AL ZAHRA COLLEGE ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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THEME 1. CONTEXT

Message from the Board Chairman

I am honoured to present the Annual Report for 2023 on behalf of the Al Zahra College Board of Directors, a document that celebrates the significant accomplishments and landmarks of the College. The year 2023 is truly remarkable, standing out as a milestone, and marking the 25th year since the College's inception. This momentous occasion offered us an opportunity to pause and reflect on our collective efforts and successes that have shaped this esteemed institution, and to appreciate the richness and strength of our contributions and ties to the community. The College's anniversary celebrations were a moving and meaningful highlight, particularly our 25th Anniversary Ramadan Iftar Dinner, which was attended by community members, founders, board members, staff, students, parents, and alumni.

Significant College developments and strategic initiatives also stand out for 2023. One of the most exciting developments this year has been the advancement of our proposed College expansion project. Over the past three years, the College has successfully acquired adjoining properties, which has laid the groundwork for our multi-stage construction plans. The first phases of the construction project are now underway, with a primary focus on the establishment of classrooms and facilities dedicated to the needs of our Secondary students. These facilities will accommodate our growth to a three-stream school, and to provide an optimal environment conducive to student academic excellence and personal growth. In addition to this long-term, large-scale project, we have continued to improve and upgrade the College's learning and general facilities. Completed work includes: the conversion of a classroom into a secondary school art hub; the renovation of the primary students' toilets, including the addition of wudu facilities; finalisation of the construction of the shaft for the planned lift; and the opening of the two newly built Primary classrooms on the second floor of the main building. The College gates were also upgraded to a new automated security system.

College enrolments and financial position continues to be strong and consistent. Through the College's sustained focus on sound financial management, Al Zahra College has successfully maintained its strong financial position and has again recorded a financial surplus. The board has resolved to keep school fees unchanged for the upcoming year to support families in an environment of high cost of living pressures. In terms of enrolments, these have remained robust, with enrolments at the College keenly sought - a testament to the College's reputation, and the trust and confidence placed in us by our students, families, and community. Staff recruitment, retention, wellbeing, equity, and professional development have remained priorities for the executive team and Board, with the approval of competitive wage increases for our teaching staff, and the continued endorsement of professional development and staff wellbeing initiatives. The College's NESA registration renewal was also successfully achieved for the next 5 years.

Our students continued to shine, and demonstrate academic, athletic, artistic and citizenship excellence. We were incredibly proud of the combined efforts of the Class of 2023, with 8 of our 24 Year 12 students achieving ATAR equivalent scores above 90. I am proud to report that all our Year 12 students who had applied for tertiary education placements received an offer to attend university. To these students, I wish to extend my congratulations on your exceptional performance in the Diploma Programme. During your time at Al Zahra College, we have been privileged to be a part of your transition from childhood to young adulthood. The critical and formative years you have spent at Al Zahra College, will continue to have a tremendous impact on your lives. As you continue in your journeys, remember our motto of 'faith, wisdom, knowledge', and I hope that these values continue to inform your lives. I am confident that, as our alumni, you will make the College proud with your future professional and personal achievements.

The Board acknowledges and appreciates the dedicated work, professionalism, and commitment of the College staff and executive team. Thank you to our parent body for nurturing and supporting the students, and for entrusting us with your children's education. By working together, our parents and staff have ensured that 2023 has been another success, in a long line of successes for the College.

Finally, the Board remains resolute in its commitment to the responsible governance of the College, ensuring that our decisions invariably serve the best interests of our students and the broader school community. Our overriding goal remains to facilitate the growth and sustained success of the College as an eminent educational institution, dedicated to nurturing students whose lives and aspirations are guided by divine principles. May we continue to receive God's guidance and blessings as we pursue our mission of providing an outstanding education, which is deeply rooted in God-centric ethical standards. With God's guidance and blessings, we anticipate continued success and advancement in 2024.

Mr M. Makki

Al Zahra College Board Chair

Message from the Headmaster

2023 is a year that holds significance in our institution's history. This year, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of Al Zahra College, a quarter-century dedicated to fostering academic excellence, character development, and community engagement.

Our college community came together to commemorate this remarkable journey with a series of celebrations and events, reflecting on our achievements and setting the stage for an even brighter future. One of the highlights of 2023 was the tremendous success of the College's fundraising initiatives. Our dedicated Primary and Secondary students spearheaded a variety of efforts, and I am delighted to announce that we raised over $37,000. These funds were generously donated to several worthy causes, including the Wish Foundation, One Hand One Heart, 14 Stars Children Foundation, and Aus Relief for Palestine. This spirit of giving and compassion is a testament to the values we instil in our students.

As a school we have coordinated our efforts to enhance teaching and learning, and to foster an environment that is warm, safe, and intellectually stimulating. This annual Report provides an overview of the College's performance across various dimensions. It highlights our academic achievements, the growth and development of our students, and the progress of our three International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes: the Primary Years Programme (PYP), the Middle Years Programme (MYP), and the Diploma Programme (DP). Below I document some key highlights for 2023 in each of our IB Programmes.

In the Primary Years Programme, a range of initiatives and programs were launched and further refined in 2023. A key highlight was the launch of the InitiaLit program from Kindergarten to Year 2 classes, which focuses on the building of phonics knowledge and strong foundations in literacy. From Years 3 to 6, the Primary School also successfully conducted familiarisation and preparation for the new Mathematics and English NESA syllabus requirements, in teacher programming, pedagogy and assessment. The Primary School maintains its focus on explicit instruction to scaffold learning to individual student needs. Teachers reported an increased level of engagement and focus during literacy sessions because of the explicit teaching of literacy and numeracy. Through regular assessment and tracking on numeracy and literacy learning, students' learning needs were better identified and supported. In Mathematics, all staff had the opportunity to put their training during the year-long 2022 Primary Numeracy Project into practice, particularly the numeracy reviews and the adoption of a range of teaching resources and strategies. Primary students continued to utilise several online programs to support learning of English and Mathematics, including Maths Seed, Mathletics, Reading Eggs, and Wushka. These programs enabled students to independently revise skills and strategies learned at school. The IB Programme of Inquiry guiding our transdisciplinary learning was reviewed to support a more streamlined and in-depth approach to literacy and language education. The learning support program was expanded to provide in-class learning support to all Kindergarten to Year 2 classes, and targeted in-class learning support for Years 3 – 6 students.

The Primary School also focused throughout the year on promoting parent and family engagement with the College, as well as raising the profile of the family unit in the College community. Regular parent meetings were held throughout the year focusing on upskilling parents in the areas of parenting, cyber-safety, child emotional regulation and social skills development as well as bullying prevention and intervention. Regular communication to parents to enhance student wellbeing was also initiated throughout the year, focusing on themes including healthy diet, device usage, and student mental wellbeing. A range of successful and well-attended family events were also held, including the National Families Week picnic, Mother's Day, Father's

Day and Grandparent's Day programs, and International Children's Day Colour Fun Run. Parental involvement was also welcomed with our Gardening Club, volunteer teaching, and fundraiser support. Primary students were given opportunities to participate in a range of co-curricular activities, including excursions, camps, Harmony Cup, Choir, Quran Club, Parliament and SRC, Gardening, Chess Tournaments, Interschools Public Speaking competitions, and ScopeIT. Students also commemorated and celebrate important days including Harmony Day, Palestine Day, Book Week, Simultaneous Storytime, as well as important religious events and commemorations.

In the Middle Years Programme, our students have continued to grow and flourish. In 2023 we continued to experience success with our Personal Project results, with more students receiving exceptional results than in years passed. Almost the entire cohort passed their Middle Years Programme, earning commendable results. It is evident that the students have done their themselves, their families, their teachers and the school proud. We are elated to see the hard work of all the parties involved come to fruition in such a pleasing way.

Throughout 2023, the Middle Years students participated in many fundraising endeavours, including Harmony Day, the Colour Fun Run and Jersey Day. These events raised thousands of dollars combined, donated to various charities that seek to help marginalised groups of people all around the world. Al Zahra College students also participated in community events, such as the outreach group 3Bridges' Annual Iftar Dinner and our own AZC Iftar Dinner, where we hosted guests from various other schools to break the fast together. This has become a hallmark of our school's Ramadan and Eid celebrations, as our students can assert their presence outside the walls of the College and build networks with various community members.

The students of the Middle Years Programme at Al Zahra College demonstrate all the qualities of life-long learners. We have witnessed them be caring and brave when they have advocated for those suffering in Gaza. We have witnessed them being knowledgeable communicators when they participated in Elevate Study Skills sessions. We have witnessed them be open-minded inquirers when they worked with the outreach officers from 3Bridges. We have witnessed them be reflective and balanced when they have undertaken their Service as Action projects. Throughout 2023, the Middle Years students have embodied all the traits of IB learners, and we are confident they will continue to do so in the years to come.

Finally, it is my privilege to reflect on the achievements of our Senior students in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme. This year, our students have not only excelled academically but have also shown remarkable growth in every aspect of their development—physically, intellectually, emotionally, and ethically.

Our Year 12 Class of 2023 achieved a median ATAR selection rank of 86.30, for students who passed the Diploma. This is a significant achievement for a proudly non-selective and inclusive school, highlighting our commitment to accessible, high-quality education. The highest Diploma score was an impressive 39 out of 45, translating to an ATAR of 96.35.

Equally noteworthy is the fact that all our full Diploma students entered their first or second choice of university. Many of these students exceeded their expected achievement levels, showcasing the substantial 'value-add' our educational approach provides. Furthermore, several students earned scholarships to study at major universities across Australia, a testament to their hard work and our school's supportive environment.

This year has also been marked by immense dedication and perseverance in sports, with our students displaying outstanding talent and determination across various disciplines. They have not only participated

in but have excelled at annual sporting competitions, bringing home trophies and establishing Al Zahra College as a formidable competitor within the 31-school ASSISA association.

Our students have increasingly taken leadership roles in social justice initiatives. Projects like One Hand One Heart have engaged them in fundraising for developing countries, while their involvement in Harmony Day and partnerships with organizations such as The World Food Appeal, Red Cross, and the Salvation Army have made substantial impacts both locally and internationally. These initiatives, coupled with workshops led by our seniors on balancing school and societal pressures, underscore our students' commitment to ethical development and community engagement.

Our Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) program continues to be a cornerstone of the IB Diploma at Al Zahra, empowering students to explore and address social issues firsthand. This program is pivotal in helping them grow into well-rounded individuals who are ready to take on the world's challenges with empathy and integrity. Looking ahead to 2023 and beyond, we are inspired by our students' achievements and are excited to support them as they continue to pursue excellence in all facets of their education. The success of our Diploma Programme is a clear indicator of the vibrant, engaged, and compassionate community we are building here at Al Zahra College.

In 2023, we will continue to build on the successes of the past year and further develop our programs and services to meet the needs of our school community. To all members of the Al Zahra College community; the Board, company members, students, families, alumni, and staff, thank you for being part of the continued success of the College. Our collective achievements are truly the result of our collaboration, commitment and expertise as a whole community. Thank you for your unwavering support and partnership. Let us continue to work together to inspire and empower the next generation of leaders.

Dr. Wissam Mustapha

Al Zahra College Headmaster

About Al Zahra College

The motto of the College is *Faith, Knowledge, Wisdom*, which underscores our mission to develop faithful, knowledgeable and wise young people who take responsibility for creating a better and more peaceful world. Our students are challenged to become active, internationally minded learners and critical thinkers who promote intercultural understanding and respect.

Established in 1998, Al Zahra College is an Independent, coeducational, International Baccalaureate World (IB) School that was established to provide an alternative education option for the growing Muslim Community in Sydney, Australia. The school began operation from two modest houses adjacent to, and leased from Al Zahra Mosque, and over the next two decades, the College has witnessed a steady growth, and a physical expansion, with the College purchasing several adjoining properties to become a multiple-building facility that caters to the learning of over 500 students from Preschool to Year 12. Long-term plans for the College involve the expansion of the current School grounds to accommodate the growing student population, and to meet the demands in enrolment applications for placements across Preschool to Year 12.

Al Zahra College is an authorised full continuum IB school, offering the PYP (Primary Years Programme), MYP (Middle Years Programme) and DP (Diploma Programme), one of the few schools in the country to offer the three IB Programmes. The College is also registered with New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA) and adheres to the standards and requirements set for all the Key Learning Areas. Additionally, the College offers Arabic language, Islamic and Quranic studies as part of its curriculum. The College also provides extra-curricular opportunities, Learning Support programmes, counselling, and Speech services for its student population. Al Zahra College provides a learning environment for our students, that is conducive to academic excellence. Our inspiring staff and our challenging curriculum enable our students to perform to the best of their abilities.

Although Al Zahra College is an Islamic school, students of all cultures and religious affiliations are welcome to enrol. Through the Islamic faith, which is foundational to the College, our students are nurtured to develop high moral values and ethics. The Islamic ethos and values are also instilled in our teaching programs and give all students an opportunity to cooperate and work together in a harmonious and collaborative environment, and to understand and appreciate the common ideals of the Islamic faith in a spirit of tolerance and understanding. A reflection of these ideals is the ongoing commitment of the College to fundraising and community service.

Al Zahra College provides a learning environment in which students can develop an understanding, respect for their own cultural background, and take pride in their identities. Consequently, the ability for students to respect other cultures is strengthened. Islam, by its very essence, is multicultural and Al Zahra College seeks to instil in all students, high moral values, and respect for all people. This in turn enables them to flourish within the cultural diversity of multicultural Australia and equips them for effective participation, as Australian citizens in the broader global community.

Al Zahra College caters to students from Preschool to Year 12. In 2023, the College had a total of 614 students. The number of students enrolled in the Primary Years Programme was 370, while the Middle Years and Diploma Programmes had a total of 244 students. The school's population consists of students from a diverse range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, with almost all our student population across K-12 coming from English as an additional language background.

Further contextual information about the College is publicly accessible on the My School Website (www.myschool.edu.au), including student numbers, student backgrounds, school staff and enrolments. Further information can also be accessed on the Al Zahra College website.

THEME 2. STUDENT OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

NAPLAN

In May 2023, students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 completed the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). Four tests covering Reading, Writing, Language Conventions (Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation) and Numeracy were conducted across Australia on three days over the same week in May. Each test is between 40 and 50 minutes long.

Below is a breakdown of our students' performance in the exams in comparison to student with similar background and with all other Australian schools.

	AL ZAHRA COLLEGE	STUDENTS WITH SIMILAR BACKGROUNDS	ALL AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS
NAPLAN – YEAR 3			
Reading	398	404	405
Writing	440	422	416
Spelling	428	411	404
Grammar	424	414	411
Numeracy	400	407	407
NAPLAN – YEAR 5			
Reading	502	507	496
Writing	492	497	483
Spelling	514	503	489
Grammar	509	509	497
Numeracy	494	499	488
NAPLAN – YEAR 7			

Reading	548	548	536
Writing	492	497	483
Spelling	572	554	539
Grammar	571	553	539
Numeracy	548	550	538
NAPLAN – YEAR 9			
Reading	565	577	564
Writing	575	585	567
Spelling	585	582	568
Grammar	578	574	557
Numeracy	555	582	568

Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

The Record of School Achievement (RoSA) is a cumulative credential awarded at the end of Year 10 at Al Zahra College. In 2023, 43 students took the decision to pursue the International Baccalaureate (IB) and were therefore eligible to receive their RoSA. Analysis of 2023 RoSA Grades resulted in a 10% increase in the number of A grades in English and a 7% decrease in the number of D grades. In Mathematics, a 10% increase in the number of A grades and a 17% decrease in the number of D grades. In Science, our students achieved a 10% increase in the number of A grades, and a 24% decrease in the number of D grades.

Diploma Programme Results

The IBDP is a two-year educational program primarily aimed at students between the ages of 16-19. The Programme provides an internationally accepted qualification for entry into higher education and is recognised by many universities worldwide.

IB DP students must choose one subject from each of five groups (1 to 5), ensuring breadth of knowledge and understanding in their best language, Additional Language(s), the Social Sciences, the Experimental Sciences and Mathematics. Students may choose either an Arts subject from group 6, or a second subject from groups 1 to 4. At least three and not more than four subjects are taken at higher level (240 teaching hours), while the other subjects are taken at standard level (150 teaching hours). In addition to disciplinary and interdisciplinary study, the Diploma Programme features three core elements: The Extended Essay; Creativity, Activity and Service; and Theory of Knowledge. These elements broaden students' educational experience and challenge them to apply their knowledge and skills.

The table below illustrates the exceptional results and school statistics for the 2023 November IBDP Session.

Full Diploma School Statistics	
Number of candidates registered in the session	27
Number of subject entries in the session	177
Average points obtained by candidates who passed the diploma	32 /45
Highest diploma points awarded to a candidate	39 /45
Average grade obtained at the school by candidates who passed the diploma	4.81 / 7

Post School Destinations

Year 12 students are encouraged to nominate post-school options, which are aligned with their career ambitions, talents, and their individual interests. During this process, our students are provided with ongoing support to select appropriate courses, complete scholarship applications, look at alternative pathways to

enter tertiary education, as well as access a range of support schemes, including early entry schemes, the Schools Recommendation Schemes (SRS) and the Educational Access Scheme (EAS). All the 27 students who completed the IBDP at Al Zahra College in 2023 received an offer from university and are subsequently enrolled in a diverse range of courses in major universities in Sydney.

Our 2023 Year 12 graduates enrolled in the following university courses:

Course Title	Institution
B Med MD	UNSW
B Physiotherapy	WSU
B Eng (Hons) (Civil Eng)	WSU
B Eng (Hons) (Elec Eng)	WSU
B Hlth Science	WSU
B Eng (H) Civil	Uni of Tech Sydney
B Eng (Hons) (Civil Eng)	WSU
B Eng (H) Civil (Struc)	Uni of Tech Sydney
Dip Eng/B Eng	WSU
B Nursing	Aust Catholic Uni
B Econ/B Adv Stds	Uni of Sydney
Dip Hlth Sc (HPE)	WSU
B Eng (H) Software	Uni of Tech Sydney
B Psych Sc/BA	Aust Catholic Uni
B Nursing	Aust Catholic Uni
B Exer Sci/M Physio&Ex Phys	UNSW
B Psych (Hons)	Uni of Tech Sydney
B Eng (Hons) (Civil Eng)	WSU
BSci MTeachSec(BioChemEnv)	Uni of Tech Sydney
B Education (Primary)	Aust Catholic Uni
B Cybersecurity	Uni of Tech Sydney
Dip Engineering	WSU
B Oral Health	Uni of Sydney
Dip Engineering	WSU

THEME 3. STAFFING

Teacher Accreditation Status

ACCREDITATION STATUS CATEGORY	NUMBER OF TEACHERS
Conditional	6
Provisional	4
Proficient Teacher	53
Total number of teachers	63

Workforce Composition

Please refer to http://www.myschool.edu.au. Al Zahra College embraces all faiths and backgrounds for all our staff and students. None of our staff have identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, but applications from First Nations teachers and other staff are strongly encouraged.

AL ZAHRA COLLEGE STAFF 2023		
Category	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teaching Staff	28	35
Non – Teaching Staff	9	15
Total	37	50

* Figures exclude maternity leave & LWOP.

Staff Professional Learning

Staff professional development remains a strategic priority for the College, as it is key to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. All our staff participated in professional learning programs in 2023, which focused on Child Protection legislation, policy and procedures, evidence-based pedagogy, IB and NESA curriculum content, and College-based policies and procedures. Below is a summary of the professional learning that was completed by Al Zahra College staff in 2023.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING		
Course	No. of Staff Attended	Provider
Leading An IB Education Category 3	3	International Baccalaureate
Spell-It	2	Multilit Pty Ltd
MYP Interdisciplinary Teaching And Learning In The MYP Cat 2	3	International Baccalaureate
Employment Relations in Schools	1	AIS NSW
English 7-10 New Syllabus Implementation	2	AIS NSW
Business Management: A Focus On Internal Assessment Category 3	1	International Baccalaureate
Independent Sydney And Districts Meeting	1	Amity College
Extended Essay	1	International Baccalaureate
The Role Of The Supervisor In The Extended Essay	1	IBICUS Ltd
Diploma Programme Coordinator Quarterly Meeting	1	Canberra Grammar School
DP History Cat 1	1	International Baccalaureate
IBAP Regional Workshop	3	International Baccalaureate
DP Chemistry Cat 1	1	International Baccalaureate
English A: Language And Literature	1	International Baccalaureate
DP Biology Cat 1	1	International Baccalaureate

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IB DP SEHS	1	International Baccalaureate
PYP Network Meeting - Facilitating Inquiry	3	International Baccalaureate
Preparing for Renewal of Registration/Accreditation in 2024	1	AIS NSW
DP Environmental Systems and Societies Cat 2	1	International Baccalaureate
English 7-10 New Syllabus: Grammar in Context Online Learning Experience	1	AIS NSW
Leading the Implementation of the new English 3-6 Syllabus	5	AIS NSW
Planning and Programming for Classical and Modern Languages K-6	3	AIS NSW
English: Teaching the Novel - Focus on Reading	1	AIS NSW
Getting Ready for Robust Research Experience	1	AIS NSW
Attendance, Exemption and Enrolment Requirements for Schools	1	AIS NSW
NSW/ACT MEA Interpretation: Parental Leave Experience	2	AIS NSW
Community Cohesion: A whole-school approach	1	AIS NSW
Preparing for Implementation: Classical and Modern Languages K-6	1	AIS NSW
Decisions and Revisions	2	AIS NSW
DP English A: Language and literature Cat 2	1	International Baccalaureate
DP Language Ab Initio (generic) Cat 2	1	International Baccalaureate
NSW/ACT MEA Interpretation: Annual Leave Experience	2	AIS NSW
NSW/ACT MEA Interpretation: Classifications and Letters of Appointment Experience	2	AIS NSW
Planning and Programming with the new Mathematics 3-6 Syllabus	3	AIS NSW
Connecting Social and Emotional Learning, Positive Behaviour and Academic Success	2	AIS NSW
PYP Network Meeting	1	International Baccalaureate
Community Cohesion: Understanding extremism	1	AIS NSW
Planning and Programming with the new English 3-6 Syllabus	4	AIS NSW
From Text To Words: Strategies To Support Reading Difficulties	3	SPELD NSW
Mastering Morphology: Understanding How English Words Work	1	SPELD NSW
6th Annual Australian Islamic Schooling Conference (AAISC6)	2	Centre for Islamic Thought and Education/ UniSA
Primary Curriculum Requirements for School Registration	3	AIS NSW
Managing School Construction Projects	1	AIS NSW
WISE Forum	2	WISE Foundation
Leading the Implementation of the new Mathematics 3-6 Syllabus	3	AIS NSW
Collaboration, Communication, Connection	1	Compass
Planning and Implementation for Classical and Modern Languages 7-10	1	AIS NSW
Community Cohesion: Powerful partnerships	1	AIS NSW
English: Programming and Planning for the new English 7-10 Syllabus	4	AIS NSW
Planning and Programming for the New Mathematics 7-10 Syllabus	2	AIS NSW
Redundancies and Managing Restructures Experience	1	AIS NSW
Risk Assessment and Management in Schools: Child Protection and Mental Health	1	AIS NSW
RoSA/HSC Curriculum Requirements for Registration and Accreditation	1	AIS NSW
School Governance Module 10: Child Safe Schools - Values, Behaviours and Culture	6	AIS NSW
School Governance Module 13: NESA Registration and Accreditation	6	AIS NSW
School Governance Module 3: An Introduction to Legal Compliance	6	AIS NSW
School Governance Module 7: Child Protection	6	AIS NSW
School Registration Policy Requirements	2	AIS NSW
Social and Emotional Learning Webinar	1	AIS NSW
Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviour	1	AIS NSW

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviour Module 1	2	AIS NSW
Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviour Module 2	2	AIS NSW
Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviour Module 3	1	AIS NSW
Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviour Module 4	3	AIS NSW
Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviour Module 5	1	AIS NSW
The Annual Briefing 2023	1	AIS NSW
The Inclusive Classroom: Differentiating for ALL - Blended Learning Experience	1	AIS NSW
Using Evidence to Enhance Classroom Practice	1	AIS NSW
Using Quality Literature as Mentor Texts to Support Growing Writers K-6	3	AIS NSW
Whole-school Wellbeing 2024	Information Webinar	1	AIS NSW
DP Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation Cat 2	1	International Baccalaureate
DP Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches Cat 2	1	International Baccalaureate
DP Sports, exercise and health Science Cat 2	1	International Baccalaureate
PYP Making the PYP happen in the early years: Implementing agency Cat 1	2	International Baccalaureate

THEME 4. ATTENDANCE

Student Attendance Rates

Overall, 90 percent of students attended school on average each school day in 2023.

Student Attendance Data 2023
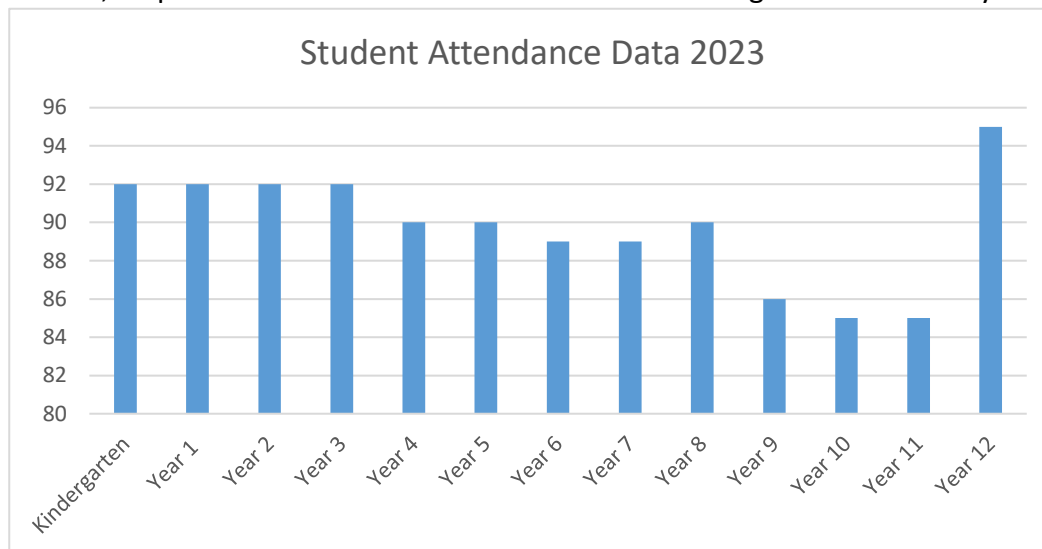
Management of Non-Attendance

In 2023, Al Zahra College implemented a comprehensive system to manage student attendance and address non-attendance issues. Parents are responsible for notifying the College of their child's absence via email or phone before the start of the school day. Class teachers take the attendance roll electronically at 8:40 am, and all absences are recorded on the Sentral system. Notifications of absences are received by the College Receptionist and reported accordingly.

For unexplained absences, if a student's absence is not explained by 9:00 am, a text message is sent to the parents or guardians requesting immediate contact with the College. Persistent unexplained absences are escalated to the relevant executive in the Primary and Secondary schools for follow-up. If parents or guardians repeatedly fail to inform the College of absences, these College executives contact them directly to remind them of their reporting obligations. All information related to unsatisfactory attendance is recorded in students' files and included in their College Reports.

To improve attendance and student engagement, the College encourages parents and guardians to ensure their children attend school regularly and to avoid condoning absences for unauthorised reasons such as birthdays or leisure activities. Students with persistently low attendance are monitored, and personalised strategies are developed to increase their attendance, which may include one-on-one meetings and alternative arrangements in consultation with parents or guardians. For frequent absences due to illness, the College requires medical certificates and consults with parents regarding the student's healthcare needs. The College also reports any concerns about student safety, welfare, or wellbeing to the Community Services Child Protection Helpline or the Child Wellbeing Unit. Lastly, the College retains attendance registers for seven years after the last entry and stores copies off-site at regular intervals to ensure data integrity and accessibility.

THEME 5: SCHOOL POLICIES

Al Zahra College Policies and Procedures are accessible via the College's CompliSpace PolicyConnect platform, from the Headmaster, the College admin office, or through parent communication platforms, including Sentral and Skoolbag, as well as Parent Information Guides. Some of our key policies are also accessible via our College website, including our Child Protection Policy. Any updates of policies and procedures are communicated on parent information platforms including Skoolbag, Sentral, and ClassDojo as well as through parent information upon enrolment.

The following school policies are publicly available on the Al Zahra College website

- Enrolment policy
- Child protection policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Discipline policy
- Complaints policy

THEME 6: STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION

Parents

Parent satisfaction and feedback are crucial to the continuous growth and improvement of Al Zahra College. In 2023, parents had numerous opportunities to engage with staff and provide feedback about their child's education. The College initiated a range of informal events to increase parental involvement and opportunities to interact and communicate with Al Zahra College staff, including family picnics, mothers', fathers', and grandparents' day's events, and numerous charity events throughout the year. These events conveyed to parents the appreciation and value that the holds for its parent community and enabled us to build a culture of trust between families and the College.

Formal opportunities for communication were also maintained, including regular face-to-face parent information sessions for kindergarten, new Years 1-12 students, the Diploma Programme, and other stages. Additionally, parents participated in weekly and termly assemblies, religious celebrations, the PYP Exhibition, MYP Personal Project presentations, Year 12 Art Expo, Year 6 and 12 graduation ceremonies, and parent-teacher meetings. The College also hosted parenting workshops on campus for preschool and primary school parents, including parenting workshops. These well-attended events kept parents informed and involved in their children's education and provided opportunities for informal interaction with college executives and teaching staff.

Parents regularly communicated with teachers and the executive team via email, ClassDojo messages, phone calls, and scheduled face-to-face meetings. The College promptly addressed any feedback or complaints according to its complaints and grievances procedures. Overall, parent feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with parents expressing satisfaction with their children's schooling experiences, student wellbeing, and character education.

Staff

Al Zahra College is a safe, positive, supportive, and collegial environment where issues can be raised and addressed in a productive and professional manner. Teachers meet with the executive staff weekly during admin meetings, and staff wellbeing and any other staff concerns are discussed. Feedback from staff and discussions with executives at the College indicated a high level of satisfaction with the College. Individual meetings are scheduled between teachers and the School Heads at the beginning, middle and end of the academic year as part of the PDP process.

Teachers continued to have autonomy and the executive support to participate in professional learning that was aligned with their PDP goals. Supporting teachers in this process has contributed to enhancing teacher autonomy and morale. Teachers are welcome and encouraged to raise any concerns or highlight any feedback during these meetings. In general, teachers also had many whole-school and Programme-specific meetings, which provided regular platforms for open communication between staff to share information, concerns, and to collaborate professionally. Al Zahra College teachers continued to have opportunities to participate in professional learning throughout the academic year, particularly in the areas of the International Baccalaureate and numeracy education.

Students

Students have a range of opportunities to express concerns or provide feedback to the College. The main channel for both Primary and Secondary students, is through the proactive Students' Representative Councils (SRC), whose members are elected by their peers. The Student Representative Councils articulate student concerns, identify and implement actions to address student concerns, facilitate peer mentoring programs, organise a variety of events, and lead successful fundraising initiatives throughout the year. Council members gather input from their fellow students and consider their feedback seriously. The SRC serves as an effective platform, allowing us to gauge high levels of student satisfaction with the College.

Additionally, SRC members contributed to the drafting and review of the College's student-friendly child safety policy, the child-specific code of conduct explanation, and the overall student code of conduct. These documents, which are explicitly discussed at the beginning of the academic year with all students, highlight that the College values and encourages student feedback and communication. In the classroom, students collaborate with teachers to develop Essential Agreements, which outline shared expectations for learning and behaviour.
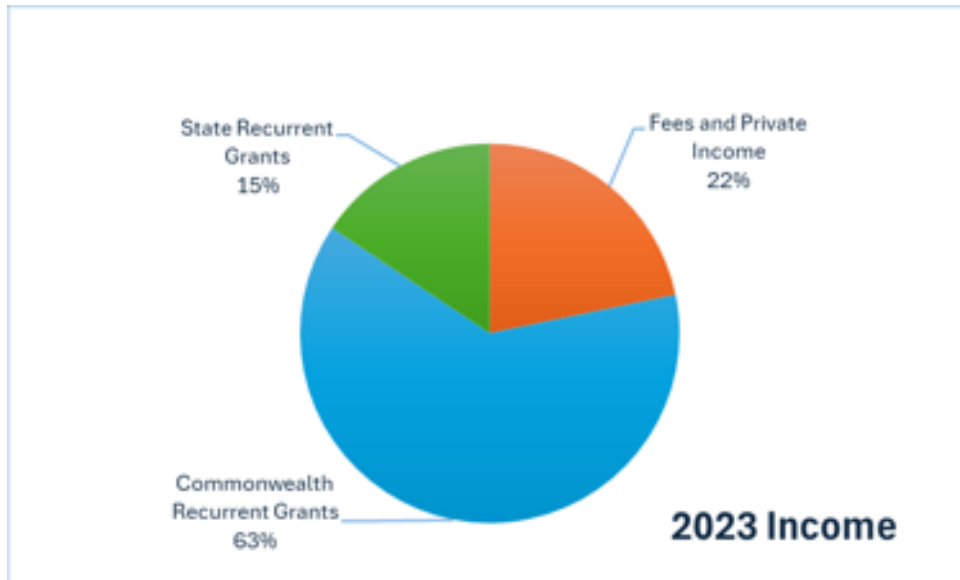

Throughout the year, the College has organised engaging, challenging, and enjoyable extracurricular activities that broadened students' skills and interests, enhancing their overall wellbeing. Feedback from students indicates that their teachers make them feel cared for, treat them fairly, and encourage and motivate them to perform at their best. The College executive team also maintains an open-door policy, ensuring that all student concerns are taken seriously and addressed promptly. Students have responded positively to the College's comprehensive reward systems implemented in both the Primary and Secondary schools.

THEME 7. SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Income 2023

Expenditure – 2023