



The
ATHENA
SCHOOL

+

ATHENA
MONTESORI
EARLY EDUCATION

2023 Athena School
Annual 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 of Athena,

This year has been a big learning curve for me personally. I have had the opportunity to participate in The Association of Independent Schools 'Principal Induction Program'. Through my role, I can help staff continue to develop their own teaching capabilities, and through our specific training program (which is quite extensive) I have been guiding the staff to do so. This is of great benefit also to our students and their educational journey. I am looking forward to getting all the teachers through this training program.

As part of our Athena teacher development, we also had the pleasure of having the wonderful Zelia from Timor-Leste come for training and apprenticing with us – she intends to open an Athena School in Timor. Very exciting times, we look forward to seeing the opening of The Athena School Timor-Leste!

At Athena, we prioritise real life learning and this involves getting out into the real world to experience it first-hand – with the recent purchase of our new school buses this year this has become even more possible. Our students have enjoyed trips to see plays, to wander through museums, engage in science activities, go on historical tours, play vigorous sports, swim in the ocean, ski down mountains, and many other activities where they got to put their learning to practice. These excursions and activities really bring learning to life, and we plan to continue exploring in 2024.

One of the unique aspects of The Athena School is our Quality Assurance Department. When the student arrives, we do an interview to establish the student's view of school in general and any difficulties they may be experiencing. We then test the student's Word Recognition Age, Comprehension, Spelling, Grammar, Written Expression and Maths. Based on these test results we formulate a program, if needed, to address any gaps in the student's appropriate curriculum knowledge, and this is incorporated into their IEP (Individual Education Program). They are helped with this program by their teacher and/or Quality Assurance staff. As the student moves through their IEP, many of the units of work include exams, which are done in the Quality Assurance Department. Any needed correction is done, so that the student has full understanding of what they have studied before they move onto the next unit of work. This system allows our students to work at their own pace and take the time to fully comprehend and master any subject.

I am proud to have had the opportunity to lead Athena for another year – as a past student myself, it brings me so much joy and honour. I look forward to yet another year of teaching all the students and staff at the Athena School – both the curriculum and our motto 'Persistence, Integrity and Understanding'.

Let's continue to rise to greater heights together!

Yours sincerely,

*Sarah Matara
Principal*

Chairman's report

2023 was a great year here at Athena. Full of activities, work, fun and good cheer – a fruitful year was enjoyed by our students and staff and many achievements and goals were realised.

Our beautiful school premises got some overdue attention this year with the external repair and repainting of the Baltic Street building. This has been in the pipeline for a few years (whilst we finalised the raising of funds for the project) and was finally completed at the end of 2023. The workmanship of Dial a Painter, who undertook the mammoth job, was fantastic and we are very pleased this stunning old building is back to its beautiful best.

With the success of the Baltic Street building restoration, plans were initiated for further maintenance works to be completed in 2024 – including the painting of our high school classroom, and other repairs that will contribute to the beauty and preservation of this historic site.

Following the appointment of Sarah as our Principal last year, she has been hard at work in taking over the reins in every facet of her new position. Sarah completed the Principal Induction Program through the Association of Independent Schools in 2023 to assist her in this endeavour. As set out in the AIS's description of the program, this program 'seeks to build the professional skills and personal leadership capabilities of principals in their early years. This

program has been designed to meet the most pressing challenges encountered in the role as well as to enable participants to envision and lead emerging futures for their school.' Sarah is exceeding expectations in her role and the Board is very happy to have her as The Athena School Principal.

Thank you to all the volunteers and parents and caregivers who make our school such a fabulous community. Your participation in the teamwork involved in teaching a child is greatly appreciated, as is our community's participation in all our events, excursions, fundraising activities and in the general camaraderie we experience here. It is all of us together that make this school the amazing gem that it is!

A huge thanks also to all our staff who work tirelessly to ensure our students are doing well in their studies. Our teachers are all dedicated, hardworking, professional people and we greatly appreciate them!

Looking forward to 2024, the Board will be pushing forward with our plans for even more maintenance for our buildings and site; while our Principal, Sarah, continues to nurture, support and assist our teachers and staff to deliver the excellent education Athena endeavours to give. At the end of the day, it's all about our students, and all of us thoroughly take pride in helping and watching them achieve their goals.

Yours sincerely,

Tarne Dirou
Board Chairman



Board of Directors

Athena School Board of Directors

Name	Role	Qualifications/ Experience
Tarne Dirou	Chairman	Project Management, 33 years Business experience, 21 years Accounts experience.
Wayne Byrne	Treasurer	Accountant – 46 years. Technical Writer, Business experience.
Diane Gilbert	Secretary	12 years at Athena – establishment and enrolments, 15 years Executive Director, 19 years Accounts, Marketing/Internet.
Kim Fitzgerald	Public Officer	Accounts experience – 36 years. Past Chairman P&F, past Chairman of Board.
Michael Gordon	Ordinary Member	11 years Bookkeeper/Accountant, 21 years board experience with not-for-profit organisations.
Daniel Milne	Ordinary Member	Qualified Financial Planner, Partner of Financial Planning, Property Advice, Mortgage Brokering, Accounting and Business Consulting.
Sarah Matara	Principal	Bachelor Of Arts (Hist/Pol), Masters Degree In Primary Education Aps Youth Specialist Graduate, Aps Educators Course Graduate 22 Years Teaching Experience



Parents & Friends Committee

Message from the Chairman

There were many great things done by our P&F in 2023, with many long-term plans achieved and a huge involvement from our High School class.

Many of our fundraising activities received stellar support from our community with much needed funds raised through our Easter Raffle, Jogathon and the Christmas Raffle.

Our High School Class assisted with many of our raffles and events this year, as well as running some of their own fundraising activities such as: Discos, Cake Stalls, and the very popular Mother's Day Stall. The students also raised funds through some of their class activities where they had to design, make and sell marketable products in our Tuck Shop. The entire school enjoyed their efforts with some very delicious treats such as: Muffins, Brazilian Cheese Balls, Protein Balls, and other healthy snacks on offer. All proceeds of their fundraising went towards the High School's annual ski trip.

Through the P&F efforts, we were able to finally purchase two new school buses! This is something we have wanted for a number of years and since purchasing these, we have been making good use of the buses with plenty of excursions and outings. Other purchases made in 2023 included new computers, and a new interactive whiteboard for our 3-6 classroom.

Thank you to all our staff, families and students who have contributed to our P&F this year. Our community support is very much appreciated, and we greatly enjoy getting everyone involved in school activities.

Yours sincerely,

Tarne Dirou
Acting P & F Chairman



P&F fundraising items for 2023

Income	
Raffles	\$3,055.70
Snow trip	\$10,360.70
Jogathon	\$10,280.80
Misc – Cake stall/Disco	\$2,261.55
Tuckshop	\$11,513.02
Total income	\$37,471.77

Expenses	
Snow trip	\$16,421.84
Jogathon	\$883.43
Tuckshop	\$4,465.04
Computers/Smartboard	\$9,992.99
Buses	\$13,000.00
Bank charges	\$120.00
Total expenses	\$44,883.30

Profit/loss	-\$7,411.53
Carried over from 2022	\$28,234.84
Bank balance as at 31/12/23	\$20,823.31
Outstanding deposits	\$195.5
Carried over to 2024	\$21,018.81

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>



The Athena School NAPLAN results for 2023

	Reading		Writing		Spelling		Grammar		Numeracy	
Year 3	430	Sim 416 All 405	418	Sim 419 All 416	457	Sim 441 All 404	422	Sim 423 All 411	402	Sim 412 All 407
Year 5	No results shown due to privacy reasons									
Year 7	No results shown due to privacy reasons									
Year 9	No results shown due to privacy reasons									

Sim = Similar Schools All = All Australian Students

NAPLAN participation for this school is 94%

NAPLAN participation for all Australian students is 95%

Note: A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate for a comparison to be available. Grey shading indicates participation did not meet these thresholds.

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; or Clean up Australia Day, where our students get out and actively clean up areas in our community.

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



Key targets and objectives

Providing a nurturing environment that enables us to service our students, by ensuring that we have the delivery resources and facilities to ensure that every student is happy and well on the way to obtaining the educational tools to competently pursue their goals in life.

Target	What needs to be done?
Lead and manage change so that we build the culture we aspire to and stay true to purpose.	<p>Continue to build a safe and supportive environment for all members of the community, increasing awareness and confidence for all.</p> <p>Maintain emphasis on professional development of staff to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness.</p> <p>Develop digital spaces to enhance learning, communication and day-to-day operations.</p>
Ensuring that LRH Educational technology is in full use within the school, resulting in every student developing a love of learning in full.	<p>Continue to develop literacy and numeracy growth providing students with the confidence to learn and apply their learning.</p> <p>Utilise their confidence to develop independence, strong leadership skills and an inherent care for others within the school community.</p> <p>All staff across the school using the LRH Educational technology and utilising all resources to achieve this.</p>
Grow interdependent relationships across the school and wider community.	<p>Continue to build links with other schools and learning organisations.</p> <p>Connect parents and carers into a strong group working for the well-being of students and the community.</p>
Enhance the branding of the school.	<p>Utilising the school community, continue to work at improving the school facilities and appearance through regular inspections and planned maintenance and upgrades.</p> <p>Review and further develop Building & Landscaping Plans and target them out.</p>
Develop further successful marketing and PR programs resulting in increased enquires and ultimately enrolments.	<p>Continued promotion out in the form of email, Facebook campaigns and billboard.</p> <p>Utilise existing parents and friends to find and cultivate referrals.</p>
Re-brand existing resources for export and get them being exported.	Reformatting all existing courses and ensuring they are properly used when exported.



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 NESAC Standards of Competency. 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.

External professional development

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

- Teachers Network Meetings
- AIS Principal's Induction Program
- AIS Governance Module 1: Into to Independent Schools.
- Maths U See Webinar 'Maths for Everyone'
- Asthma Online Training
- Anaphylaxis online
- First Aid and CPR Training
- School Governance Module 7: Child Protection
- Live Life Well @ School: Starting the Journey
- Webinar: From Struggles to Success – Transforming Reading Culture in your Classroom
- Montessori International Congress (Thailand) – The Universal Child
- Montessori National Conference – Transforming the Adult
- Masters of Teaching (in progress).

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. The Athena School also has its own courses, based on the Hubbard Method Teacher Training. More information can be provided as needed. 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
- Educator's Course
- Reading Basics for Teachers
- Learning How to Learn
- Teaching Reading at Athena
- Teaching Handwriting
- Communication Course
- Grammar and Communication
- How to Write a Checksheet
- Effective Teaching Course
- Fundamentals of Instruction.



Workforce composition

The Athena workforce is made up of teachers with tertiary education, Montessori qualifications, teachers assistants, support staff, administrative and operational staff.

School staff	Number of individuals	Full-time equivalent
Teaching staff	7	6.2
Teaching support staff / Assistants	8	5.8
Non-teaching staff	5	3.4
Total	20	15.4

Teacher accreditation and qualifications

All teachers require active accreditation with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) to teach in any school. The above reflects the details of accreditation levels for staff responsible for delivering the curriculum.

Level of accreditation	Number of staff
Conditional	1
Provisional	0
Proficient	6
Highly Accomplished Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
Lead Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
Total number of teachers	7



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 following:

- The student and family hold attitudes, values and priorities that are compatible with the School's ethos.
- The School has the 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 to 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 monitors 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

Approved by Executive Council, The Athena School

Athena student attendance rate 2023

	Whole School	Y K-2	Y 3-6	Y 7-10
Semester 1	88%	86%	90%	89%
Term 3	90%	87%	95%	87%



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

Approved by the Executive Council & Board of Directors, The Athena School Limited



Surveys

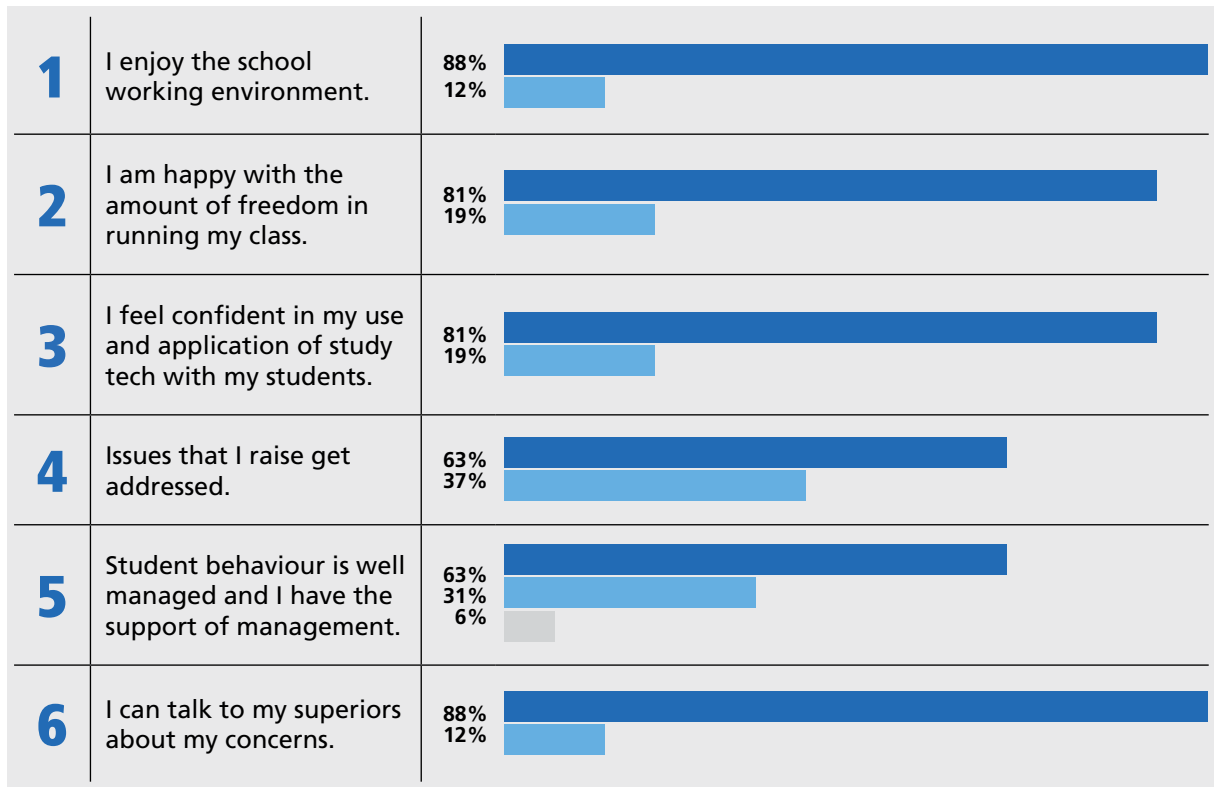
Parent satisfaction survey

1	I am happy with my child's progress at Athena.	80% 13% 6%	
2	I am happy with the facilities and resources provided to my child at Athena.	80% 13% 6%	
3	My child is in a safe environment at Athena.	86% 6% 6%	
4	I can talk to the staff about any concerns I have.	80% 6% 13%	
5	I observe that my child enjoys school.	67% 33%	
6	The staff are professional.	80% 20%	

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



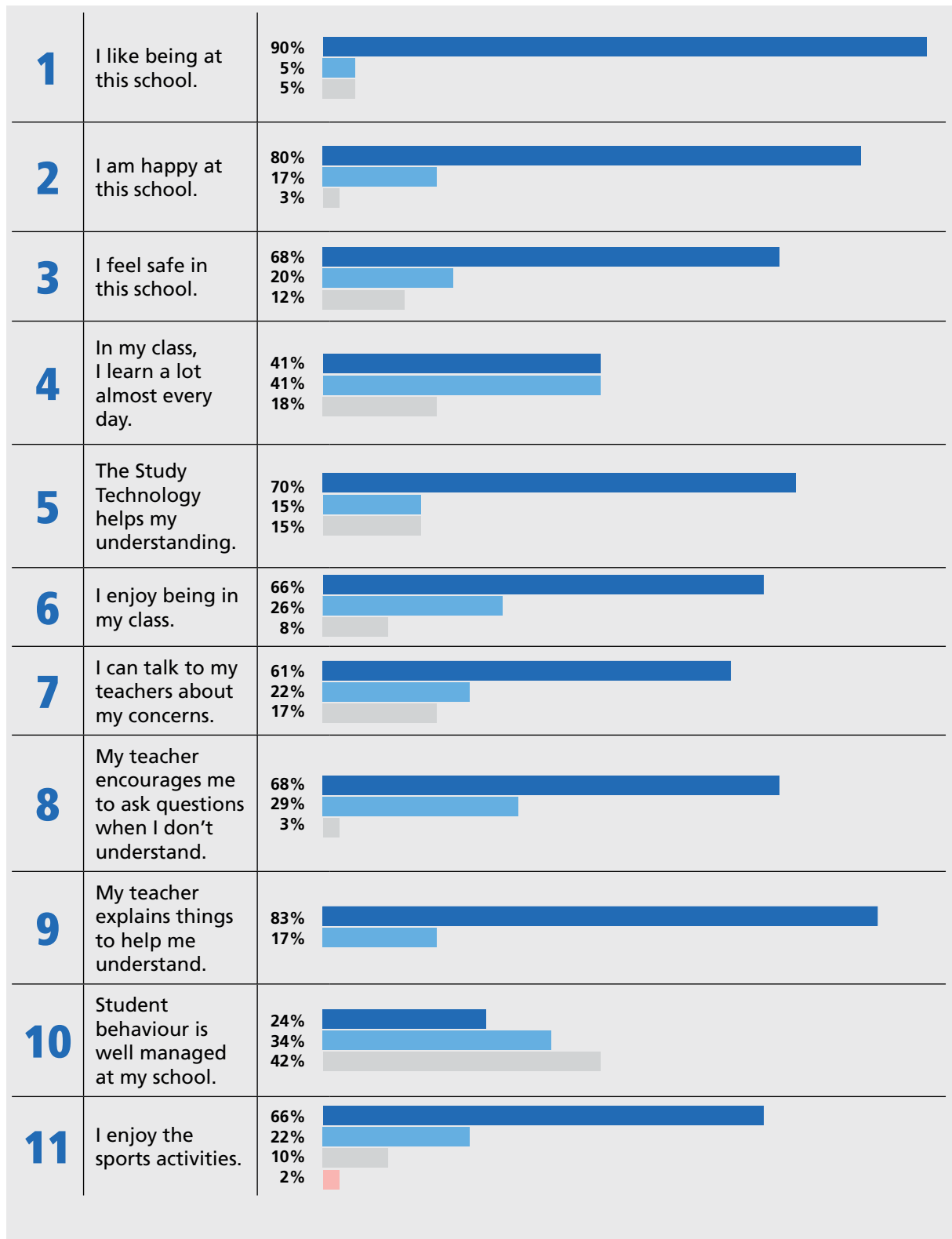
Teacher satisfaction survey



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



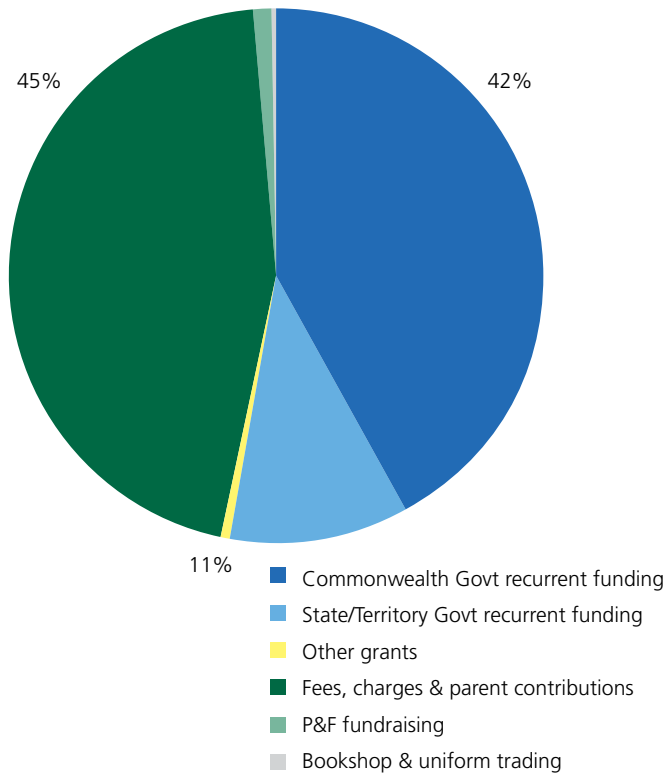
Student satisfaction survey



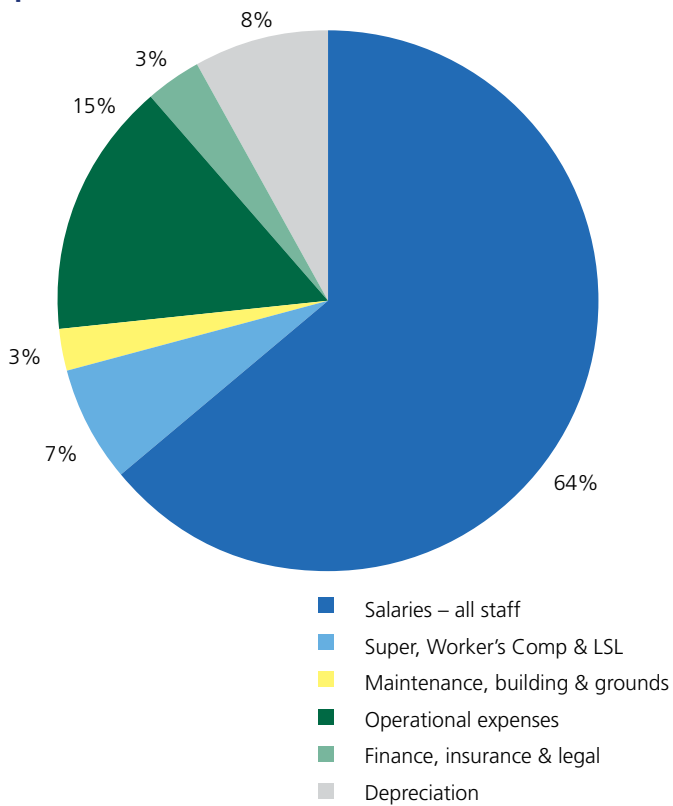
■ Strongly agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Neither agree or disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree

Financial overview

Income 2023

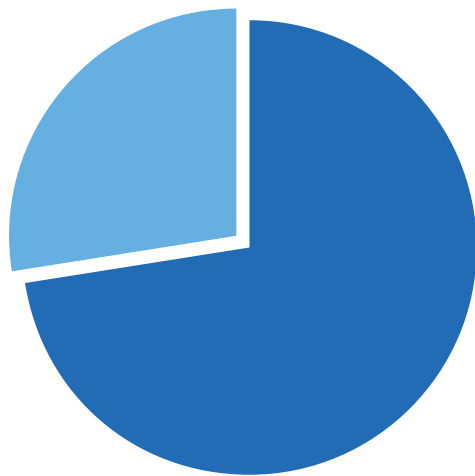


Expenditure 2023



Where are they now?

Post-school destinations 2023



- Further study
- Workforce

73% of students leaving Athena at the end of 2023 went on to further education.

27% of students leaving Athena at the end of 2023 went on to pursue full-time employment.





PERSISTENCE ★ INTEGRITY ★ UNDERSTANDING