



kinma

Inspiring a passion for learning, for life

PRIMARY • PRESCHOOL • PLAYGROUP

Kinma Core and Guiding Principles at Kinma we:

1. strive for each child to achieve his or her full academic, physical, and social potential in a supportive stimulating learning environment
2. develop an educational program which is child-centered, innovative and based on an understanding of child development
3. respect the individuality of the child
4. foster self-determination in the child
5. develop the child's exploration, critical thinking and creative abilities
6. stress co-operation rather than competition
7. emphasise active involvement in a wide range of learning situations
8. utilise the resources of our bush environment and the community
9. maintain high academic standards
10. are non-denominational and co-educational, with small, flexible multi age groups and no uniforms
11. support the emotional wellbeing of children and teachers and abstain from corporal punishment and other coercive and manipulative approaches
12. conduct individual assessments and not competitive exams
13. respect and safeguard the professional status of teachers
14. strive for co-operation amongst teachers, other educators, parents, and children and provide regular educational and social opportunities for close relationships amongst them to be formed, including the involvement of parents in aspects of the day to day work of the school
15. allow pupil participation in the affairs of the school and encourage their involvement in the community outside the school
16. apply the latest findings from education, psychology and related fields to improve teaching and learning within the school.
17. stimulate public interest in education in general, especially modern approaches to learning. In doing this, Kinma acts as a demonstration centre from which educational practices and innovations may diffuse to other schools.

A message from key school bodies

Chairman's Report 2017

Dear parents and families,

This will be my final Annual General Meeting (AGM) as a director on the Kinma Board. I have been on the Board since 2014, the last year as Chairman, and for most of my tenure I've also served on the Education Committee.

I can honestly say that I've really enjoyed the last four years. I've had the opportunity to participate in engaging - and often inspiring - discussions about the school's direction and philosophy, and to see first-hand the inner workings of the school. I feel privileged to have had the experience, and it's also been a genuine pleasure working with the other Board members, all of whom approach their task with such a love for the Kinma way! I would like to take this opportunity to thank the other Board members for all of their efforts in overseeing the school's governance and operations.

But if it's the end of an era for me, I can't help feeling that it's the beginning of a new era for the school. As you all know, the stand-out achievement of the last year has been the construction of the new classroom. This is an amazing accomplishment, completed over a very short period of time - and I want to give an extra special thanks to Julie Carr. On top of the myriad other things she does, somehow she managed to drive the whole project, seeing it through to fruition with great efficiency and with minimal disruption to the normal rhythms and routines of Kinma life.

The new classroom also represents the culmination of a long-range strategic plan dating back to 1999. That was when the then Board came up with its 20-year plan for Kinma. The plan included a list of major capital works projects - including new buildings for the preschool, a new admin/library building, a new hall and a new classroom. Back then, it must surely have seemed outrageously ambitious.

Fast forward 19 years, and the school has now achieved everything on that crazy wishlist!

And that's why I say this is the beginning of a new era for Kinma. With its new classroom - completing the circle of buildings envisioned 19 years ago - and record student numbers, I believe that the school is poised on the threshold of a wonderful new phase in its existence - one which will invite all sorts of opportunities to nourish and enrich our community ever more deeply, and perhaps even to engage more directly and proactively with some of the broader debates about education that are going on out there in the world. Sitting on the Education Committee, and hearing about some of the cutting-edge research into education, it's amazing to me how often the models being recommended are precisely the ones that Kinma puts into practice every day. So maybe - just maybe - it's time to spread the word even more than we have before!

That of course is just my personal view. Where the school goes from here will be up to you and your elected Boards. However, the current Board has already made significant headway, inasmuch as it has just recently finalised a high-level vision for the school's direction over the next few years. Nothing is set in stone - future Boards will want to - and indeed be expected to - make up their own minds about the school's direction. However, one can't start a journey unless one establishes a

starting point, and so at the very least the current Board's vision will give us a framework to guide our efforts and harness our energies into that bright new future I feel sure awaits Kinma.

I've already thanked Julie for her amazing efforts as the school's manager - but there are other people to thank as well.

I want to thank Claire Hickson and the other members of the school's admin team - they all did a truly outstanding job in meeting Kinma's day-to-day operational requirements and keeping the school running smoothly. I would also like to thank Shaun Luttrell for once again doing such a great job as Treasurer.

And I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all of the teachers in preschool and primary - you really are the heart and soul of Kinma, and it's your commitment and energy that provide our children with such a beautiful, unique and stimulating environment in which to grow and learn and fulfil their potential.

Last but not least - a word about the AGM. The AGM is enshrined in our Constitution and is an important feature of our democratically elected and parent led school. It involves the Board reporting to community members about the school's activities and finances for the previous year and allowing time for members to ask questions, and also to confirm the directors for the coming year.

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM and will be more than happy to listen to your thoughts and answer any of your questions

Jonathan Kelt
Chairman

Education Committee 2017

The year commenced with the community standing hand in hand around the core of the Primary, as it does every year; a ritual, a rhythm, one of many, with which children are familiar, which grounds them in the culture that has grown to be Kinma. Intentions for the year ahead. The circle as we watch has grown strong, and still pliable, but strong. What a delight for our community. Also the joy of Preschool staff and children joining the circle has been strengthening and deepening our connections.

Classrooms were set up and children and staff, or learners and learners, were in and out of the spaces creating a warm buzz throughout. Primary had their rituals with morning flow, book boxes, hoops and balls and many other starters. Preschool days unfolded gently and leisurely with children coming to their place to join their friends, big and small.

Amongst our days of classroom learning in 2017 we added extra spice with:

New chickens	Yurt farm	Bush walking	Swimming
Orienteering	NSW Art Gallery	Basketball	Yoga
Fizzics Science	Life Education	Musica viva	Riverside Theatre
Sculptures by the Sea	Group 3 camp	Martial arts	Visiting the Post office
Wild Life Gardens	New Leaf Nursery	Violin	Tinkering
Dog manners	Gardening	Theatre Sports	Preschool play

This is just a taste of our 2017 at Kinma.

2017 EDUCATIONAL STAFF ROLES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Each year the staff and Board prepare a report for the upcoming AGM. We look over the previous year’s happenings and then continue the story into the new year. For 2017 it is no different. We welcomed back Beatrice (Bea) who took on a newly created role within Kinma as an Education Specialist, to support students who could do with just that ‘little bit extra’. Sadly, we also farewelled the wonderful Grace, gentle Kimberley and the oh so amazing Holly! But we welcomed in Kate, Alley and Deepika who were finding their rhythm, making their own niches and somehow filling the spaces left behind. Children reacted warmly and engaged with our new staff, showing them the ropes. (As we write this report we are also rostering for Grace to return in the latter half of the year!) In Kinma Preschool, staffing remained constant which is such a beautiful bonus for the young children who have been dipping their toes into a world outside their homes!

2017 EDUCATIONAL POLICY REVIEWS

As an independent school and pre-school, Kinma is guided by a set of policies. To remain current, these policies must be periodically reviewed and updated. In 2017, the Education Committee, led by Juli G, embarked on a policy review process. When reviewing policy we look at how does this work in practice; how does it filter through to families and what key messages are we hoping to share. One area that we revisited and clarified a number of times was how do we effectively identify a child who requires academic support? How quickly do we intervene? How can we do it better and what stands in our way? Some other policies that were reviewed 2017 included: Home work Policy, Anti Bias Policy and Nutrition Policy. This review process is continuing into 2018.

Time was also spent reviewing the changes that have come into play with NEA (National Education Standards) as we gear up for our five yearly registration in 2019 from NSW Board of Studies. The last snippets of term 4 2017 provide a wonderful overview of the educational environment at Kinma... A violin concert features, as does the Kids Christmas Market with children made offerings and pre-loved stuff from homes. BUSHLINK Bushcare group are increasingly building a stronger relationship with our children; bushcare flows into lunch and soccer! Soccer per se flourishes in the school with children from all groups sharing the bottom field. Handball crazes continue at out-times as do all manner of imaginary games, drawing, reading and story writing. Bushwalks feature and foot dips in the creek as the weather heats up. Buddy reading and shared singing further serve to bring the children into a collective.

PARENT SURVEY OUTCOMES 2016-2017 – CHANGE HAPPENS FROM PARENT FEEDBACK

The most recent parent survey content and format was introduced late in 2016, so 2017 was its second year. An amazing 100% of primary parents answered the 2017 survey making it a comprehensive collection of views from throughout the parent community.

The Education Committee spent time reviewing the data of the 2017 survey in comparison to our 2016. It was pleasing to see that views collected from both years continued to show families have a strong sense of belonging within the community, and that they feel as though their voices are heard.

One of the areas that we identified for improvement was the way we support children at times when they are needing extra support academically. Following this, the Kinma Board agreed to employ a part-time teacher to give additional assistance within the primary classrooms. This has been working very well with Bea Heine in this role.

The survey allow us to monitor parents and children's experiences over time, and also enables us to capture views on particular matters - eg assessing interest in Kinma OSHC (after school care). Another successful implementation from family feedback was to support parents to know a little more of the 'how to' of teaching maths and literacy at Kinma. We held two learning forums in 2017 to take parents into the heart of maths and literacy classes at primary.

Over the next few years the survey will be invaluable to help us identify areas of strength and areas where some improvement is called for so we can keep ensuring Kinma achieves its educational vision. We really appreciate the time that everyone takes to complete the survey and hope this continues in 2018. This year will also see the launch of a pre-school survey designed specifically for pre-school and to meet ACECQA guidelines about feedback from the community.

Education Team
Kinma School

Contextual information about the School

Kinma community believes that education is a process of growth which continues throughout life. Therefore Kinma is not preparation for life, but the opportunity for children to discover life and the world within a safe and secure environment. Education is not the transmission of facts, but the development of understanding and thinking skills. Education at Kinma must reflect life, where learning is undertaken through the integration of specific disciplines, the use of concrete materials and real life experiences.

Children take an active role in their learning, while the teacher takes a role as facilitator providing opportunities for students to investigate at their own rate within their own learning style. Children are given the opportunity to bring their pre-existing knowledge, understanding and interests to their learning. In this way education becomes meaningful and purposeful to children. Responsibility for their own learning enables the development of self-discipline as children discover the consequences of their actions and develop their own limits for behaviour.

Kinma provides an environment which respects and nurtures the individuality of its members. It promotes an active, creative and generative movement for all its members. Kinma staff believe that children have an innate desire to learn. Through the recognition and understanding of developmental stages of childhood and individual learning, teachers design the educational program to engage with that idea. Implicit in this program is the belief that play and imagination are central to learning and that a broad curriculum is most appropriate in the primary years. It is basic to Kinma's philosophy and day-to day operation that home and school environment are compatible and that parents are aware and involved in their child's education.

Parents are valued members of the Kinma community. It is intrinsic to the values of Kinma that staff, parents and children work together in order to further understand and 'know' each other well as to develop a true sense of community. Parents are consulted and counseled before making Kinma their final choice of school as it is vital to the community and child's development that home and the school environment are compatible. Parents are made aware of, and are involved in, their child's day-to day education.

Intrinsic motivation - Intrinsic motivation consists of wanting to do something for its own sake—to read, for example, for the pleasure of reading along. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation exists when the task isn't quite the main point; one might read in order to receive a reward or a good grade. These two kinds of motivation are not only different, but they tend to be inversely related.

Studies show that the more you reward people for doing something, the greater chance that they will lose interest in whatever they had to do to get the reward. Researchers have found that giving children “positive reinforcement” for being helpful and generous ends up undermining those very behaviors, and [encouraging students](#) to improve their grades results in their becoming less interested in a learning system.

Prioritising and self-regulating - In an era of constant distractions in the form of portable play devices and televisions for even young children, it is hardly surprising to discover that children find self-regulating and prioritising their time challenging. Kinma is an environment of mutual respect where children gradually learn to respond to limits and to gradually develop the skills needed to set their own limits.

Student outcomes in standardised national literacy and numeracy testing

LEARNING, MONITORING, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

"Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself."¹

OVERALL POLICY

This policy shows the Kinma approach to student learning.

LEARNING VALUES

"The future wellbeing of human society and its environment depends upon the quality of peoples' interactions with each other"²

At Kinma, building genuine relationships with people having similar and dissimilar values is a vital part of our students' learning. At Kinma we incorporate social justice, inter-cultural understanding and democratic principles into our daily learning practice. We immerse our students in the practices of a community based in democracy. The Kinma learning environment immerses students in the political and social systems of our wider community. Students at Kinma are in a sense apprentices – their learning derives from simultaneous immersion and formal study.

As members of the Kinma community, the students are encouraged to

- ask challenging questions
- foster curiosity
- engage with actual life issues
- develop project-based learning skills through meaningful experience
- action their decisions.

Students play an active role as decision-makers and leaders in Kinma's learning practice. Student ideas and interests generate units of work in all Key Learning Areas. The role of teachers then becomes blending the knowledge, skills and values set out in the relevant syllabi and tailoring learning to individual needs. At class and school meetings, students raise issues, suggest events and propose resolutions to problems. Student input also plays a key role in planning excursions, responding to behaviour issues, and classroom management. Students and teachers together debate the issues and make decisions. Kinma students who are thus empowered assume greater responsibility for activities and projects than in the majority of schools.

Kinma welcomes both the new English and Maths syllabi (2013) as the values and attitudes espoused therein sit so comfortably with what is stated above.

MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT AT KINMA

"Assessment activities should:

- enable students to demonstrate their learning in a range of different contexts

¹ John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*, 1916

² Page 7, Human Society and Its Environment Syllabus, 1998, NSW Board of Studies

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- be reliable, free from bias and provides evidence that accurately represents a student’s knowledge, understanding and skills
- be inclusive of and accessible to all students
- be part of an ongoing process where progress is monitored over time. “³

Kinma meets all the assessment requirements of the Board of Studies.

Observation and reflection

At Kinma, assessment is made up of observation of each student, shared reflection on these observations and monitoring of progress against each student’s learning needs. The mantra for Kinma teachers in assessment is “we look, we listen, we learn about each student, from each student, with each student, along with the family”.

Every student enters Kinma as a whole person. Each student has already formed a personal outlook and sense of him/herself from an array of experiences: joyful moments, sad times, successful new activities, frustrating incidents and insightful episodes. Students bring their world into Kinma.

As soon as a student enrolls at Kinma, teachers start active observation both within the classroom and outside in the playground. Observations focus on interactions with other students, adults and the physical environment. Teachers observe

- how each student learns
- who each student chooses to mix with and how social interactions unfold
- where each student feels comfortable and where they do not
- the situations that facilitate a student’s learning and those that pose challenges.

Observation is perhaps a teacher's most profound tool, often constituted as a kind of mental checklist, which derives from knowledge of content and processes relevant to school, knowledge of childhood and knowledge of the individual student. Observations are undertaken by a number of staff at different times. Teacher observations are the subject of individual and shared reflection by staff that helps identify options for interpreting the observed activities or behaviours. A team approach allows for as much diversity and support as possible.

The results of reflections (known as “reflection based inferences”) are collated and discussed with staff, students and families at appropriate times. The rich dialogue itself makes the assessment effective. It is deep and probing and gives insight to all concerned (students, staff and families) regarding the ideas, the challenges and the potential routes for learning.

Observation and reflection provide the basis of ongoing monitoring of each student’s learning requirements and learning progress, and the monitoring allows students, parents and teachers are aware of changes over time in

- strengths and weaknesses or concerns
- interactions with others
- approaches to learning
- development needs.

On the basis of teacher observations, teachers join students’ learning by providing appropriate stimuli and opportunities. Teachers overlay their ongoing observation and reflection with active assessment of student development across informal and formal learning areas (like literacy and numeracy). In this way, ongoing observations provide teachers with a rich monitoring and assessment tool that feeds the growing curriculum.

³ NSW Board of Studies, Syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum, Advice on Assessment (2012)

Developmental Stage Statements as Safeguards

The teacher's knowledge of a student grows, largely through observation. As teachers glean more information, they are better able to tailor a supportive, appropriately challenging learning environment. This process never stops. The teachers are aware of each student's changing needs as the student passes through different developmental stages. Such stages are not hard and unbending. They are general guidelines to aid teachers in planning appropriate learning experiences. The teachers use various developmental stage statements (NSW Board of Studies documents, Department of Community Services guidelines and other relevant developmental continuums) to guide their programming and assessment for each individual.

These actions and guidelines help teachers make decisions about the best ways to facilitate further learning for each student. The individual observation and planning ensures that students are progressing commensurate with their ability. If teachers note a discrepancy between a student's potential and the developmental stage statements, they:

- clarify understanding of the areas of need, through focused tasks and observation
- consult with parents (this is ongoing)
- provide opportunities for skill development
- continue to monitor skill development
- record observations in anecdotal notes.
- consult specialists if needed.

It is this core mix of observation, communication, respect, facilitation and stimulation that roots the learning process at Kinma in the present. It is this process that allows each learner to continue the unique learning journey with which s/he has entered the school.

Assessment

Teachers make ongoing assessments over the course of the school year. Each new assessment is compared with the individual student's previous assessments. In this way, Kinma teachers document individual progress over the year. This approach to assessment is known as "developmental assessment".

Records of Kinma student development are kept in each student's portfolio of work. Portfolios consist largely of samples of work. Samples include but are not limited to photographs of the student engaged in experiences that reflect changes in their physical, social, emotional and/or intellectual learning. The photographs are particularly beneficial with PE, Creative and Practical Arts and some Science and Technology and Maths creations that could not otherwise be recorded. Portfolios contain significant pieces of work and provide a longitudinal view of students' development and progression.

Assessment Tools

The practical tools that Kinma teachers use in their monitoring and assessment of students include:

- writing and collation of anecdotal notes
- collection of samples for portfolios
- sending work home at the conclusion of a unit of study
- student, teacher and peer assessment of various pieces of work
- teacher-student conferences
- self-assessment by students
- learning outcome continuums
- skills checklists (maths, English)
- group discussions and feedback.
- pre and post tests on topic areas, where appropriate (mainly stage two and three studies)

A detailed list of assessment tools is set out in Appendix 1 to this policy.

Teacher-student conferences provide opportunities for discussion on works in progress throughout the process, not just when completed. Conferences allow teachers to identify and address needs in context.

Student self-reflection covers the whole of their learning process: what experiences are enjoyed, in what do they excel, what experiences do they dislike, what poses a challenge? Self-assessment can take various forms: labelled diagrams, written responses, diary entries and verbal responses.

Pre and post testing provides information for the teachers on the state of the student's current knowledge, and is usually done at the start of a unit of study. The post testing, undertaken at the end of a unit of study, shows the new level of student knowledge and provides input for the teacher's assessment of ongoing learning requirements. It is also used as a reflection base on teacher practice.

“Teachers should consider the effect that assessment and feedback have on student motivation and self-esteem, and the importance of the active involvement in their learning.”⁴

At Kinma, an individual student's progress is not assessed comparative to other student's progress. In reading and SENA (Schedule for Early Number Assessment) in maths, teachers use a range of measures to gauge the student's approximate stage level. Teachers make and retain records of individual learning and development. These records can be consulted at any time by the three-way partners in student learning; student, parent and staff. Families are involved in discussions and planning if a student's needs require particular attention.

Staff are keenly aware of the danger posed to learning by making quick, simple or conclusive judgments. They appreciate that they can only observe within the extent of their own (inner and sensory) vision. To compensate for this natural limitation, much of staff's time at Kinma is taken with dialogue. One distinct advantage of our small school is that because staff learn with and play with all our students, they build relationship with all students. This provides a student's classroom teacher with several other well-informed perspectives on each student's learning.

TRANSITION TO THE NEXT GROUP

Kinma students work in three groups working in three classrooms. Transition between groups can occur at the start of the school year or during the school year.

Teachers take many factors into account when considering a student's transition between groups. The most significant factor is the benefit to the student. Teachers consider the student's emotional, social, academic and physical development. In addition, teachers take into account family issues (e.g. separation, death in family) and the school's structure.

Teachers always consult the student, parents and other teachers to ensure that the student is in the most supportive learning environment. When a student moves to a new group, the previous teacher will discuss and pass on any relevant information to the student's new teacher. The student's portfolio, anecdotal notes and letters are also exchanged and read.

⁴ NSW Board of Studies, Syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum, Kindergarten – Year 6 Assessment Strategies (2012)

REPORTING AND FEEDBACK

The aim of reporting is for teachers to give feedback and communicate their understanding of the student to his/her family. Reporting is a dialogue involving teacher, parents and student. Each has an active role to play.

Kinma supports a wide range of feedback and reporting opportunities. They include:

- teacher reports on class activities in the weekly newsletter
- letters to parents
- classroom displays
- class or school meetings
- informal discussions between teacher and parents
- parent information evenings (held each term)
- student / school performances
- student self-reports
- Kinma learning forums
- formal parent-teacher interviews
- written half yearly reports for each student.

In terms one and three, teachers set up formal interviews with each family to discuss the individual student, to build a common understanding of the student's development and learning needs. The outcome of these discussions is a jointly planned future learning path for each student, highlighting both strengths and challenges for that student. In terms two and four, teachers issue "formal" written reports to parents. The format these reports take is responsive to the changing needs of students and staff and the experiences of the semester that they reflect. Kinma's reports are detailed and individual, rather than formulaic.

APPENDICES

1 TEACHER ASSESSMENT TOOLS

2 STANDARDISED TESTING

APPENDIX 1: ASSESSMENT TOOLS AT KINMA

Key Learning Area	Self Assessment Opportunities	Teacher Assessment Opportunities	Peer/Other Assessment Opportunities
English - reading	Questionnaire Reflection as part of teaching and learning cycle Socio-gram / brainstorm / mind-map for bi-annual report	Running record (PM benchmark kit and text the child is reading) Sight words (Understanding Words) Dialogue forum	Buddy reading
English - writing	Self-editing pro-forma Reflections – written, illustrated, diagrammatic, charted Questionnaires	Dolch spelling lists Multi lit spell check Teacher/student conference Work samples (see, scope and sequence) Checklist for genre writing (from What, Where, How to teach English) Handwriting checklist	Peer conference Dialogue forums Writing plays for class or other groups
English - Talking and Listening	Questionnaire Reflections - written, illustrated, diagrammatic, charted Daily life	Observation and anecdotal notes of daily life at school Presentations Poetry festival / Plays Class forums Class and whole school meetings	Class and whole school meetings Natural feedback
Maths	Questionnaire Reflections - written, illustrated, diagrammatic, charted Daily life (shopping, cooking)	Work samples and photos Anecdotal notes SENA Presentations and Observation Predictions Teacher designed pre-tests Pre and post testing in topic areas	Share reflections Working in groups

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Key Learning Area	Self Assessment Opportunities	Teacher Assessment Opportunities	Peer/Other Assessment Opportunities
Science and Technology	Reflections - written, illustrated, diagrammatic, charted Questionnaire – brainstorm mind map	Work samples – particularly experiment records and data Photos Models / designs Observations	Share reflections Peer coaching
Creative and Performing Arts	Reflections - written, illustrated, diagrammatic, charted - Questionnaire	Art / craft samples Observation Anecdotal notes Photos Models / designs Plays / Poetry festival / End year celebration	Share Reflections Peer coaching
Human Society in its Environment	Reflections Questionnaire	Work samples Group dialogue	
Language other than English	Reflections Conversation	Observation and anecdotal notes Work samples Presentations	Conversations / dialogue / role play

APPENDIX 2 – STANDARDISED TESTING

Kinma’s educational philosophy is founded on the principle of non-competition. Our constitution bans competitive testing. There are several reasons for this rejection of competitive testing.

1 Not all learning competency is amenable to simple statistical analysis

Kinma promotes a form of education that values all types of student intelligence and learning styles, many of which cannot be measured statistically or competitively. Standardised testing creates a narrower version of excellence that does not reveal real learning competency.

2 Standardised, normed tests results are harmful to students

When students are judged to be sub-standard or to exceed standards, their self- concept can be artificially moulded and their confidence easily damaged. Such judging creates division in school communities. Kinma is a strong and cohesive school community and is deeply concerned about such harmful effects of testing on students and the community as a whole.

3 Standardised testing limits educational opportunity

When schools are judged on student performance in standardised testing, students and teachers start to focus their work on improving test results. This means responding to the needs of the tests at the cost of individual learning needs or the integrity of school philosophy. This was recognised by Australian Literacy and English University Teaching Boards over 2010-2013 with public statements in the media and educational literature. Both organisations recommend the cessation of standardised testing. Their voice is spreading to assorted groups in Australian society. Kinma offers a student driven program consistent with a learner driven pedagogy – a major contribution to educational development in Australia.

4 Testing undermines teacher expertise

Because of its size and philosophy, Kinma provides an ideal educational environment where staff members are highly attuned to each student’s progress and make decisions about programming that are sensitive to all aspects of a student’s performance. Close observation and individual assessment are a better use of each teacher’s creative and professional expertise. A richer indication of learning progress than standardised measures are found in modes such as:

- peer teacher observation
- ongoing staff reflection and dialogue,
- parent/teacher monitoring and conversation and
- student/teacher communication

5 Any benefits for other schools don’t apply at Kinma

While schools with large class sizes or high teacher turnover might identify some information they can use from standardised testing, this is not the case for Kinma. Kinma group sizes are small and teacher numbers are low. Teachers are in close contact with all the students and are well aware of student progress and development without needing to consult standardised test results.

6 Testing absorbs scarce resources

Teachers need to prepare students for state and national standardised testing, and to then run the tests and prepare paperwork to comply with reporting requirements. These activities take teacher time away from more beneficial teaching and assessment activities. With such small staff numbers and an administration staff of two, tests impose a serious administrative burden.

5. Whitlam Institute 2013, *Submission to the Senate Standing Committee Inquiry into the effectiveness of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy, Interim Report*:15
Australian Literacy Educators' Association (ALEA) 2013, *Submission to the Senate Standing Committee Inquiry into the effectiveness of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy*, June 2013: 2

6. Wyn, J, Turnbull, M and Grimshaw, L. 2014, *The impacts of high stakes testing on schools, students and their families: Parental Attitudes and Perceptions Concerning NAPLAN*
Howell, A. 2012, *The Silent Voice in the NAPLAN Debate: Exploring children's lived experiences of the tests*

7. *Professional Voice- A NAPLAN DEBATE*. A national symposium held by AEU (Australian Education Union) in Sydney in July, 2010. "Advice for Ministers and ACARA on NAPLAN, the use of student data, MySchool and league tables". Contributors include Alan Reid, Margaret Wu, Allan Luke and Brian Caldwell.

Please note that Kinma school has copies of all these articles (and more) should you be interested in reading them.

Professional learning and teacher standards at Kinma in 2017

The following educators were employed :

Category	
Teachers who have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines, or	8
Teachers who have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR Guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications, or	0
Teachers who do not have qualifications as described in (a) and (b) but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context (Manual, page 39)	0

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW KINMA 2017

What did staff get up to. Professional development is ongoing with the staff at Kinma. In 2017 we did many internal sessions with Juli Gassner, our Education Co-ordinator throughout 2017. Juli made us think and rethink.

- **Individual group meetings** (Regular min 3 times per term)
Meetings with Education Co-ordinator to focus on individual needs of children, programming, group dynamics and any other issues raised by teaching staff.
- **Maths - Barrier Games as a Critical Thinking tool**
Implementing Barrier Games in different Mathematical areas – Ensuring staff comfortable with Language.
- **Progressive Education – Unpacking Kinma’s Core principles**
 - presented by Grace : Cooperation over competition
 - presented by Michelle : Evaluation at Kinma - The place of standardised testing

And also professional development from external providers

- **Zones of Emotional regulation** – All school staff and Kimberley
- **First Aid-** Asthma and Anaphylaxis Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
- **Autism Spectrum** – external course attended by two staff and shared with staff
- **How Sensory Processing can affect children’s behaviour** – 4 staff
- **Music and Movement** – Musica Viva– Part 1 and 2 – all staff

Description of the Professional Learning Activity - Community	Number of participants
Board Planning Day	6 Board members 2 staff members
Community Day	7 staff 75 parents
Learning Forum (Term 2) How do we teach maths	5 staff 30 parents
Learning Forum (Term 3) How do we teach Literacy	5 staff 40 parents
Family termly meetings 1-4 (individual groups)	All staff 75% of all families

Workforce Composition

2017 Staff Employed	Full time	Part time
Primary teaching	0	8 (5.5 fte)
Support teaching	0	0
Management	1	1 (.6 fte)
Administration	0	2 (0.62 fte)
In 2017 the average daily staff attendance rate was 90%		
Retention rate from 2016 was 100% .		

Student attendance and management of non-attendance

Attendance Guidelines

Kinma is a comprehensive co-educational K-6 school (non graded classes) providing an education underpinned by democratic values and operating within the curriculum guidelines of the NSW Board of Studies. Once enrolled, families are expected to support the school's core values and beliefs and comply with the school rules to maintain the enrolment. All absences are to be reported to the school by the parents/guardians on a daily basis. This can be done via telephone, SMS, email or in person at the office.

Procedures

The class teacher (at any time staff are unsure they gain clarification from Manager)

- will monitor the daily attendance/absence of the students and notate on role and student file by 10am each day
- notify parent(s) and/or guardian(s) regarding poor school and/or class attendance in conjunction with the Education Co-ordinator or Manager
- discuss strategies with the family to address the problem of poor attendance. The Education Co-ordinator or Manger will be in attendance at such meetings
- document unsatisfactory attendance information in the student file and the interview report to the parent and report at staff meeting
- at the end of the year will archive all student data including documentation for reason of absence

Administration

The Administrator (or delegate)

- Will notate on student file (in purple) any information received about non attendance for the day prior to 10am
- Administration will review all roles by 10am and send SMS to any families whose child is not in attendance and there has been no notification (if no response within 1 hour will telephone)
- Administration will up date role with any additional information

Will keep a register of enrolments that includes the following information for each student:

- name, age and address
- the name and contact telephone number of parent(s)/guardian(s)
- date of enrolment and, where appropriate, the date of leaving the school and the student's destination for students older than six (6) years, previous school or pre-enrolment situation
- the register of enrolments retained for a minimum period of five (5) years preceding the current date
- the register of daily attendance retained for a minimum period of seven (7) years preceding the current date

- a record of all telephone and email communications of student absence notifications in the notes section of each group roll. (name and date of care giver who makes the notifications - reason for absence)

Where the destination of a student under fifteen (15) years of age is unknown – the family have not given an up to date address:

- will send a certified letter to the last known address
- try and make phone contact
- will email a DET Officer with the Home / School Liaison Team and notify them of the student’s name, age and last known address
- If Management are concerned for the students safety they will contact Family and Community Services

Student attendance rate	Percent ¹
All students	92%
Indigenous students	-
Non-Indigenous students	-
Student attendance level (Proportion of students attending 90% or more of the time) ²	Percent ¹
All students	88%
Indigenous students	-
Non-Indigenous students	-

Kinma Primary does not order their classes in the traditional K-6 model. We have small family groupings where children learn in mixed age classes to allow for flexibility in the stages taught in each curriculum area.

Student attendance by grade level is calculated by the age of each child as at 31.07.17

Year 1	86.26%	Year 4	92.25%
Year 2	85.01%	Year 5	93.02%
Year 3	85.81%	Year 6	92.09%

Enrolment Policies

The Enrolment Process and the Enrolment contract

CONTENT

Background information – Kinma History
Background information – Kinma Philosophy and Ethos
Characteristics of the Student and Community Body
The application form
Enrolment procedures
Guidelines for applications for enrolment of students with disabilities
Conditions of entry
Exclusion from the School
Medical treatment
Amendment of terms and conditions
Enrolment Contract - fees
Penalty clauses
School fees
Notice of withdrawal

Kinma History

Kinma Limited is a non-profit company limited by guarantee. The school was founded in 1971 by a small group of parents who wanted a more progressive and stimulating education for their children. Kinma Limited is still governed by its members. The parent body holds a majority of positions on the Kinma Board. The Board consists of six parents elected by the parent body and two community representatives. Two additional Directors may be appointed annually where particular expertise is required.

KINMA PHILOSOPHY AND ETHOS

Kinma is a leader in progressive education, supporting other educators to develop learning values and programs that are effective for all students.

Kinma's philosophy underpins a program that supports each student to reach their best in a nurturing and stimulating environment. Our philosophy ensures that we:

- respect the individuality of the student
- embrace difference
- foster self-determination in the student
- develop creative and critical abilities
- replace competition with co-operation
- stress active involvement of students in a wide range of educational situations
- support students to become flexible thinkers and independent, self-directed learners
- utilise the resources of the environment and the community.

Kinma learning focuses simultaneously on each individual student, and on building a healthy dynamic community; providing informal, innovative and individualised learning opportunities. The Kinma program builds from detailed understanding of child development and close observation of each student.

Kinma students learn in an atmosphere of equality. There are no uniforms and students are on first name terms with all staff. This equality supports students in becoming active “citizens” of Kinma, who understand and take responsibility for their conduct on many levels. Kinma students develop maturity and insight that support them throughout life.

Competition and testing are not supported at Kinma. They are not seen as the best ways to monitor student progress and needs. Kinma educators are expert at identifying and working with individual learning needs without recourse to competitive assessment.

Attachment 1: Kinma Core and Guiding Principles (page 5-Preschool and Primary Parent Handbook)

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENT AND COMMUNITY BODY

Kinma offers pre-school education for children from 3 to 5 years of age and primary education for children up to the age of 13. Kinma supports a weekly playgroup for children under 5 years of age.

Kinma has currently 125 students of whom 75 are in Primary and 50 in Preschool. There are approximately equal number of girls and boys throughout the school.

It is fundamental to Kinma’s philosophy and day to day operation that the home and school environments are compatible and that parents are aware of, and involved in their child’s education. Families vary in the amount of knowledge they possess concerning Kinma, but all families require some orientation to this unique program. Some form of continual involvement is helpful in order to maintain awareness, because Kinma is an evolving environment.

Attachment 2: Preschool and Primary Family Handbook

APPLICATION FORM

The first step in applying to enrol at Pre-school and / or Primary is to complete the Application Form and return to Administration.

The completion of this application does not guarantee a placement at the Preschool or Primary School.

The information that is collected is required for the following purpose:

- to enable key contact information in relation to duty of care
- to best understand the learning requirements of your child
- to collect statistical data for the NSW Department of Education, NSW Department of Family and Community Services, and the Federal Department of Education Employment and Work Place Relations

A letter of offer and confirmation will be forwarded with appropriate fee charges when an offer of placement is made. All offers of placement need to be accepted within a fourteen day period.

PROCEDURES

Preschool

All applications will be processed in accordance with this policy.

Subject to availability, offers of a place will be made in the following order:

- whether there are siblings of the applicant already enrolled at Kinma,
- date of application; and
- suitability of the applicants.

Primary

All applicants will be processed in accordance with this policy.

Subject to availability, offers of a place will be made in the following order:

- whether there are siblings of the applicant already enrolled at Kinma,
- current Preschool families wishing to transfer to Primary will be placed on waitlist at the date of enrolment to Preschool,
- Length of time at Preschool (minimum 12 months)
- external applications after internal offers have been secured; and
- suitability of the applicants.

Continuing enrolment is subject to the student's and family's adherence to the guidelines and expectations of the School, and payment of all school fees.

Attachment 2: Behaviour Management Policy

Guidelines for Applications for enrolment on behalf of students with disabilities

The *Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Standards)* apply to a school's dealings with all students with disabilities (i.e. those enrolled at the school even if they have not yet commenced) and also prospective students with disabilities (i.e. those for whom an approach has been made regarding admission). These guidelines provide a structure to help schools comply with the *Standards* in the context of the enrolment process for students with a disability as defined under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

These guidelines are intended to be flexibly applied to suit the circumstances of each application.

When considering any application for enrolment, a determination should be made regarding the school's capacity to address the student's individual needs. This can be achieved by working through the individual planning process to identify the reasonable adjustments that would be required to facilitate the student's access to and participation in the educational opportunities provided by the school. This process requires lateral thought to identify solutions.

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

Being Informed

At Kinma we utilise a number of methods to disseminate information. It is an expectation that families make themselves available to these sources so they can be kept up to date with any changes to School policy or practice. We offer a weekly newsletter, face book and direct email correspondence.

School Absence

It is a requirement that any student who is not in attendance on a day that they are enrolled the School administration is notified by email (enquiries@kinma.nsw.edu.au), telephone (94500738) or in person at the office. This is not only a legislated government requirement but also imperative that we know that all students are safe and in the times of emergency drills our information is current and accurate.

If you are planning an extended period of leave you are required to seek permission from the Manager in accordance with NSW Government 'Keep them Safe' Legislation. Your earliest possible request is appreciated.

Attachment 4: Attendance guidelines

Behaviour

Behaviour management at Kinma is applied to achieve a well-functioning school that allows all students, staff and families to be treated fairly and with dignity. We do so in an environment that supports cohesion and inclusion; free from disruption, intimidation, harassment, victimisation and discrimination.

The School supports the emotional wellbeing of students and teachers and abstains from corporal punishment and other coercive and manipulative approaches. The school does not support the administration of corporal punishment by anyone including parents enforcing discipline at school.

Exclusion from School

If the Manager, or any person deputing for the Manager, considers that a student is guilty of a serious breach of the rules or has otherwise engaged in conduct which is prejudicial to the school or its students or staff, the Manager or deputy may

exclude the student permanently or temporarily at their absolute discretion.

If the school Board or the Manager believes that a mutually beneficial relationship of trust and cooperation between a parent and school has broken down to the extent that it adversely impacts on that relationship, then the school, the school board or the Manager may require the parent to remove the child from the school. The school will only exercise its powers under this clause to exclude a pupil permanently if it has provided the pupil and the parents or guardians of the pupil with details of the conduct which may result in a decision to exclude the pupil and provided them with a reasonable opportunity to respond.

Attachment 2: Behaviour Management

No remission of fees will apply in relation to any of the above cases.

Medical Treatment

If a student needs urgent hospital or medical treatment of any nature and the school is unable to contact the parent or guardian after making reasonable efforts the parent or guardian authorise the school to give authority for such treatment. The parent or guardian indemnifies the school, its employees and agents in respect of all costs and expenses arising directly or indirectly out of such treatment.

Changes to terms and conditions

The School Board may alter these conditions of entry at any time by providing not less than one terms notice, and will generally take effect from the January of the following year.

Contact details

It is the responsibility of parents to advise the school of change of address, contact telephone numbers and email addresses.

ENROLMENT CONTRACT – FEES

Enrolment Fee

The enrolment fee is invoiced once a placement has been offered. The payment of this fee is required before a student can commence. This fee is non-refundable.

Tuition Fees

Fees at Kinma are billed in four equal amounts (term 1, 2, 3 + 4) through the year. These fees are due and payable within the first 4 weeks of the term.

There is a direct debit system that allows a monthly payment option. To enquire about this method talk with Administration.

School Camp Fees

Kinma primary attend an annual camp and there is a fee charged for attendance. This invoice is billed separately from tuition fees.

Notice of Withdrawal

Families at Kinma are required to give one full term's notice (excluding holiday periods) when withdrawing their child. Failure to give sufficient notice will incur an additional cost of one term's fees.

Attachment 5: Fee Policy

ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy is to guide staff on the policies and practices to enrol and settle in new students at Kinma Preschool and Primary.

POLICY STATEMENT

Kinma's philosophy of education does not suit all students or families. It is important for Kinma to get an understanding of the student's and family's needs and expectations before accepting a request to enrol a student. Kinma is not obliged to enrol every student who seeks enrolment. Kinma reserves the right to decide whether to accept or reject an application for enrolment.

Kinma charges a non-refundable enrolment fee. The level of the fee is set by the Board.

Once a student is accepted for enrolment at Kinma, the school has an obligation to that student for their educational and social well-being while at Kinma. Kinma understands that families are part of the Kinma community.

The foundation of a good relationship between families and Kinma begins from their first inquiry. From the point when a decision is made to enrol a new student, Kinma will prepare an individual orientation plan in consultation with the student's family, focussing on language, culture, social and educational strengths and any other relevant considerations.

Where there is no current vacancy at the school or preschool, an enrolment application may be placed on a wait list. Progression of any enrolments from the wait-list are entirely at the discretion of the Manager.

PRACTICE

First contact for new families is with the office. The Manager or her delegate explains a bit about the school at this first contact and offers options for the family learn a bit more about Kinma and our style of education, like:

- Coming on a school tour
- Attending an open day at the school
- Coming to an educational event for Kinma families like "Talk over Tea".

During school tours and open days, families have the opportunity to see the preschool and primary school in operation and to meet the staff. At these events, the Manager (or her representative) provides information about the school's philosophy, as well as about administrative matters such as fees and hours of operation.

At educational events for parents, families can learn more about our approach to learning, and talk to families about their experience of Kinma.

When a family indicates the wish to enrol a child, Kinma office staff provide them with an enrolment package. The package includes information about the school and enrolment forms that the family must complete before the enrolment can be accepted. The enrolment forms collect the information that is required to comply with government requirements.

Once the enrolment fee is paid and all relevant documentation completed, Kinma office staff place the application on the wait list.

When a new student's enrolment is accepted, the orientation process begins. The Manager or her nominee will consult further with the family regarding specific information such as allergies, language and cultural needs of the family, the start date, orientation visits. Fees and other costs are discussed.

Teaching staff help the new student find other students to socialise with, and formally orient them in regard to the physical space at preschool or primary. They support the student with close attention until the student appears settled. During the orientation period Preschool staff will endeavor to give feedback to new families on a weekly basis. Primary staff are available before and after school (by appointment) to provide feedback.

School Policies

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY **(anti bullying, discipline)**

OVERALL POLICY

Behaviour management at Kinma is applied to achieve a well functioning primary and preschool that allows all students, staff and families to be treated fairly and with dignity. We do so in an environment that supports cohesion and inclusion; free from disruption, intimidation, harassment, victimisation and discrimination.

The School supports the emotional wellbeing of students and Educators and abstains from corporal punishment and other coercive and manipulative approaches. The school does not support the administration of corporal punishment by anyone including parents enforcing discipline at school.

KINMA CONTEXT

Students respond to courteous and considerate treatment by their friends and adults, and will approach activities with concentration and motivation when tasks are suited to their needs and interests. We acknowledge that students are learning through out their Kinma journey and will respond depending on their age and social and emotional maturity. Educators are are mindful of the ages and skills of the children involved and offer support and assistance as appropriate.

At Kinma, students are encouraged to be responsible, independent and develop discipline for themselves from within. We encourage students to respond to limits and gradually develop the skills to set their own limits. We carefully consider the development of each student in all areas, including student behaviour. At Kinma, we create learning environments to develop students who:

- have self-discipline and a sense of responsibility for behaviour
- have respect for others and their differences
- display honesty in action and thought
- value cooperation
- take pride in their school, their classrooms and their groups.

Kinma acknowledges that:

- some testing of the limits of acceptable behaviour is normal for students
- students gain a sense of security in their school environment knowing that, if necessary, limits will be placed on their behaviour and that of others
- misbehaviour is often a student's expression of underlying factors
Educatorss take steps to understand the intent of students' misbehaviour and to respond to the underlying issues as well as the misbehaviour. This is done in collaboration with students and where appropriate with parents, always giving due consideration to the goal of developing self-discipline in students.

EMBEDDED PRACTICE

We actively develop a relationship

Staff, parents and students develop good relations based on open communication, humour, respect and shared learning experiences.

We promote independence in students

At Kinma we believe it is important for students to develop independence and a sense that "I can do it". While staff are on hand to support all situations, we encourage students to "have a go" or to gain assistance from peers; not to turn automatically to an adult for the answers.

At Kinma, staff are always looking for ways to empower students, as empowerment leads to a greater self-awareness and increased self-esteem. Students with good self-esteem are in a sound position to develop self-discipline.

We create opportunities for students to contribute to the Kinma community

Staff listen to, and act on, students' ideas and involve students in decision-making at every opportunity so that they can make a positive contribution to their own lives at Kinma. Key opportunities for student involvement include daily Kinma life, weekly school and class meetings, inquiry-based learning and brainstorming study themes.

We make encouragement a habit

Encouragement focuses on effort and is positive and empowering. The focus is on improvement and confidence building and is offered at all times.

We develop a healthy attitude to mistakes

Our mistakes have the potential of providing our greatest learning opportunities. When students make errors, constructive feedback is provided so that students can learn from their mistakes.

We are good role models

Students are more likely to develop a healthy lifestyle with positive self-esteem and an optimistic outlook if others in their lives demonstrate this through their own behaviour.

STANDARDS

To support these outcomes, students and staff have agreed on three basic rules at Kinma. Both students and staff use them to shape behaviour. They are:

- respect yourself
- respect other people and living things
- respect our environment

Staff and students have agreed that students have the right to:

- play and learn
- be safe and happy in the playground
- speak and be heard
- access resources, first aid and staff
- have a clean environment

Staff and students have agreed that students have the responsibility:

- to learn and share with others

- not to hurt others by word or action
- not to abuse our rights
- to respect and maintain school resources and our physical environment

The following actions are inappropriate and unacceptable:

- bullying or violence (verbal or physical) with the intent to harm
- speaking to educators, parents, visitors or other students in an offensive manner
- deliberately damaging, defacing or stealing school property, other property or acting in a way likely to cause damage
- not acting responsibly towards people when outside the school community
- being in possession of an object, the purpose of which is to inflict harm to another or to property
- being in possession of cigarettes, alcohol, or unlawful drugs

Students and staff discuss desired behaviour during a range of interactions. The focus from staff at all times is on the desired behaviour, not the misbehaviour. For example, we would say, “walk please” rather than, “don’t run”. We then discuss our school standards, along with students’ rights and responsibilities. We use these standards to guide behaviour and support an understanding of expectations.

PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOURS

Guiding behaviour is an ongoing part of socialisation for students at Kinma. Kinma staff are well equipped to support students. Students are respected as individuals, but are expected to participate appropriately as members of the whole group. Support and guidance in managing inappropriate behaviour will depend on the individual circumstances of each instance.

The first action generally taken in response to inappropriate behaviour is discussion with the student/s involved to find out what happened and why. Depending on the individual circumstances of each case, Kinma’s responses may also involve discussions with other students or staff.

If there is disruption to the group, the student/s may be required to work in the library or office until such time as they, and staff, feel they can contribute appropriately in the group.

If the student/s involved have displayed similar behaviours previously, or the behaviour raises staff concerns, staff will contact parents to arrange a meeting. At this meeting, staff will advise parents of the ongoing behaviours and discuss strategies, and what parents may do to support the student.

Where the student/s behaviour involves serious risk to him/herself, others or school property, the Manager or delegate will take immediate protective action. This could include the family being contacted and the student being taken home for their own and/or others’ safety.

If any of these behaviours above also involve damage to, or theft of property, families will be expected to repair, replace or return the property.

EXPLICIT DISCIPLINE, SUSPENSION AND / OR EXPULSION

If the situation escalates significantly, where the school is considering suspension or expulsion, the family will be formally advised in writing. The process, as documented below, will be managed as efficiently and expeditiously as possible. The School will endeavour to complete these actions within 7 days if possible. The formal disciplinary process follows the steps set out below.

- Step 1 Manager or staff member (as appropriate) prepare a report on the behaviour.
- Step 2 Manager provides written information to family about the behaviour.
- Step 3 The Education Committee convenes a special meeting to consider the behaviour and appropriate penalty. The family may present its position to the Committee in person at the start of the meeting, and may bring a support person. The support person is not a participant, and does not represent the parent. After any family presentation, the meeting continues in closed session to consider all information available. The Education Committee may seek specialist external advice to guide its considerations, for example from the behavioural or executive team at the Association of Independent Schools.
- Step 4 The Education Committee makes a full report on its considerations and makes recommendations to the Board.
- Step 5 The Board considers the Education Committee's report and makes its preliminary finding and decision on actions to be taken. This finding and decision is provided to the family and the Education Committee. The Board seeks a written response from family. The family may request a review in its written response, and must provide any further information that it wants the Board to consider. If there is no written response from the family in the timeframe (at least one week must be provided), the preliminary findings and decision become final.
- Step 6 The Manager arranges any requested Board review.
- Step 7 The Board makes a final finding and decision. The Board must consider any new information provided when undertaking its review. The Board provides its final decision to the family and to the Manager.
- Step 8 The Manager implements any decisions made by the Board.
- The process and decisions are confidential. The school would not prevent any student's admission to another school.

COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. OVERALL POLICY

This policy is to guide members of the school community on how they can give feedback and raise concerns about the operations of Kinma, and to guide volunteers, staff and Board members on how to manage and respond to complaints.

Kinma is committed to fair and efficient resolution of complaints. Members of the Kinma community have a right to raise concerns and have them handled well in an orderly, objective and timely manner. Kinma is committed to use every opportunity to improve services. Feedback from the Kinma community, including the feedback in complaints, will always be used to monitor and improve Kinma's performance.

High standards of confidentiality and privacy are applied by all parties in the complaints process.

This policy applies to the full school community, both staff and complainants, including all staff, volunteers and families of Kinma students.

1.1. Exceptions

This policy does not cover the management of grievances and disputes by members of staff (see Grievance Policy).

This policy does not cover the management of child protection concerns (see Child Protection Policy "Keeping Children Safe at Kinma").

This policy does not cover the management of issues or conflict between members of the Kinma community outside of school activities.

2. KINMA CONTEXT

Members of the Kinma community interact and communicate with each other all the time, at drop off and collection, at school events and activities and in their private lives outside the school. Naturally these interactions will involve sharing our Kinma experience or particular Kinma activities. Sharing in community is a valued strength of Kinma.

Where a member of the Kinma community has a concern, it is important to raise the issue with a staff member who is in a position to resolve it. Kinma warmly encourages parents to raise any concerns so that problems are addressed early and do not fester, causing stress for all parties.

The best strategy for avoiding problems at Kinma is regular communication between parents/carers and teachers. Kinma teachers encourage parents and carers to drop in for a few minutes now and again to exchange information about how things are going at home and at school. Home issues can impact on a student at school. When teachers are aware of home issues, they can support the student better at school. These issues can be large or small – not sleeping well, a serious illness, a parent travelling for work, a new pet and so on. At Kinma we call this "prepare and pre-empt".

Most parents/carers drop-off or collect at least a few times a week. It is very desirable to use these times for keeping teachers up to date. Parents who do this may avoid problems through building valuable relationships

with the teacher. These relationships reduce the likelihood of concerns arising, and can make it easier to resolve any that do arise.

Many concerns are resolved by early informal discussion with the teacher. Where that is not possible, more formal steps can be taken.

3. TYPES OF COMPLAINTS

- **Student learning and welfare**

Examples of student learning concerns include:

- students needing more teacher support
- students in conflict with each other
- dangerous items used in play or class
- student welfare (also refer to Kinma’s Child Protection Policy)
- **Staff conduct**
 - concerns about teacher style or capacity
 - concerns about teacher management of learning program
- **Community issues**
 - concerns about conduct or behaviour of other parents/carers at school or at Kinma activities

4. INFORMAL COMPLAINTS

4.1. Student learning and welfare

The classroom teacher (for primary students) or Preschool supervisor (for preschool) is the first person to talk to about any student learning or welfare concerns. Kinma encourages face-to-face discussion to for this. Where face to face discussion is not possible, telephone discussions are preferred. The process is:

- parent/carer arranges to meet with the teacher to discuss the issue
- teacher documents the issue and the outcome in a file note.

Meetings with classroom staff should be completed before 8:55 am or started after 3:05 pm. Teachers are not available at other times as they are in class with their students.

4.2. Staff conduct and community issues

These concerns should be raised with the Manager. The process is:

- parent/carer arranges to meet with the Manager to discuss the issue
- Manager documents the issue and the outcome in a file note.

5. FORMAL COMPLAINTS

5.1. Nature of formal complaints

Some concerns are not appropriately or effectively managed informally. Examples of concerns that are best dealt

with in a formal complaints framework are:

- serious issues about staff performance or behaviour
- complaints that have not been successfully resolved through discussions
- complaints about governance of the school or preschool

5.2. Making a formal complaint

A formal complaint should be made in writing. It should explain the problem and what has been done to date in response to it. It should be identified as a formal complaint.

5.3. How a formal complaint is managed

The Manager of Kinma is responsible for managing formal complaints. All complaints except those about student learning are directly managed by the Manager or Kinma. Complaints about student learning are delegated by the Manager to the Education Coordinator. Complaints about the Manager are managed by the Chair of the Board.

A formal complaint made to any other staff member or any Board member will be re-directed to the Manager for action. The only exception is where a formal complaint relates to the performance of the Manager. The Chair of the Board is responsible for responding to formal complaints about the Manager. Any other staff member or Board member who receives a formal complaint relating to the Manager will re-direct that complaint to the Chair of the Board for action.

5.4. Setting up the investigation process

In most complaints, Kinma’s standard investigation process will be appropriate, but the person responsible for managing a complaint may have a good reason to propose an alternative approach. The staff member responsible for managing a formal complaint will take the following steps to confirm the appropriate process before a complaint is investigated:

	Action	By whom	Timing
1.	Acknowledge receipt of the complaint, and advise the complainant of the proposed investigation process	Manager/ delegate	Two working days
2.	Respond to proposed process, agreeing or suggesting changes	Complainant	Two working days
3.	Determine process if changes suggested. Note, the Manager’s decision on process at this point is final.	Manager/ delegate	Two working days

If the complainant proposes an alternative process at Step 2, the responsible person responsible must give due consideration to the suggested approach and should give reasons for a decision not to accept it. The staff member’s decision on process, whether that decision is to accept or reject alternatives, is the final decision.

5.4.1. Investigation process

The investigation process must commence within two weeks of the complaint’s being made. The standard investigation process is:

	Action	By whom	Timing
4.	Meet with complainant(s) and person(s) complained about to find out more about the issues and perspectives.	Manager/ delegate	Within two weeks of complaint being received
5.	Further individual or joint meetings to arrive at agreed definition of issues of concern, and options for resolving the complaint	Manger/ delegate	Within two weeks of the first meeting
6.	Document the identified issues and proposed actions for resolving the complaint, including timetable for implementation and process for monitoring implementation	Manager/del egate	Within one week of last meeting
7.	Obtain formal response to proposed resolution	All parties	Within one week of the documented solution.
8.	Implement the agreed resolution	Named parties	In agreed timeframe
9.	Report back on success of the implementation	Named parties	In agreed timeframe

In proposing a resolution to any complaint, Kinma staff must take into account the advice and comments of all involved parties, and the obligations set out in the Kinma constitution and policies. A template is available for documenting the proposed solution to a complaint. The document must provide for all parties to sign it.

Usually the Manager is responsible for monitoring agreed implementation steps and outcomes. Where the Manager has delegated the complaint, or where the Chair is responsible for it, the delegate or Chair is responsible for monitoring implementation and outcomes.

If no agreement can be reached through the investigation process, the complaint is escalated to the review process at Section 5.4.4 of this policy.

5.4.2. Supporting parties to a complaint

A family member making a complaint may bring a support person to a meeting about the complaint. That person may be a friend or a family member. Kinma staff may not be the support person for a family member.

A member of staff who is subject to a complaint may bring a support person to a meeting about the complaint. For a member of the classroom staff, the support person will normally be the Education Coordinator. For a member of the pre-school staff, the support person will normally be the pre-school supervisor.

Support persons are not participants in the complaint. Their role is to be a friend to and provide advice to the party they are supporting.

5.5. Review process

Where a party to a complaint is not satisfied with the options for resolving it, or with the actions taken after an agreement has been reached, the complaint is escalated to the formal review process.

The person responsible for complaints review is the Chair of the Board. The Chair may delegate the review role to another member of the Board.

When a complaint is escalated to the review process, the Chair will convene a panel consisting of the Chair, and two other Board members. The panel must be convened within ten working days of receiving the escalated complaint. The panel is to determine the complaint in a timely manner. As complaints at this level may be complex, an absolute timeline is not set, but as a guide, it is desirable that complaints are resolved within four weeks.

The panel will obtain from the Manager all the documentation of the complaint from informal and formal processes taken to date. The panel will then invite the parties to the complaint to put their positions through written submissions or hearings. Unless the Manager of Kinma is a party to the complaint, the Manager provides guidance and support to the panel and attends all hearings and panel meetings.

The panel may ask the Manager to obtain advice from the Association of Independent Schools about the management of the complaint and options for resolving it. The AIS will provide advice only to the Manager or the Chair. Unless the Manager is the subject of a complaint, the Chair will not approach the AIS direct. The panel must also take into account the constitution of Kinma and Kinma policies in proposing a resolution to the complaint.

The panel is able to:

- call both parties together for guided discussions
- suggest strategies to be taken to manage issues while the complaint remains open
- make a binding resolution.

The panel's resolution of the complaint must be documented and provided to all parties. Reasons for any decision must be given in the document. The panel's resolution of the complaint, including actions for parties to take and follow up steps, is the final determination of the complaint.

5.6. Learning from experience

Documentation from formal complaints is collated twice a year for review by the Board. complaints analysis, using the attached template, makes up part of the Manager's six-monthly risk management reporting.

Collated documentation of complaints involving student learning are also reviewed by the Education Committee before they are referred to the Board. Trends and unresolved issues must be identified by the Manager/delegate for review by the Education Committee and the Board. The Education Committee may propose policy changes as a result of concerns raised at any time. It does not need to wait for an annual report of concerns.

The names of complainants, and any other identifying information about complainants, are not provided in reports to either the Education Committee or the Board.

In addition, all members of the Kinma community who have raised concerns or complaints will be invited by the officer handling the concern or complaint to complete a feedback form about the complaints process. These forms will be collated by the Manager for annual feedback to the Board.

Appendices

1. Template for recording investigation (process)
2. Template for recording complaints and resolutions (issues and actions)
3. Template for monitoring implementation and outcomes
4. Template for reporting to the Board
5. Template for feedback from complainants

Policy Review

Review of all policies is undertaken by our Education Committee. Policies are generally on a 2 year cycle. However some medical policies are reviewed annually. This Committee consists of one staff member from the Preschool group and one staff member representing the Primary group. There are two current parents on the Committee and the School Manager.

At times students raise issue that may require staff to review a practice, which in turn can lead to policy changes.

Policies are reviewed and changed in line with any legislative changes as appropriate.

Once policies have been reviewed and amended as required a copy is distributed to the whole school community via the newsletter which is sent weekly to individual email addresses.

Final draft policies are submitted to the School Board for ratification. The School Board consists of 6 current parents and two community members.

Full copies of all Kinma School policies are available from the Administrative office by contacting 02 94500738 or emailing office@kinma.nsw.edu.au

School determined improvement targets

<p>Facilities and resources</p>	<p>Building of a new GLA in primary for increased student numbers. Students and families were actively engaged in the exciting process of a new classroom.</p> <p>These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design of new play structures • Working with the Builders to understand the size and foot print that each component and the whole took • Mathematically using the brick laying as a multiplication and critical thinking unit • Questioning the need for windows and doors • Making a story book gift for the builders of the journey • Making morning and afternoon tea for the builders • Negotiating play space and rethinking where a particular activity may have occurred prior to construction
<p>Teaching and Learning</p>	<p>History and Geography - Building on the student collaborative tool-set from 2016/7, the staff will further develop specific critical thinking strategies for History and Geography. Collaborating across the three groups during 2017 to highlight everyday events that make a difference to our own or others' lives. Students delving into these scenarios knowing that they are occurring now. Looking objectively and less objectively if the circumstances are viewed differently.</p> <p>Infusing CAPA into the daily life of the classroom. Professional development with Musica Viva and in house staff support will be used to ensure increased staff comfort with CAPA in all KLAs. This has encouraged and supported the staffs confidence in exploring music and movement within all parts of the day, not just afternoons. This will be continued into 2018 as we are looking at creating a student and famil t choir.</p>
<p>Student interest</p>	<p>Following the building of strategies to increase responsibility in 2016/7, strategies of building student responsibility for their projects in the CAPA area will be explored. This is equally important across Pre-school and primary, as appropriate by stage king our shared play and work smoother each day. This is an ongoing process – cycle.</p> <p>We commenced some more explicit whole group S E L process with our middle group. We have also introduced peer support in basketball and increased it in our tinkering days.</p>

Areas for 2018

Area	Priorities
Facilities and resources	Ongoing work to complete the new classroom.
Teaching and Learning	<p>S E L - ongoing deeper work to include and co create a bank of words across the school that children can identify as they move from group to group.</p> <p>Review the changes to mid and end year transitions to different groups. This has been done to align Preschool and Primary movements and to see if less movement and change is a positive reflection within class dynamics in terms of cohesion.</p>
Student Interest	Look at the possibility of designing and creating a new playing area within the bottom playground. This initiative came from the students and will be managed in the most by the group 3 children (10-12 years). Working in a progressive and democratically aligned manner, taking into account the needs of all the community will be a wonderful experience for the students.

Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility

STUDENT AND COMMUNITY WELFARE

‘Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.’ Margaret Meade

Kinma community believes that education is a process of growth which continues throughout life. Therefore Kinma is not preparation for life, but the opportunity for children to discover life and the world within a safe and secure environment. Education is not the transmission of facts, but the development of understanding and thinking skills. Education at Kinma must reflect life, where learning is undertaken through the integration of specific disciplines, the use of concrete materials and real life experiences.

Children take an active role in their learning, while the teacher takes a role as facilitator providing opportunities for students to investigate at their own rate within their own learning style. Children are given the opportunity to bring their pre-existing knowledge, understanding and interests to their learning. In this way education becomes meaningful and purposeful to children. Responsibility for their own learning enables the development of self-discipline as children discover the consequences of their actions and develop their own limits for behaviour.

Kinma provides an environment which respects and nurtures the individuality of its members. It promotes an active, creative and generative movement for all its members, an environment which allows and actively encourages children to reach their potential in all areas. Kinma staff believe that children have an innate desire to learn. Through the recognition and understanding of developmental stages of childhood and individual learning, teachers design the educational program to engage with that idea. Implicit in this program is the belief that play and imagination are central to learning and that a broad curriculum is most appropriate in the primary years. It is basic to Kinma's philosophy and day-to day operation that home and school environment are compatible and that parents are aware and involved in their child's education.

Parents are valued members of the Kinma community. It is intrinsic to the values of Kinma that staff, parents and children work together in order to further understand and 'know' each other well as to develop a true sense of community. Parents are consulted and counseled before making Kinma their final choice of school as it is vital to the community and child's development that home and the school environment are compatible. Parents are made aware of, and are involved in, their child's day-to day education.

At times throughout a child's learning journey individuals and small groups need additional support to assist their understanding of feelings and events that they cannot control. Staff take time to support students and can gain the assistance of the Education Co-ordinator and Manager if required. In consultation with the family staff identify behaviours that may benefit from a professional body (e.g. neck specialist, psychologist, natural therapist). At Kinma we have a list of support professionals within the wider community to access. Detailed information is held in the Health Support File in Administration.

The essence of the demand for freedom is the need of conditions which will enable an individual to make his own special contribution to a group interest, and to partake of its activities in such ways that social guidance shall be a matter of his own mental attitude, and not a mere authoritative dictation of his acts.

- John
Dewey Democracy and
Education

At Kinma we hold the belief that human relationships are the fundamental basis of all learning and that we all learn and develop in different ways. Humans are social beings and from a young age we support them to develop their self- concept and abilities. Therefore, it makes sense that we are not bound to any one model of education. We are eclectic in our practice, continually evolving and striving towards better education for all children.

Since 1972 Kinma has seen the importance of social and emotional well- being. This impacts on every aspect of society: work, relationships, parenting, the economy and political structures, even our use of the physical environment.

‘ Achieving happiness, emotional balance and good relationships are ‘ good things’ in themselves, and need no further justification, although there are many such justifications.’ (Weare 2000)

The School is the location for a large proportion of child socialisation, therefore schools are crucial in social and emotional development either explicitly or implicitly.

Through the following Kinma allows children to develop from within a respect of themselves and others:

- Building relationship
- Really listening
- Non judgment
- Student autonomy
- Self- motivation
- Experiential learning
- Teacher as facilitator
- Learner centred
- Peer learning
- Co-operative group work
- Build in small steps
- Teacher clarity

Reporting Item 12: Parent, student satisfaction

Relationship is paramount in our philosophy and practice. We believe that families are the child's first teacher. The family is the most powerful influence on a child's learning and development. Our aim is to build strong connections with each family in order to make the transition into school as smooth as possible for parents and children. We believe that an educational experience is as much about the parents and families as it is about children and teachers. At Kinma parents, children, extended families and staff form a community.

Parents are not only invited to become involved in the operation of the School community through participation, for example Council, Education Committee or Finance Committee, but parents are recognised as collaborators in the education of their children. In our view parents are 'experts' on their children, we encourage the sharing of this knowledge to enrich children's learning by helping us build a more complete overall picture of each child.

Involvement is welcomed and encouraged. All meetings are open to Kinma families and we conduct the following to review our practice:

- Teacher appraisals (one per annum) - survey is sent to all families – **return rate 2017 100%**
- We have a community liaison co-ordinator;
- We hold an annual community gathering day at the beginning of each year;
- Two formal interviews with parents each year (30 minutes each) – numerous informal throughout the year;
- One parent Information evening held each term, and
- Three Learning Forums held each year
- Democratically aligned classroom practices – weekly class meetings chaired by students and fortnightly whole school meetings chaired by students.

Parent Survey Term 4 2017

OVERALL FINDINGS –parent survey 2017

Main strengths:

Children’s sense of belonging and support for their development – socially, emotionally, creatively and cognitively (SKILLS OF THE FUTURE)

- Children’s strong sense of belonging
- Opportunities for children to explore and express their creativity
- Development of children’s critical thinking skills
- Level of support to develop interpersonal skills
- Children’s social and emotional development

Good fit between parent values and Kinma’s and parent sense of being valued and included in their child’s education.

- Alignment between the values of Kinma and parents
- Parents feel as though their voice is heard/opinions matter
- Teachers making themselves available for parents
- Parents inclusion in classroom activities as observers or participants
- Management being available for parents

Functional Support

- Teachers being prepped for each day
- Approachability of admin
- Clear and informative communication from admin
- Newsletter format easily accessible and timely

Actions:

Ratification that the core principles are being expressed though both the children and parents. Important that we feed back to parents about their positive responses and acknowledge their participation.

Other positive areas:

- Teachers giving support to children in navigating social relationships
- Children feeling comfortable to ask for help in the classroom
- Right balance of working independently and collaboratively
- Encouragement to participate in sport and other physical activities
- Response of children to the progressive teaching style
- Parent comfort with child’s numeracy, writing and reading development
- Provision of helpful and informative feedback/reports
- Approachability of Board members

Actions:

To use as supportive messages, and help to reduce barriers.

Main improvement areas:

- Classrooms being adequately equipped and resourced for learning
- Newsletter format easily accessible and timely

Actions:

Prioritise into things that we accept and those that we need to work on and create plans for addressing the priorities.

To feed results and any improvement plans into internal feedback with parents so they know they are heard.

To feed into internal development opportunities for staff.

Areas where parents note a gap in their understanding or knowledge: (this was identified by answering unsure / don't know)

- If the balance of working independently and collaboratively is right
- If children feeling comfortable to ask for help in the classroom
- Whether the focus on computers and IT is appropriate
- Whether teachers are adequately prepped for the day
- Whether governance is responsibly carried out

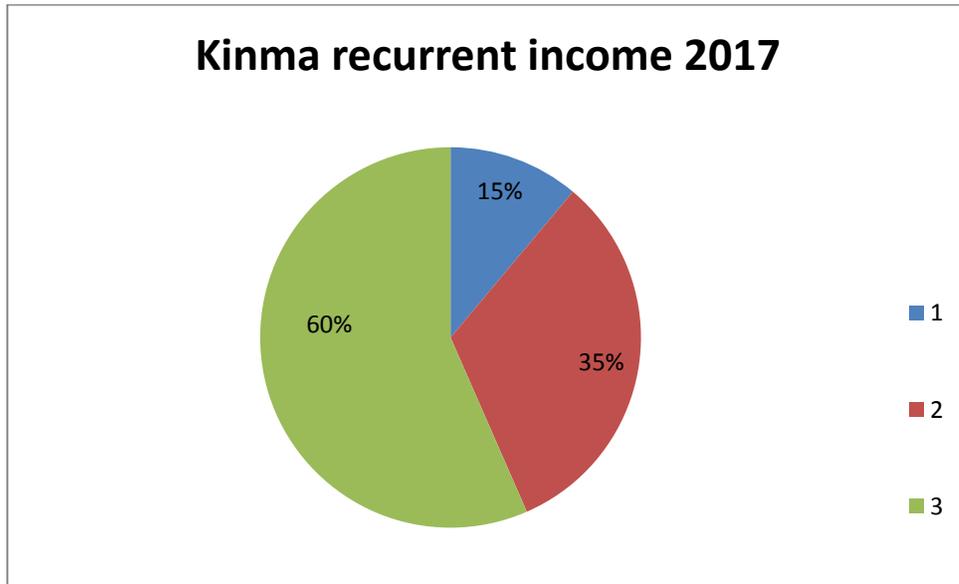
- **Actions:**

To identify which parents most want to know

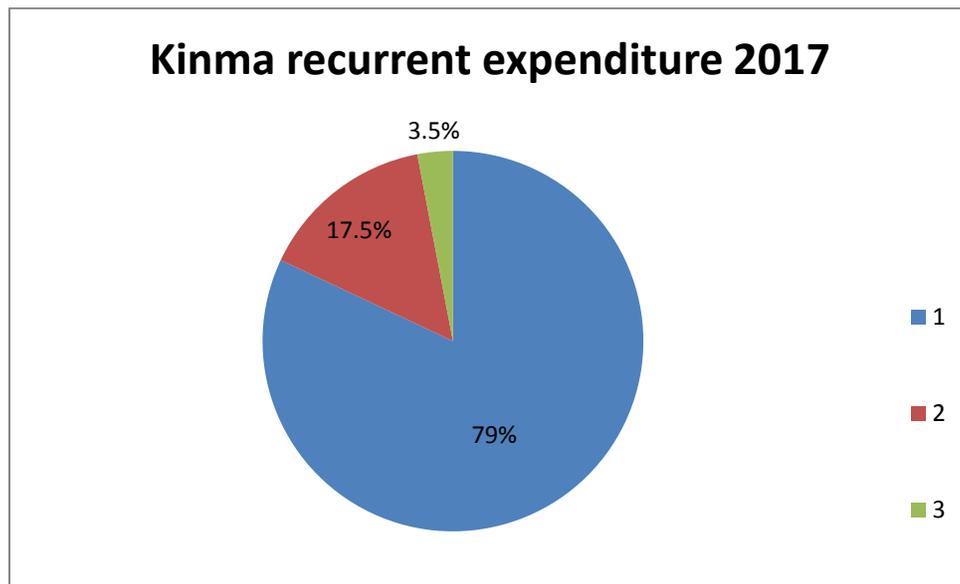
To offer as topics for Parent Enrichment Forums

To help to open discussion for other

Reporting Item 13: Summary of financial information for 2017



- 1 Other income
- 2 Government and other grants
- 3 Private Fee Income



- 1 Salaries and Wages
- 2 Other expenses
- 3 Capital expenses