

# The Tombolo Academy

## Annual Report 2021



Tombolo Academy, AGEID 87019, 453 Bluff Road, Hampton 3188, Victoria

### Statement of Commitment from the Principal

The Principal attests that:

- All teachers at the school are Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registered.
- The school has met the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) minimum standards for registration (except where any exemptions apply).
- All expenses and commitments of funds have been used to support educational outcomes and operational needs; and
- The school complies with the Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order 1359.  
Child Safe Commitment

Tombolo Academy is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. Tombolo Academy has a zero tolerance for child abuse. We are committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability. Every person involved in Tombolo Academy has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she/they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

## Democratic Principals

Tombolo Academy is committed to the principles of a liberal democracy.

- We believe in an accountable, democratically elected government.
- We respect and observe the rule of law and believe that no person is above the law.
- We believe in equal rights for all before the law, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, gender, or other attributes.
- We believe not only in the freedom of religion, but also the need to practice tolerance and understanding of others' beliefs.
- We believe in the value of freedom of speech and freedom of association, but also acknowledge that we have the responsibility not to abuse this freedom.
- We believe in the values of openness and tolerance, and value and respect all members of the school community regardless of background.

## School Overview

Tombolo Academy is an Independent Specialist School for Twice Exceptional students, newly established in 2021, located in Hampton, Bayside. The school was registered with the VRQA to take students operating in at least one area at Year 7 to Year 10 in February 2021. In December 2021 the VRQA granted approval for the school to take students from Year 3 to Year 10. The foundation intake was approximately 27 students. The school is excited to grow and expand rapidly in the next few years.

### What is a Twice-Exceptional Student?

What is 2e? When an individual demonstrates “evidence [of] exceptional ability and disability which results in a unique set of circumstances.” Twice exceptionality is not a diagnosis; it is a conceptual way of identifying, understanding and supporting the social, emotional and academic needs of a uniquely gifted learner.

[The National Twice-Exceptional Community of Practice \(2e COP\)](#)

### The Tombolo Academy Mission

Every day we deliver a rich educational program that emphasises the strengths, gifts and talents of our students while building the skills necessary to be successful throughout their lives.

### The Tombolo Academy Vision

We imagine a time when all our students recognise their boundless potential, embrace their differences and are accepted for their uniqueness.

## **The Tombolo Academy Values**

At Tombolo Academy, we are committed to sustaining a positive environment in which all students and adults can flourish in an inclusive setting where all members of the community feel safe and valued. We bring these values to life through:

### **Respect**

- Respect ourselves.
- Respect each other.
- Respect our community and the world around us.
- Value and support diversity.

### **Humility**

- Remain humble despite our personal achievements, strengths, and differences.
- Take responsibility for our actions.
- Make informed choices and are considerate of others, and our community.
- Grow with dignity and integrity.

### **Resilience**

- Are brave when faced with challenges.
- Positively adapt to change in a variety of contexts.
- Show commitment, and apply ourselves until the end.
- Build confidence to solve problems and connect failure to learning.

### **Curiosity**

- Find the joy in learning.
- Have a sense of adventure and are willing to try new things.
- Develop an awareness of our place within the global community.
- Develop a sense of interest and wonder.

### **Collaboration**

- Work with others to achieve success.
- Foster strong partnerships between students, teachers, and others in our community.
- Acknowledge that by working together in a positive and constructive manner enables us to achieve collective outcomes.
- Take collective responsibility for the success and wellbeing of all learning in our community.

### **Empathy**

- Treat others with care and compassion.
- Consider the feelings of others before we act or react.
- Understand and appreciate the cultural diversity of our community.
- Develop an awareness of how we might impact the feelings of others.

## **Every day we align our actions to our core values.**

### **We see the potential in every student.**

- Each student has an Individual Learning Plan with clear learning and behavioural goals.
- We have high expectations for every student. After every session students reflect on their engagement and receive positive feedback in real-time and guidance for improvement.
- A Student Support Plan is designed for each student. It details tailored strategies to ensure that they can engage in their learning.
- Rigorous initial assessment of each student's needs begins with observations in their current setting.

### **We believe every student deserves to experience joy in their learning.**

- We provide an engaging and innovative learning experience, based on The Victorian Curriculum.
- Regular excursions take our students beyond the core academic curriculum and further encourage each student to make deeper links with their learning.
- We have a high staff to student ratio and so learning is modelled, scaffolded, and supported.

### **We invest in caring and trusting partnerships.**

- Our thorough intake process ensures we are the right program for families.
- Our focus is building strong rapport when a student first starts at our school. Every term starts with exploring the school values and students take part in a series of activities to build their trust, resilience, and confidence.
- Our enrolment process clearly sets out the expectations for parents and how we can support them during their child's journey.

## **Tombolo Academy School Board**

<b>Chair and Director</b>	Mark Northeast
<b>Director</b>	Alan, Wayne Saunders
<b>Director</b>	Deanne Cannizzaro
<b>Director</b>	Emma Grey
<b>Director</b>	Thomas Velican
<b>Director</b>	Anne Warner
<b>Director</b>	Angela Riordan

## Teaching standards and qualifications

All teachers employed at the Tombolo Academy are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT). Due to the challenging nature of a start-up school several staff left midyear.

Staff composition in 2021 was as follows:

<i>0.6 FTE Principal (February-June)</i>	<b>Anne Jackson:</b> <i>Principal, Diploma of Education, Graduate Diploma in Counselling, Master of Education, Gifted and Talented, Master of Education, Special Needs.</i>
<i>0.6 FTE Business Manager (February-September)</i>	<b>Catherine Kirby:</b> Certificate in Narrative Therapy, NADA Narrative Practices, Certificate in Business management, Post Graduate Certificate Program Management, Education Support Certificate.
<i>1.0 FTE Administration Officer (February-November)</i>	<b>Kristen Hughes:</b> Diploma in Business, Graduate certificate in Human Nutrition. Bachelor of social Science Double Major.
<i>0.6 FTE Finance Officer (February to November)</i>	<b>Shirley Hughes:</b> Certificate 2 in Business Studies, Certificate 1 in Bookkeeping.
<i>1.0 FTE Teacher (February – June]</i>	<b>Rhiannon Lowry:</b> Maths and Science Specialist; Master of Education, Monash University
<i>1.0 FTE Teacher (February – June)</i>	<b>Kintara Phillips:</b> English Teacher, Bachelor of Education, Primary and Secondary, Master of Education, Gifted and Talented.
<i>1.0 FTE Principal (June to present)</i>	<b>Helen Barrett:</b> Principal; B. of Arts (Hons) Business and Finance; B. of Arts (Hons) Humanities, English and Psychology; Postgrad. Cert. of Education (Primary 5-11 Years) with QTS; First Aid.
<i>1.0 FTE Assistant Principal (June onwards)</i>	<b>Alexander Newman:</b> Senior Class Teacher (Year 3-4); B. of Arts (Hons) Outdoor Adventure with Sports Development; Postgrad. Cert. in Education (Primary Education) with QTS; First Aid.
<i>1.0 FTE Assistant Principal (June onwards)</i>	<b>Jason Shulman:</b> Master of Education
<i>0.4 FTE Teacher</i>	<b>Kim McClounan:</b> Class Teacher (Foundation – Year 4); Bachelor’s Degree (Teaching), Bachelor of Creative Arts, Photography; First Aid
<i>1.0 FTE Education Support Officer</i>	<b>Daniel Lewis:</b> Teaching Aide/Sport Coach
<i>1.0 FTE Education Support Officer</i>	<b>Emily Nicholls</b> Teaching Aide
<i>1.0 FTE Administration Officer</i>	<b>Melissa NeSmith:</b> Administration Officer; Dip. in Secretarial Studies; Cert. III in Children’s Services (Teaching Assistant); B.Sc. in Education (Special Ed K-12); M.Sc. in Education; First Aid.

## Student Report

The school started with 27 students and this number was maintained throughout the year. The rates of attendance for the 2021 year as per the annual student attendance data was:

Year 7	86.68%
Year 8	87.86%
Year 9	87.17%

The Tombolo Academy complies with the Australian Education Act (2013) that requires children of school age to be in full-time attendance at school.

- All enrolled students are required to attend school unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent.
- Illness is reasonable grounds for absence.
- Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and are only absent if unwell or if absolutely necessary.
- Parents have a responsibility to provide a written note or telephone call to the school explaining why an absence has occurred.
- All student absences are recorded in both the morning and the afternoon by teachers.
- Government departments and enrolment auditors may seek student attendance records.
- Staff will contact parents with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences.

## Curriculum

The Tombolo Academy curriculum is creative, flexible, and innovative. It involves explicit teaching of different strategies, teacher modelling and scaffolding. Students have clear learning intentions and success criteria. Class sizes are small with a maximum of 10 students and 2 staff per class. Teachers are there at the point of need and offer 1:1 support when required.

The current scope and sequence of integrated topics are categorised into 4 term units (two-year rolling program) of work linked to the Victorian Curriculum and these incorporate science, history, humanities, and personal and social capability.

Cycle One	Cycle Two
Earth and beyond-The Expanding Universe	Origins-First Peoples
Globalisation-Cause and Effect	Microworlds-Zooming In
The Great Civilisations-Egypt to Asia	Changing the Code
Our Planet, Our Future	A Race Against Time-Survival and Adaptation

As we are a start-up school we are continually developing and expanding our curriculum. We develop learning units that encourage students' wondering and questioning. This leads to higher-order thinking skills as students move through the process of inquiry to investigate and express their growing understandings. Students are supported to work independently, and collaboratively. We

encourage each student to make deeper links with their learning by developing their research and inquiry skills.

Relationships are at the heart of great learning at Tombolo Academy. Our team works closely with parents to establish a working partnership and quickly build confidence in every student. We want students to feel empowered, and they can make valuable contributions in the world around them.

## Professional Development

All registered teachers at Tombolo Academy are required to engage in at least 20 hours of professional development (PD) activities each year to renew their registration. All staff participated in all staff meetings and daily briefings which frequently present areas related to professional development. Staff also have access to the PD offered by ISV and other professional development organisations.

In 2021 staff attended seminars on:

- identifying school values
- identifying the mission and vision statement of the school
- special education
- first aid, CPR, anaphylaxis, Asthma, child safety
- Infection Control Training
- PDA (Pathological Demand Avoidance) workshops
- TEAM Teach
- Curriculum Development
- Micro Credentials

All staff attended onsite PD days as well as online seminars throughout the year.

## Standardised Assessments

All of the students took part in NAPLAN 2021.

## Parent and Student Feedback

I am quite blown away by how incredible Tombolo is - the fascinating curriculum, the approach to learning and interesting topics, the amazing staff, the gorgeous students, the calm and progressive environment and by how happy xxxx is to be part of the school community and so so so happy at the end of each day. He is already growing more confident, resilient, engaged and mature from his first 4 weeks at Tombolo - he talks so positively about all aspects of the school and is so grateful and happy to be attending there.

### ***New Parent***

To all the staff at Tombolo,

Thank you for everything you have done for the kids this year. It is evident how much you value each one of them. I have seen so much growth in XXX over the last 6 months and for the first time I feel confident that he is where he is meant to be. I hope you all have a wonderful break.

***New Parent***

We just want to say a huge thank you to all of you. It's been an unbelievably turbulent year, not just with COVID but also starting at a brand-new school and having to create everything from a new curriculum to new staff. We simply can't express enough how grateful we are and totally in awe of your commitment. You make the world of difference to XXX and therefore to our whole family. The ripple effects are endless. Thanks for sticking with it and showing enormous endurance and kindness.

***New Parent***

Thank you to all the staff for the energy and thought that you put in to make this school an engaging place for our kids.

Your calm and gentle demeanours have made Tombolo feel like a safe place for XXX to be. Your acceptance and understanding have allowed XXX to flourish.

Thank you for all the extra time and hard work you have put in.

***Parent***

Thanks a lot for making school fun for me and a place I enjoy coming to.  
Thanks for all your hard work over the last 2 terms.

***Student***

Thank you for making the school a safe place for people to come and learn and escape their shell.

***Student***

There are not enough words to describe how grateful we are to you all for the incredible effort you have put into the school over the past 2 terms. The environment you have created, the kindness and patience you have shown has impacted our family; we have seen XXX's confidence and happiness grow dramatically and for that we are very thankful.

***Parent***



Dear Tombolo Team

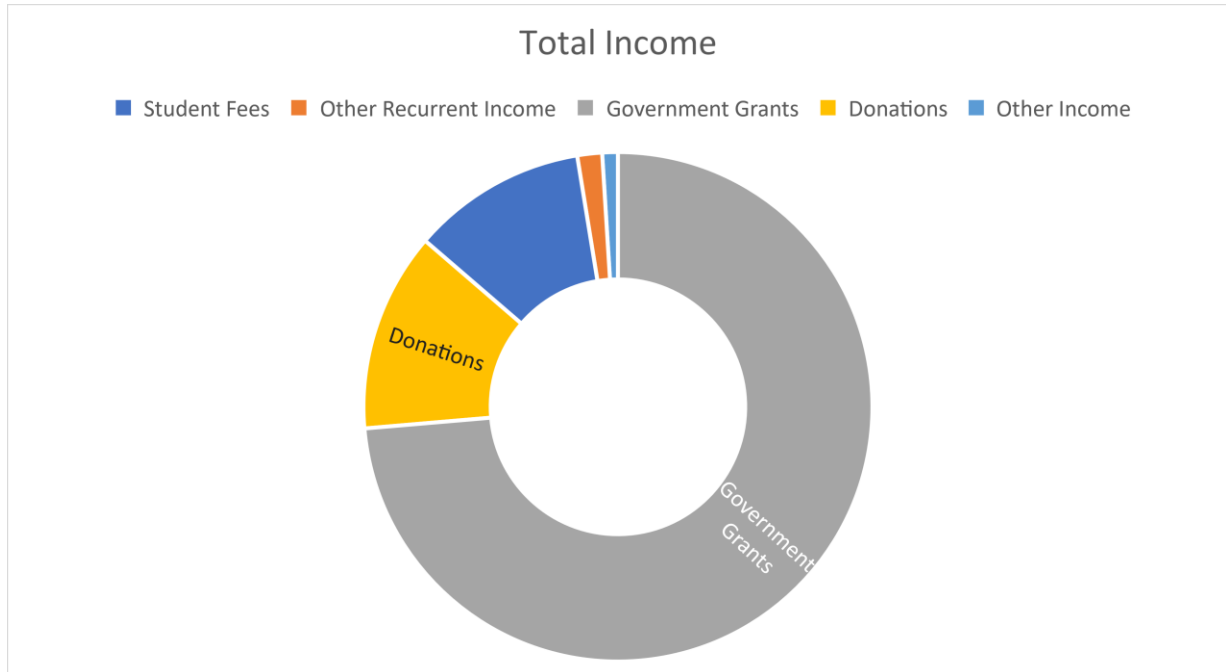
Thank you for all of your amazing and heartfelt efforts this half year! It was probably hard enough to join a start-up school 4-5 months after opening, let alone in a pandemic and where the children are gorgeous but have significant needs. Yet you've taken it all on board with gusto, positivity, and passion. From the helpful and regular communications with parents to the efforts to bring new talent into the school to the many new activities and fun events and now the exciting renovations! XXX and I are truly in awe at how much you've achieved in such a short amount of time. We've seen XXX really start to shine and have some confidence thanks to your investment and strategies, but also because you've seen him - you've gone behind the defensive exterior to start to draw out the boy with a beautiful heart, brain full of ideas and so much potential who just needs some guidance and someone other than his parents to believe in him. We can't thank you enough for what you've done and are doing and are really excited for the year ahead.

**Parent**

## Financial Report

### Total Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31st December 2021

Total Income \$1,533,768



Total Expenditure \$1,042,475



Tombolo Academy is a not-for-profit organization but adhered to contemporary business practices to ensure that the finances are managed in an effective manner. The Finance Committee has been reviewing the annual budget, managing the cash flow, and developing a Financial Risk Control Register.

## Contact Information

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