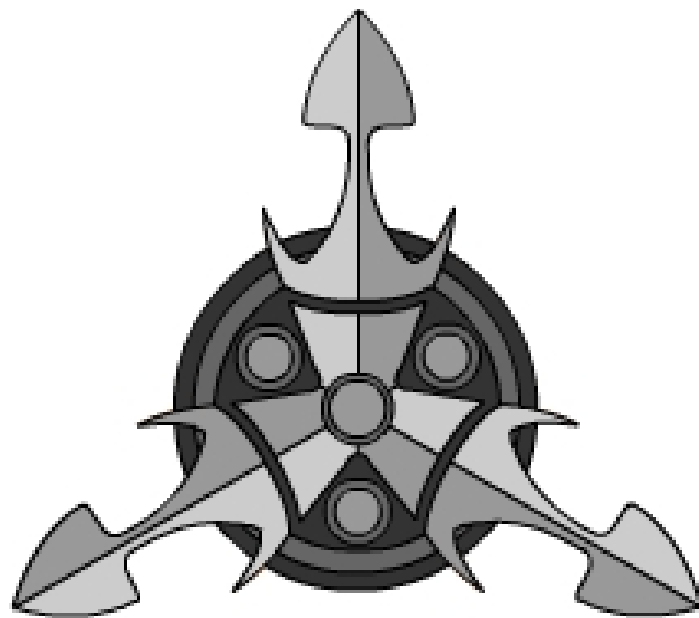


# Annual Report 2020

## Kamaruka Inc.

ABN 82 267 854 859



KAMARŪKA

Respect for Self

Respect for Others

Responsibility

# Annual Report 2020

## President of Committee's Message

This year - 2020 - is one that will live long in our memories.

It was a year that required everyone to face challenges over and above the many more usual ones that arise as part of life.

The pandemic overshadowed to some extent the devastating bush fires that occurred and required everyone to approach daily life in a manner not previously experienced by many of us – isolation, social distancing, sanitising and wearing masks. Whilst it brought tragedy and sadness, it also helped many people re-assess and realise the importance of family and friends, of the freedoms we enjoy and how easily most of us take all that we have for granted.

It certainly brings home the saying “you don't know what you have, until it is gone”.

And on top of all the changes, restrictions and limitations that the pandemic caused, we all lost the founder and inspirational person – Alfonso Scibilia – who created, nurtured and grew Kamaruka into the safe, encouraging haven where students can develop and find their way forward in the world.

These unexpected and life changing events have and will continue to challenge us for some time, yet we must persevere and work diligently to overcome these hurdles and others that will arise in the future, just as Alfonso did since starting Kamaruka 20 years ago. And there were many challenges.

History will record 2020 as the Covid-19 year – let your personal history record that it was the year that you learnt the importance of family, the importance of friends, the importance of special people in your life like Alfonso and your teachers and counsellors and the importance of appreciating that which we have, yet rarely stop to think about.

Best wishes to all for a positive, fruitful and healthy life.

Mario Scibilia - President

## Philosophy & Rationale

Kamaruka was established in 2001 to provide a more appropriate educational environment for boys diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

As the name suggests, attention deficit is a problem with concentration.

The mainstream classroom, typically with 20 or more students, cannot provide the environment conducive to learning for boys with this disorder. Their need for a consistent approach to discipline and structure in their lives is not possible with the diversity of teaching styles they would encounter in a regular school setting.

With a staff/student ratio of approximately 5:1 in secondary and 3:1 in primary classes, boys who have fallen behind academically can be given personalised attention to overcome their weaknesses and restore their self-esteem.

The timetable is deliberately weighted towards physical activity and academic classes are interspersed with a more “hands on” activity to reduce the length of time the boys have to sit and concentrate.

## Governance

The Kamaruka Inc. is a Public Benevolent Institution, registered as a Charity. The Advisory Committee acts as the governing body, establishing and monitoring the strategic direction of the school. The operation of the school is delegated by the Advisory Committee to the school principal.

The Advisory Committee meets at least once per term to review policies and oversee the general operation of the school. The elected members for 2020 were as follows:

Alfonso Scibilia / Mario Scibilia	President
John Bibby	Vice President
Deneille Sutton	Treasurer
Rick Scibilia	Secretary
Tom Witenden	Staff Representative
Marianne David	Staff Representative
Debbie Sojka	Staff Representative
Darren Giri	Parent Representative
Susan Glasgow	Parent Representative
Natalia Zarzycka	General Member

## Staffing

The teaching staff at Kamaruka is committed to maintaining a stable environment with minimal disturbance to the daily routine. Building a rapport with students and understanding each student's individual needs is vital to the successful implementation of the behavioural program. Being a small staff, regular briefings guarantee a unified approach to teaching and the use of consistent consequences in maintaining classroom discipline.

26 Staff were employed over the 2020 school year. No staff member identified as Aboriginal and/or of Torres Strait Islander background. All teaching staff are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. Specialist staff and teacher's aide all have a current Working with Children Check.

Principals:	Alfonso Scibilia Tom Witenden	(Master of Education – leadership and management)
Bookkeeper:	Richard Gaunt	
Business Manager:	Rick Scibilia	
School Counselors:	Debbie Sojka Emma Tyler Krystle Westhorpe	
Teaching Staff:	Marianne David Lizzie Playford-Wall Nicole Stylianou David Matler Huw Norris Kelly Newton Dan McHugh Yoki Han	(Master of Teaching, Bachelor of Arts, Grad dip of Education) (Bachelor of Science - Psychology, Post-grad Certificate of Education) (Bachelor of Education, Bachelor of Applied Science) (Master of Teaching, Bachelor of Health Sciences) (Post-grad Diploma of Education, Bachelor of Theology) (Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts, VIT permission to teach) (Master of Teaching, Bachelor of Design) (Grad Diploma of Secondary Education, Bachelor of Psychological Science)
Literacy Intervention Specialist:	Melanie McIntosh	(Master of Education, Bachelor of Veterinary Science, Grad dip of Education)
Teacher Aides:	Robert Shook Charmaine Bravo Natasha Kotova Janelle Stafford Lauren Power Luke Induni Meg Vincent Fiona Murray Olivia Scarlett Brandon Marsh	

## Professional Development

All registered teachers at Kamaruka are required to engage in at least 20 hours of professional development (PD) activities each year in order to renew their registration. All staff participated in weekly staff meetings and briefings which often present areas related to professional development. They also have access to the PD offered by ISV and other professional development organizations.

## Intensive Intervention Program

Over a period of two or three years, the intervention program at Kamaruka aims to address the social inadequacies and emotional issues associated with learning difficulties. Behavioural change is accomplished through a system of rewards and consequences, challenging boys to accept responsibility for the choices they make.

Boys between the ages of 8 to 15 years, who have low-esteem, but with average or above average IQ, will benefit immensely from the positive experiences and a sense of belonging.

The social skills training, strategies to self-manage behaviour and develop organisational skills, all in a very structured school environment, make the program particularly suited to boys exhibiting symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

## Curriculum

It is usual for enrolments at Kamaruka to have a history of behavioural issues and consequently are already under the guidance and treatment by a health professional. Psychological assessments and school reports allow us to place students in appropriate classes to meet their individual academic and social needs. Following the Australian Curriculum guidelines, the modified curriculum focuses on literacy & numeracy skills. Individual deficiencies are addressed with personalised remedial work for low achievers, and extension for those needing a more challenging curriculum.

Language skills are fundamental to the growth of self-esteem. The ability to express ideas and feelings is vital for the personal and social development of the individual.

The English curriculum is designed to improve reading fluency, comprehension, handwriting skills, expressive language, spelling and grammar.

The curriculum includes English, mathematics, science, art, drama, music, gymnastics, Foot & Fist Boxing, jiu-jitsu, swimming and outdoor education via camps and one-day activities.

## Student Progress at Kamaruka

Kamaruka is a registered special school. At Kamaruka, each student has an Individual Education Plan. All students are assessed at the time of enrolment and twelve monthly thereafter on the Wide Range Achievement Test for reading, spelling and maths.

The Kamaruka program targets students with low self-esteem and social/emotional difficulties. It is our belief that subjecting such children to national testing procedures, such as NAPLAN, would only exacerbate their condition. Consequently, with parental support, students enrolled at Kamaruka are granted exemption from such testing.

## Staff, Parent and Student Satisfaction with Kamaruka

Anecdotal reports from parents and health professionals reinforce the effectiveness of the structured program at Kamaruka. It is not uncommon to have parents report that students are generally more settled and are achieving better academically within a few weeks after enrolment.

When asked for feedback on their satisfaction of Kamaruka, staff reported the most satisfying aspects were:

- Kamaruka is more than a school, it is a family
- Seeing the positive changes in the students
- Working with other dedicated staff in a supportive environment
- Seeing the students happy, engaged in learning and making friends
- The school successfully supports the development of the students' social and personal skills
- Staff at Kamaruka know and care about students
- Staff at Kamaruka are dedicated to improving student learning outcomes
- Helping the students achieve their goals both academically and socially

Parents reported high levels of satisfaction with the following:

- Kamaruka is really supportive of all the students
- Teachers and staff are great at communicating with parents
- Parents are kept well informed about the learning programs undertaken by students
- Staff dedication to meet my child's needs has been remarkable and unwavering
- My child made significant progress in large part due to the guidance of staff
- Staff are so supportive

Students reported their satisfaction with the following reflections:

- I have become more assertive, more confident and found my voice as a person
- I feel I have gained mental toughness and I am ready to accept any challenge
- Everyone at this school has helped me so much on my way
- Kamaruka gave me an opportunity to actually enjoy coming to school
- I am so lucky to have an opportunity to have a connection with the people here
- I am very grateful for all the teachers and teacher aides for trying so hard to help the students
- The qualities I gained are respect, being more authentic, being more understanding of everyone and accepting other people's differences, just to name a few.

## Student Attendance

School attendance data for 2020 has not been published due to inconsistencies in the data as the result of the varying health advice and schooling arrangements in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Student non-attendance across the school during the year related predominantly to illness and/or medical, therapy and counselling appointments.

Kamaruka families are required to notify the school of an absence either in person or by telephone, email or note. All absences are recorded daily and systematically by the school. We encourage regular attendance, it is important if appropriate levels of progress are to be made. Kamaruka will work with parents and specialists to support a student's regular school attendance.

## School Operations

### Income:

Fees and levies	229,949
Interest	3,061
Donations	10,902
Government Grants	2,219,709
Government Stimulus	100,000
Other	38,679
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>2,602,299</u></b>

### Expenses:

Salaries and Associated Costs	1,420,198
Operating Expenses	708,004
Depreciation	84,560
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>2,212,762</u></b>

<b>Surplus</b>	<b><u>389,538</u></b>
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## Contact information

### Kamaruka Education Centre

52 River Street  
South Yarra Vic 3141  
Tel: (03) 9826 0330  
Fax: (03) 9826 4134

Email: [info@kamaruka.vic.edu.au](mailto:info@kamaruka.vic.edu.au)

ABN 82 267 854 859

### Postal Address:

PO Box 6086  
Chapel Street North  
South Yarra Vic 3141

Web: [www.kamaruka.vic.edu.au](http://www.kamaruka.vic.edu.au)