

NORTHSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

CHRONICLE

winter

why code?

Find out what our
children are learning at
Northside CIY Club.

extraordinary ordinaries

Take a sneak peak at a big
project our 9-12 students have
been working on.



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WINTER 2017 **NORTHSIDE CHRONICLE**



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NORTHSIDE CHRONICLE
WINTER 2017

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from the principal

GETTING TO KNOW NORTHSIDE

With the school approaching its 40th anniversary, this is a perfect time to reflect on where the school has come from, where it stands today and where it may go in the future.

by Dr. Georgina Reynhout



On the 31st August 1977... eighteen parents with an appreciation of & passion for an educational philosophy developed by Dr. Maria Montessori met to discuss the formation of a new Montessori pre-school.

The story of the school goes back to 31 August 1977. On this historic day, eighteen parents with an appreciation of and passion for an educational philosophy developed by Dr. Maria Montessori met to discuss the formation of a new Montessori pre-school. An executive committee was formed and enthusiastic parents left with a brief to find premises, raise funds and establish the appropriate legal framework. Within ten weeks, Fiona Campbell had been offered a position as the first Directress. Montessori materials were acquired and some premises in a Pymble church hall were identified as an ideal location. On 15 November 1977, Jill Edin, Julie Fox, Tineke van Gasselt, Geoff Alderdice, Suzanne Burdon, David Ferrier and Jan Meher undertook a pledge to the Northside Montessori Society's Memorandum of Association and became the first Directors.

Suddenly, and quite unexpectedly the church congregation rejected the proposal for the lease of the church hall, much to the disappointment of the Directors. Ku-ring-gai council came to the rescue, offering West Pymble Community Centre as a suitable alternative. Unfortunately, the premises were not available for the start of the term, so as a desperate interim measure it was decided to set up the first classroom in Richard and Julie Fox's garage. As fate would have it, the community centre site never eventuated. Kathryn Greiner, then working in the Department of Youth and Community Services alerted the

Directors to the fact that the Turramurra Kindergarten at 198 Bobbin Head Road was for sale.

And so it was that Stepping Stones Montessori Pre-School began in February 1978, with 8 children in the morning and 8 in the afternoon. Such humble beginnings!

The pre-school grew very quickly and an obvious need for a primary school was satisfied in 1980 by the starting of a class at the adjoining property 196 Bobbin Head Road, once again in a garage! This property was purchased in 1988, in the tenth year of the school's operations. By this time 110 children were enrolled aged from 3-12. The long day care centre was to follow much later, in 2015.

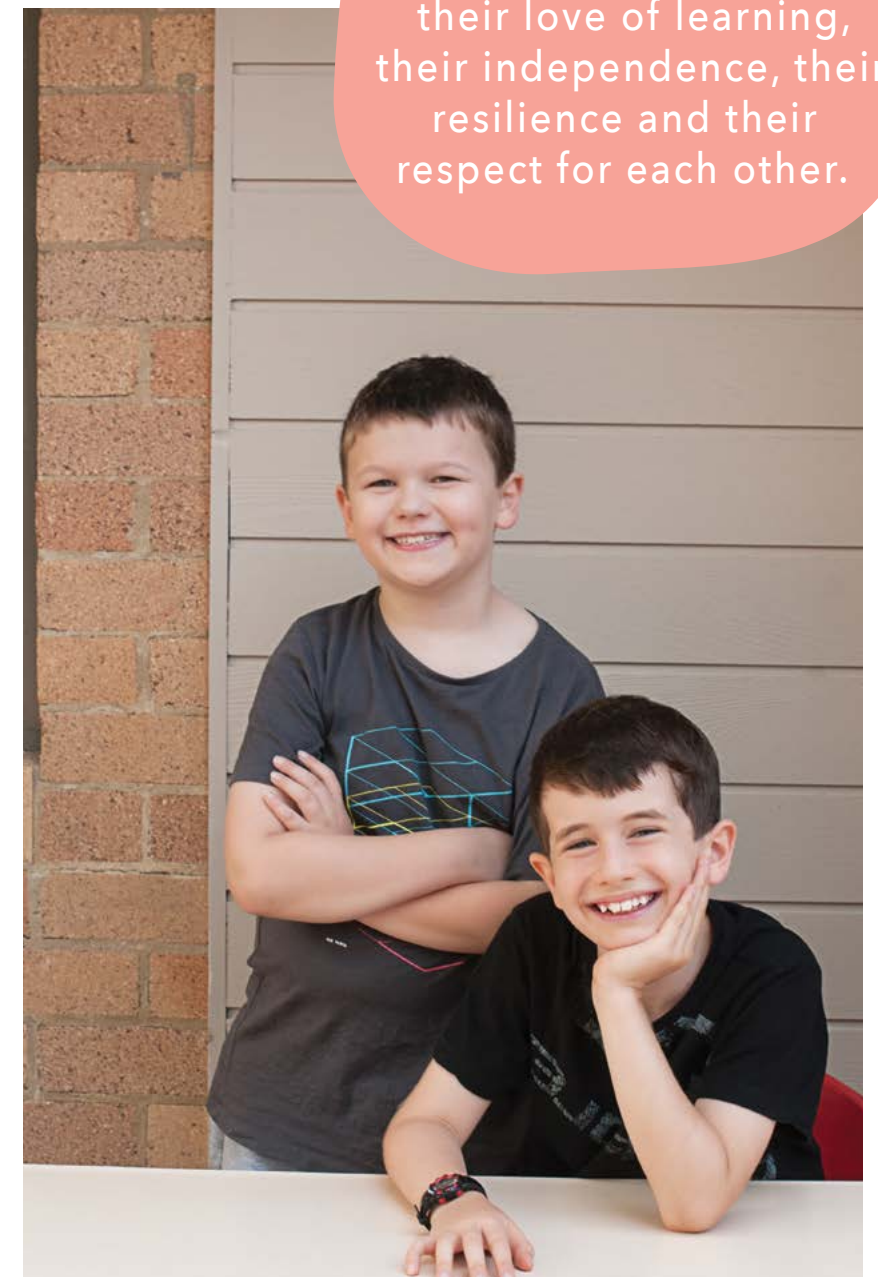
What does this all look like today? There are many similarities between the original schools and the Northside Montessori pre-school, primary school and Stepping Stones Montessori long day care centre. The children are still starting their lives in a beautiful environment which aims to nurture their love of learning, their independence, their resilience and their respect for each other. The Montessori materials that are ordered have changed little. Many of them are still purchased from the Nienhuis factory in The Netherlands. The factory was founded in 1929 by Albert Nienhuis, who collaborated with Maria Montessori to create products which reflected her vision of education. In primary, there may be computers in the classroom but the children still learn the four mathematical operations using the golden bead material. The philosophy remains constant and now educationalists are acknowledging the concept of 'sensitive periods' and the 'whole child'. Recent educational

reforms seen in other settings show contemporary educational approaches are just beginning to catch up with Montessori educational theory.

And what of the future? It is impossible to predict what tomorrow will look like. The challenge of preparing children for the future is great. However, having chosen to have their children educated in this rich learning environment, discerning parents can be comforted. The skills and love of learning

developed in their children will equip and empower them as young people to face whatever challenges and opportunities that the future may have in store. As Maria Montessori so correctly observed *"Within the child lies the fate of the future."*

The children are still starting their lives in a beautiful environment which aims to nurture their love of learning, their independence, their resilience and their respect for each other.



infant & toddler

PROGRAMS

This term was an exciting one as we kicked off our brand new Nido Parent-Infant Program!

by Megan Nguyen (Infant & Toddler Directress)

In our Nido Parent - Infant program, the parent attends the session with their infant where we join in discussion on how to best support the child during their sensitive periods of life. This program also has a big focus on supporting the parent as we examine how to cope with the busy demands of the modern world while still being present and parenting in the Montessori way. At the end of each session we build a sense of community by all coming together for a group time where we share songs, discover new baby yoga moves and enjoy a relaxing massage....well, the infants that is! These first months and year in the child's development are so important. As each infant grows, so do their parents; they become more confident and empowered in their journey.

This program also has a big focus on supporting the parent as we examine how to cope with the busy demands of the modern world while still being present and parenting in the Montessori way.

OUR TRANSITION PROGRAM

has seemed quieter this term as we have had children move up to the 3-6 Cycle. The dynamic always changes in the classroom when a child is missing. The tasks which that child performed routinely do not get carried out as much and it is seen in the environment. Annie, who moved up to Edna's class last month was always the green thumb in class and ensured that both the veggie garden and indoor plants were always cared for. Since her transition up, I walk in and notice sad, droopy leaves and then remember why; "My gardener is gone!" It's a wonderful first little look for children to see how we all fit into the community and offer our own special qualities. You may have noticed Annie's great gardening skills this term in our veggie patch where she planted and nurtured our pumpkin that has grown to monstrous proportions!



OUR TODDLER PARENT PROGRAM

is at full throttle as we reach the half way mark for the year. I can't describe the amount of growth and transformation we have seen in the children. This term there have been so many beautiful breakthrough moments as more children feel secure in the environment. Children who felt insecure speaking to me have now come out of their shells and share their special weekend adventures as we greet each other at the door. The joy a Toddler Directress feels when a child finally speaks his first sentence to you is priceless. It's hard to contain the excitement and as the child toddles off I find myself looking at the parent and mouthing the words, "Oh my goodness, he spoke to me!!" These are the moments you can't rush; but when they occur you know your patience has paid off for the reward is great.



The joy a Toddler Directress feels when a child finally speaks his first sentence to you is priceless.



OUR INFANT AND TODDLER PARENTS

know that I like to stretch them by sometimes asking them to step a bit out of their comfort zone. I assure them that our classrooms are a safe place to do this as it is hard for many. I often ask parents why they feel so uneasy watching their child move about independently, especially in the Practical Life area. As you know, these areas are filled with lots of glass, ceramics and jugs to provide as much water as the child needs. What is the worst thing they think will happen with the child in the space? The answers are generally the same: fear of breaking something and fear of making a mess. Feelings of embarrassment are also noted. Breakage often seems unavoidable with children who have never come in contact with a glass that doesn't bounce like plastic. However, with each break, the child very quickly learns that he must carry such objects with gentleness and care. Of course, breakage usually produces a mess and this is often something that is unsettling for parents. It not only takes time for the child to trust my response in the environment but also for the parent. Over time, both parent and child know that our space is not a place where they will be judged but one which allows the child all the opportunities and trust he needs on his journey to naturally self-perfect.

This term there have been so many beautiful breakthrough moments as more children feel secure in the environment.

AS WE

draw inward during the cold winter, we can take the opportunity to reflect on why we do all of this; put up with the spills and messes and breakage. We do it because we know they are important pieces in the child's progression towards independence.

Megan Nguyen
Infant & Toddler Directress



Origami

A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE

We are very lucky to have Kay Chida teach the Origami class on her own initiative as an extra-curricular activity one afternoon per week.

by Mal Hebblewhite (Board Director)

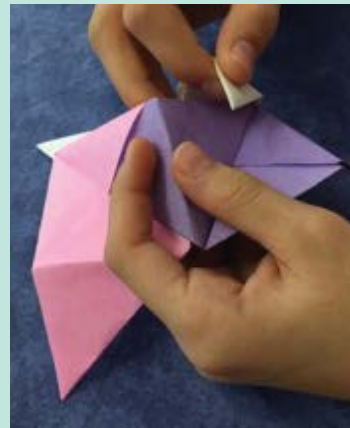
I was a big Star-Wars fan as a child. My daughter Isabella knows this, so perhaps that's why she was so excited when she recently made a tiny, bright orange paper X-Wing Fighter at her weekly Origami class and brought it home as a gift for me. After so many flowers, baskets, and polyhedra, I was pleasantly surprised to see a finished item I could really connect with - I felt like Origami had arrived!

We are very lucky to have Kay Chida teach the Origami class on her own initiative as an extra-curricular activity one afternoon per week. It is popular with boys and girls, and a variety of ages. There is a younger group catered for as well as the older children.

It's easy to see this extra-curricular activity simply as entertainment and an alternative to after-school care, but I've recently realised it's much more than this.

I'm a relative novice when it comes to the Montessori method, but it seems to me that behind the creative outputs of the class there are strong Montessori principles at work.

I have often come into the room before Origami class has ended, to find the students (and Kay) deep in concentration, focused intently on the task at hand, to the exclusion of all else. On one occasion I was present for several minutes before any of the children even noticed me, such was their concentration. The value of being present, in the moment, and immersed in the activity at hand is rare and valuable in a digital world that hampers a child's attention span development.

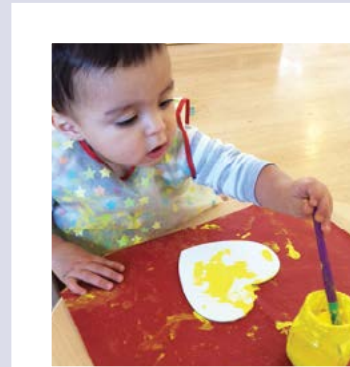


"WE DO IT OURSELVES"

Besides the fine motor skills and attention to detail that is involved in creating such delicate objects, the Origami work also requires an appreciation of geometry and mathematics, in the form of 2D and 3D geometry, development of solids, and an understanding of algorithms to undertake the elaborate processes involved in making such complex projects.

I asked Isabella what it is that she likes so much about the Origami class (so much so, that she has asked to do it for the last 4 years). Sure, there's the social aspect of doing something fun and creative after school, and an opportunity to share the experience with friends. But she also said things like: "Creating interesting and beautiful things"... "we do it ourselves"... "I enjoy the challenge of the hard things we make..."

The focus on process - as much as the outcome, the sense of purpose and achievement upon completion of a complex and difficult project, and progressing at their own pace - these are all features and benefits that would seem to link well to the Montessori philosophy. Isabella is now making more X-Wing Fighters in different colours to create a mobile for me. May the Force be with you!



NIDO ROOM NEWS

by Karla Moggs

During the last few months we have had a number of celebrations including a wonderful Mother's Day afternoon tea where we welcomed the Nido mothers and grandmothers to share time and do some activities with their children. Families created frames and had a lovely afternoon together.

We recently celebrated National Reconciliation Week by creating Aboriginal dot paintings and a group collage of the Aboriginal flag. The children explored finger painting, brush painting and also nature leaf painting. We looked at photos of Aboriginal art and created our own representations.

We have also been working towards implementing and embedding self-help and care skills into the routine. The older children in the room have practised carrying chairs to and from the meal tables and scraping their bowls at the completion of a meal. The children have also been mixing, measuring and baking a number of recipes, some shared from families to incorporate into our practical life activities. We would love to continue to share recipes with families and incorporate them into our curriculum.

stepping STONES

IC ROOM UPDATE

by Shallu Kataria

In the IC Room we focus on the children's practical life skills. Educators encourage independence, teaching children to pick up the tray from the shelf, using both hands and put it back when they finish their work. Educators encourage children to take care of the environment by giving children the opportunity to clean up the classroom with dusters and dust pans. It is very important for children to learn how to maintain and clean the environment in which they are in. As a part of children's self-care, educators encourage them to dress and undress themselves and teach them what are the essential things they need to do when they are going outside for play e.g. putting on sunscreen, jumper and a hat.

The children were very excited about making gifts for their mothers for Mother's Day. Our IC children enjoyed spending time with their mothers and grandmothers at the Mother's Day afternoon tea. The children completed craft activities in the classroom together with their mothers and grandmothers.

We celebrated National Reconciliation Week recently. The children were given the opportunity to make boomerangs, using dot painting and make an Aboriginal flag with their hand prints. This activity was a good opportunity to extend on their sensorial development.

For Literacy and Numeracy the children have shown an interest in tracing shapes and numbers in the classroom. We have been singing counting songs as well as songs in the children's home language. This helps support the children to recognise that they have a right to belong to many communities and to broaden their understanding of the world in which they live.

CASA ROOM UPDATE

by Amanda Annear

Autumn is such a beautiful time of year and Casa children have embraced it with curiosity and wonder. Leaves falling from the trees engaged children's learning about leaf shapes and parts. This led to further discoveries such as insect life and the various types of seeds appearing in the environment. We planted some seeds in cotton wool to observe the changes taking place from the initial swelling of the seed to growing roots and leaves. Our time spent in the playground is used to collect seeds and the children have been fascinated with the number found in small pods and how such big trees grow from such a tiny seed. A recent discovery in the garden was the complete shell of a cicada which is now on display in the Casa room.

The beginning of May was full of excitement as we prepared gifts for our very special mums. The children worked very hard making cards, decorating presents and wrapping them up. We celebrated Mother's Day by inviting our mothers and grandmothers to a special afternoon tea. The children enjoyed time with their mums doing a craft activity and sharing their experiences in the Casa room by showing the use of materials along with new skills they have mastered.

We also recognised Reconciliation Week with a focus on Aboriginal culture and customs through stories and art and craft activities. It is important that young children in Australia today grow up with an appreciation and respect for the diversity of cultures, races and ethnicities that surround them. Through the song 'Colours of Australia' and the storybook 'All my Friends and Me' (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2016) we studied differences in our eye colour, hair colour, skin tone along with similarities like we all have noses, ears and a love of chocolate brownies. The focus of these discussions was that although we may look different on the outside we're all very similar when you look on the inside.

Learning fundamental life skills, or practical life, is the component of the Montessori Early Years Learning Program that links the home environment to the experiences in the Casa Room. Children love order, and they love to be independent, and this desire finds expression in the exercises of Practical Life. Children are able to choose from a variety of practical life exercises that focus on different skills. Over the coming months we will be incorporating more cooking experiences into the programme to further develop these valuable skills.



Children love order, and they love to be independent, and this desire finds expression in the exercises of practical life.



getting to know...
MARGRET PALMA

a journey to DISCOVERING MONTESSORI

by Margret Ranada Palma (Brolga Directress)

There was a time I never imagined myself becoming an early childhood educator. This was not the path I thought I would end up taking, knowing what I put my teachers and professors through.

Twenty years ago, I obtained a degree in Communications, majored in Speech Communications and minored in Writing. I was expected to get into journalism after graduating but I ended up taking a position as an instructor at the High School program of the same state university I graduated from. I had 13 and 15-year-old children under my tutelage, teaching English Literature and Speech Communication. In the second year of doing this, an opportunity came up to teach undergraduate students on campus.

There was a time I never imagined myself becoming an early childhood educator. This was not the path I thought I would end up taking, knowing what I put my teachers and professors through.

I took up this challenge and transitioned to being a Speech Communications instructor at the university. After a couple of years, as I was being prepared to take my Master's degree, I felt like I needed to experience life outside of the academe - to be able to further inspire and to enrich my life experiences which would help me become a more effective teacher.

I moved out of the comfortable sphere that the university environment offered and I ventured out into another world - I entered the corporate life in the big city with a brief stint as a trader and then soon after, I decided to find my niche in the world and ended up travelling.

Within a period of two years, I was travelling and working whilst soul-searching. It was my exposure at a non-profit organisation in California where my discovery for working with kids sparked my interest in educating little ones. I was volunteering to care for the young children whilst the parents were attending their counselling sessions. I considered taking my post-graduate studies in early childhood. A friend had then suggested that I observe her class at a Montessori school.

I sat in awe in that prepared environment in Northern California. That was when I made my decision. In the summer of 2004 I embarked on my journey as a Montessori student as I decided to take the Montessori 3-6 Early Childhood teacher training course in Florida.

The period of time as an intern and as a student taught me a lot about the theories that I was studying. Working as an assistant gave me a different point of view too. When I had finished my course, I moved back to San Francisco as I was offered a position as a Directress. I had my own classroom and I was able to utilise what I had learned but also kept learning as I was surrounded in the school by experienced directresses and assistants.

Having worked from the East Coast to the West Coast of the United States, I brought my training and experience back to the Philippines, wanting to make a difference in the education sector. I looked for a school which embodied the Montessori philosophy and I found one and was offered a role. I was privileged to have had the opportunity to work alongside a wonderful Directress who personified the ideal Montessori teacher. I worked as her assistant with the freedom to make presentations as a teacher as well. I learned a lot more and I knew there was still much to learn, to hone my skills, to religiously observe the children, to follow the child when they are ready for presentations, and much more.

As far as life-changing decisions go, I got married to the love of my life. My husband's work required him to travel extensively so we moved around. He was then assigned to Perth in Western Australia.

As it was then, my training and experience helps me with my parenting, as parenting helps me as a directress.



STARTING IN 2009

I taught in Perth for three and a half years until I fell pregnant. This is where my education in early childhood accelerated further. As a mother, everyone thought I would breeze through the first three years, especially with all that knowledge I had gained from my training and experience with children. As any parent knows however, this is more challenging than one could imagine. I looked at everything I learned in a different light. It was another learning experience, with lack of sleep, breastfeeding struggles and the absence of a support system, especially my family here in Australia. As it was then, my training and experience helps me with my parenting, as parenting helps me as a Directress.



MONTESSORI IS

not just a method of teaching, a philosophy to be followed in a school, it becomes a lifestyle, one that you constantly practice day in and day out. I only realised that when I became a mother. It is a humbling experience to watch firsthand in your own home what Maria had written about. My eureka moments continue with each new milestone or simple occurrence, as I sit (stand or run) to watch my daughter. Seeing the wonder on her face when she picks up a piece of fluff would always be a sight to behold.

As soon as my daughter turned eighteen months, she joined a Montessori Toddler Program and when she turned three, she quickly transitioned into the Casa program in Perth until it was time to move to New South Wales.

It has been 12 years since I completed my Montessori training but I continue to learn. The children teach me something new every day. My own daughter has her own life lessons to share with me too.

HERE I AM NOW

with the Northside community. I was given the chance to work in the Toddler Program for 18 months. I am back in my specialisation in the 3-6 classroom and I have missed being in the Casa program. As I am updating my state qualifications, I have been very lucky to work in a mainstream classroom to see the bigger picture and have a better appreciation for what Maria set out to do in educating the children.

The journey as a Montessorian has had its different hurdles, especially before motherhood and now as a parent. It has been 12 years since I completed my Montessori training but I continue to learn. The children teach me something new every day. My own daughter has her own life lessons to share with me too. They are the best teachers, after all, since this is what we set out to do as Montessori teachers: to follow the child and guide them in their self-construction to become the persons they are meant to be, providing them an education that hopefully will bring about peace.

The beauty of the Montessori education is that wherever you are in the world, the materials and the method are the same when the philosophy is practised as it has been designed and intended. From North America to Asia, and now Australia, I have been fortunate enough to have worked in schools that aim and promise to deliver a true Montessori education. I have come to the realisation that my ideals to make a difference applies to wherever I am, whatever I could do to make a difference. As Malala Yousafzai said: "One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world. Education is the only solution. Education first."

Margret Ranada Palma
Brolga Directress



a typical day

We are now halfway through the year and our Kookaburra class has eighteen children - 6 three-year olds and 12 five-year olds.

by Edna Salvador (3-6 Directress)

The children have bonded well and are enjoying working and learning together. The youngest members of the class have a small repertoire of activities that they can now do independently. The Practical Life activities remain a favourite especially window washing, brass and silver polishing, apple cutting and orange juicing. There is something about the movements in these activities that are especially attractive to the very young children as they allow them to copy what adults do. Imitation is also one of the strongest urges at this age. The middle group of four and new five-year olds are "writing" stories with the movable alphabet, creating designs with the metal insets, tracing puzzle maps and exploring the sensorial materials. Meanwhile, the Extended Day children are learning their phonogram sounds, counting the long chains of numbers and mastering their letter formation. The oldest children in the class are often involved in what they would call a "big work". For example, two children may be working on the long chain of 9 for two days! They painstakingly sort all the arrows needed for labeling and meticulously count each bead from 1 to 729.

The oldest children in the class are often involved in what they would call a "big work"

A TYPICAL DAY STARTS AT 8:30AM

when the children begin arriving. One by one the children come through the gate. We see excited and smiling faces and tears are now a thing of the past. Soon all the nineteen children have arrived and during the next several hours, they will choose learning activities and will involve themselves individually, as well as in small groups. They will have a variety of lessons during which they are shown how to use the Montessori materials. Other lessons are in the form of direct instruction on, for example, the phonetic sounds of letters or names for geometric shapes or names of numerals.

At 9:30, some children begin preparing the snack table. A child may choose to cut a banana, another one may cut an apple with an apple slicer and another one may be happy with squeezing an orange. Only two children are allowed on the snack table and the children have learned to practise waiting with the patience of a saint.

Only two children are allowed on the snack table and the children have learned to practise waiting with the patience of a saint.

THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THE MORNING,

the children have completed activities involving sorting and sequencing objects, identifying names of vegetables, arranging geometric shapes and painting pictures. In a very real sense, the children are responsible for the care of this child-sized environment. This classroom of nineteen children is a small community where the little people help each other. Older children show younger children how to use the materials. When the children are hungry, they prepare their own snacks by cutting fruits and vegetables they have brought to share. They go to the bathroom without assistance. When something spills, they clean up themselves. They also enjoy sweeping, polishing and washing dishes, tables and windows. We see them steadily grow in their independence as each day passes. We witness as they develop a sense of order, a longer ability to concentrate and transition smoothly from one activity to the next.

It is now 11:00am and if the weather permits, the children get ready to go outside for a play. But not without applying sunscreen first and wearing their hats. Outdoor play provides lots of opportunities for the development of social skills and gross motor skills. The children rush to the monkey bars and they call out to us to watch them as they can now swing on two bars, three bars and all the bars! They navigate the length and breadth of the playground effortlessly. We see a small group gathered in a corner collecting ladybugs. Another group is in the boat pretending to be sailors sailing the seas. One child who is quite shy is alone and other children are encouraged to invite her to play. Another child falls and scrapes her knee and her friends rush to a teacher to tell her what has happened.

SOON IT IS 11:30AM

and the children go back to the classroom. They sit on the floor and get ready to listen to a story. On some days, a child or two might do Show and Tell or share some news. Their friends ask questions or make comments. The children like to sing songs and recite rhymes, too. At 11:45, they say goodbye to some of their friends who go home. The rest get ready for lunch, wash their hands and set the table for eating. Lunch time is full of friendly banter. This is how the first half of the day typically unfolds. There is another work cycle in the afternoon during which the Extended Day children continue to work on the Montessori materials for Maths, Language, Cultural Arts as well as have group discussions and lessons on other areas in Geography, History, Health, Science and Creative Arts. Meanwhile, the three and four year olds staying for Home Environment continue to choose their work from the shelves but may also do art and craft. If they are sleepy, then they can certainly take a nap. The day ends at 2:45 and when the day is over, the children would have done a variety of activities. They leave school still sporting the same smile they had in the morning.

The three & four year olds staying for Home Environment continue to choose their work from the shelves but may also do art & craft. If they are sleepy, then they can certainly take a nap.

oosh

UPDATE

by Sureni Giritharan
(OOSH Coordinator)



The second term has almost come to an end. We would like to welcome Dylan, Jayden and Joshua who started After School Care this term. They have settled in well with the program and are getting along really well with the other children. It was a smooth transition for the children.

What a busy time we have in After School Care! Our afternoon program contains a variety of activities to engage the children with interest. We start off with a healthy afternoon tea, followed by the activity for the day based on the theme for that week, outside play, story time, group games and of course free play.

Board games became very popular this term after we introduced them and children now play on a regular basis. The stand out for the children has been playing an oldie but a goodie: Snakes and Ladders. At the beginning the primary and the extended day children were playing and the younger children were just watching. Now we see the 3+ wanting to play even though they are not fully familiar with the number patterns. They love the way they go up on the ladders and down when they land on a snake's head.

OUR FAVOURITE THINGS

Cooking is another popular activity that all age groups love participating in. Everyone's favourite moment is taste testing their creations, of course! If children have to leave early before the food is ready, without fail, they come on the next day to collect their share of food!

The children's favourite physical activity is good old musical chairs which is still the most favourite among all ages!

We encourage all children to take part in the activities. Parents can look at our weekly program sheet which is posted above the parent sign out sheet in ASC. Parents and carers are always welcome to chat to our staff if you have any concern or doubts on any matter.



The children's favourite physical activity is good old musical chairs which is still the most favourite among all ages!

HOLIDAY PROGRAM

Our Term 1 holiday program was very busy and the children had a wonderful time! It would not have been possible without the commitment of all the staff who worked during the program.

Our holiday programs are always busy. We have some exciting incursions booked for the next holidays. We create a day program for a smooth flow hence children are encouraged to do the activity created for that day at a particular time. However, we do not force children to work on any activity/craft if that doesn't interest him/her.

Have a safe break and we look forward to seeing you in the holiday program.





WEEKS OF WORK

The work covered many of the NSW Education Standards Authority outcomes for Science and Technology, English, Maths and Visual Arts. It was very detailed and required weeks of work. It was wonderful to witness the creative process and problem-solving that occurred in all the children. For the children studying vertebrates and invertebrates, they were trying to make the details life-like, and keeping scorpion tails up and joining large segmented bodies proved quite the challenge. The children making the toys tried many different ways to make wheels that moved. The collaborative work that ensued was very productive and inspiring.

The Level 3 children had to draw their chosen animal from a bird's eye view, lateral view & anterior view. This in itself was a challenge as they had to use their imagination to visualise some of these views.



THE PROCESS that the children followed was one where firstly they had to decide what they wanted to research and/or design. Detailed drawings then had to be completed. The Level three children had to draw their chosen animal from a bird's eye view, lateral view and anterior view. This in itself was a challenge as they had to use their imagination to visualise some of these views. Even the youngest children had to complete drawings. They all then wrote a report about why they chose their subject, what materials they used, how they made their model and any problems they encountered. Their drawings were also included. They completed first drafts and final drafts before writing it all onto their posters.

science exhibition

This term the students in PJ presented an array of models based on work they had been doing for this semester.

by Janene Johnson (6-9 Directress)

The level 1 children researched and made models of vertebrates, the Level 2 children had been studying forces and made toys which could push and pull and the Level 3 children researched and made models of invertebrates. These were then displayed and presented to the parents. Whilst the activity may have looked like a craft activity or some simple project work, it was far from it.

The level 1 children researched and made models of vertebrates...



ALL OF this culminated in a wonderful exhibition which was attended by many parents. The sheer joy and pride that the children exhibited was apparent to everyone in attendance. The children did a beautiful job and presented their work very confidently.

The value of work

IN A COSMIC EDUCATION

We have been doing lots of purposeful, meaningful work this term in a prepared environment that provides children the opportunity to work for and by themselves.

by Sarah Barton (6-9 Directress)

In 1938, Dr. Montessori gave a lecture regarding work where she said, "The increase in intellect and harmony comes from experiences in the environment. The young child has showed us that he does not need impositions and oppressive teachings, but freedom, guides and work, work for as long as he wishes and as hard as his impulse tells him."

We have been undertaking lots of purposeful, meaningful work this term in a prepared environment that provides children the opportunity to work for and by themselves. The children have now settled into our class environment and have had plenty of presentations from which to choose to do their work. We continue to work with their insatiable desire to learn.

In Language, we have looked at the parts of speech in Grammar Box work and the children have really loved exploring the various command cards that go with this work. A command card uses a part of speech and commands the child to act out what the card says. For example, a command card may say "walk quickly across the room" when working with the adverb. This allows the children to work together in groups, practise their reading and do something in the class that they would not usually do while highlighting the part of speech they are working on.

We have spent some time outdoors this term looking at simple classification of leaves. The children collected leaves and then sorted them according to their veins. They then did drawings of the leaves and wrote observations on them. We were very lucky to have Noelle's zebra finches come to the class earlier in the year and we are looking to get our own pair of finches. It would be very valuable for the children to have the responsibility of caring for birds during the school holidays and weekends. Please let me know if you are interested in assisting us with this.

The children have heard 'The Story of Colour' over a period of weeks that documents the history of different colours. The children were very interested in Tyrian Purple and we had a look at our clothing to see if anyone was wearing the very regal colour.

THANK YOU

to Julie Vickers who came to help us make our bath salts for Mother's Day. The children had some experience with measuring the quantities needed and were very excited to give their hand made presents to their mums. Thank you also to Clayton Spencer who brought his sensei to show all of primary the ancient teachings of martial arts. The children loved learning about the history of Ninjutsu and seeing it enacted in real life. We were very grateful to Janene who thought it would be a great opportunity for all of primary to get together.

Thank you to Margaret Kroger for organising our drumming session. The children loved playing their drums with the rest of primary and some even got up and danced as people played. The staff also busted some moves at the end while the children played (and laughed).

We hope everyone has a relaxed Term 2 break so the children can come back ready for more purposeful, meaningful work in Term 3.

EXTRAORDINARY Ordinaries

What do Alexander Hamilton, Misty Copeland, Anne Frank, Mary Anning, Eddie Mabo and David Gulpilil all have in common? Well, if you ask any 9 - 12 student, you will probably hear a definite, "They're all extraordinarily ordinary."

by Margaret Kroeger (9-12 Directress)



This event fosters 'big work' and 'creativity' - two things that are very attractive to the 9-12 child.

Yes, it's that time again for PM to showcase some amazing people as part of our annual 'Evening of Extraordinary Ordinaries'. This is an event that is much anticipated by the children. They talk about it fondly throughout the year and as soon as they start packing up their displays from one year, they begin discussing and planning for the next.

So, what is this evening of 'Extraordinary Ordinaries'? The children spend about a term gathering resources, planning, researching and editing their work on a self-chosen person who has made a positive difference to the world. They create beautiful posters, time lines, charts, activities, questions, models and artefacts. Often I have wondered why this event seemed to capture their enthusiasm so completely. In a nut shell, this event is so enjoyable for the children because it satisfies their developmental needs as a Second Plane Child.

SO WHY DOES 'EXTRAORDINARY ORDINARIES' RESONATE SO DEEPLY IN THE 9 - 12 CHILDREN?

- It provides an opportunity for children to think about 'big questions' like 'What qualities do I admire in others?', 'What is a hero?' and 'Do I have those same qualities?' Children in the Second Plane are developing their own internal moral compass. This research helps them contemplate and solidify their own ideas about strength, right and wrong and making positive choices through their study of others.
- Another characteristic of this age group is a tendency to 'hero worship'. Our work with 'Extraordinary Ordinaries' gives the children an opportunity to discuss the difference between someone who is 'popular' and someone who is a 'hero'. While some of our students chose a person who is popular - like the singer Pink, they chose them not just for their ability to

entertain others but also for their humanitarian and advocacy work. As Warren Buffet said, "If you can tell me who your heroes are, I can tell you how you're going to turn out. It's really important to have the right heroes."

- 'Extraordinary Ordinaries' suits the tone of Montessori history work. In Montessori education, history is not focused on remembering a list of people born into royalty or recalling a series of dates or battles. Instead it is a study in gratitude for all those (named or unnamed) who have helped prepare the way for us. It recognises the person who first started written communication as much as it does the Queen of England. It looks at the commonalities of all people and how we meet our fundamental and spiritual needs over time. The message is that we have much more in common than we have differences. By studying an ordinary person who has made extraordinary choices as part of their research, the children discover that anyone can be a hero - even someone who was a child just like them.
- This event fosters 'big work' and 'creativity' - two things that are very attractive to the 9 - 12 child.

In Montessori education, history is a study in gratitude for all those (named or unnamed) who have helped prepare the way for us.

- Our 'Extraordinary Ordinary' work allows opportunities for peer mentoring and collaboration - just as it is in the 6 - 12 Montessori environment.

The older children who have been part of this experience before,

love to help the younger children settle into the process. Often they will explain a skill or step and share their own work to illustrate part of the task. Those who love to draw help others who are a little uncertain. Those who love to read help others find suitable books and digital resources. Those who are especially tech savvy help others with word processing or printing clip art. Children discuss their work together and often brainstorm ideas in a group. They help to read and edit each other's rough copies. There is a wonderful and purposeful energy in the room which reflects the child-centred and child-driven nature of Montessori education in 6 - 12.

- It combines realism with fantasy. The 9- 12 child wants authentic experiences and to learn about the world beyond the classroom. The person they study has life experiences beyond those of the students. The children can experience things vicariously through their chosen person. The Second Plane child is also drawn to stories and imagination. Many concepts and areas of study are presented first to the 6 - 12 child, through 'Great Stories' and imaginative charts. Imagination fuels their learning. Similarly, the student chose to present their 'Extraordinary Ordinary' work through creative stories, charts, and illustrations. We have students interviewing their chosen person, dressing up as their subject and creating letters, artefacts

and diaries from their chosen person's perspective. Although grounded in reality, there is also ample room for creativity, empathy and imagination.

- It reflects the changing focus of learning in 9 - 12. In 6 - 9 the work is often process based. The children are becoming comfortable with the process of different skills such as long division with the racks and tubes. In 9 - 12 the focus shifts - not only is understanding the process important but so is the ability to communicate the steps and end product with others. The journey and destination are equally important for the 9 - 12 child. They love sharing their work and discussing their discoveries about their chosen person with peers and adults alike - especially on the night of our event.

- This work is cross-curricula involving skills from different key learning areas. This is a common feature of Montessori learning in 6 - 12. As they create their timeline the students are perfecting their writing skills and when they present their work to others on the night, they are refining their public speaking skills. Creative Arts is covered in the illustrations and Technology is explored through computer word processing. In sequencing the years on their time line, they are working with Mathematics skills and they are constantly honing their research skills throughout the work. History and Geography are brought into tracing the life and times of their chosen person. Just like the Montessori learning they do in class, their learning is connected and intertwined.

- Most of all, the children love the event because it is fun.

For all these reasons our 'Extraordinary Ordinary' work remains a highlight for the children as it speaks to their needs and tendencies as a Second Plane Child. The 9 - 12 children look forward to sharing their work with you on our 'Evening of Extraordinary Ordinaries.'

Margaret, Kay and Kim.



why code?

We want Australian kids to be able to create technology, not just consume it.

by Andrew Smith (ScopeIT)

Technology is the digital playground of children today. Almost every child has access to a digital device, but we want Australian kids to be able to create technology, not just consume it. Learning to code unlocks the potential of what you can do with technology. Having a solid grounding in the fundamentals of how technology works is the foundation of innovation.

Computer 'code' is the programming that makes all technology work. Experiencing how computers think and work is part of a relevant education and unlocks children's potential to create with technology. We at ScopeIT Education teach children programming and computer code because understanding how to code and design software has far-reaching benefits beyond simply a career in IT, like developing logical thinking and problem-solving skills.

What we need is a holistic approach to equipping our students to tackle the Digital Technologies curriculum. There are a myriad of services, methods, websites, programs and providers pitching to help 'teach kids to code'. But is having kids just go online to code enough or is the answer to the Digital Technologies curriculum much broader than this? Sure, coding is the language of the future and a robust digital technologies education should be underpinned by coding but coding is just one part of the equation. The conversation must be more than 'let's teach kids to code', even if this is a great place to start. It's critical that we prepare them with the necessary skills for 21st century learning and their future employment.

At the CIY Club at Northside we don't run courses, we are a club where children can come along and learn with others to create projects at their own pace.

At ScopeIT Education we believe that an integrated, complementary ICT learning experience is crucial to the education of this generation. With the combination of strategic planning, skilled design and current best practice implementation, schools can provide an ICT pathway to ensure student success.

CIY CLUB

is a complimentary arm of ScopeIT. At the CIY Club at Northside we don't run courses, we are a club where children can come along and learn with others to create projects at their own pace. Students work their way through the achievements from level 1 to 9, collecting the required number of stickers in each level to receive their coloured wristband and progress to the next level! There is no finish line just continual achievement and projects to be delivered.

CIY Club came into creation from the growing amount of time that our young people are spending on digital devices. We teach kids the coding and mechanics behind the games that they play, in a supportive environment. There are also other technology skills to be developed along the way.

We believe all Australian children will benefit from learning these skills. Employers of the future will require their employees to be creative and clever with technology, regardless of the career path they pursue.



THE IMPORTANCE OF language learning

by Kay Chida (Japanese Teacher)

To learn languages is more than learning how to speak them, it is also being able to understand the relevant culture, country, history, cooking/food, various arts and many more features.

The most important thing is to enjoy learning languages.

When students enjoy their learning, they learn more. They are able to better shape their interests to study further and this can already be seen in the children who are learning Japanese.

Language learning provides a window into a different world, especially its mix of traditional and modern features which provides a wide context for inter-cultural learning.

Languages can also be learned through sport and the arts.

A language will build a strong network of interpersonal connections which offer many opportunities to engage with its people and experience their culture both in Australia and in their country.

The culture associated with language learning is perhaps its most significant strength, enabling us to share aspects of our societies as well as understand differences between the countries.

So, let's enjoy learning languages!

Language learning provides a window into a different world...

Why learn French?

Learning a language is pivotal to the multicultural landscape in which we live and work today, but why specifically should we learn French?

by Michele Adamson (French Teacher)

"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to man in his language, that goes to his heart." (Nelson Mandela). Learning a language is pivotal to the multicultural landscape in which we live and work today, but why specifically should we learn French?

French is still one of the very few languages that is spoken all over the world and on all five continents. It is the sixth most widely spoken language overall and the official language in 29 countries, second only to English in this category. French is also taught as a foreign language in most education systems around the world and thus is the second most widely learned foreign language in the world. Moreover, there are many committees and organisations across the world where French remains the official language, including the United Nations (UN), the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and even the International Olympic Committee (IOC).



STUDENTS IN THE 9 TO 12 YEAR OLD FRENCH CLASS REHEARSE THEIR PLAY, LES TROIS PETITS COCHONS (THE THREE LITTLE PIGS)

"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to man in his language, that goes to his heart."

NELSON MANDELA

Learning French will set our students apart from the rest and broaden their horizons, both culturally and linguistically

THE LANGUAGE COMPANY

provides French lessons in our school for all age groups on Wednesday afternoons. These focus on teaching our students to enjoy French, helping them to achieve confidence and fluency in the language. Teaching is based on best practice from around the globe and the teachers are fluent or native speakers of French. Our students can expect engaging course materials, delivered in a format that's relevant and motivating to their age group and individual ability. Learning French will set our students apart from the rest and broaden their horizons, both culturally and linguistically. As a wise French Proverb says: "Un homme qui connaît deux langues vaut deux hommes", which translates to: "A man who knows two languages is worth two men". If your child is interested in joining the French program at Northside, please contact enquiries@thelanguagecompany.com.au. We look forward to hearing from you. Merci!

AFTER ALL THOSE FRENCH GAMES, MOVEMENT & MUSIC, OUR 3 TO 6 YEAR OLD STUDENTS PRACTISE WRITING IN FRENCH ABOUT THIS TERM'S THEME.



sporting stars

We have been fortunate to receive two grants this year from the Australian Government under the banner of "Sporting Schools".

by Mary Abolins

How lucky we are to have sport in our schools and how lucky that it is a compulsory part of our curriculum. Some children may not agree with this, however it gives every child in Australia the opportunity to experience sport of some kind at some level.

We have been fortunate to receive two grants this year from the Australian Government under the banner of "Sporting Schools".

Sporting Schools is Australia's largest school-based sports participation program to help children foster a lifelong interest in sport.

Sporting Schools brings together schools and sports to help get Aussie children active in their local communities. Sporting Schools is open to all Australian primary schools, and with quality programs developed by over 30 national sporting organisations, it offers a fun and supportive environment for children and coaches.

With this money we have had providers come to Northside Montessori for gymnastics and aerobics, each coming into the school and giving specialised classes in these sports.

This term has been a particularly busy as we have also had visits from the NRL and Oz Tag associations. These sporting bodies give children the opportunity to experience their sports by coming to the schools and giving the children free clinics.

Sport these days comes in different forms and you don't always need a ball!

When you ask the children at Montessori what sporting activities they do we get a variety of answers from yoga to ice skating, horse riding, ballet, cheer leading, dance and parkour. When

I first heard the word parkour, I said pardon, what is it? For those that don't know

parkour is a philosophy and training method for movement through any environment at speed. The concept is to overcome all physical and mental obstacles in your path by using your body and mind to run, climb, jump and vault.

There is a sport for all children; we just need to find the one that sparks that lifetime love.



THERE IS

a sport for all children; we just need to find the one that sparks that lifetime love.

Being active in our lives helps us physically and mentally to be able to live a happy life. Sports help children develop physical skills, get exercise, make friends, have fun, learn to play as a member of a team, learn to play fair, and improve self-esteem. Parents can also take an active role in helping their child find that sport and develop good sportsmanship. This is not always easy for them in our competitive world

At Montessori it is not about winning. We concentrate on being involved in as many sports as possible, learning as many skills from different sports and enjoying the games.

WHAT'S ON...

these school holidays



3 - 14 July - Macquarie Centre - School Holiday Workshops

FREE KIDS WORKSHOPS MACQUARIE SHOPPING CENTRE

Plant your own seeds and watch them grow or decorate a mug at Macquarie Centre's Free School Holiday Workshops. Spots are limited. Admission is on a first in best dressed basis. 3rd - 14th July 11am - 2pm, outside Big W.

AUSSIE NIGHT MARKETS AT ST IVES

After a successful trial run, the Aussie Night Markets is set to take up residence at the St Ives Showground every Friday night. The night markets will be filled with delicious food trucks, market stalls, live music and kid's activities. Friday nights 5pm-10pm, St Ives Showground. Free entry.

FREE TROLLS MOVIE AT MAGPIES WAITARA

Trolls the movie will be showing at Magpies Waitara on Tuesday 4 July from 11am. Free to watch, head on down during the school holidays. Kids meals are \$8 from The Kitchen.



FREE KIDS COOKING AT ST IVES SHOPPING VILLAGE

Kids can have fun learning new skills in the kitchen while making Moroccan Cous Cous. Ages 5+. Monday 3rd - Thursday 6th July. 9:30am-1:30pm. Level 1, near Cotton On Kids. No bookings required.

FREE CLUE TRAILS AT OLYMPIC PARK

Download your chosen Clue Trail, grab a pencil and get going. Can you unscramble the message at the end of the trail? Pictorial version available for early readers. Weekends only at Newington Armory. www.sydneypark.com.au

NAIDOC BLAK MARKETS AT BARANGAROO RESERVE

The lively open-air market is a rare opportunity for families to learn about and experience Aboriginal culture with over 30 stalls, bush tucker cooking demonstrations, dance performances, live music and language and culture workshops. Stargazer Lawn, Barangaroo Reserve. Sunday 2 July, 11am-5pm. Free entry.



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