 3 2021 has not been published due to extensive COVID-19 related disruptions during this period for a number of jurisdictions.			

NOTE:

2021 attendance data in NSW is not comparable with previous years' due to changes to the attendance calculations, to align with ACARA's revised 2020 National Standards for student attendance data reporting. Although there was no state-wide lockdown in Semester 1 2021, COVID-19 had some impact on attendance rates.



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 School Office.

Bullying and Harassment

The Athena School is committed to the development of our workplace as an educational community which acknowledges the intrinsic dignity and value of all people, and which promotes behaviors reflective of the recognition of that dignity and value in our school. We are therefore committed to uphold the laws regarding discrimination, harassment and bullying. We are committed to ensuring that procedures are in place to address any violations of these laws.

Discrimination, harassment or bullying within The Athena School will not be tolerated under any circumstances. In keeping with our philosophy, when discrimination, bullying or harassment does occur, either through thoughtlessness or intentionally, we will endeavor to initiate effective procedures based on the principles of natural justice to provide

a satisfactory resolution for the complainant. This process will strive to recognise individual rights and enable all parties to keep their sense of self-worth.

Copies of our *Policy Regarding Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying* and the *Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Statement* can be found on our website or obtained from Reception in the School Office.

Illness

A student should not attend school if they have a fever or illness of any description and should not return to School until they are well.

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 a qualified First Aider 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 and any valid Public Health Orders must be activated immediately. Parents of un-immunised children should be informed and advised to keep their children at home until the situation has resolved.

A copy of the *Infectious Diseases Policy* can be obtained from Reception in the School Office.



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.

A copy of the *Health and Distribution of Medication Policy* can be obtained from Reception in the School Office.

Serious incidents and emergencies

Serious incidents and emergencies are to be handled per the policy *Serious Incident Reporting*. Copies of *Incident Reporting Policy*, *Procedure for Handling* and *Incident and Procedure for Critical Incidents* are available from Reception in the School Office.

Homework

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

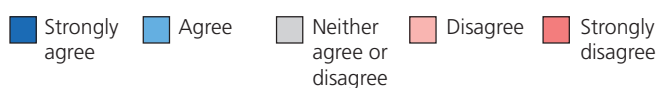
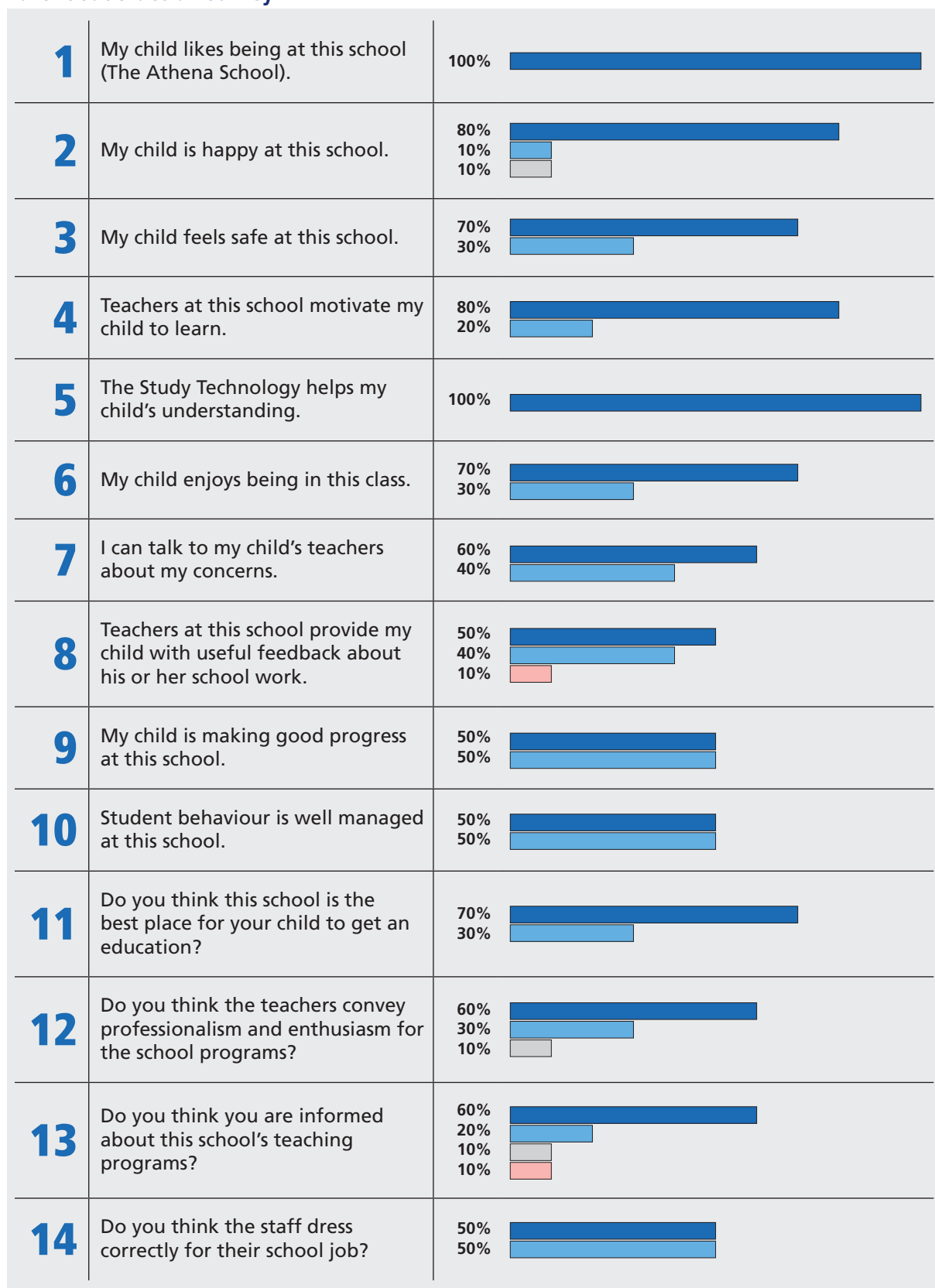
Executive: 3.6.2 Pastoral care

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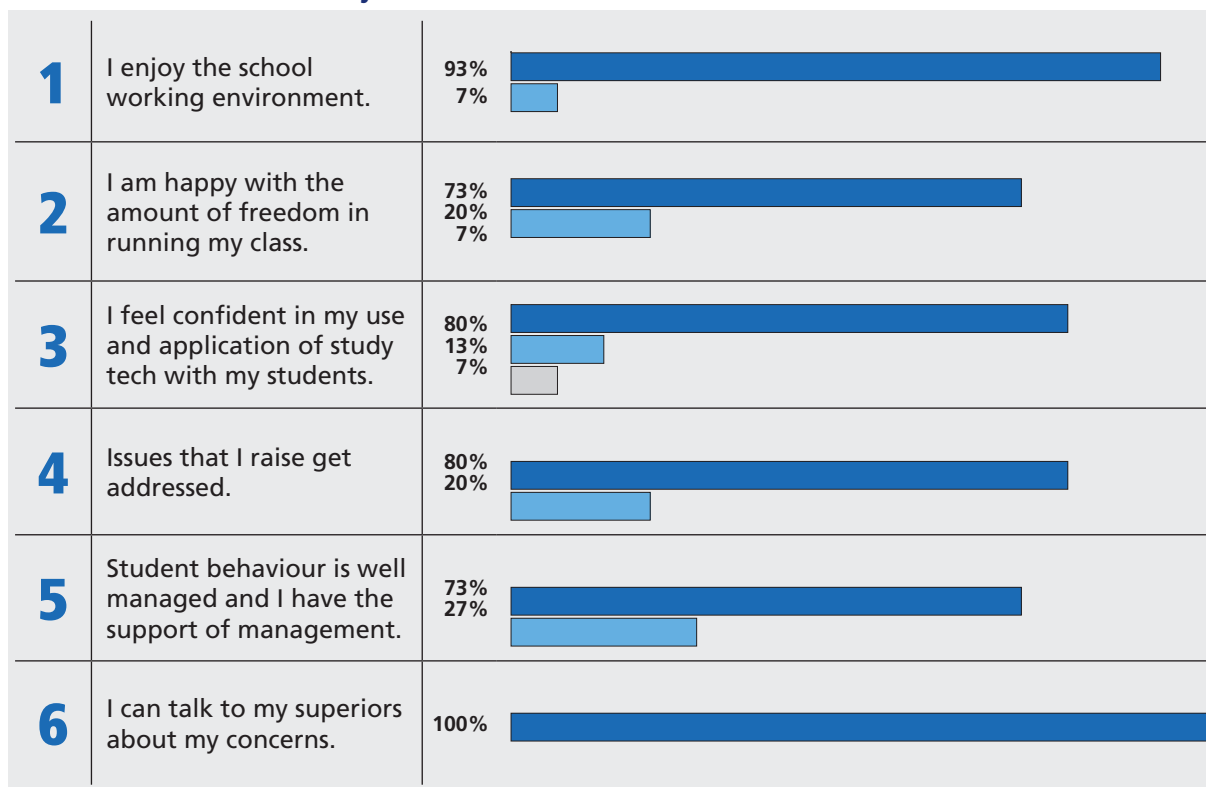


Surveys

Parent satisfaction survey

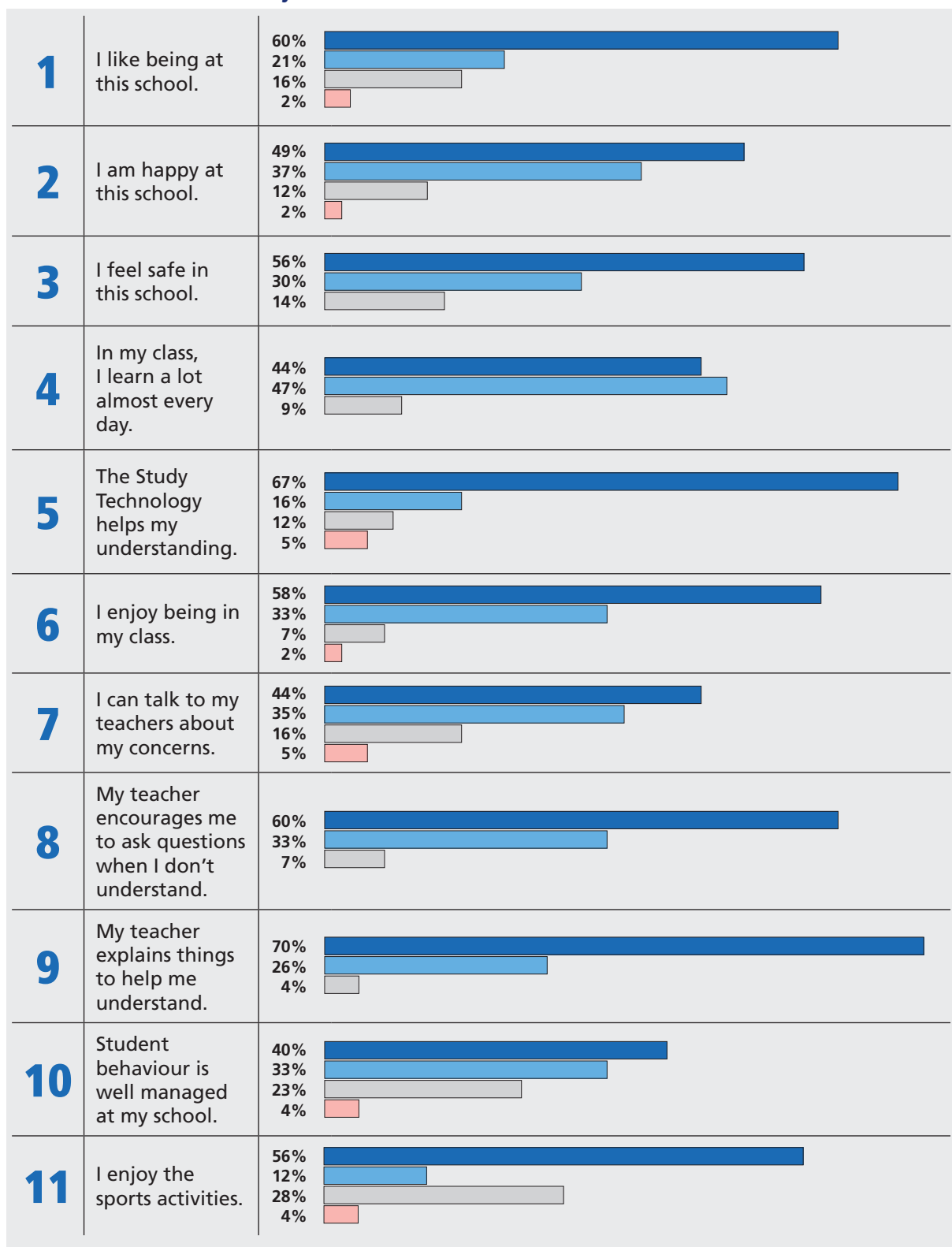


Teacher satisfaction survey



- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

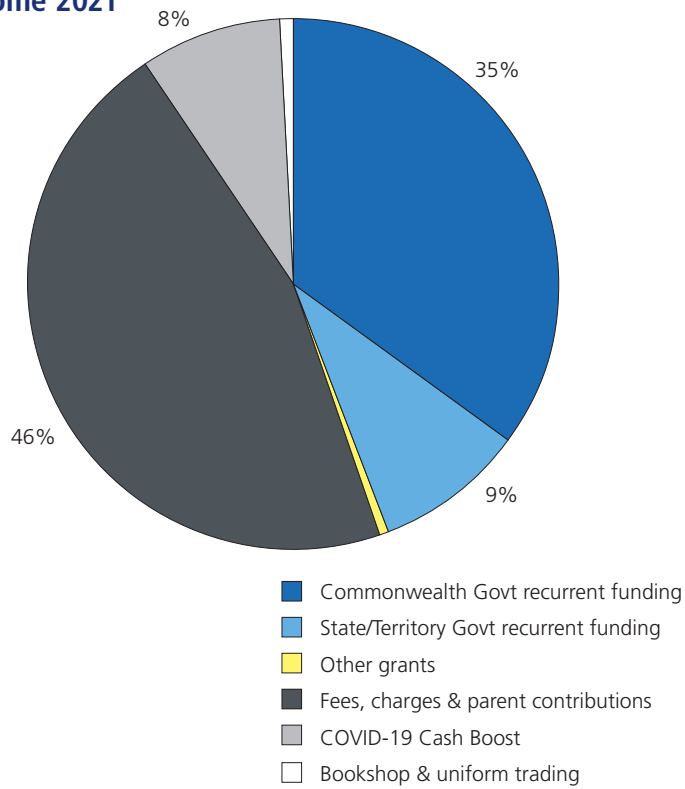
Student satisfaction survey



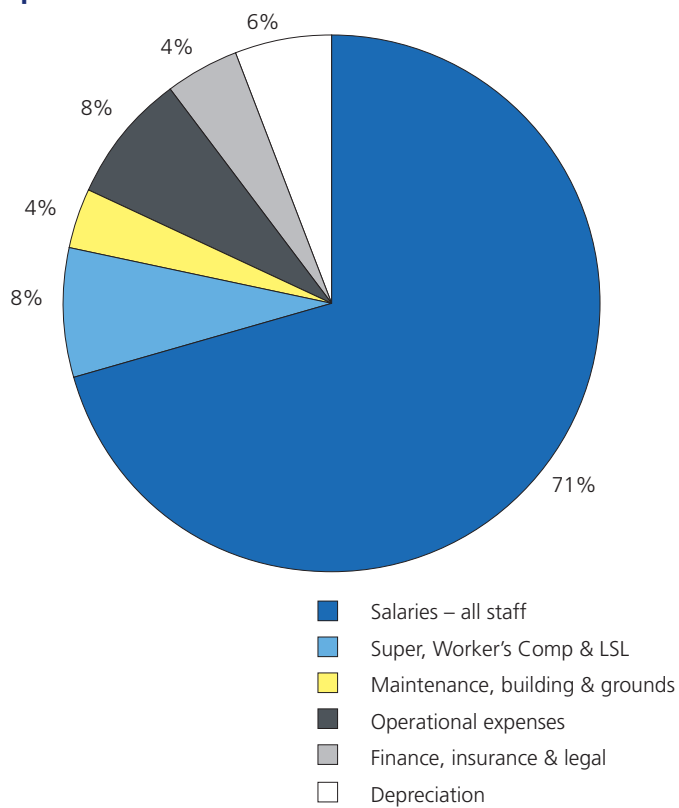
■ Strongly agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Neither agree or disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree

Financial overview

Income 2021

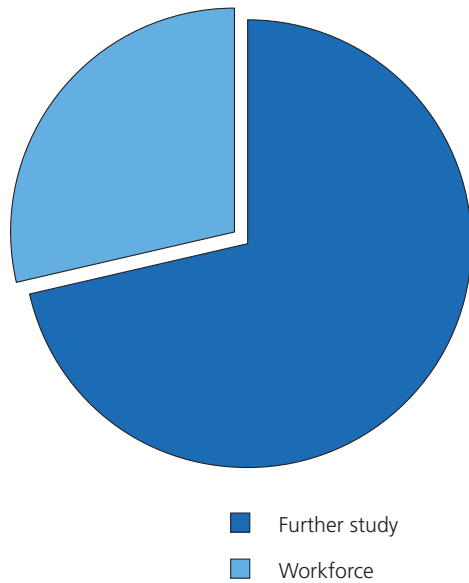


Expenditure 2021



Where are they now?

Post-school destinations 2021



71% of students leaving Athena at the end of 2021 went on to further education.

29% of students leaving Athena at the end of 2021 went on to pursue full-time employment.





In loving memory of
Fiona Milne

Our beloved Principal and friend Fi Milne passed away on March 14, 2022,
following a short battle with aggressive cancer.

Fi began her very long association with the school in the 1990's and dedicated most of her working life to Athena. Commencing as Principal in 2008 and leading until the end, she embodied the ethos of Athena: *Persistence, Integrity and Understanding* – she lived by these tenets and demonstrated them every day in her life.

Fi's willingness to seek out goals and help her students achieve them was legendary. She was always available for a chat and ready to assist, and always had just the right piece of advice to be shared when needed. The number of students who would pop in to say 'hi' or help Fi with a project or odd job was vast. The number of students who later in life still mention Fi and the impact she had on them is extraordinary. She truly was an incredible person with an enormous heart.

Fi's was a life well lived. She did what she intended to do, which was to help people. The 100's of messages from all over the world, that Fi received on the announcement of her intended retirement, were full of thanks and gratitude for the impact she had on each person's life.

Fi will be greatly missed but her legacy will be carried forward at Athena,
and we will all endeavor to continue her amazing work.

