



Montessori Children's Centre, McLaren Vale

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Education, Curriculum and Learning Policy

NQS

QA1	1.1.1	<i>Curriculum decision making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.</i>
	1.1.2	<i>Each child's current knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.</i>
	1.1.3	<i>The program, including routines, is organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.</i>
	1.1.4	<i>The documentation about each child's program and progress is available to families.</i>
	1.1.5	<i>Every child is supported to participate in the program.</i>
	1.1.6	<i>Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions and to influence events and their world.</i>
	1.2.1	<i>Each child's learning and development is assessed as part of an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluation.</i>
	1.2.2	<i>Educators respond to children's ideas and play and use intentional teaching to scaffold and extend each child's learning.</i>
	1.2.3	<i>Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, is regularly used to implement the program.</i>

NATIONAL REGULATIONS

Regs	73	<i>Educational programs</i>
	74	<i>Information about the educational program to be kept available</i>
	75	<i>Information about educational program to be given to parents</i>
	76	<i>Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program</i>

EYLF

LO1 – LO5	<i>All learning outcomes under the early years learning framework will be addressed through our policy and practices.</i>
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AIM

Educators aim to create positive learning environments and guide experiences for each child in conjunction with their family. Educators will observe children and facilitate their learning to provide each child with an individualised portfolio by documenting their learning throughout the year. Educators will use the Montessori Curriculum (0-6) to guide their pedagogy. Children and their families will be encouraged to participate in the ongoing process to promote engaged learning.

RELATED POLICIES

Additional Needs Policy	Child Protection Policy
Continuity of Education and Care Policy	Educator and Management Policy
Enrolment Policy	Excursion Policy
Food, Nutrition and Beverage Policy	Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy
Immunisation and Disease Prevention Policy	Infectious Diseases Policy
Medical Conditions Policy	Orientation for Children Policy
Physical Activity Promotion Policy	Physical Environment (Workplace Safety, Learning and Administration) Policy
Record Keeping and Retention Policy	Relationships with Children Policy
Technology Usage Policy	

IMPLEMENTATION

Our Educational Leader is **Ainsley Roscrow**.

The role of the educational leader is to work with educators to provide curriculum direction and to ensure children achieve the outcomes of the approved learning framework.

Montessori Children's Centre is committed to the Montessori Method of teaching. The 0-6 Montessori National Curriculum provides the framework by which educators observe, plan and reflect on individual children's learning and development.

Our service is committed to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) in conjunction with the Montessori Curriculum.

Observations of all children enrolled in our service will be documented and kept for future reference and reflection, through use of portfolios. Children's portfolios will be available for a child's family members to look at but remains the property of the Service for the duration of the child's enrolment. Portfolios will be added to regularly by educators, families and children and reflected upon by educators to ensure programming for each child remains relevant to their interests and developmental stage.

Other Approved Learning Frameworks (current as of 8 December 2011)

- Australian Capital Territory
Every Chance to Learn - Curriculum framework for ACT schools preschool to Year 10
- Tasmania
The Tasmanian Curriculum, the Department of Education of Tasmania, 2008
- Victoria
The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework
- Western Australia
The Curriculum Framework for Kindergarten to Year 12 Education in Western Australia.

The Montessori Method of Education

The Montessori Method of Education underpins the policies, procedures and practices of all aspects of our work at our service.

The Montessori Method of Education was developed by Dr. Maria Montessori (1870 - 1952). The Montessori methodology has long enjoyed worldwide acceptance as a respected alternative educational approach.

In December 2011, The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) recognised the Montessori National Curriculum as an alternative national curriculum framework to be included on ACARA's Recognition Register.

The Montessori Method of Education provides an educational framework for children from pre-school to university age with principles and practice guidelines for educational environments for the four planes of development Dr. Montessori identified children pass through on their journey to adulthood.

The Montessori approach is supported by three distinct components.

- *A Philosophy of Education*
- *A Methodology To Guide Educators*
- *A Set Of Materials To Support The Translation Of The Theory Into Practice*

At Montessori Children's Centre educators follow the principles and practices Montessori developed for Plane 1 of development and use the many different Montessori materials which correspond to this age group to provide inspirational environments for young children. They see education as "aid to life" as the natural development and interests of each child informs their interactions with young children.

Principles of Montessori Education

Montessori identified 4 Planes of Development on the child's passage from birth to adulthood.

In the First Plane of Development from birth to age six, the child is characterised by his or her 'absorbent mind', absorbing all aspects of his or her environment, language and culture.

In the Second Plane of Development from age six to twelve, the child uses a 'reasoning mind' to explore the world with abstract thought and imagination.

In the Third Plane of Development from age twelve to eighteen, the child *****

In the Fourth Plane of Development from age eighteen to twenty-four, the adult explores the world with a 'specialist mind' taking his or her place in the world.

It is principles and practices of Plane One of Development which are applied at the Montessori Children's Centre.

First principle: The Absorbent Mind

Unconscious Absorption

- *Montessori believed that an infant possesses the capacity to absorb the environment simply by being in it. She used the way the child learns to speak as an example of this.*
- *Montessori believes that the first three years are those of unconscious absorption.*
- *We don't know that the child has been absorbing things from the environment until the child brings them to a conscious level. E.g. says his/her first word.*
- *All of a baby's impressions are registered by his sense. The child touches everything, examines it minutely and puts it in his mouth.*

Conscious Level

- *From about age three the child brings what he/she has already and continues to absorb to a conscious level.*
- *The child now begins to classify impressions e.g. colour red into shades of red.*
- *This sub stage which lasts until about the age of six is characterized by the acquisition of language and the mastery of physical movements.*

Second Principle: Sensitive Periods for Learning

- *Montessori believed that there are sensitive periods for learning in which the child will learn effortlessly.*
- *Once they have passed the learning can still be done, but it is with effort only.*
- *These are now known as windows of opportunity and have been validated by recent brain research findings.*

From zero to six the child is sensitive to:

- *Order*
- *Acquiring language*
- *Movement*
- *Social aspects of life*
- *Small objects*
- *Learning through the senses.*

Guiding Montessori Principles

- *The child wants to learn*
- *The child has an innate tendency to explore.*
- *The child wants to choose it and do it for him/herself*
- *The child learns through his/her senses.*
- *The hand is the chief instrument of the brain.*
- *The child wants to do what we do and use the same things we use.*
- *The child is fascinated by small objects.*
- *The child likes things to be orderly and beautiful.*
- *The child wants a chance to practice things*
- *The child wants to do it right.*
- *Practice makes perfect and permanent*
- *The child is interested in his/her social group.*
- *The child has an intense desire to communicate and is particularly receptive to language.*

For further Montessori Information please refer to *Statement of Principles*.

Early Years Learning Framework

- *Each child's learning will be based on their interests and strengths and guided by our educators.*
- *Educators must work in collaboration with families to provide relevant learning experiences for each child, based on their interests and family experiences.*
- *Every child will be equally valued and their achievements and learning celebrated.*
- *Educators will observe and record the strengths and learning of each child.*
- *Educators will work closely with children and families to generate ideas for the curriculum.*
- *Learning Outcomes will be linked to the curriculum during and after each child's learning has occurred. The curriculum must not be pre-programmed to match specific Learning Outcomes.*
- *The curriculum will be based on the children's interests, educators extending children's interests, spontaneous experiences and family input.*
- *Where appropriate, the service will liaise with external agencies and support persons to best educate and care for children with additional needs.*
- *Where appropriate, the curriculum (play and learning experiences) will build and develop each child's Learning Stories, Portfolio and Observations of each child's strengths and achievements.*
- *The curriculum will be evaluated and reflected upon each week by educators.*

Learning and Play

- *Children are encouraged to express themselves creatively through a wide variety of indoor and outdoor activities.*
- *Children's fine and gross motor skills are strengthened and developed through a wide variety of both indoor and outdoor activities including manipulative play, block play, sensory play, dramatic play, drawing and other physical activities such as running and skipping.*
- *Mathematics and science concepts along with exploration of natural aspects of our environment are encouraged through block play, building, cooking, water play, sensory play, collecting natural materials such as leaves and rocks and gardening.*
- *Language development is encouraged through educators modelling language, show and tell, story time, games, poems and dramatic play experiences.*
- *Social/emotional and independence skills are strengthened through activities such as role-play, dramatic play, group games and self-help tasks.*
- *Music and movement activities encourage physical, social and creative areas of a child's development.*
- *Road safety, hygiene, dental care and nutrition will all be built into the weekly program.*

These activities will be supervised and guided by educators to find out how child responds as an individual and also as part of a group. Educators will work in conjunction with families to provide learning experiences that are relevant to each child and tailored to their specific needs. A child's home language, culture and religious practices will be accepted and included in the program.

From this, educators will assess the child's needs and plan ways to meet these needs. We evaluate this program every week in order to make sure we stay on target and help each child to reach their full potential. The weekly program will be displayed in the room it takes place in. We welcome any suggestions and are happy to answer questions from family members at any time.

EYLF Learning Outcomes

1. Children have a strong sense of identity.
2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world.
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
4. Children are confident and involved learners.
5. Children are effective communicators.

SOURCES

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

National Quality Standard

Early Years Learning Framework

REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed annually.

The review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

Next review date: 1 June 2013