

# Children's House Program

Ages 3-6 years



# MONTESSORI CHILDREN'S HOUSE

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Rockingham Montessori School's Children's House classrooms are led by a dedicated and highly-trained Montessori teacher and education assistant. Montessori children begin Children's House around the time of their third birthday. They attend five mornings a week, between 8:30 am and 11:45 am. When their teacher considers them ready, four-year-olds will gradually transition to attending full days, from 8:30am to 3:00pm. Five-year-olds attend five full days a week.

Our Children's House educational program is divided into five areas and provides every opportunity for children to achieve the outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework for Australian Early Childhood. The five areas are:

- Practical life exercises (including Health and Physical Education)
- Sensorial materials
- Language
- Mathematics, and
- Cultural activities (Science, History and Geography, The Arts, Technology & Enterprise).



# MONTESSORI LEARNING MATERIALS

The Children's House introduces children to a wide range of sensorial materials with which they explore the world; for example, music bells to strike and match, sound cylinders for shaking and matching, and sandpaper tablets giving experiences of rough, rougher, roughest, and a tower of cubes to demonstrate volume. These and other materials help the child to develop a sound base for learning through the use of language and mathematical materials.

The children are also provided with experiences in practical living: cooking, brushing and polishing for example. There is a kitchen area in which everything is scaled down to a size easily used by children. These real-life activities develop confidence and manual dexterity and provide a link between what happens at school and at home.

In the Children's House, children may work independently or with the teacher, individually or in small groups. The classroom is calm and has a sense of order, and the children are busy and focused on their tasks.

As most learning occurs during the first six years of life, it's during this period that children have the power of absorption and special sensitivities.

To fulfil these needs in a child, the "prepared environment" is designed to provide materials or activities that meet the needs of the child.



# OUR 'PREPARED ENVIRONMENT'

- Offers the child the opportunity to work independently over an extended period of time at their own pace
- Gives the opportunity for repetition
- Isolates one concept only, making learning easier
- Is linked with the world outside and
- Requires independent thought and decision-making and is often self correcting

Here, teachers meet the social, emotional, intellectual, physical and cultural needs of a child through observation.

## MONTESSORI ON CHILD DEVELOPMENT FROM 3 TO 6 YEARS

The 3 to 6-year-old child is undergoing a process of self-construction. Acquisition of one's own first culture is the child's central developmental drive in the first plane of development.

The Children's House environment serves this drive abundantly, bringing the world to the child. Globes, maps, songs, land forms, collections of pictures of life in different cultures, and much more, is offered, with the aim of helping the child to grow as an individual appreciating the larger context of their world.

### **The main areas in the Children's House program are:**

- 'Practical Life' links the home environment with the classroom and encompasses control of movement, care of person, care of environment, and grace and courtesy
- 'Sensorial' provides a sense of order to the child's world and begins to develop capacities for distinction, classification and abstraction using sensory materials with precise language
- 'Language' is developed holistically. Oral language is facilitated through a variety of activities such as songs, games, poems, stories and classified language cards. Reading and writing alongside the power of language begins with alphabet symbols and story-telling
- 'Mathematics' is a language for understanding measurable relationships that link the concrete and the abstract. The child has seen the distinctions of distance, dimension, graduation, identity, similarity and sequence, and will now be introduced to the functions and operations of numbers.

Considerable emphasis is also placed on Creative Arts, Music, Science, Geography and Cultural Studies.

# IS THERE A MONTESSORI CURRICULUM?

When your child enrolls into our Children's House Program for 3-6 years, the daily practice of Montessori philosophy is made possible by a clearly defined Montessori curricular framework. The Montessori curriculum includes practical life, sensorial, language, mathematics, botany, geography, art, music, drama, environmental studies and more!

When you look around the Montessori classroom, you will see the Montessori curriculum in all the activities and materials on the shelves.

Everything in the classroom is size appropriate for the child, from furniture to crockery. The colour of the furnishings, floors and wall should be soft and muted with limited wall displays so that the brightly coloured Montessori materials attract the children and focus their attention.

## WHAT IS PRACTICAL LIFE?

Children have daily opportunities to learn and use practical life skills, which enable them to develop concentration and specific skills which lead to enhanced educational outcomes as well as the life skills of caring for their environment, themselves and others in the community.



# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

## HOW DOES MONTESSORI PROMOTE MY CHILD'S LEARNING?

Montessori focuses on children's learning and self-discovery, not on educators 'teaching'. Fostering independence is an integral part of Montessori philosophy:

- Children work individually or in small, self-selected groups
- Self-directed children are encouraged to work independently with minimal educator direction once they have been introduced to a range of new concepts or learning activities
- The children can access all activities independently or with the help of a peer without relying on constant adult assistance or direction
- The child is left to choose their own work but is presented with new, developmentally appropriate work regularly to increase their repertoire of choice and provide more opportunities for them to uncover their interests
- The Montessori child is put in charge of their learning through their exploration - this may seem a subtle distinction, but it is a crucial part of the Montessori approach.

## HOW WILL MY CHILD DEVELOP CONCENTRATION

Dr. Montessori discovered that young children desire to be active for long periods in concentrated activity. If interrupted by group work or whole class activities, children cannot reach a state of deep focus and choose work that needs only superficial involvement.



# MARIA MONTESSORI - EDUCATION

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Maria Montessori was a medical doctor who became world renowned for her work in the education of young children. She was born in Italy on 31 August 1870 and in 1896 was the first woman to graduate as a doctor from the University of Rome. In her work as a voluntary researcher at the University's psychiatric clinic, she visited asylums to select patients for treatment and there observed children with intellectual disabilities.

It became clear to her that none of them had any hope of improvement while in asylum conditions and she became interested in the education of these children. She began to study, and eventually to work with, children with intellectual disabilities, becoming convinced that the key to their education lay in the release of their individual potential.

She designed and built a set of learning materials and developed an educational environment in which self-motivated learning could take place. Her success with these children led her to take an interest in the education of children without disabilities, and in 1907 she started her first school, the Casa dei Bambini in a Rome slum.

Thus began Dr Montessori's life-long involvement in education rather than medicine.

The Casa dei Bambini attracted a great deal of attention, and in 1909 Maria Montessori ran her first training course for teachers. From this came her theory of education (set out in 'The Montessori Method') and the growth of Montessori Schools all over Europe and the USA.

The Montessori approach to education is based on mutual respect and co-operation.

Dr Montessori believed that learning starts at birth and children develop naturally.

Dr Montessori was nominated three times for the Nobel Peace Prize, and she lived to see herself and her theories acclaimed throughout the world.



*"Only through freedom and environmental experience it is practically possible for human development to occur"*

**- Maria Montessori**



MONTESSORI  
SCHOOLS & CENTRES AUSTRALIA

*'We envision a sustainable,  
just and peaceful world  
where custodians of tomorrow  
engage, contribute and thrive'*

Rockingham Montessori School is a proud member of 'Montessori Schools & Centres Australia'  
We acknowledge, reference and refer to their published guide  
- Montessori Parent Guide Ages 3-6, 2022

