



Southern Montessori School

Prospectus

*The child is truly a miraculous being, and this should be felt deeply
by the educator. - Dr Maria Montessori*



Vision Statement

A Montessori learning environment that involves families, educators and the broader community in empowering children to reach their potential.

Mission Statement

We provide a challenging and diverse education that fosters independence, respect, collaboration and a love of learning, and supports children to be valuable members of the community and care for the environment.

Statement of Philosophy

We believe in the philosophical principles of Montessori Education.

Our school's policies, procedures and practices are underpinned by Montessori philosophy and based on a deep understanding of child development and how children learn. The Montessori approach recognises the potential and uniqueness of children and their immense capacity to learn when provided with a carefully prepared environment, specifically developed materials and curriculum, and highly skilled, caring and observant educators.

Within this framework:

- We will provide opportunities for students to develop the self-discipline needed to take increasing responsibility for their behaviour, so they can contribute in a meaningful and responsible way to their environment and community, and participate effectively in democratic decision making.
- We will endeavour to support children to realise their full potential as intelligent and capable learners through the provision of individualised programs, which value students' diverse experiences and acknowledge their unique strengths and needs.
- We will provide a stimulating learning environment which facilitates the development of intellectual curiosity, ethical thinking, critical and creative thinking, love of order, concentration and independence so that children feel empowered to take risks and develop confidence in themselves as problem solvers and life-long learners.
- We will explicitly teach practical life skills and provide opportunities for children to apply these skills to enable them to become increasingly self-reliant and self-confident.
- We will provide opportunities for parents to participate in our Montessori community, respecting their role as their child's first teacher. We will support parents, through informal discussion and formal information sessions, to incorporate Montessori philosophy into their child's home life.
- We will, as educators, reflect the values and principles of Montessori philosophy in our daily practice, and participate in professional learning at many levels to ensure that we maintain a culture of best practice methodology and continuous professional improvement.



Welcome to Southern Montessori Education Centre

On behalf of the children, staff and Board, I would like to warmly welcome you to our school.

Southern Montessori Education Centre aims to provide challenging educational programs that have Montessori principles at their core and are based on sound educational theory and practice delivered through small, multi-aged classes.

Montessori education is a holistic approach to learning that is child-centred, teacher facilitated and addresses the physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs of children.

The Montessori approach is unique and is based on Dr Maria Montessori's observations of child development. Her discoveries of the needs and characteristics of children at various stages of their development are the keys to establishing carefully prepared learning environments that promote children's natural curiosity and love of learning.

Under the guidance of our professionally trained, dedicated teaching team, children explore, discover, and use their imagination and creativity to build their knowledge and understanding of the world.

The carefully sequenced teaching materials and learning program encourage children to take an active role in their learning, giving them opportunities to develop qualities of independence and self-discipline. The approach fosters social awareness and responsibility and encourages children to value differences.

Please join us for a school tour to learn more about Montessori education so that you can make an informed choice for your child's education.

I look forward to meeting you.

Noel Browne
Principal

Southern Montessori Education Centre at a Glance...

Montessori Philosophy

The Montessori philosophy embraces the whole child, their natural curiosity and love of learning. Based on mutual respect and cooperation, Montessori education encourages independence by providing environments that meet the developmental needs of children. This builds self-confidence, inner discipline, a sense of self-worth and promotes positive social behaviour.

Dr Maria Montessori's insights and understanding of child development have been enormously influential all over the world, both through the Montessori movement and in mainstream education, which has incorporated many of her practices.

Interestingly, Montessori education parallels what is now known about brain development and actively fosters cognitive functions, social cognition, and such higher-order competencies as empathy and leadership thus providing a strong foundation for life-long learning.

Montessori Education develops:

- Concentration and persistence
- Independence
- A sense of order
- A positive attitude towards learning
- Initiative and intrinsic motivation
- Self-confidence
- Self-discipline
- Sensory motor skills
- Natural curiosity
- Cooperation and a sense of community
- Respect for the rights and needs of others
- Respect for the natural world



Key Principles of the Montessori Method

Integrated Curriculum: The Montessori curriculum is organised into a spiral of integrated studies with the aim of making education a coherent whole.

Independence: Great care is taken to create learning environments that foster children's growing independence.

Order: Order underlies all aspects of the environment. This includes the physical environment as well as the adults and their approach and the sequence of presentations.

Choice: Children are supported to become self-disciplined and learn to make good choices. This is a major goal of Montessori education and education for life.

Freedom: Although there is freedom within the classroom, it is freedom within limits. Children are limited by the requirement to be constructive and responsible with materials and behaviour.

Multi-age classroom: In the multi-age classroom children are grouped according to specific planes of development. A stable and strong community develops as children continue with the same group for three years.

Movement: Movement greatly enhances learning. The Montessori materials all involve active use and participation by children.

Control of Error: In the early years, the environment, and in particular the materials, are prepared in a way that allow children to become aware of their mistakes and to correct them.

Materials: The Montessori materials act as keys to children's development.

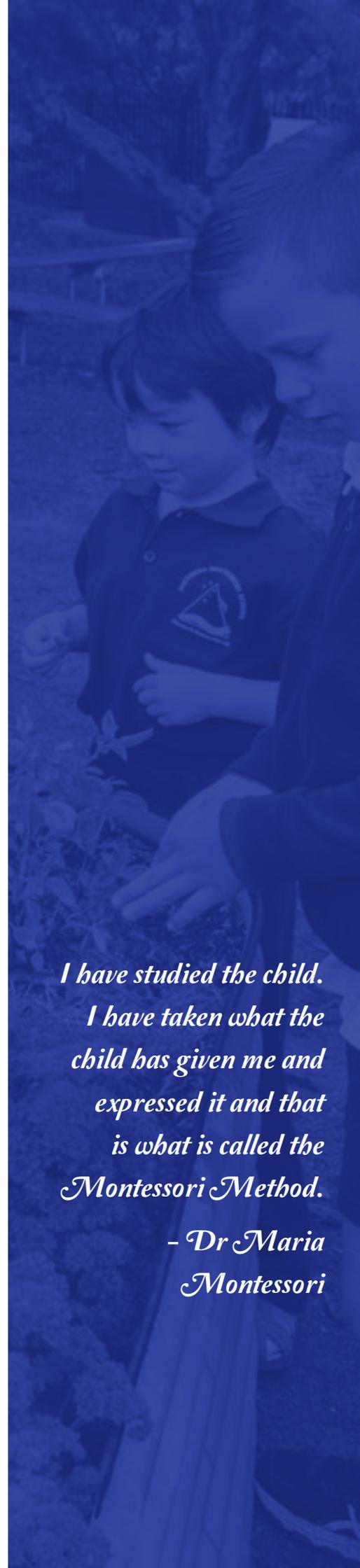
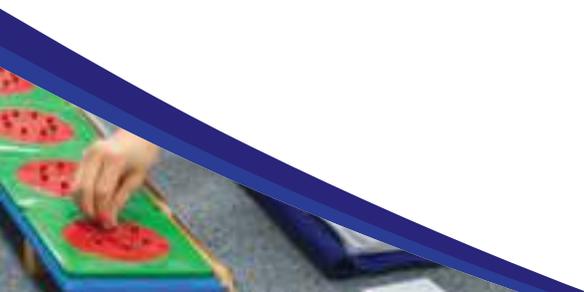
Role of the Adult: Working as a facilitator, the Montessori teacher builds a culture of learning and inquisitiveness. Montessori teachers have high expectations of children's academic and social achievement.

Self-discipline and positive guidance: Montessori teachers use kind and firm guidance with the aim of helping children learn self-discipline and self-control. Montessori children respect each other and their environment.

Intrinsic Motivation: Children are intrinsically motivated and are driven by their desire to become independent and competent learners.

*I have studied the child.
I have taken what the
child has given me and
expressed it and that
is what is called the
Montessori Method.*

*- Dr Maria
Montessori*





Our Teaching Team

All teachers are qualified and registered to teach in South Australia and many either have Montessori qualifications or are working towards them. Our highly skilled, caring, committed teachers and classroom assistants provide quality Montessori educational programs.

The combination of small class sizes and experienced educators allows us to offer personalised teaching and learning programs.

Our Special Education support teacher establishes strong working partnerships with the regular classroom teachers in order to help ensure that children's learning needs are identified and supported as early as possible.

Our Curriculum

Educators at Southern Montessori School implement the Montessori National Curriculum and the Australian National Curriculum. The Montessori National Curriculum has been recognised by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) as an alternative curriculum framework.

The education of children does not aim at preparing them for school but for life.
- *Dr Maria Montessori*



Our Early Learning Centre

Embodying the Montessori philosophy, our Early Learning Centre provides the ideal learning environment for young children. The Early Learning Centre caters for young children in four distinct education programs: Baby Steps, Toddlers, Preschool and the 4 Year Old Friday Program.

Baby Steps and Toddler Programs

The Baby Steps and Toddler Programs provide a unique opportunity for parents and children to learn together in a Montessori environment, guided and supported by a trained coordinator. Dr Maria Montessori developed her approach to education by observing children's development during their early years. She believed that education begins at birth and that the first six years of life are critical for setting the foundation for their future learning and development. She observed that during these early years, children learn through their senses when their ability to absorb information is at its highest. The early years are therefore critical for the formation of positive attitudes towards learning.

The Montessori materials for this age are specifically designed to provide children with activities which:

- refine the senses
- promote language development
- heighten spatial awareness
- foster an understanding of mathematical concepts.

Through the Montessori practical life activities, children also develop skills which will lead to greater independence.

These programs are designed for children up to 3 years of age. Children are accompanied by their parent/carer.

Help me to do it by myself.
- *Dr Maria Montessori*

Preschool

The Montessori Preschool builds upon the foundation offered by the Baby Steps and Toddlers Programs and is structured to facilitate children's inquiring minds within a secure, family-like environment.

The Preschool aims to foster a love of learning that will stay with the children throughout their lives. Children are encouraged to construct their own understanding of concepts through their exploration and interaction with the Montessori learning materials that are carefully designed to match their developmental needs.

Self-discipline is fostered by engaging children in decision making, encouraging task completion, and creating a classroom environment where the right to learn is respected at all times.

The program aims to nurture:

- the growth of independence
- a strong interest in learning alongside good work habits
- a willingness to accept responsibility for one's actions

The Preschool program is for children aged 3 - 5 years. The Preschool is a preparatory step into the Primary programs.

4 Year Old Friday Program

The Montessori 4 Year Old Friday Program is designed as an extension to the Preschool Program and helps prepare children socially, emotionally and academically for the next step into formal schooling. The program runs in much the same way as the Preschool but with greater emphasis on developing school readiness behaviours and early literacy and numeracy skills.

This program is for children in the 12 month period before their formal schooling commences.



Our Primary School Program

Cycle 2 (Years 1, 2 and 3) and Cycle 3 (Years 4, 5 and 6)

Montessori primary education builds on the foundation laid down in the preschool years. As in preschool, there is a strong focus on an education that equips students to be independent, competent, responsible and caring people, who see value in making a contribution to their community. Respect underpins all aspects of school life. Respect for self, others, and the environment is necessary in order to develop trusting relationships and a healthy atmosphere in which to learn and grow.

Individual, small group and whole class lessons occur throughout the day and teaching and learning programs are individualised to meet the needs of the child at each stage of development. Primary children have a thirst for knowledge and are actively involved in their own learning, and it is through a child's own exploration, imagination and creativity that knowledge and concepts are understood and mastered. Within this nurturing and supportive environment, children are encouraged to set personal goals and perform to the best of their abilities.

Our aim is not merely to make the child understand, and still less to force him to memorize, but so to touch his imagination as to enthuse him to his innermost core.

- Dr Maria Montessori





Our Middle School Program

Cycle 4 (Year 7, 8 and 9)

Middle school ushers in a new level of independence. Students have opportunities to collaborate on both self-initiated and teacher-initiated projects. This time allows for individualised instruction, a natural pace for absorption of material presented for both mastery and emotional understanding, and unlimited depth of pursuit based on student interest.

The adolescent is interested in the quality of society for themselves and for others in the world and the formation of themselves as a socially responsible person. The Middle School learning environment focusses on human interdependency with the natural world and provides community experiences that offer meaningful work that will be valued by society. Students are supported to develop a respect and commitment to a code of civility for their lives as adults.

The adolescent can be vulnerable and sensitive – filled with doubts and lacking confidence. They can have difficulty concentrating and can be easily distracted. Our Middle School community is sensitive to the needs of adolescents and provides support at this time. The environment also provides practical work that integrates and engages academic studies and provides opportunities for self-expression.

Adolescents are impressive intellectually and enjoy discussing abstract ideas. They can now reason based on evidence and are interested in discussing moral and spiritual questions. Our Middle School environment provides an integrated thematic approach to the curriculum and encourages the development of intellectual abilities – abilities to abstract, conjecture, predict and create.

*‘By following the path of education that Montessori suggests
‘young persons’ will have confidence in their own abilities to learn.
By this means, they will be enabled to expand and renew their
knowledge throughout their lives.*

– Paula Polk Lillard



Community

The family plays an integral role in the life and education of children. Montessori education acknowledges this and aims to develop a strong working partnership with parents in order to maximise student learning. Parent involvement in the school sends an important message to children that as a community we value and care about their education.

In a growing school such as ours, parental involvement is essential. The contribution of families in the areas of governance, fundraising, maintenance and improvement to our school enables us to offer a competitive fee structure. In fact, the success of the school is to a large extent due to the willingness of parents to give of their time and energy.

Below are just some of the ways that parents can become involved at Southern Montessori:

- Serving on the Board of Governors
- Becoming a committee member
- Assisting in classrooms or with resource making
- Helping in the library
- Assisting with excursions and special school events
- Coaching a sports team
- Assisting in working bees (It is expected that each family will attend one per year)
- Serving on our strong and vibrant Parents and Friends committee.

Other Community Connections

We maintain strong relationships with a number of community organisations and institutions which enhance student learning. These include:

- NRM – Natural Resource Management
- ASMS – Australian Science and Maths School based at Flinders University
- Marcellin Technical College
- Montessori Australia Foundation
- Montessori World Education Institute
- City of Onkaparinga Library

Before and After School Care

Before and After School Care can be accessed via the O’Sullivan Beach Children’s Centre and O’Sullivan Beach Primary School.

Extra-curricular Opportunities

- Soccer, Netball and Cricket
- Tournament of Minds
- Wakakirri
- Choir
- Glee club
- Sporting Schools (after school sports)
- SAPSASA - Sports, Athletics, Swimming

Leadership Opportunities

- Children’s Representative Council
- Year 6 Leadership through Community Service program
- Better Buddies Program
- Environmental Committee



Thank you for your enquiry

We understand that choosing an education path for your child is one of the most important decisions you will make. We trust that the information enclosed will be of help to you.

If you have any further questions, or if you would like to attend a School Tour, please contact the Centre on 8384 7233, and we will be only too pleased to assist you.

Contact details for our Centre are:

Southern Montessori Education Centre Inc
53 Galloway Road, O'Sullivan Beach SA 5166

Phone: 08 8384 7233

Fax: 08 8384 8904

Email: admin@southernmontessori.sa.edu.au

www.southernmontessori.sa.edu.au

Accompanying this Prospectus you should also receive:

- Fee schedules
- Statement of Strategic Direction
- Registration forms

The essence of independence is to be able to do something for one's self. A child works in order to grow, and is working to create the adult, the person that is to be.

- Dr Maria Montessori

