Pymble Turramurra Pre School

Presidents Report

Annual General Meeting 6th March 2024

To my fellow Members,

2023 was an excellent year for the Pre-School. With our staff ably lead by Tori Dyson, in her second year as Director, 2023 was a year of **stability** and a year of strengthening our sense of **community** and **connection**, after the disruption and challenges of the Covid years prior.

There is something special about Handley Avenue. It’s intangible… the ‘Handley Spirit’. The sense of community and connection that has been built over more than 60 years. A spirit and connection that lasts well beyond your and your child’s years attending the Pre-School.

In discharging its duties, the 2023 Board focused on good governance, remaining a great workplace to retain and attract high quality educators and continuing to evolve our service to meet the needs of our community.

Notable results over the last year include:

* 1. **‘Exceeding’ the National Quality Standard** – On the back of a huge effort by Tori and staff in updating and evolving our policies and procedures, over 2022 and 2023, and continuing to deliver the high quality service and reputation for which Handley is known, in late 2023 we were recognised by the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority as ‘Exceeding’ National Quality Standards. Congratulations Tori and team!
  2. **Continue the digitisation of how we operate and communicate with members** – including digital sign in and sign off procedures and use of Storypark to better communicate with parents and carers. The new payroll and education support services we implemented in 2022 improved our operational framework too.
  3. **Researched the service levels and staffing conditions of other Community Based Pre-Schools in the area** – which showed we continue to offer a high quality and well staffed service with high(er) staff to children ratios. The Board remains conscious of the ‘war for talent’ in Early Education – with a lack of supply of early educators and evidence of early educators being lured into the primary education system and other sectors – we focused on what we can do to continue to be an ‘employer of choice’ for high quality early educators.
  4. **Continue to deliver our finances prudently**: Subject to it not impacting the high standard of our service to the kids, the Board, supported by Tori, have taken responsible steps to keep costs in control notwithstanding the impact of inflation and, where possible, apply for grants to supplement our revenue and improve the natural environment of the Pre-School.
  5. **A successful Fete and Social Events calendar**.

I would like to express a big ‘Thank you’ to:

1. **The Staff**. On behalf of the almost 90 families in our membership, I would like to express a huge amount of gratitude and thanks to the staff… Our Staff are the Pre-School’s biggest asset. It is widely accepted that the first five years of a child’s life is an important developmental stage for their long term well-being and life potential. The educators and staff at Handley Avenue play a significant role in shaping our kids lives for the better. I would like to formally thank Tori Dyson, Paula Harris, Elisha Love, Allison Johnson, Teela Mah, Nicole Droder, Tanya Kirkham, Steph Morrell, Eumi Cho, Kirsten Bennett, Michelle Johnson, Jill Jones, Tegan Chan, Sheryll Flores and Emilie Stewart. Know that you, and your positive influence, will live long in the hearts and minds of our Handley kids and families as they stride through life.
2. **The Retiring Board**: The nine members of the 2023 Board held seven Board Meetings since the last AGM and several sub-committee meetings and staff reviews throughout the year. I’d like to acknowledge and thank the 2023 Board members:
   * 1. Vice President – Alex Kinsey
     2. Secretary – Amanda Wheatley
     3. Social Committee Chair – Kate Johns
     4. Treasurer – Inna Van
     5. IT member – Guy Morrow
     6. General member – Sofie Bachelor
     7. General Member – Ali Hovey
     8. General Member – Aruj Anand

In particular, I would like to acknowledge and thank the Social Committee Chair, Kate Johns and the broader Social Committee for driving such a successful Fete and social events program.

I would also like to thank, Alex Kinsey, who was a very engaged and supportive Vice President who made my role a lot easier and did numerous things behind the scenes for the benefit of staff, member families and grant applications. Thank you.

1. **Class parents:** Thank you to the 2023 Class Parents for stepping up and helping foster the ‘Handley Spirit’ and making the most of our connection and sense of community. Thanks also to those parents who helped throughout the year, whether that be helping set up and pack up the various social events like the Disco or Walkathon, contributing to and volunteering time at the Fete (a compulsory obligation), making yourself available to staff to help in class room reading or empathetically wrapping a collective hug around the shoulders of member families going through some tough times.

Not having had a child at Handley Avenue in 2023, it was clear to me that, whilst the Board of Management plays an important part to ensure the Pre-School operates sustainably for the community, the Board of Management, in my opinion, is ***not*** as important as the collective and individual contribution of each of the 90 households of parents and carers in each years membership. It is the involvement of parents and carers from each of the 90 households that makes the difference between the Pre-School having a **good** or a **great** year. I encourage the new and returning Parents to consciously invest of yourself in this community, as much as you can, to make the coming year a rewarding and successful one for you and your family…. and to help keep the ‘Handley Spirit’ alive.

Thank you,

Angus Dockrill

President, Board of Management,

Pymble-Turramurra Pre School Inc.