

Spring Issue Sep 2015

The Northside *Chronicle*

EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Modern research into educational needs
and child development

SUPPORTING INDEPENDENCE

How to ensure that your home meets your child's
developmental needs

MONTESSORI IN THE PRIMARY YEARS

The benefits of continuing Montessori
education beyond the pre-school years

Northside Montessori School
Pymble, Australia



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Principal: Barbara Maxfield
Coordinator: Jenni Jackson
Design: Carolyn Ballard
Cover Photography: Jennifer Taylor (vividly.com.au)

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Northside Montessori School
 42 Bobbin Head Road, Pymble NSW 2073
www.northsidemontessori.nsw.edu.au

At Northside Montessori, we work with your child's natural drive to grow and learn. Their individualised and independent learning occurs with choice of activities, peer-learning, and hands-on experiences, based on their development and facilitated by their directress/director.

Our school offers an experience that fosters your child's desire to discover and create, both in the classroom and in life.

A love of learning for their future and for our future.



Welcome

I often reflect on our school community and how important it really is; not just to our children but to our families. The range of backgrounds, cultures, education and languages amongst our families is rich and diverse and yet there is a strong sense of unity. The common belief that a Montessori education is the right choice for our children bonds our community. But it really is a lot more than that.

During term 3 the strength of the Northside community was clearly evident. There are so many examples of our parent body working together, often going unnoticed by others, and mostly with the intended purpose of making our children's school a better place. We had some significant input from parents into our Strategic Plan 2015 – 2018, we also have a small group providing input into the development of a School App, others sharing their skills for the 'modernisation' of our website, and others have had played a significant role in some design concepts for our Stepping Stones site. We have some exciting plans for a mural along the wall adjacent to the basketball court; thanks to enthusiasm, creative flair and experience of one of our parents. The list goes on.

The School Support Hours program has certainly provided a number of forums for parents to work together at events like Pink Tower Trivia Night, the Father's Day Breakfast, Tuckshop Day, Working Bees, Cooking & Craft activities in the classrooms and the fantastic support for the school Library. However, there is also a strong sense of support and camaraderie beyond the School Support Hours program with social get-togethers, child-minding, and shared pick-ups/drop-offs as well.

Being part of a strong school community is vital for children too. When our children commence in our Pre-school classes at NMS they don't really wonder; "Will I make friends here? Will I be popular?" Or, "will my teachers like me? Will they care about me?" Or, "Will I be able to do the work here? Will I be smart enough?" Or, "Will I be safe here? Will I be teased, shunned, humiliated?" At three years of age they are not thinking along these lines. By the time our children are of the age when those sort of questions come to mind our children already feel accepted, nurtured and cared for, and the notion of being teased, shunned or humiliated is the farthest thing from their minds at our school.

A growing body of research confirms the benefits of building a sense of community in school. Students in schools with a strong sense of community are more likely to be academically motivated, to act ethically and altruistically; to develop social and emotional competencies and to avoid a number of problem behaviours, including drug use and violence later in later years.

If children generally respond favourably to statements like those listed below, then this is a good indication that they are experiencing a strong sense of community.

"My class is like a family."

"Children in my class help one another learn."

"I believe that I can talk to the teachers in this school about things that are bothering me."

*"Children in my class can express their views
and even challenge rules that they think are unfair."*

It would be interesting for parents and carers of children 5 years of age and older to ask those questions of their child.

by Barbara Maxfield, Principal



Happy Birthday

Each year on 31st August we acknowledge Dr Maria Montessori's birthday. We remain in awe of her insightful research and the resulting method of educating children.



Whilst our 3–6 children don't entirely grasp what all this means they certainly enjoy the singing and celebrations that take place as you can see in these lovely photos.



Our primary children were encouraged to think deeply about the aspects of a Montessori education, and what this meant to them as learners. And of course they enjoyed the treats and celebration at the end of the day too!

Upcoming Events

Fri 18 Sept

Last day of term 3 for students

Mon 5 Oct

Public Holiday

Tues 6 Oct

Pupil Free Day

Wed 7 Oct

First day of term 3 for students

Fri 9 Oct

9-12 Debate and Art Show

6.00pm

Wed 14 Oct

Parent Education Evening - Work vs Play

6.45pm

Thur 15 Oct

Open Morning for Prospective Parents

Fri 16 Oct

Grandparents Morning Tea and Open Morning

9.00am

Tues 20 Oct

Parent Forum - School Support Hours

6.45pm

Tues 27 Oct

Parent Education Evening - Class Journey

6.45pm

Thur 29 Oct

Open Morning for Prospective Parents

Sun 1 Nov

Working Bee

Wed 4 Nov

Parent Education Evening - Great Lessons

6.45pm

Wed 11 Nov

Remembrance Day events

Thur 12 Nov

Open Morning for Prospective Parents

Fri 13 Nov

Tuckshop Day

Wed 18 Nov

Rehearsal for 9-12 Play

Fri 20 Nov

9-12 Play and 6-9 Production

6.00pm

Thur 26 Nov

Open Morning for Prospective Parents

Mon 7 Dec

Year 6 Graduation and End of Year Concert

Tues 8 Dec / Thur 10 Dec

Parent/Teacher Interviews

Wed 9 Dec

Last day of term 4 for students



Graduate Panel

The Graduate Panel which took place on 12th August included a range of past students from Northside Montessori School, including one of our current parents! This event is my favourite each year. Hearing the ex-students speak so candidly about their transition to secondary school, about how their Montessori education equipped them for "life after Montessori education", and what long-lasting impressions their experience at NMS has left them with really confirms the significance of a Montessori education in preparing a child for life.

The transition for any Year 6 child going to Year 7 involves change. This also applies for children who attend a K – 12 school. I have witnessed this transition in a number of schools that provide an education for children from Kindergarten to Year 12 as well as school with Year 7–12 where I was Year Coordinator, Deputy Principal and Principal.

Most parents will recall their own experience when they moved from Year 6 into Year 7. Some may have experienced a little trepidation whilst others will recall the excitement of something new. Having a large year group, lots of teachers and rooms, homework, the canteen, buses and trains, lockers, uniforms and students as old as 18 years, are just some of the things that may be different for children.

At Northside we have a dedicated program that helps prepare our Year 6 children for their transition to Year 7. All secondary schools have an orientation program for their new Year 7 students as well. So, all in all, the children from Northside are well-equipped, well-prepared and supported in the process. The young people who spoke at our Graduate Panel confirmed this as they spoke so confidently about their own experiences.

I am grateful to Margaret (9–12 Directress) for arranging the speakers for this event. The willingness of our graduates to take part from year to year speaks volumes about their strong feelings and memories of their primary schooling at Northside.

by Barbara Maxfield, Principal

"The greatest gifts we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence."

Maria Montessori



Education in the 21st Century

Northside Montessori School subscribes to the Montessori White Papers which allows us to share modern research on education and child development with our teachers and families. The following is the Volume 1 main article for 2015. *By Barbara Maxfield, Principal*

Mauricio A. Flores, JD serves as Executive Director of the P4 Medicine institute. He works with P4Mi's Board Chairman, Dr. Leroy Hood to develop a network of integrated P4 Medicine demonstration projects in the United States and globally. Mauricio is also responsible for engaging other healthcare stakeholders and thought leaders to accelerate the emergence of a P4 Medicine healthcare system that delivers more effective clinical care at lower cost. A graduate of Harvard Law School, Mauricio practiced law for over 30 years with a particular focus on the impact of technological change on society. After clerking for the Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court, he was a partner in two national law firms and the co-founder of a boutique law firm specializing in biomedical intellectual property that integrated scientific and legal expertise in cross-disciplinary teams of lawyers and scientists. The author gratefully acknowledges the contributions of Laura Flores Shaw to this article.

Key Points

- A new “knowledge economy” has arisen in which the primary source of wealth creation lies in the innovative application of intellectual capabilities.^{1,7}
- In this economic environment, there are two things every parent must keep in mind when thinking about their children’s education:
 1. To be successful in a knowledge economy marked by an accelerating rate of both technological and social innovation, your children will probably have to “reinvent” themselves more than once in their lifetime, and
 2. We have to face the fact that people skilled at innovation will reap disproportionate rewards.
- Thus, schools should be promoting creative thinking in students. Unfortunately, education is still dominated by the concept of learning as a kind of factory production.¹³
- In contrast, Maria Montessori realized over 100 years ago that fostering creativity is a key educational goal

“If education is always to be conceived along the same antiquated lines of a mere transmission of knowledge, there is little to be hoped from it in the bettering of man’s future.”

Maria Montessori - The Absorbent Mind

What do you want from your children’s school? Most parents and schools are focused on knowledge and discipline, which everyone knows go hand in hand. Hence the intense stress on standardized examinations. But stop and think about it. Are knowledge and discipline really enough? And what do we mean by “discipline”? Do we mean discipline that comes from within? Or merely the habit of complying with the demands of authority?

There was a time when knowledge and disciplined compliance with the rules of factory work and rigidly hierarchical corporate organizations were the twin keys to success. But mainstream economists are telling us that this is no longer the case. Our industrial era economy and society are increasingly being transformed by digital technologies, and so have the requirements for success. Let’s consider what that means for what your children need from their schools.

In a recent article in Foreign Affairs, three prominent economists wrote:

*Machines are substituting for more types of human labour than ever. As they replicate themselves, they are also creating more capital. This means that the real winners of the future will not be the providers of cheap labour or the owners of ordinary capital, both of whom will be increasingly squeezed by automation. **Fortune will instead favour a third group: those who can innovate and create new products, services, and business models*** (emphasis added).¹

Technological innovation “explains all modern growth.”² *Without a flow of new technologies growth inevitably slows and then stops because of diminishing returns on capital investment no matter how capable and hardworking the population.*³ Hence, the “best definition of the Industrial Revolution is the set of events that placed technology in the position of the main engine of economic change.”⁴ *The principal innovation of the Industrial Revolution was not any specific technology but rather the “invention of invention” – a systematic, science-based approach to innovation.*⁵

Constant innovation entails the ongoing “creative destruction” of existing economic structures described by Joseph Schumpeter.⁶ Over the last four decades, advanced industrial economies have shifted away from an emphasis on production of physical goods,⁷ which is increasingly relegated to developing nations with lower labour costs. **A new “knowledge economy” has arisen in which the primary source of wealth creation lies in the innovative application of intellectual capabilities** “to integrate improvements in every stage of the production process, from the R&D lab to the factory floor to the interface with customers.”⁷ The OECD defines the concept of the knowledge based economy as “an expression coined to describe trends in advanced economies towards greater dependence on knowledge, information and

high skill levels, and the increasing need for ready access to all of these by the business and public sectors.”⁸

With the shift to a knowledge economy, the percentage of GDP attributable to “intangible” capital has increased significantly.⁷ **A recent study by the World Bank concluded that at least 80 percent of the wealth in high-income countries consists of intangible assets**, and middle-income countries are fast catching up.⁹ A car, for example, is “less and less the product of metal fabrication and more a smart machine that uses computer technology to integrate safety, emissions, entertainment, and performance.”⁷ The intellectual property and know-how that goes into cars and other tangible assets is an increasing percentage of their value. The products of Microsoft, Google and the other leading companies of the knowledge economy are even less material.

Of the 20 public companies with the highest employee value in terms of market capitalization, seven are high-tech innovators founded since the early 1970s: Apple Inc. (no. 3); Gilead Sciences Inc. (no. 4); Qualcomm Inc. (no. 10); Google Inc. (no. 14); Amgen Inc. (no. 16); Microsoft Corp. (no. 17); and eBay Inc. (no. 20).¹⁰ Most of the products produced by these companies are exportable, often at very little marginal cost. The cost of producing software and pharmaceuticals, for example, is concentrated in their development: the cost of producing another copy of a software product or a pill is essentially trivial. It has been estimated that twenty to thirty percent of value created by innovation that produces exportable products is passed onto the employees in the form of salaries.¹¹ Google Inc. (47, 756 employees) and Apple Inc. (80,300 employees), for example, are among the 15 highest paying companies in the world, with median salaries at \$125,000 and \$123,000 respectively.¹² In addition, many employees earn capital gains through stock options.

In this economic environment, there are two things every parent must keep in mind when thinking about their children’s education. First, to be successful in a knowledge economy marked by an accelerating rate of both technological and social innovation, your children will probably have to “reinvent” themselves more than once in their lifetime. What do I mean by that? Well, consider the fact that commercialization of the digital technologies that are now at the centre of economic development are largely dependent on the internet, which for all practical purposes did not exist until around 1990. Think of all the technologists, venture capitalists, and entrepreneurs who built companies like Microsoft, Apple, and Google and who simultaneously transformed established industries like banking, finance, and manufacturing. These people were not taught how to do that – they had to be creative. They had to create new professions like IT management, web design, etc. In short, they didn’t just change jobs – they created new ones as old jobs became less and less productive, and in many cases were eliminated altogether. This process of creative destruction is only going to accelerate, making personal reinvention the critical skill in the coming decades.

Second, we have to face the fact that people skilled at innovation will reap disproportionate rewards. “In the future, ideas will be the real scarce inputs – scarcer than both labour and capital.”¹ And of course the scarce input will naturally command the highest prices. Hard work in acquiring stores of existing knowledge and diligence in applying that knowledge are no longer guarantees of economic success. **People who generate valuable ideas will be in a position to take most of the rewards of innovation in a knowledge economy.**

Schools should be promoting creative thinking in students. Unfortunately, education is still dominated by the concept of learning as a kind of factory production. In a widely cited study, Raymond Callahan showed how educators in the first third of the 20th century applied the principals of “scientific” business management to educational practices.

The core idea was (and unfortunately remains) that “The school is a factory. The child is the raw material. The finished product is the child who graduates.”¹³ And though teachers are considered the factory workers required to shape the raw material according to management’s standards, it’s ultimately the students who are forced to comply with those rigid and detailed standards.

In contrast, Maria Montessori realized over 100 years ago that fostering creativity is a key educational goal. And there is direct evidence that Montessori schools foster creative performance, development, and potential compared to conventional schools (see Montessori and Creativity, this volume). Montessori environments allow children to construct substantive knowledge, which is the building block of creativity in all subjects, from math to the fine arts. Discipline is emphasized, but not compliance with directives from above. Instead, Montessori schools foster inner discipline that enables students to do the hard, organized work that creativity in all fields requires. Finally, Montessori schools carefully foster and nurture each students innate drive to create by providing them control of their learning, ownership of their work, flexible use of their time, allowance to work at their own pace, and opportunities to work and learn beyond the classroom walls.¹⁴

It’s time to dismantle the factory framework that dominates our educational system today yet does not serve children’s needs for the 21st Century. But we don’t have to reinvent the educational wheel because Dr. Montessori already did.

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Supporting Independence

Can you imagine living in a house with oversized furniture and being able to reach anything without asking someone for help? A child in a world built for adults... how to make your home support your child's independence.

Can you imagine living in a house with oversized furniture and not being able to reach anything without asking someone for help? Well this is what your child goes through everyday at home. **There is a reason that Maria Montessori named the 3-6 environment "Casa Bambini" - the Children's House, as everything in it was child sized and easily accessible to them so that they could access things in the environment without having to ask an adult.** On the contrary, the home can often be the exact opposite. The child has to ask the adult for help or to access something pretty much all of the time. This limits their feelings of independence, breaks their own thought process about the task they wish to conduct and reverts them back to being dependent on the adult.

If you can support your child to first have an idea, independently seek the resources, perform the task and bring the task to an end by putting things back where they belong you have supported that child in their development. You have increased their mental independence and concentration. You have begun to grow the executive functions of the brain that deal with higher order thinking, task organisation and planning. You have given them the feelings of "I can do it myself" that will stay with them for life and you have allowed them the opportunity to develop their coordination of movement. All this from a simple practical life task such as preparing their own snack, choosing an outfit, self-dressing or brushing their teeth.

Practical life for the 3-6 child lives in the home and it is a wonderful way you can assist your child to feel connected to family life and develop their concentration and independence. Involve them in daily household chores and give them opportunities to care for themselves (dressing, washing, brushing, eating, toileting) and their environment (washing dishes, stacking dishwashers, mopping floors, watering plants, feeding pets, setting the table, preparing food).

Maria Montessori has been quoted many times as having said, "Help me to do it myself" when referring to the 3-6 child. Here are some tips from the website Aid to Life (www.aidtolife.org) about how you can make your home more child friendly and help them to do it themselves.

Dressing

1. Offer clothes that allow for independence: shirts that easily pull over her head, bottoms with an elastic waist, Velcro-style fastenings, and snap fastenings that she can do for herself.
2. Make a few choices of your child's clothes accessible by hanging a low bar at child height for clothes on hangers. Provide a child-sized basket or hamper for dirty clothes.
3. Provide a low mirror and a child-sized brush and comb for combing hair.

Snack preparation and eating

1. Empty a low kitchen cabinet for your child's small drinking glasses, a small jug (pitcher), bowls, plates, spoons, and forks, each with their own place or container in that cupboard.
2. When choosing dishes, find child-sized versions made of breakable materials, not plastic. Your child will learn how to handle objects with care by occasionally dropping something that breaks. Breakage should be handled in a matter-of-fact manner, without anger or scolding. Children quickly learn to hold dishes with care.
3. Children are more likely to eat something if they have helped prepare the food. Small children can peel a mandarin orange or a banana if you start them off.
4. Prepare her environment with furniture and equipment that are her size. For example, when she wants to wash carrots or strawberries, she will sit at a table and chair her size and use small kitchen tools that fit her hands. Show her clear ways to do tasks such as dusting a shelf, sweeping, washing socks, wiping the table after a meal, folding up and putting away clothes, setting the table, and many more.

Mistakes, repetition and time to learn

Montessori talked about having a "friendly feeling for error" and that it is a natural part of the learning process. You can foster this in your child by letting him/her learn from their own mistakes. They will not work as you work, quickly and efficiently. If they are learning how to use a mop there may be soap and water on the floor when they are finished. The process is far more important to their inner growth than having clean floors. Help them to clean up by sharing the task with them rather than stepping in and doing it for them.





Montessori in the Primary Years

Recently I came across this article on the benefits of a Primary Montessori education. As a 9–12 educator I'm privileged to see our Year 6 students graduate, year after year, as empowered, engaged and empathetic young adults. I watch them blossom as a result of their Montessori experiences to become self-aware, motivated and autonomous students. For me, the proof is in the pudding. Our graduating children are the most sincere and accurate evidence that Montessori education works. But for parents who do not see the legacy of all these students, class after class, year after year, I hope this article will help you to reach a decision about the future of your child in Montessori. Written by two Montessori parents in the United States, Tanya Rykind and Jenny Schanker, this is thoughtful and thought provoking advice from one parent to another. So if you are currently facing a decision for your child, please book in for an observation and see a Primary Montessori class at work, first hand. Please feel free to speak with the Northside Primary Staff too. *By Margaret Kroeger*

Your daughter is turning five years old and the next door neighbour asks you if you have enrolled in a kindergarten. You haven't. Your daughter has been attending a Montessori school and you have been pleased with her progress and development. But you are not sure if she should continue on in the Montessori Primary program.

For most families, the question triggers a variety of different emotions. So, why should your family stick with a Montessori education for the Primary years from Kindergarten to Year 6?

There are five compelling reasons why a Montessori Primary education adds significant value to the future success of your child.

1. **A Montessori Primary education does more than most traditional programs to develop independent and critical thinking skills.**
2. **A Montessori Primary education gives lessons and presentations that nurture the multiple intelligences of each child and capitalize upon recent scientific research.**
3. **A Montessori Primary education offers children a wider array of academic work than traditional educational models in a safe and age appropriate environment.**
4. **A Montessori Primary education offers children a community dedicated to creating a peaceful world.**
5. **A Montessori Primary education does more to celebrate differences and to understand a world of cultures.**

1. Independent and critical thinking skills

Children who continue their Montessori education into the Primary years will continue to develop their potential as independent, critical thinkers. Beginning with infants and toddlers, **Montessori environments guide children to become physically and emotionally independent and self sufficient.** Young children are given the tools to set the table, prepare the snack and wash the dishes. Your child has washed dishes, sliced bananas, swept crumbs, and put her work back

from the place she got it. She has also practiced problem-solving skills such as using appropriate words to express emotion, and used mechanisms like peace roses to cope with interpersonal conflicts.

In Montessori programs, Primary children learn to balance a striking degree of freedom with a sense of responsibility and self-determination. The children learn to allocate their time between academic responsibilities and caring for their classroom environment, and to understand the importance of developing and expressing their own opinions. When 10-year-old Noah was asked to give his observation about the differences between his public school experience and his Montessori school experience, he said, "You can disagree with the teacher and not get into trouble here."

A group of 16 Montessori Primary children were asked to contemplate whether it is important to have their friends like the things they like. The children were asked to go to one side of the room if they agreed with the statement and the other side of the room if they disagreed. At first blush, all the children agreed with this statement. Then, one child, age 9, stepped out and said, "I'm changing my mind. I think that it is easier to make new friends who have things in common with me but when I have more time being friends with someone, I am able to disagree with them without hurting their feelings." Her experiences in a Montessori classroom, where she was confident that she was valued as an individual, allowed this child to step out of a group, act independently from her peers, and think for herself. These life skills will be so important for teenage years and beyond.

2. Multiple intelligences

The Montessori Primary classroom is prepared to honour the multiple intelligences of each child. Multiple Intelligences is the work of Howard Gardner who brought to light the various ways in which our brain learns. Some children are visual learners, some learn through logical reasoning and mathematical deduction and others may learn from the natural world. Gardner's work has determined there to be 8 intelligences which predominate in some greater than others.

Montessori Primary education addresses the needs of children who learn by doing, seeing, hearing, building, dancing, drawing,

socializing, and listening to their inner self because it follows the child and changes the environment to enhance learning. It is common to see a variety of hands-on materials in every subject area. There are globes, models of the solar system, skeletons, sandpaper letters, calligraphy pens, and yes, there are beads. Beads are used to engage children kinesthetically. Beads are a visual tool to show abstract concepts concretely. And beads, especially the traditional glass beads, offer the child the beauty of colour, shape, and texture.

Aesthetics are extremely important in the Montessori classroom. Rooms are prepared very carefully, to be beautiful, calm and peaceful. Children are invited to use their senses; to taste, smell, hear, touch, and see. Instead of worksheets, Montessori classrooms have children working with food, smelling perfumes to explore how smells dissipate, listening to concertos, and knitting. Songs are sung, poetry chanted, plays recited, stories told. Students have access to an outdoor environment to study nature, watch birds or sit and listen to the sounds.

Children who learn by doing are encouraged to do while children who learn by reading are invited to read. Montessori invites children to learn the way they learn best while strengthening the other intelligences they are capable of using so that they can reach their personal potential.

3. Wide array of academic work

Walk into a Montessori classroom and you may see children conjugating verbs in English. You may see a group of students conducting an experiment to demonstrate the differences between acids and bases. You may even see a group of children knitting, discussing how to make patterns with a purl or a knit.

Every Montessori Primary program will have works that expose, encourage and invite the child to learn concepts and ideas about history, geology, geography, mathematics, language, astronomy, ecology, chemistry, anthropology, astronomy, physics, biology, microbiology, sociology, and geometry. The geography curriculum, for example, distinguishes itself from a traditional program because it offers so much more in depth action and hands-on activity. Children who have been in a Montessori infant/toddler program or primary program have touched and seen the small globe of the earth. The globe is made so that each continent is elevated and coarse. The continents are sand papered giving the child a “feel” for the shape and size of each continent.

The Primary program offers students opportunities to make continents and land forms. Classrooms have trays with water and clay so that children can shape, make and see the land form. In an upper Primary classroom materials are given to the children to expand and deepen their knowledge. Children are given access to maps, compasses, graph paper, and over head projectors, helping students to understand the making of a planet, the concept of plate tectonics, and the evolution of the cosmos. **Traditional classrooms may touch upon concepts and ideas, but only the prepared Montessori environment gives children the breadth, depth and time to experience intellectual work without interruption.**

4. Community and commitment to world peace

The Montessori Primary program is different than all other educational models in that it is committed to giving children a “Cosmic Education” and teaching universal values of respect, tolerance, and trust that will create a peaceful world.

Dr. Montessori believed that children who knew who they were personally and in the big picture of the human experience were more likely to care for themselves and for the world around them in ways that would foster peace. Cosmic Education offers the child opportunities

to understand the interconnectedness of all things and the personal responsibility needed for the care and well-being of all things. According to one father, “the common goal is the well-being of my children. I want my children to know they are part of a bigger community than just their family or school. I want them to know they are cared for and listened to. In turn, they care and listen. For me, Montessori teaches the importance of being responsible for each other, not just acquainted with each other.” Because of this commitment to “Cosmic Education” and Peace Education, there are lessons, activities and resources on the shelves that teach about the birth of the cosmos, evolution of the species, fossil records showing the recent understanding of the growth of the human being, and timelines of the development of language and numbers.

There are lessons describing the major world religions, what they believe, how they practice. There is a peace corner, dedicated to quiet and stillness. Classrooms have community meetings where children are invited to discuss classroom issues, concerns or activities. Children discuss, decide, and brainstorm solutions that work for them. Children and adults work together to build a peaceful and harmonious community of learners.

Service to the community is also an active way in which Montessori classrooms teach the web of relationships. By reaching out to the community, students see the greater community. Students may visit assisted living centers, fund raise for a homeless shelter, or work at the local center for stray animals. All of these experiences are integrated into the work of the Montessori student. The commitment to offering children opportunities to belong to a community by participating in real life experiences as well as asking children to examine the mysteries of the universe prepares children not only to live in the “real world”, but assume responsibility for its well-being.

5. Celebrating differences and understanding world cultures

In Montessori schools, developing an appreciation for diversity and understanding cultures form the backbone of the academic curriculum and enliven the social atmosphere. Most Montessori schools actively recruit a diverse student body, and involve the whole family in activities that foster intercultural understanding and a playful exploration of the global village. This unfolds as a strong international education where lessons delve deep into the habits, life styles, arts, religions, and languages from around the world.

Because the Montessori “family” is international, many schools choose to have international dinners, dance and art workshops, cultural performances, international pen pals, and exchange programs. School-wide celebrations of world cultures enrich the communal life of each Montessori family. Around the school and in the classrooms, there may be expressions of world cultures. Flags from around the world may be displayed. Outside, a pole proclaiming peace in many languages may stand prominently in a garden space. Artifacts and clothing from around the world may be hung on walls throughout the building. Students may research other places in the world and go so far as to invite guests to share experiences and stories of their culture. Children may sit down to meals prepared by classmates, appreciating different foods and different ways of preparing foods.

Through field trips, Montessori Primary children learn to appreciate the culture of the communities in which they live and attend school. Visits to local businesses, surrounding farms or ranches, sites of local industry, and hospitals help them understand the influences that shape their surroundings. Hands-on study of regional geography, history, and natural environment gives the children the sense of connection necessary for the development of thoughtful, culturally literate citizens.

cont. on page 12

The goal of the cultural education program in Montessori Primary programs is to teach interconnectedness and social responsibility. The focus is the celebration of differences and an understanding of how those differences enrich our lives.

In the end, the answer to the question, "should my family continue to stick with a Montessori education for the Primary years?" must grow from the answer to some further questions.

What skills do I believe my child needs to succeed in the 21st century? What do we value as parents? Is it important for my child to be an independent and critical thinker? Do we want our child to learn to use the full potential of his multiple intelligences? Does she need opportunities for true intellectual work in a variety of subjects? Do we value a safe, peaceful environment where our children's needs are paramount? Do we believe in the power of cultural understanding to build the tolerance and appreciation necessary to create a better world for future generations?

If your answers to these questions are a resounding "yes", why look beyond your Montessori environment for the kind of education you seek for your child?



Montessori is an education for independence, preparing not just for school, but for life."

Maria Montessori

SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

PLAY

The Great Big Science Shows at Hornsby Libraries

6-12 yrs \$10 Various dates and locations

Drawing Workshop with Roger Fletcher at Kuringai Libraries

Various ages \$5 Mon 21 Sep Various times and locations

Caravan Extravaganza at State Library of NSW

All ages \$30 Tues 29 Sep 10.00am

Kids Tours at State Library of NSW

All ages Free Mon 21 Sept 11.00am

SEE

Kspace

A new interactive adventure game for kids (under trial)

National Museum Australia, Canberra

Now until 18 Oct 2015 Free admission

The Greats: Masterpieces from the National Gallery of Scotland

An extraordinary and richly presented showcase of some of the world's most revered old master paintings and drawings by many of the greatest names in European art.

Art Gallery NSW

24 Oct 2015 to 14 Feb 2016 Entry costs apply

Family Torchlight Tour: Twilight on a Tall Ship

All aboard for an extra-special torchlight experience on board the HMB Endeavour. Enjoy an interactive theatrical tour, games, souvenir crafts and themed refreshments. Program includes light refreshments, exclusive after-hours access to HMB Endeavour and souvenir art making activities.

Australian National Maritime Museum

Fri 25 Sep 6.00pm Entry costs apply

Wild Planet Activity Room

To celebrate the opening of the much-anticipated exhibition Wild Planet, join us for a wild time in our fun activity room. Make a hanging animal mobile to take home, enjoy dressing up and take part in our group art activities.

Australian Museum

Every day \$5

Dreamtime Astronomy Planetarium Tours

Hear stories written across the Australian sky as our Aboriginal guides share their cultural astronomy under the virtual night sky in the planetarium. Afterwards, view objects through our telescope.

Sydney Observatory

Various dates and times Entry costs apply



Kindy Faren

A picture speaks a thousand words! The recent Kindy Farm event was simply delightful. What a beautiful way for our Pre-Primary children to learn about farm animals. Feeding, grooming, touching, hearing, smelling and seeing the animals was an experience many of children may never have had before. We have some great photos to share with you.





Science in the 6-9 Class

The benefits of studying science go way beyond the subject itself, and forms the basis of the broader curriculum in a Montessori classroom. Communication skills, patience and perseverance, and a curiosity about the world are encouraged with the study of science. *By Craig Batger*

What is a scientist? ... We give the name scientist to the type of man who has felt experiment to be a means guiding him to search out the deep truth of life, to lift a veil from its fascinating secrets, and who, in this pursuit, has felt arising within him a love for the mysteries of nature, so passionate as to annihilate the thought of himself. ~ Maria Montessori, The Montessori Method.

The 6 to 9 child enters what Montessori called the age of the "reasoning mind". They now ask questions which begin with "How" and "What if...?" They move beyond themselves and the need to learn names and parts and are able to think more abstractly and see what may be. It is now, where Montessori's idea of Cosmic Education is presented through the telling of The Five Great Lessons. These imaginative stories provide the framework whereupon the secrets of the universe are presented in the Montessori classroom. Exploration of these concepts is then reinforced by the use of experiments and Montessori impressionistic charts. This is the beginning of the development of scientific thought. **Montessori students' questions become their hypothesis and through the power of observation, they come to their own conclusions about the laws of the universe.**

The 6 to 9 have been very busy this term working on our main focus of Science and Technology.

The culmination of this work has been our **Science Fair**, where the children have been able to present their own work for everyone to see. The children were introduced to terms and ideas such as hypothesis and how to develop a hypothesis in regards to their particular area of interest and why science relies on non-successful attempts as much as successful ones.

So why is science important?

Science involves a lot of communication with other people. Science develops patience and perseverance in kids. It can help kids form a healthy dose of skepticism. Science teaches kids about the world around them. Science can spark in kids' minds that they, too, can help solve the world's big problems.

Science involves a lot of talking and listening to others; it develops patience, too – a lot of the time in science things don't happen overnight. Students begin to develop skills for life such as perseverance, problem-solving and researching. It helps the students to think about what could happen before they do it, to create a hypothesis in their mind. Then students learn that not everything works the first time. Some experiments fall in a heap and you have to find out what went wrong, and try again.

Science helps to teach students to form their own opinions rather than take those of others for granted. Through our science study

students have realised that in science you're taught to go about getting a whole lot of information from different people and sources – experts, teachers – it's not just Googling for the answer online, and even if you know what to expect as a result the results don't always appear as expected.

The experiments that were undertaken by the class were very broad in nature, given to their own personal ideas and interests, so many great experiences have been had by all.

James & Max - How to make a hovercraft

Isabel & Claire - Quicksand

Emma & Jane - Chemical reaction (Monster toothpaste)

Raiuri & Andelle - Optical illusions

Dan & Isabella - How to make a thermometer

Jim & Lara - What people think

Lachlan - Robotics

Anthony, Roman & Enrique - Lungs

Ella & Amber - Water tension

Jamie & Lucas - Chemical reaction (Mentos fizz)

Jack & Chris – Viscosity of liquids

The science that occurs in our classroom is not only formalised for events such as the Science Fair. Science is, in fact, a very large part of the daily curriculum for the children. The following are just some of the ways in which science is approached daily within the classroom for the 6 to 9 child.

Zoology

The difference between plants and animals.

Identifying and classifying animals

Identifying parts of insects, arachnids, crustaceans, mollusks, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals

Basic needs of animals

Animal homes

Reproduction

Lifecycles

Food Chains

Adaptation

Animal defense mechanisms
Investigating how humans use animals
Caring for captive animals
Human organ systems

Botany

Basic needs of plants
Parts of Herbaceous Plants
Parts of Trees & Shrubs
Identification of roots, stems, leaves, seeds, fruit
Transpiration
Growing and caring for indoor and outdoor plants
Investigating how people use plants

Health Sciences

Self esteem
Systems of the human body
Nutrition
Physical Education

As Montessori teachers, we realize that when children are given the ability to learn about what interests them, they are more actively engaged and mindful of their own learning. We present our Montessori students with the wonder of the universe in order for them to grasp the cosmic wonder and interdependence of life around them so that they are better prepared to understand their own place in the universe.

*"Science is simply the word we use
to describe a method of organising
our curiosity."*

Tim Minchin





Music at Northside

I don't often get the opportunity to let the parents know what happens at Northside in the music program. I guess after reading below you might understand why I love my job. *By Marilyn Williams, Music Coordinator*

On Monday morning before school we have our Orchestra. Children from Extended Day to Year 6 are welcome to join and participate. Those who learn an instrument out of school use their instrument of choice and those who don't are encouraged to play Xylophone and Glockenspiels.

As those who have attended the Soirees in the past may know, we play a wide range of music and at the moment we are preparing "Smoke on the Water" for our next performance.

On Monday morning I have the pleasure of conducting music classes in the 3-6 classrooms. The emphasis in this age group is to expose them to a wide variety of music. We sing songs in different languages, learn dances from different countries as well as play percussion ensembles. A favourite part of the lesson is Music Appreciation where we play a Classical piece and put a story to it. Currently the classics we are listening to are "Trepak" and "William Tell Overture"

Tuesday is where I get to enjoy teaching the older children. The 5-6's alternate between a composition lesson one week and Practical Jam session the next. In composition week we learn to write simple melodies following a particular scale. This year we have composed using the Blues Scale, Whole Tone Scale and Pentatonic. The Year 5-6's are working on their favourite composition to be printed using Sibelius, a program used for Notating music on the computer. The goal being that we are able to print a collection by the end of the year.

In Practical lessons we often Jam and play some of their favourites. Keyboard instruments are the main instruments being used for Years 5-6 however some children prefer to bring their instruments from home to use and that is fine too. Last term we had an emphasis on music by Cold Play and discussed the repetitive chord patterns in their music.

This term we have been learning to improvise using the C Blues Scale. In true Montessori style there is plenty of room for developing those who have had greater outside exposure to music while still giving the introductory basics for those who are learning things for the first time.

Similarly in the Year 3-4 classroom we alternate between lessons that are more theory based to those that are practical. The favourite aspect of theory lessons for this group have been rhythmic ensembles created by the children. They love writing tricky 4 bar rhythmic ensembles and putting them altogether to make massive ensembles. Practical lessons involve Ukeleles and for those who like to bring guitars in from home, they are able to use these. I teach children to read simple chord charts for both Ukelele and Guitar. Again for those with more advanced knowledge there is plenty of room for the children to be extended and move at their own pace.

Year 1 and 2 have the choice of playing recorder and Xylophones. Although all children have the opportunity of playing recorder, some children find covering the holes with their little fingers very difficult and find it much easier to play the xylophone. This group are also enjoying learning to read notes on the giant music white board.

Extended Days enjoy coming into the Primary Music room for their own special music class. Here they get to play glockenspiels as their main instruments but get exposed to all the lovely instruments available. This week they were very excited to get to have a turn of the small drum kit that one of our ex-students Jack Mumbray donated to the school. They came away with a greater understanding of how tricky it is to co-ordinate your hands to do different patterns at the same time and to also use your feet. Earlier on this year the Extended Days got great enjoyment from learning about "Peter and the Wolf" and all the instruments used in the story.

Last but not least is the choir. **The choir is always buzzing with enthusiasm.** Whether it be older children negotiating for me to change a few words in a song they like so we can sing it, or chatting amongst themselves to co-ordinate their own groups for the next up and coming soiree. **My favourite part about the choir is seeing the friendships across the Year groups. The older children are quick to help the younger ones with lyrics, slotting sheets in folders, chairs and in return there is a lot of admiration.**

That is just some of the examples of how Music is Alive at Northside.

*Music can change the world
because it can change people."*

Bono



Stepping Stones

Our new 3-5 class at Stepping Stones Long Day Care has settled down remarkably well into their Montessori environment. It is a delight everyday to observe the children choosing their work, engaging in it, completing the Montessori Work Cycle and deriving deep inner satisfaction, given it is their first time as a 4 or 5 year old in a Montessori Long Day Care. In fact as children can come for 2,3,4 or 5 days the break seems to be motivating them to plunge into their Montessori work with gusto on the days they avail of the program. To witness their enthusiasm as they are dropped off and head straight to the shelves to choose their work is a testament that when children are in a developmentally appropriate Prepared Environment created in tune with their Sensitive Periods, they thrive. As the Long Day Care facilitates up to 10 hours being spent in a Montessori environment in a day, it is benefiting the children to ease into their environment, rest, play, enjoy their meals and work with pleasure. *By Ipshita Nair, Directress*





Extended Day

Recently, we had a parent evening for the parents of children who will be Extended Day in 2016. It occurred to us after the event that the information is relevant to all the parents in the 0-3 and 3-6. Therefore this article will go over some of the points that we covered at the parent evening. *By Marina Ridley, Directress 3-6*

Why is extended day so important?

The third year of the 3-6 cycle for your child is called 'Extended Day'. It is the equivalent of Kindergarten in a traditional school – but it is so much more for a Montessori child! **Extended Day is a time for consolidation of all that your child has learned in the first two years with the materials in the Montessori classroom.** It is important that the opportunity to use all of his or her skills at this time is allowed, or progress may be lost. **Extended Day is the time that the children are reaping the fruits of the seeds planted when they began in the Montessori environment at 3 years of age.** The child must remain in the environment for this phenomenon to take place, as the environment at Montessori and the Directress is the key to this taking place. The Directress has known your child for 2 plus years! We know your child well and we know you too! This makes for an easy transition. In fact, some people remark they didn't even notice the transition from 4 years to Extended Day, it was that easy and seamless.

Children who are approaching Extended Day usually do so with much positive anticipation. They are looking forward to being the eldest child in the classroom and one of the leaders. They take opportunities to peer-teach other children and to model their obedience to self and their new found control of their Will. Peer-teaching to others also requires higher order thinking skills. One needs to know their work well to help another understand. This is part of the consolidation of work. **David Kahn (1990) once said that 'the Montessori classroom is more than a classroom; children learn to be a contributing member of the community; it is a society in a microcosm'. This only occurs in a Montessori environment where freedom, choice and multi-age groups are found.**

Who is the Extended Day child?

Children who have completed two years of the Montessori pre-school program and who have or are turning five within the first half of the following year will be considered for the Extended Day program. Where a child's age is in questions, the decision to move a child into the Extended Day program is that of the Principal who will consult with the Directress.

Extended Day children have become very sociable. They have moved from stages of solitary play and associative play and are now engaged in co-operative play (see glossary) where they are learning to plan their games, organize each other, build or make things together as a group. They have formed friendships and are beginning to work as a team. The work in Extended Day Language takes advantage of this beginning of movement to the next plane of development by running group language lessons.

The child in Extended Day is helpful and responsible. They offer to assist other children. They are independent and take the initiative to choose their work independently. They now show that they have the power to act out of choice rather than simply curiosity. The child now works longer on activities and in turn more complex work can be carried out with the materials.

What is the Extended Day schedule?

The Extended Day is 8:30am to 2:45pm 5 days per week. The children enjoy a 3 to 3.5 hr work cycle in the morning time. This is interspersed with snack or an outdoor experience as the child requires. After lunch and a play outdoors, the children begin the afternoon work cycle. Extended Day children currently work all together as a group.

What sort of work do Extended Day children do?

Extended Day children work towards the BOSTES (Board of Studies) Early Stage 1 outcomes using Montessori methods and materials. Staff at Northside Montessori have mapped the Montessori curriculum against the BOSTES Early Stage 1 outcomes. **Each Extended Day has a mixture of small group lessons and individual lessons. Each child has an individual lesson plan based on their needs and development in learning which directs them to meeting their potential** with each BOSTES Early Stage 1 outcome. Individual lesson teaching such as this is sometimes termed 'satellite teaching'. This is rarely a feature of traditional schools.

The Key Learning Areas we cover as mandated by the Board of Studies are as follows. The chart shows where the lessons will derive from in the Montessori curriculum.

BOSTES

Key Learning Areas (KLA) Covered in Montessori Area of:

English	Language
Mathematics	Mathematics and Sensorial
Science	Culture, Language, Sensorial, Practical Life.
HSIE	Culture, Language
PDHPE	Grace and Courtesy
Creative Arts	Sensorial and Sensorial Self Expression, Culture, Language
Geography	Culture/Geography, Sensorial

How do we assess the children?

The Board of Studies recommend that educators use a mixture of assessment techniques for Early Stage 1 children including observation of children's participation and contribution to activities, anecdotal records and the collection of work samples. In Montessori environments, most materials have a unique 'control of error' which allows the child to instantly see when their work is incorrect. This is a powerful assessment tool that the child themselves monitors. It is also unique to Montessori. We take note of this process through our observation of the children while at work. In order to assess we also need to keep detailed, timely records. We do this via our checklists, work curve observations and grading for reporting purposes. We do not 'mark' children's work nor do we supply them with grades or numbers to quantify the standard and worth of their efforts.

How do I know my child is achieving and 'where they ought to be'?

Montessori schools are famous for little 'hard copy'. We don't send lots of worksheets and test papers home. That's because we don't really do them! We work with our hands with the materials. This doesn't mean you have to be in the dark about your child's progress. Your child's directress is available for meetings face to face, via email, telephone or letter throughout the year. You can always contact us in addition to biannual reports and parent teacher interviews, in fact we like you to! You are welcome to book an observation to see your child in action at school and you can do this during most of the year. If we have a concern about your child, we will contact you to discuss and work through concerns. We will work with you to provide strategies to help your child succeed.

What are the implications of not completing Extended Day for my child?

If the child is withdrawn before this time, he or she will have to:

- Adapt to a new environment with children who are new and strange
- Adapt to a new environment where children have recently left a purely play based situation or pre-school and where the equipment and materials are unfamiliar to you and your child.
- Adapt to new methods, i.e. larger, whole group teaching directed learning experiences.
- Adapt to new adults and routines.
- Adapt to a setting where the social courtesies and deportment (Grace & Courtesy) have not been developed in most other children

What is our overall focus in Extended Day?

Apart from working towards the Early Stage 1 BOSTES outcomes, we endeavour to focus on a basic love of learning and not on an accelerated learning pace. It is most definitely not a 'hot house for learning'.

Montessori gives young children a strong basis in their most formative years for developing into a well-rounded responsible and happy person.

Where to after Extended Day?

Some continue to traditional schooling environments, however, many of our children continue into our Montessori 6-12 program where they continue to thrive in a familiar environment constructed around their needs. **I highly recommend visiting the 6-9 and 9-12 environments and seeing just how truly amazing your child's education can be.**

Glossary

Unoccupied Behaviour: The child does not engage in a particular activity or interact with others. They wander around or remain stationary, simply sitting or staring into space.

Solitary Independent Play: The child engages in play activities but plays on his own and not with others or with their 'toys'. Is absorbed with his own play things and neither communicates or acknowledges the existence of other children.

Onlooker Behaviour: The child watches others who are engaged in play activities but makes no special overtures.

Parallel Activity or Play: The child plays or works independently, quietly side by side with another and may use their toys or materials. They may do similar things but do not talk much with one another

Associative Play: The child plays with other children using the same materials and even talking with them but she acts on her own and does not subordinate her interests to those of the group. Children may pass things back and forth and make occasional comments on what they are doing.

Symbolic and Imaginative Play: The child uses an object to stand for another and or incorporates imaginary objects into his play. Eg a box becomes a car.

Co-operative Play: Children actively co-ordinate their activities swapping toys, taking defined roles and in other ways keep interactions going. The group of children may seem to have organised themselves to do a particular thing.

Role Taking: Children take on particular roles and the associated language. E.g. tone of voice, specific words and phrases. Children co-ordinate and act out multiple roles within context of a complex play scenario.

Glossary source: "Child Development and Education" by Teresa M Mc Devitt and Jeanee Ellis Omerod, 2002, Columbus, Ohio, Merrill Prentice Hall.

"One test of the correctness of educational procedure is the happiness of the child."

Maria Montessori



The trinity of a Montessori education

We are three quarters through the 2015 school year. One cannot help but be amazed by the development of the children (along with the parents and carers) in the Toddler Program. In this enriching eighteen month cycle of under-3s being offered with our parents and carers, we would like to give emphasis on the importance of the decision you have made to offer your child the endless possibilities of what a Montessori education has. What exactly makes Montessori stand out above the rest? It is the trinity of the environment, the child and the directress. *By Margret Palma*

The Montessori environment has been well-prepared to offer the opportunities for the children to discover, explore, and experience with the use of their senses that will guide them to independence, which is the main thrust of Montessori's philosophy. Sight, touch, taste, smell, language, and movement are all important in the first three years of life that Maria Montessori dubbed as the "unconscious absorbent mind." During this stage, the children are like sponges that take everything in. New parents remark on the accessibility of a pair of child-safe scissors, or a child-safe knife for food preparation, and even water for hand and dishwashing...things they say are not within the children's reach at home. **The significance of a prepared environment allows the children to make choices for themselves on what activity they would like to do, knowing where things are and how to do things. They are offered the opportunities to do things themselves. Without these given opportunities how will they gain their autonomy?**

This is when the directress plays an important role in the classroom. First, she is responsible for the prepared environment. She sees to the needs of each individual child she has during each session. She ensures that the activities on the shelves, inside and outside the classroom are arranged accordingly and aesthetically. She guides your child by presenting how certain materials work. She observes the child and knows when it is necessary to step in or take that step back to avoid any interruptions in the cycle of activity the child is engaged in. In our Toddler Program, the parents and carers are involved in the daily activities in class. It is equally imperative to guide them on how the environment works. **The interaction between parent/carers and child gives us a glimpse of the child's journey to independence.** Sometimes we witness the adult doing things for the child. This simple act is a very natural instinct for us adults yet it defeats the purpose of what the environment has to offer the child, and more vital is the development of independence of the child who is under three. Dr. Montessori said: "When a child is given a little leeway, he will at once shout, "I want to do it!" But in our schools, which have an environment adapted to children's needs, they say, "Help me to do it alone." And these words reveal their inner needs." [Maria Montessori, *The Secret of Childhood*, translated by M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J.]

The centre of the triad is the child. The environment and the directress exist because of and for the child. A reminder of what the children go through daily is that "what the child experiences is what IS" (Smith, 2015). They are forming impressions with what they see, touch, hear, feel and taste firsthand. How do we all raise and guide the

children as we keep up with the theories, philosophies, new studies and research that we learn and are exposed to everyday? From birth, four simple words could be a tenet in parenting and even in education: "Do with...not to" (Smith, 2015). They are powerful words when strung together. In the under 3s level, as a directress, our role is to work and assist with the parents and toddlers. In understanding the psychology of this little person, we are supporting the development of the child and not creating obstructions, through their language, movement, social and emotional development. We are strengthening their path to independence. It is within the child's needs to do things himself, the drive to be completely autonomous from the mother and carer, and then followed by the dictates of nature. We begin as early as they are able to, once trust and a sense of security has been formed in the bond of the family. We do it not to make them perfect at this age but we once again offer them the opportunities to begin the process of gaining their autonomy... from toileting, to feeding themselves and cleaning up.

In this triumvirate of child, environment and directress, a small community is formed. It encompasses that safety shield the child has come to recognise when he enters his space in the school.

There are many encounters he will go through, whether it is a new event, saying hello to new friends, greeting old friends and bidding others goodbye...it is the cycle he will go through at a young age, and it will be filed in his bank of memories. For example, this term, our Toddler Program has been included in the termly Tuck Shop. One could see how our toddlers who have participated find the involvement exciting as they sit on the picnic blanket with their mothers/carers, having a little picnic after class and briefly being part of the school community as they see the primary children having their own gathering too. Our little ones feel safe in this community indoors and outdoors as they build their confidence through their independence. They learn how to serve each other, take turns with the materials, and do things on their own. This is what a Montessori Education offers your child at such an early age.



Primary Update

9-12

All the happenings from the 9-12 class. *By Margaret and Janene*

With the sounding of trumpets, a flurry of Donkey hooves and the roaring of an ogre, the class has begun their rehearsals for 'Shrek'. We look forward to sharing our performance with you at Turramurra High School on 20th November. A full dress rehearsal take place straight after school on 18th November. A note regarding times and costumes will be sent home shortly.

We schedule a 9 – 12 performance every year as it has so many benefits for the children. Not only does it satisfy Board of Studies outcomes in Creative Arts, Human Society and Its Environment and English but is a highlight of the year for many of our students. **They must work creatively and collaboratively on costumes, script, props and staging. They help each other to learn their lines, manage stage fright and to step outside their comfort zones. It allows students to develop trust with each other and to bring out strengths within themselves. They always delight in sharing their efforts with you and the wider Northside community.**

This term has seen some great in-depth research by the students. Our youngest students have been learning about body systems - where they are located and how they work together. They are currently completing life sized 3 dimensional models of the different body organs on large sheets of butcher's paper. Some of the questions that have been asked during our lessons have been fascinating – prompting further research. Other students have also been studying the human impact on environments – including Macquarie Island, Antarctica, Queensland Rainforests, the Mediterranean and New South Wales National Parks. They have drawn maps, sketched before and after illustrations, written paragraphs and created posters to show case their research. Our oldest students have been studying daily life in Australian history with a focus on the years 1788, 1838, 1888, 1938 and 2015. They have presented their research in the form of Power point presentations, timelines, historical letters, speeches, essays, lift the flap books, newspaper articles, models and ABC Picture Books. **The children's creativity and attention to detail continue to astound me.**

Our Peer Support Sessions are progressing well with our Year 6 leaders becoming more confident and relaxed in their role as leaders and peer teachers. Our sessions will continue into Term 4.

We'd like to thank all the parents who have helped the class in so many ways this term. We also have some special events running into Term 4 which would not be possible without parent assistance. These include camp, our visits to a local nursing home, our involvement in Montessori Model of United Nations and 'goings out'. Thank you to all those who have offered to help. We are very lucky to have such supportive parents.

Our students have spent part of the term writing to our 3-6 friends. Their excitement in writing and receiving letters has been tremendous. Thank you to the 3-6 staff for collaborating in this lovely

exchange. Not only has it given writing a new application and context but it has also helped to build a lovely sense of community between these two age groups.

Please add the following dates to your diaries:

October 8 – 6 pm – Level 6 Debate and 9 – 12 Art Show

October 12 – 14 - Camp

18 November at 4:00 pm – Rehearsal for play

20 November - 'Shrek' (our 9 – 12 Production)

7 December – End of Year Concert

"You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have."

Maya Angelou

Transition to high school

My girls are in Year 7 and they are still reaping the benefits of their Montessori Education!

I've been asked to write about Penny and Lucy's transition from Montessori into High School. Well, where does one start?

It's been a very big year for us that began with the sudden realisation that for the first time ever, my daughters were going to leave the security and care of a small and safe school, and venture out into the - dun dun dun - Public System! There were tears, and nerves and denial and hesitation (and that was just for school selection!).

But before we knew it, the girls were tearfully farewelling their friends and beloved teachers, and preparing for, well, let's face it – Christmas, but followed closely by their first day of school.

Big school.

Proper school.

Well, I was pretty sure this wasn't going to go well. How could they adapt from choices and freedom and independence to, do as I say when I say and washed down by a big handful of homework and tests!? Surely not. Surely my Montessori children were going to balk, rebel, flounder and eventually fail. Surely their spirits would be crushed and lost? Spirits that had been so carefully nurtured and strengthened during their time at Northside.

But my fears were exactly my answer! I wish I had known that when I was so nervous and worried. I wish the sensible Montessori Mother inside me knew and understood that their wills and spirit were safe, protected by a strong self-esteem and the knowledge that regardless of results and the amount of homework, if they do the best they can, that is all we can ever ask for.

Yes, there have been tears over the enormous amount of homework assigned, by the enormous amount of teachers. Yes, there have been nerves about tests, and worse still, test results! And yes, there have been two little children so weighed down by their backpacks that they are practically dragged backwards down the very hill they are supposed to be climbing. But at the end of the day, and here, nearly at the end of term three, I have two children that are happy, have made new friends, who love their new teachers, and feel safe at their new school. Full of spirit, capable and still – independent.

Now, the non-Montessori Mother inside me also wants to mention that my daughters receive merit awards almost daily, have attended Zone sporting carnivals, have both been Class Captain and one is now a member of the Student Representative Council. That mother would also like to add that one teacher mentioned during parent evening that she would love to clone said children! But of course, being a Montessori Mother, I would never!

I am proud of my children, how they have adapted and are growing. Eventually, I will stop worrying so much. Won't I?

by Kim Plummer, Assistant 3-6

GOOD READS

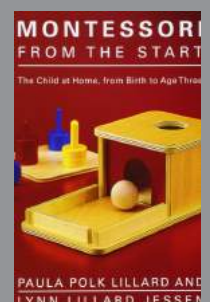
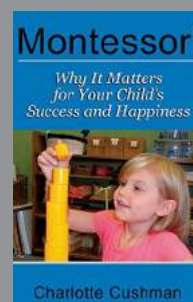
"Montessori: Why It Matters For Your Child's Success And Happiness" by Charlotte Cushman

Review by Fred Weiss

Charlotte Cushman, "...answers questions and doubts that parents have raised over the years and applies her knowledge of Montessori to matters (e.g., computer use) that postdate Maria Montessori. The result is that a Montessori parent — including me with four decades of hindsight — can say, "Oh, that's what's going on with my child" and "that's why he's doing that in class." But just as important, a parent who is considering sending a child to a Montessori school will learn the most important lesson from Charlotte Cushman's book: why Montessori matters for a child's success and happiness."

"Montessori Madness! A Parent to Parent Argument for Montessori Education", "4,962,571", "That 17th Hat", and "N is for North Korea" by Trevor Eissler. Trevor Eissler is a business jet pilot and flight instructor. He speaks internationally on education issues. He lives with his wife and three children in Texas.

"Montessori from the Start" What can parents do to help their youngest children in their task of self-formation? How does the Montessori method of hands-on learning and self-discovery relate to the youngest infants? This authoritative and accessible book answers these and many other questions. Based on Dr. Maria Montessori's instructions for raising infants, its comprehensive exploration of the first three years incorporates the furnishings and tools she created for the care and comfort of babies. From the design of the baby's bedroom to the child-sized kitchen table, from diet and food preparation to clothing and movement, the authors provide guidance for the establishment of a beautiful and serviceable environment for babies and very young children. They introduce concepts and tasks, taking into account children's "sensitive periods" for learning such skills as dressing themselves, food preparation, and toilet training. Brimming with anecdote and encouragement, and written in a clear, engaging style, Montessori from the Start is a practical and useful guide to raising calm, competent, and confident children.



An excellent documentary on Maria Montessori (50 minutes)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TXqeTYHn0p4>

NSW PARLIAMENT PRESENTS

FAMILY FUN DAY

..... 2nd OCTOBER 2015

COME ALONG FOR A LOOK AT AUSTRALIA'S
FIRST AND OLDEST PARLIAMENT HOUSE

NO NEED TO BOOK
ALL WELCOME!
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

MACQUARIE ST. SYDNEY
www.parliament.nsw.gov.au
ENQUIRES: 02 9230 2047

FUN ACTIVITIES

////////// FOR THE WHOLE
FAMILY INCLUDING:

- PHOTO AND DRESS-UP OPPORTUNITIES
- TOURS OF THE LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS
- MYSTERY OBJECT GUESSING COMPETITION
- SAUSAGE SIZZLE (MINIMUM CHARGE)
- ROVING HISTORICAL CHARACTERS
- ART AND OTHER DISPLAYS



////////// **FREE ENTRY** //////////

Parent Education Evenings

The Schedule for Term 4 has been changed slightly. It is important to book a place to attend these events. Where possible we will attempt to provide child minding but that is reliant on having a child-minder volunteer for this. Ideally we like to have two people for child-minding. Hours for assisting with this also contributes to School Support Hours.

SS = School Support Hours

CM = Child Minding may be available if a child-minder volunteer can assist

Date	Event	Overview
Week 2 Wed 14 Oct 6.45pm for 7.00pm start	Work versus Play Is there a difference? SS CM	Is there a difference between work and play? Recently, experts in the field of education have recognised the value of play-based learning environments for children – especially for children under 7 years. Is this different from a Montessori environment? Find out what it really means to refer to children's "work", to have a "work cycle", and why our materials are not referred to as "toys".
Presenter: Natasha	Target Audience: 0 - 3 and Cycle 1 focus. Any parent or carer may attend. Children should not attend this event. RSVP required.	
Week 4 Tue 27 Oct 6.45pm for 7.00pm start	Class Journey (2016) SS CM	This event introduces families to the routines and characteristics of the cycle that their child will be entering in the year ahead. Each of the three cycles differs and builds on the previous experience of the child.
Presenter: Edna, Janene, Margaret	Target Audience: Any parent or carer whose child is joining a cycle at our school in 2016. This includes current families whose child is progressing to the next cycle. Prospective parents are also welcome to attend. Children should not attend this event. RSVP required.	
Week 5 Wed 4th Nov 6.45pm for 7.00pm start	The First Great Lesson – The coming of life SS CM	Come and hear the first story in the series of five Great Lessons which form the backbone to the primary education.
Presenter: Janene	Target Audience: Any parent or carer may attend including parents from the Toddler Program and Stepping Stones Long Day Care. Children should not attend this event. RSVP required.	