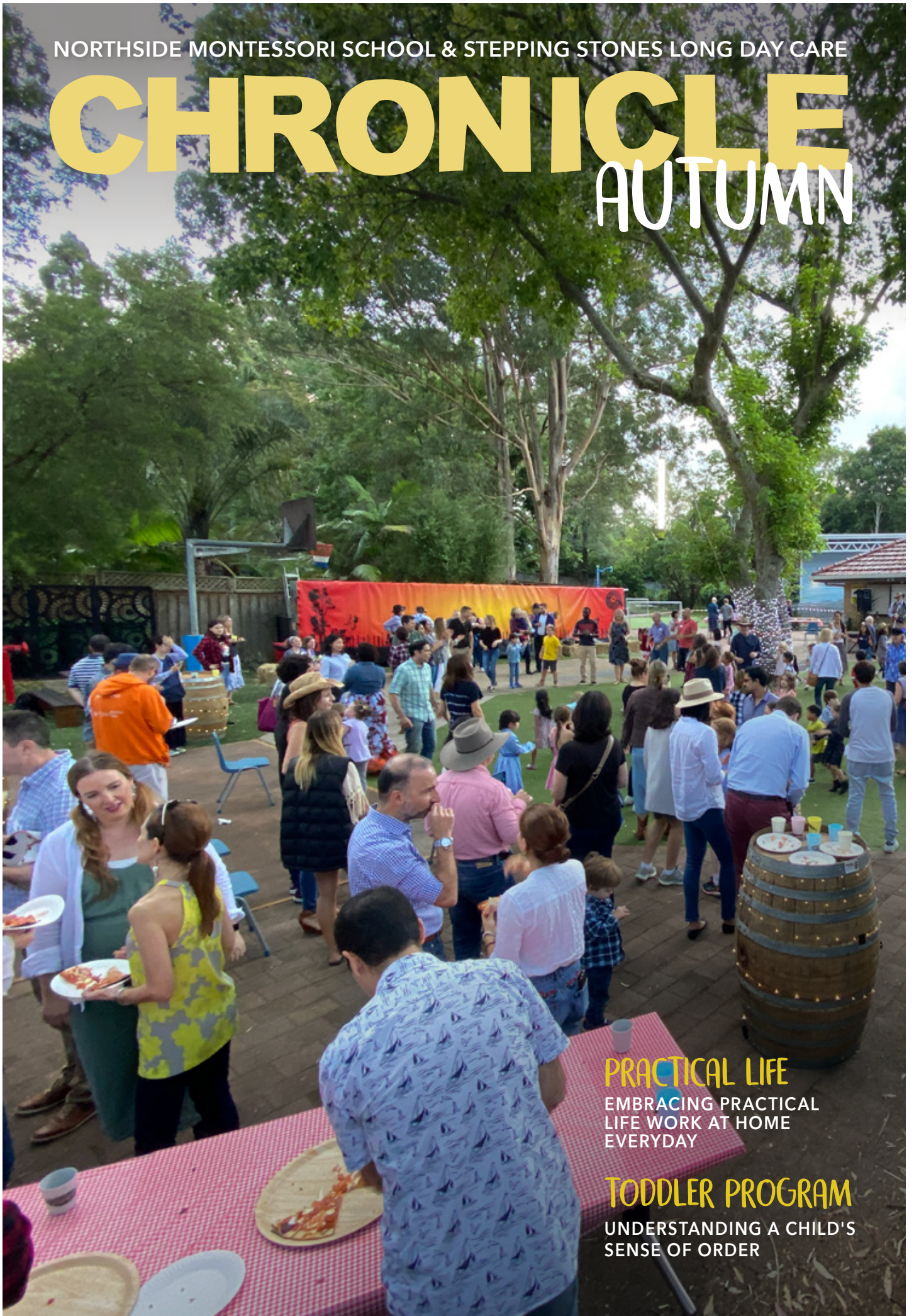


NORTHSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL & STEPPING STONES LONG DAY CARE

# CHRONICLE

## AUTUMN



### PRACTICAL LIFE

EMBRACING PRACTICAL  
LIFE WORK AT HOME  
EVERYDAY

### TODDLER PROGRAM

UNDERSTANDING A CHILD'S  
SENSE OF ORDER



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### CONTACT US

phone 02 9144 2835

email admin

northsidemontessori.nsw.edu.au

### PRINCIPAL

Adam Scotney

### GRAPHIC DESIGN

Rebecca Andrews

linkedin.com/in/becandrewshcd/

### COVER PHOTOGRAPHY

Ian Carlson

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42 Bobbin Head Road

Pymble NSW 2073

northsidemontessori.nsw.edu.au



# FROM THE PRINCIPAL



This year the Montessori Community celebrates the 150th Anniversary of Maria Montessori's life. At a time like this it is an opportunity for all those in the Montessori community worldwide to recognise and celebrate the life and achievements of such a visionary woman, who in large part has changed the shape of education for millions of children and families across the world.

As a community Northside will seek to celebrate this anniversary year with our families, students and staff in a number of ways, and we look forward to sharing these events with you over the coming months. We will be looking at ways to celebrate this milestone by undertaking events and activities that feature 150 in some way. Please keep an eye out for these activities and join in where possible. 2020 is shaping up to be an exciting year.

## THE LEGACY OF MARIA MONTESSORI

Each year as our Graduates leave Northside, we look to provide them with something that helps them to remember their time at the school. These mementos have taken a variety of forms over past years, but last year we gave our students a hardcover book based on the life of Maria Montessori. Even though our students hear about Maria Montessori from time to time in their classes, we really wanted them to have a good understanding about the woman behind the method of education that they have enjoyed all these years.

The book titled *Little people, Big Dreams, Maria Montessori* goes through the experiences and achievements of Maria Montessori's life. In the book we read

Born in Italy in 1870, from an early age Maria's parents wanted her to be a teacher, but she loved science and upon completion of school enrolled in an all boys Technical School. She then wanted to study Medicine, but this was not the done thing for girls at that time, but she persisted and become the first female in Italy to study medicine. This path of study presented constant obstacles, such as she was not allowed to examine a body with other students in the room, so she had undertake her studies at night when all the male students had gone home. But Maria did not give up!





When Maria graduated she became an assistant doctor in a mental health clinic. Here there were disabled children who were treated as if they were sick. They had no toys and were left to their own devices. Maria decided that as part of their treatment she would give them love and respect. She knew that for children to do their best they needed to believe in themselves. This proved very successful; the children learnt through play and fun. She realised that this could work with all children.

She opened a school called 'The Children's House' where children became their own teachers and the desks were small and full of counting beads and puzzles. She was the first person to use cut out letters to teach reading, and she told stories that made understanding the natural world fun.

She wrote many books and articles, and traveled the world giving courses and lectures so that other teachers could use her revolutionary method.

Schools like 'The Children's House' sprung up all over the world and Maria's method inspired children to be free, curious and responsible human beings. She believed that the children of today are the makers of tomorrow.

While this book provides a beautiful story of this amazing woman's life, it does not account for the challenges and hardships that she faced in her life. Maria Montessori overcame the obstacles around the roles of women in her time, the challenges that faced Maria and her family through two World Wars, and the resistance of many in positions of authority to acknowledge the exceptional work and method that she developed.

The remarkable work of Maria Montessori and her educational method has stood the test of time, and this is reflected through contemporary education practice that seeks to replicate many of the elements that already exist in the method that she developed. Within the Montessori classroom we share with our students the need for gratitude towards others, and recognition of those who have gone before us. As a school we are deeply grateful to Maria Montessori and the method that she developed. Our students are the beneficiaries of her wonderful work, and as a community we look forward to celebrating the 150th Anniversary of Maria Montessori throughout the school year.



We had over 260 of our school community at the event and a big thank you goes to those parents and staff who worked hard to make this event a reality.

## BUSH DANCE WELCOME EVENT

At the end of Week 4 our school community celebrated the beginning of 2020 with the Bush Dance Welcome Event. It was a beautiful night at Northside as our whole school community came together to enjoy bush dancing and dinner together. We had over 260 of our school community at the event and a big thank you goes to those parents and staff who worked hard to make this event a reality. Thank you Karen and Elisha from the P & C, and Bec our Enrolments Registrar for all the work behind the scenes to make this night possible.

Adam Scotney  
Principal









# STEPPING STONES

## CHRONICLES FOR INFANT COMMUNITY SUMMER

The summer has been a busy time for us and taking advantage of the weather. Our indoor-outdoor flow of activities has been successful. The children have loved painting outdoors and doing the table scrubbing.

We have witnessed the children working cooperatively exploring the table scrubbing materials. They all were presented the activity individually and it was presented as individual work, however, on occasion we have seen each child with an implement, and they all worked together harmoniously. They figured out themselves the job of each person and took turns without any adult mediation. The teachers had a wonderful time observing this interaction of different temperaments, personalities all working harmoniously in a children's community. One of the children fetched the water with the jug and poured it in the bowl; one would take the soap and brush and make lots of suds while one had the sponge and wiped off the bubbles formed. They all had so much fun having this cooperation and wonderful sensorial experiences. You could see they still understood and followed the steps for the practical life activity, but they broke it into specific jobs. This kind of exploration and experimentation gives these children the confidence that they are capable of doing any challenges they face as they have this confidence in their abilities. The adult observing avoided making comments and only assisted when asked. It was difficult to stop ourselves and say something, but these small praises and comments can distract their concentration and not continue the work. Many believe that praise can be a good way of encouragement; it can but needs to be used sparingly. If children become dependent on external rewards and praise, it will hinder for them to be able to develop their own intrinsic motivation. Montessori believed that intrinsic motivation is what we would like to develop in these children. They take their satisfaction from being able to do it themselves and overcome the challenges they faced themselves. This kind of satisfaction is much more meaningful to them, and they can carry for a lifetime.



The children also gain intrinsic satisfaction from being able to help their fellow peers or their loved ones. We have children in the room now who are confident and capable of helping the younger children and at times overdoing it for others. They are just so eager to help their peers that at times if the younger child wants to do it themselves, trouble can brew. The children are learning to be able to take turns and waiting patiently through repeated practice of real-life situations presented in the classroom. For children under three, they need to have a real object as they are still not able to differentiate and understand fantasy and real-life truly. We present everything realistic to them- books, images, and even practical life activities.

**Emma Elegado-Kotulic**  
Infant Community Room Leader and Early Childhood Teacher







We cannot force independence, but rather encourage it and invite participation at the pace of the children.

## NIDO

### TOILETING AND SELF CARE IN NIDO

The first steps towards independence in the area of toileting is dressing and undressing. We cannot force independence, but rather encourage it and invite participation at the pace of the children. From one invitation to use the bathroom, we saw many communicating a strong need to follow and we now have many of the children initiating the use of the bathroom. This routine has become a huge part of our day as the children are increasing their awareness and needs of their body.

We encourage the children to take off their own shoes and pull down their own pants. We then encourage the children to take their own nappies off and place them in the bin, before sitting on the toilet if they wish, and then putting on a fresh nappy, and putting their clothes back on.

Hand washing is another important step in both our toileting routine and self-care routines. We take the children through the steps of washing their hands and they develop their independence and self-care skills as they learn to do each of the steps independently.

Through consistency and exposure to the shared bathroom, we have observed the children settle and display more comfort when transitioning to the Infant Community room. We have also seen an increase in the confidence and communication with using the bathroom which prepares them early for a transition out of nappies.

Jess O'Donnell  
Nido Room Educator







## CASSETTA

### BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND HOW SYMBOLS AND PATTERNS WORK.

In our environment children are exposed to symbols and patterns on a daily basis. Either directly or indirectly.

Presentations are a direct form of intentionally giving meaning to symbols and consist of work like the sandpaper letters and numbers, rhyming games and some language cards.

Indirect ways in which we consciously help develop children's understanding of patterns and symbols are through displaying their names and other words in various locations around the room such as lockers, bed tags, craft labels that the children freely use, even the walls display symbols to draw meaning from.

As well as these examples, other ways we indirectly develop children's understanding of symbols are through stories, songs and puzzles that children take part in daily all contribute to children's understanding of symbols and patterns and their meaning.

Patterns are everywhere in the classroom the routine of the day itself is a pattern for the children to follow as there is a sequence and an understanding that one activity follows the next.

Another area where children are brought into contact with patterns is found in the work on the shelves. Each work has a set sequence that the child needs to follow to achieve success with the work.

Through providing these opportunities to connect with symbols and patterns in a purposeful and tactile way the children are given a strong foundation for further literacy and numbers work in the future.

**Rachael Beevours**  
Casetta Room Leader





## CASA SENSORIAL

The old becomes new again, with the extension of the Blindfold breathing life into the Knobbed Cylinders and Baric Tablets. Designed to assist the children in making distinctions within the environment and exploring and investigating preliminary mathematical concepts such as weight and size, the blindfold adds a second layer of challenge - isolating only the children's sense of touch.

An intense interest in 3 Dimensional figures has seen the Geometric Solids being drawn from the shelves, with presentations with Bronte labelling them with their mathematical names and exploring and investigating their shape through our sense of touch.

## LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

A firm favourite, Alphabet Bingo continues to not only develop and extend the children's letter/ sound associations as they engage in the game with rules but also allows work with a friend and a social outlet. Many exclamations of "Bingo!" can be heard throughout the learning environment throughout the work cycle.

The invitation to work with the Moveable Alphabet has seen an explosion of writing from our oldest Casa children - with weekend recounts as well as shopping lists and holiday ideas taking form through use of this versatile Montessori material. Imagine the creative writing we can expect as the year progresses!

**Bronte Nielsen**  
Casa Room Leader and Early Childhood Teacher



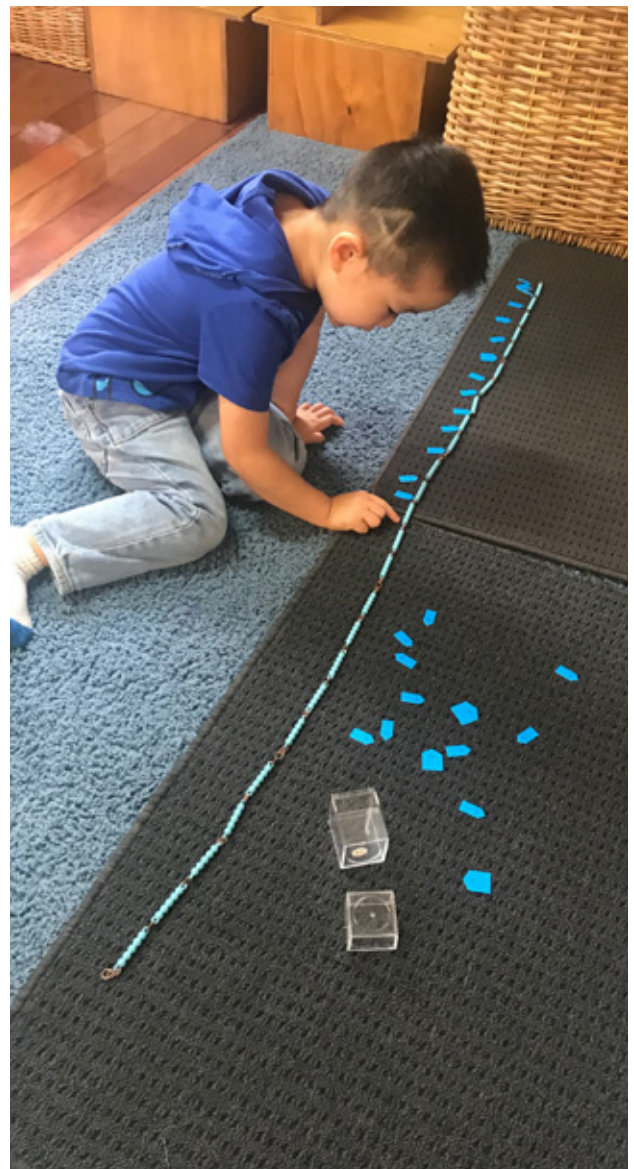


## CASA NUMERACY

The beauty of the bead chains continues to entice and engage the children, with our advanced mathematicians moving forward onto work with the Bead cabinet, exploring and investigating counting large numbers as well as skip counting and foundational multiplication.

Work with the short bead chains as well as the Spindle Box, counting and identifying, ordering and comparing continues to develop the children's mathematical skills and build their confidence in their capabilities.

Jess O'Donnell  
Nido Room Educator





Nothing is more exciting than the feeling of success when a child finds themselves able to button or zip their own jumper or lace their own shoes.



## CASA PRACTICAL LIFE

Practical Life works with meaningful and practical purpose are always a draw, with the Dressing Frames, particularly the buckles, buttons and most recently the bows, providing daily opportunities to develop, practice and refine fine motor skills and self-care capabilities. Nothing is more exciting than the feeling of success when a child finds themselves able to button or zip their own jumper or lace their own shoes.

We love to engage in transferring in Casa - with an assortment of works available utilising various spoons, tongs, jugs and bowls. Developing, practicing and refining these skills of independence and concentration lead to pleasurable dining experiences - self-serving all foods as well as liquids. Anything involving water is immediately whisked off the shelf!



## CULTURAL

Our two current science experiments upon the cultural shelves, Sink/Float and Magnetic/Non Magnetic encourage investigation and inquiry as the children engage in the scientific process and identify themselves as scientists - making sense of their world through exploration.

Our place within the wider world continues to be an exciting topic for discussion within Casa, with the children engaging enthusiastically with the World Flags - identifying not only the flag of Australia and its closest neighbours, but also countries of personal interest - and furthering their understanding of the world image through work with the Continent Colouring. We continue to love to sing the Continents song to help us remember the 7 continents of the world.

Jess O'Donnell  
Nido Room Educator







UNDERSTANDING THE CHILD'S

# SENSE OF ORDER

IN THE TODDLER PROGRAM

by Sandra Sin (Directress of Transition and Toddler program)

*"It seems to him, at this stage, a particularly vital matter that everything in his environment should be kept in its accustomed place; and that the actions of the day should be carried out in their accustomed routine."*

*E.M. Standing*

Toddlers love order. In our Montessori environment, we understand that the child is nourished and made secure by the order of materials and layouts in the room. Therefore, we pay a lot of care and attention to prepare for the child an environment which demonstrates order and structure in action. At the beginning of term, we lay out the materials on the shelves in a sequential order from easiest to hardest and keep all the materials in the same location throughout the term. In another words, there is a place for everything and everything in its place. As the child becomes familiar with the room, they gradually build confidence in choosing their work as they know where to find it and finishing their work as they know where to put it back.

The child's need for order is not limited to the environment but also their daily routines. In both the Transition and Toddler program, we practise similar routines so the child knows what to expect next. This is a typical routine the child experiences in our program:

- Greeted by the Directress at the door
- Take their shoes off and put them on the shelves
- Take out a piece of fruit from their bag and place it in the fruit basket
- Wash their hands

- Follow their interest, choose their work and pack away
- Set up morning tea table and enjoy the food prepared by children
- Wash up their plate, glass and cutlery
- Visit pre-primary playground and 3-6 classrooms (for Transition Class only)
- Listen to a story and sing/dance to a song before home time
- Put their shoes on and say goodbye

In our Transition and Toddler program, the child's developing sense of security and routine is fostered as we build up an environment and routine that make clear to the child what to expect, when to expect it and where to expect it. The consistency in environment, routine and staffing also facilitates children moving from the Toddler program to Transition class as they become more independent in their Montessori learning journey.

## REFERENCES

E.M. Standing, Maria Montessori: Her life and Work, p.123  
P.P. Lillard and L.L. Jessen, Montessori from the Start, p.204



*"The order of "what, when, and where" in the child's life provides the structure and opportunity for limits and discipline. It is living within these limits and experiencing order through them that develop the child's will. These external limits are needed in each specific instance until the child has internalised them and can control her own behaviour."*

*P.P. Lillard & L.L. Jessen*







# MUSIC IN 2020

by Marilyn Williams (Music Teacher)

## WHAT ARE WE LEARNING IN PRE-PRIMARY MUSIC & LONG DAY CARE MUSIC? (P1 & P2'S)

Our goal is for all the children to experience a wide variety of music and to have fun. The children sing, dance, play percussion and listen to music for appreciation. Simple note and rhythm reading is also introduced in classes.

**Our favourite songs for this term are;**

**SINGING:** "The Earth, The Air, The Fire, The Water", "I can Sing a Rainbow", "Tap to the Rhythm", "Copy Cat Game", "Colour Song", "Go, Go Then Stop", "Cheeky Monkey"

**PERCUSSION:** "Indo Eu", "Cross Dance" "Jibidi"

**MUSIC APPRECIATION:** "Trepak", "Pizzicatti"

**DANCES:** "Walk the Dinosaur", "Touch the Stars", "New Shoes"





When I hear the songs and music being played and sung outside the music room, it's then I know there has been a successful connection with the music.

## WHAT ARE WE DOING IN OUR EXTENDED - PRIMARY MUSIC CLASSROOM?

Within one music classroom there will always be a range of abilities based on children's musical experiences.

This is easy to accommodate in a Music Classroom as we are able to provide different ensemble parts appropriate to suit and extend each child.

A Primary music lesson includes composition, music appreciation, aural, singing and ensemble work.

With Extended Day we focus mainly on the glockenspiel and xylophones as the main instrument, as it gives children a good grounding of note patterns and scales. The children have been working on "Hot Cross Buns", "Shoop Shoop" and "Twinkle Twinkle"

In Year 1 & 2 We create ensembles using combinations of xylophones and recorders. Currently we are learning "Swinging Bones" and "Old McDonald"

In Level 3 we have a focus on Ukuleles and Melodicas. We are focusing on understanding

how to relate music we know to these instruments using chords for the Ukuleles and understanding keyboard orientation for Melodicas.

In Level 4- 6 the instrument combinations vary according to the members of our class. Currently we have ensembles that include a combination of keyboards, drums, guitars, trumpets, clarinets, violins, cello and euphonium. Children are encouraged to bring instruments from home as it adds to the variety in the ensembles. Year 4's are currently playing "New Symphony - Dvorak" and Year 5's and 6's are learning "Dona Nobis Pacem" in a round as well as Blues Scale Improvisations.

For me the music education is a lot more about what the children take away with them as much as what is done in the classroom. When I hear the songs and music being played and sung outside the music room, it's then I know there has been a successful connection with the music.

Last of all, please feel free to email me regarding any questions relating to music at the school. I am very happy to answer any questions.

My email is [Marilyn.williams@northsidemontessori.nsw.edu.au](mailto:Marilyn.williams@northsidemontessori.nsw.edu.au).

# PRACTICAL LIFE EVERYDAY

by Margret Ranada Palma (3-6 Directress)

Rinse, repeat. 🎵  
Wash, rinse, repeat. 🎵  
Wash, rinse, dry, repeat. 🎵  
Lather, wash, rinse, dry,  
repeat. 🎵



*During the time of 'self-isolation' and 'social distancing', it becomes more important to carry through and transfer the skills of what the children are learning in our Montessori environment into our homes. These are the days where we learn to slow down and involve the children in daily routines such as food preparation and household chores.*

Year in and year out, it may sometimes seem like what we do in our jobs is repetitive. As we welcome a new school year, we have had a (hopefully) restful summer break and a brand new inspired outlook on what lies ahead. We look forward to the constant of what a Montessori prepared environment offers: the materials, the layout, the people we work with and the children who we have had the privilege to guide throughout the stages they go through. What usually changes is the different personalities we meet each year and what they contribute to our daily lives. Apart from the little people who affect our chosen professions, there are also those current events that significantly impact our day to day routine.

In the advent of the coronavirus or COVID-19, it highlights the importance of hand washing, or shall we say 'proper' hand washing, as a safety and health measure for each individual. The children in the classroom have been more aware and conscious of each other's actions and movements. A child rushes to inform me that another child has put his finger in his nose and didn't wash his hands. Another girl runs up to a teacher in the playground and says that two girls used the toilets and left without washing their hands. Would this constant dobbing in be normal without the fear and panic of a pandemic on the rise?

The answer is simply yes. This constant need to report who's doing what in the classroom or playground is

normal especially of children who are aware of what the sequence of events are in their daily routines and movements. "Mary didn't push her chair in." or "Johnny, you forgot to pack away your work." We do have these young class monitors who have unofficially made it their job to remind everyone what they are meant to do, without the aid of the adult's prompts.

Each 3-6 Montessori environment may look different yet they have a lot of things in common. The Practical Life area is the first avenue of learning and all their guided exploration begins here as the three-year-olds start their Montessori journey. The activities are based on reality, so as to transfer the skills they are learning to what they can do for themselves at home and outside the classroom, such as spooning and pouring, or using a pair of tongs to transfer food from a serving platter to their plate. There is only one of each activity placed on a tray or a basket to give the children the opportunity to wait their turn. The children learn that they work in their own space, whether it's a table or a mat. They take ownership of the activity they have chosen to do and complete it from the moment they take it off the shelf to packing it away.

These undertakings are sequential, learning all the preliminary skills needed to control their bodies by putting order in their minds. The sense of order comes with the sequence of movements necessary to complete tasks, which are presented to them in a



*To extend to the child this hospitality, that is, to allow him to participate in our lives, is difficult, but costs nothing; it depends solely on the emotional preparation of the adult....” - Dr Maria Montessori*



minimally, deliberate, simple and exact manner by the guide. Through constant repetition, the children are able to achieve success in coordinating their movements as they have learned to put some form of organisation in the activities they have chosen. Through order and coordination, concentration becomes more apparent as the children strive to ‘perfect’ the aim of the activity, whether it’s polishing a metal or wooden object to make it shiny, or scrubbing a table free of dirt. These all contribute to the children’s independence as they find success through their own efforts.

Auto-education is the goal of why and how we do things in the environment. We guide the children to do the activities so they may learn to do it themselves. The Practical Life activities are centred on four core areas: Care of Self, Care of the Environment, Grace and Courtesy and Refined Control of Movement of Objects. Our activities available on the shelf allow the children to learn the skills to prepare them for independence. They gain confidence in their capabilities, as they learn to be mindful of others and their surroundings. The coordination and control of the children’s movement occurs from purposeful activity and everything else follows.

During the time of ‘self-isolation’ and ‘social distancing’, it becomes more important to carry through and transfer the skills of what the children are learning in our Montessori environment into our homes.

These are the days where we learn to slow down and involve the children in daily routines such as food preparation and household chores. The social interaction most relevant to them as they have learned from birth is found at home, wherein social graces are practiced in the absence of the network of friends and playdates. The limitations of screen time and the use of gadgets may be replaced with conversation, quiet play, purposeful activity such as art and craft, or games they can also play with siblings, which involve their imagination and cooperation.

Be the light at home. Dr. Maria Montessori said in *The Child in the Family* : “The adult must acquire the sensitivity to recognize all the child’s needs; only thus can he give the child all the help that is necessary. If we were to establish a principle, it would be that what is necessary is the child’s participation in our lives, for in that period in which he must learn to act, he cannot learn well if he does not see how, just as he could not learn language if he were deaf. To extend to the child this hospitality, that is, to allow him to participate in our lives, is difficult, but costs nothing; it depends solely on the emotional preparation of the adult....”

*The limitations of screen time and the use of gadgets may be replaced with conversation, quiet play, purposeful activity such as art and craft, or games they can also play with siblings, which involve their imagination and cooperation.*







# LIFE IN 6-9

by Linda Van Lierop (3-6 Directress)

*"Imagination does not become great until man, given the courage and strength, uses it to create. One of the normal traits of a happy human being is their desire to use their intelligence and endless curiosity to know, to explore, and to discover new ways to use familiar things."  
Montessori, 1994*



## REFERENCES:

Maria Montessori, 1994



## NEW STAFF MEMBER - Rebecca Grimshaw

Rebecca joins the Cooinda 6-9 classroom as the permanent teaching assistant after recently completing and graduating from the Montessori 6-12 Diploma (AMI) and Montessori Foundation Course in Sydney. She is passionate about working with children, parents and educators.

Rebecca has always enjoyed teaching and after living overseas in Ireland and Spain teaching English she completed her Bachelor of Education (Primary) in Sydney. During this time Rebecca discovered the work of Maria Montessori and was driven to learn more and become involved in Montessori education; where the child is the guide. She is excited to be a part of each child's journey and learning from them every day in the prepared environment.

The freedom, responsibility, exploration, independence and social development which



the children experience and develop during their phases of development at Northside Montessori is what inspires Rebecca as she has the privilege of observing this in the classroom every day.

Appealing to the children's imagination and reasoning mind through the Great Stories and the Keys to the Universe enable the unique development for each child as they will willingly choose what they want to explore, and this is a life-long skill.

Rebecca has over eight years teaching experience and enjoys traveling, swimming, and surfing.

Over this term, both 6-9 classes have settled into their new classrooms and their new dynamics, with Rebecca joining Cooinda as the new full-time assistant.

The children are excited about an upcoming incursion of a visit from the Aboriginal Astronomy Planetarium. The children will be learning about the Indigenous perspectives and how they read the stories told by the sky, developing a greater understanding of the differences and building greater tolerance. This will further extend their knowledge of fundamental human needs, and the different ways these are satisfied, also taking into consideration the ways Indigenous Australians satisfy these needs.

From the start of 2020, Spanish has been introduced to the 6-9 classrooms with Bibiana working in each class with small groups at a time. This has been a positive and exciting experience for the children, who enjoy their turn at participating in and learning some Spanish. In the lead up to the Bush Dance in week 4, the children were hard at work learning and practicing a variety of dances for the night including the Heel and Toe Polka. They thoroughly enjoyed themselves and enthusiastically put this learning into practice on the night of the bush dance. Since the Bush Dance the children have started learning tennis skills in sport. Another thing that has been introduced into the 6-9 environments has been the

art of tea making, where the children make tea for observers and visitors to their classrooms. The pride they show when undertaking this task is clear to see and the surprise and appreciation on the faces of the guests is lovely to behold.

On Harmony Day, the children will be experiencing a special visit by the Murumittigar people where they will receive an artifact talk by the educators and also experience some related art making activities. Following these morning activities, the children will have the opportunity to watch a performance by a South American Drumming Group.

The Cooinda children are gaining confidence in their environment and have started taking on leadership roles to the children new to Cooinda. The children have been taking the new children and the many visitors to their classroom environment in their stride. They have been exploring the great stories focusing on the Creation of the Earth and the Evolution of Life. Passionate conversations and discussions based on related interests have been occurring after these presentations. Finger knitting has been introduced to the children of Cooinda, with this being an area of hand work that the children can work on during reading time. The children really enjoy the variety of drama activities that have been explored in Cooinda, the human knot being a favourite with lots of giggling and debating.

## IMPORTANCE OF

# GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

by Mary Abolins

At the beginning of the school year gross motor skills are one of the important skills that is a focus for extended day, levels 1 & 2.

They are important for everyday activities which require whole body movement and which involve the large muscles of the body to perform everyday functions such as standing, walking, running, jumping and sitting upright at the table.

Working on gross motor skills helps a child gain strength and confidence in his/her body. It also helps them with their exercise and physical activity, which is important for a healthy lifestyle. Developing these skills helps a child's ability to do more complex skills in future activities like playing in team sports.

They also include eye-hand coordination skills such as ball skills (throwing, catching, kicking) as well as riding a bike or a scooter and swimming.

In our lessons at Northside the children practice these skills in many ways by using hoops, agility ladders, skipping ropes, hurdles, mini tramps, obstacle courses and many more fun activities.

In this day and age there is so much more technology, which is not a bad thing; however, it is learning how to balance a healthy lifestyle.



### IF YOU NEED SOME IDEAS ON IMPROVING YOUR CHILD'S GROSS MOTOR SKILLS AND GETTING OUTSIDE HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS.

- dance: fast, slow, silly, etc.
- crab walk
- obstacle course
- walk outside
- play in the park
- animal dancing
- animal walking
- hopscotch
- froggy hop across the room
- roll around different ways
- tug of war or pulling
- hop: 1 leg, both, forward and backwards, sideways
- kick a ball around between each other
- run between two points
- tag
- jump over lines: forward, backward, sideways, arms crossed, legs apart and together
- jumping in place: arms crossed, eyes closed, legs apart and together
- jump counting: see how many times you can jump without stopping
- toss a ball through a hoola-hoop
- swimming
- straight leg walking: walk and don't bend your legs
- roll like a ball: pretend to be a snowball or rock
- throw a ball up and count bounces before catching: 1 bounce, then do two etc
- kick a ball: use one leg at a time and then switch

**These are fun activities you can do with your children so get out and have some fun.**



*Working on gross motor skills helps a child gain strength and confidence in his/her body. It also helps them with their exercise and physical activity, which is important for a healthy lifestyle. Developing these skills helps a child's ability to do more complex skills in future activities like playing in team sports.*



# OOSH NEWS



## BEFORE SCHOOL & AFTER SCHOOL CARE

by Surendrini Giritharan (OOSH)

*A smooth start for the year and a warm welcome to the new starters as well as our older children. We have Jessica joining us from the first day. She is settling in reasonably well with our program and getting along well with her peers without any issues. Overall, it has been a smooth transition for all the children.*

This is just an update on what we do in BSC and ASC for the new families.

BSC starts at 7am. Breakfast is served from 7am to 7.45am. Children are provided with a healthy breakfast according to our weekly menu. The food is prepared in compliance with their allergies and special dietary needs. The morning program has activities that encourage all the kids to be involved in group activities, games, story time and free play until they go in to their class rooms.

In the same way, our afternoon program contains a variety of activities to get the children engaged with interest. We start off with afternoon tea that is nut free and always healthy with two fruits, two vegetables, one carbohydrate and one dairy product. The menu also gets changed all the time depending on the children's likes and dislikes with a variety of healthy options. Food is also prepared strictly taking into consideration every child's allergies and special dietary requirements. Following this, the activity for the day based on that week's theme. This includes activities such as cooking. Children also get to take a cook book home filled with the recipes they prepared each week. We also allocate time for story time, group games, free play and 1 hour of outside play.

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

We also do termly observations of each child individually and in group situations.

We know how much parents worry about their child's safety, so a task sheet is filled out every single day about the safety and practice of the activities being performed.

As part of the learning we also celebrate cultural events, like Chinese New Year, Easter, Deepavali, and Christmas.

### MEDITATION

This year we have introduced MEDITATION for the children. We are practicing a simple breathing technique with their eyes closed in the meditative posture every afternoon for 5 mins. Children are able to sit and concentrate. We will increase the timing depending on how the majority of the children are taking it. They will benefit tremendously in all aspects without any doubt.



# HOLIDAY PROGRAM

A little bit of info below about the holiday program for the new parents and their children:

This runs from 8am-6pm. It is your responsibility to provide enough food for morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea, a water bottle and most importantly a HAT. All their belongings have to be clearly labelled with their names on it. Outside time will be in the morning before 10am and again in the evening after 3/4pm depending on the weather. Sunscreen will be given to all children during outside time. We have our own sun cream but parents are more than welcome to provide one for their child with their child's name on it.

We do have a variety of activities, each holiday program is based on the children's interest and learning. We also organise incursions from outside providers. Every holiday program, we introduce new activities to create interest, learning and excitement. We do the same for our outside incursions but at the same time we do repeat some of the popular incursions. Last year Brickworks, 9D cinema and our Kids First aid program were very popular hit among all age groups. They thoroughly enjoyed the activity and had lot to talk about it that afternoon. The First Aid training was very practical and the children learned the basic lifesaving skills. This session was very much valued/appreciated by the children and the parents as such. We have decided to conduct it every year in term 4 as a refresher so that it doesn't get forgotten.

We have a wonderful group of qualified staff doing all the hard work to make sure the program runs smoothly. If you have any concerns with a staff member please bring your concern directly to the principal's office and not discuss your issue with the staff on duty.

Have a wonderful holiday and we look forward to seeing you during our holiday program!



# ADOLESCENT EDUCATION

## WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

by Margaret Kroeger (9-12 Directress)



During my AMI Adolescent Training, two of our amazing advisors and lecturers were Laurie Ewert-Krocker and Robyn Warren. Laurie, an eminent speaker, author and Pedagogical Advisor to the Hershey Montessori School's Adolescent Community, helped illuminate the importance and power of authentic work in an adolescent program. Robyn, a proud grandmother of a Northside student, has a long and well respected role guiding both Second and Third Plane students and educators here in Australia and internationally. Robyn's deep respect and understanding of teenagers was profound and her beautiful and heart felt lectures brought us to tears. Both these wonderful guides were able to convey the practicalities of teaching adolescents and an appreciation of the uniqueness and potential of students in this plane of development.



As Laurie and Robyn explained, Dr. Montessori wrote about the needs of students in the Third Plane (12 - 18 years of age) and outlined notes for curriculum delivery in Appendices A and B from 'Childhood to Adolescence'. At the core of our training was a realisation that students in the Third Plane need protection and understanding at this vulnerable time in their development and that they require opportunities to grow into their role as empowered and empathetic members of society. An Adolescent Program should promote character development, intellectual exploration, links to the natural world, building of community and authentic physical tasks that meet the





*"The work is the thread which binds the social organisation together and makes the experience of interdependency possible."*

needs of the group and of society at large. The work of the adolescent encompasses the work of the hand, the work of the intellect and work in, and of, the community. Work needs to be purposeful and real - meeting the needs of the adolescent group or wider community. It is more than simply achieving an end product (whether that be an essay, a group meal or the building of a chicken house.) "The work is the thread which binds the social organisation together and makes the experience of interdependency possible." Work on the land should not be separate or valued less than work in the classroom. They need to be concretely linked and treated with equal respect and importance.

"There is a need for a more dynamic training of character and the development of a clearer consciousness of social reality" (From Childhood to Adolescence, 62 Clio).

"Education should therefore include the two forms of work, manual and intellectual, for the same person..... these two kinds complete each other" (From Childhood to Adolescence, 65 Clio)

Laurie and Robyn helped us to understand that there are interwoven imperatives when working with adolescents. These include development of self through creativity and artistic expression, development of the social self (giving, communicating and connecting with others) and education for the development of the adult self. They are more than boxes to be ticked or lessons to be covered - they should be intrinsic and inseparable tenets of any Adolescent Program. These will be at the core of the Northside High School model.

In 2018, Laurie attended a symposium on Montessori Adolescent Education where Adolescent Guides from a range of countries discussed these three cornerstones further. Following this is a summary of their collective insights.





Adolescents are creating themselves through interaction with others in a prepared environment (the Adolescent community, the land and wider society.) They are also beginning a transformation into adults so the practicing of realistic adult-like activities are imperative.

# 1

## DEVELOPMENT OF SELF EXPRESSION

Students in the Third Plan need avenues to develop an awareness of the human experience.

**Key questions include:**

- What is it to be human?
- How are we alike? How are we different?
- What have people brought to society through self-expression?
- How can I discover more about myself through creativity?
- What can I discover about others through their creativity?
- How have others added to society and understood society through self-expression and creativity?
- How can I add to society, or understand it better, through self-expression and creativity?

As Laurie wrote in her summative notes at the symposium "Adolescents need to develop an inner self awareness and voice: to express what they think, what they see, what they understand, what they struggle with, what they love."

"Self-expression needs an audience, other people to connect with and to share an appreciation of the human experience. All of the expressions that Montessori lists (music, poetry, writing, dance, art) are languages that bridge us to, and allow us to see, the beauty and value in the OTHER."

# 2

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE SELF SUITED TO SOCIETY

In a Montessori Adolescent Program, Math and English are not separate and isolated pursuits.

They are languages that are imperative for communication and connection. They are "vehicles for social interaction and human interdependency." They need to be "practiced and brought to consciousness" to support true development of the individual. They should be explored to support inner strength, curiosity, connection and self-esteem.

As Laurie summarised during the symposium, "We become active members of society by being literate in both mathematical thinking and in languages. We are born with both of these abilities, but they need to be trained toward proficiency and moral interaction."

It is not enough to have an understanding of Maths, English, Science and the Humanities in isolated. They need to be entwined as though strands within a rope. There needs to be a curiosity and desire for students to apply knowledge in order to connect with others and to understand and impact the world around them. As Adolescent Educators, this is a loftier and more vital goal than simply scoring well on a test.



# 3

## EDUCATION AS PREPARATION TO ADULT LIFE

In an Adolescent Program, student explore the human experience so they can better grow into informed, questioning and contributing members of society.

**Students need opportunities to explore:**

- The Earth and the Interconnectedness of Living Things (to cultivate a sense of awe, curiosity, responsibility and gratitude)
- The study of Human Progress and the Development of Civilisations (to develop a sense of the forces that have brought people together or caused division, to appreciate how humans have worked to change their environment to better meet their needs)
- The Study of the Human Experience (to develop a sense of time and progression and an appreciation for the gifts, discoveries and inventions that have come before)
- Mathematics, English and the Humanities (as a way to build connections and to develop a sense of self)
- Work on the Land (as a practical application of their academic studies and as a way to build self-esteem, community and cohesiveness)

Adolescents are creating themselves through interaction with others in a prepared environment (the Adolescent community, the land and wider society.) They are also beginning a transformation into adults so the practicing of realistic adult-like activities are imperative.

"Adolescents manipulate the land and the human infrastructure on the land. They experience what humans have universally experienced throughout time in establishing, organizing, and enriching societies and civilizations. Without the farm/land, this doesn't happen naturally."

**Other key features of an authentic Montessori Adolescent Program, identified by the symposium, included:**

- Economic production and exchange (such as a school café)
- Producing and providing food (researching, budgeting, growing, harvesting, preserving, preparing, serving)
- Care of animals (researching, planning, building, daily care, maintenance of health and well-being of stock, maintenance of equipment, record keeping, budgeting, study of profit and loss)
- Environmental Studies (linked to their immediate environment and beyond)
- Constructing and maintaining housing and other structures
- Opportunities for away from home experiences (care of self and others)
- Education of place and service learning (embedding the program and students into the community)
- Cultural sharing (story-telling, ritual, exchange with wider community)
- Creation of governance (student generated rules, structures, codes, protocol for conflict resolution)
- Robust Intellectual engagement/study (sharing ideas, peer teaching, debate, Socratic discussions, collaborative presentations, sourcing expert support from the community)

These components need to be interwoven, understood and highly valued within a complete Adolescent program that has, at its heart, the needs and development of the Third Plane student. This is our goal for an Adolescent Environment at Northside. As Robyn and Laurie urged, working with adolescent students to see their value as an empowered individual and a positive member of society is paramount. 'Montessori is an education for independence, not just for school but for life.'



## PRIMARY LIBRARY

Janene Johnson

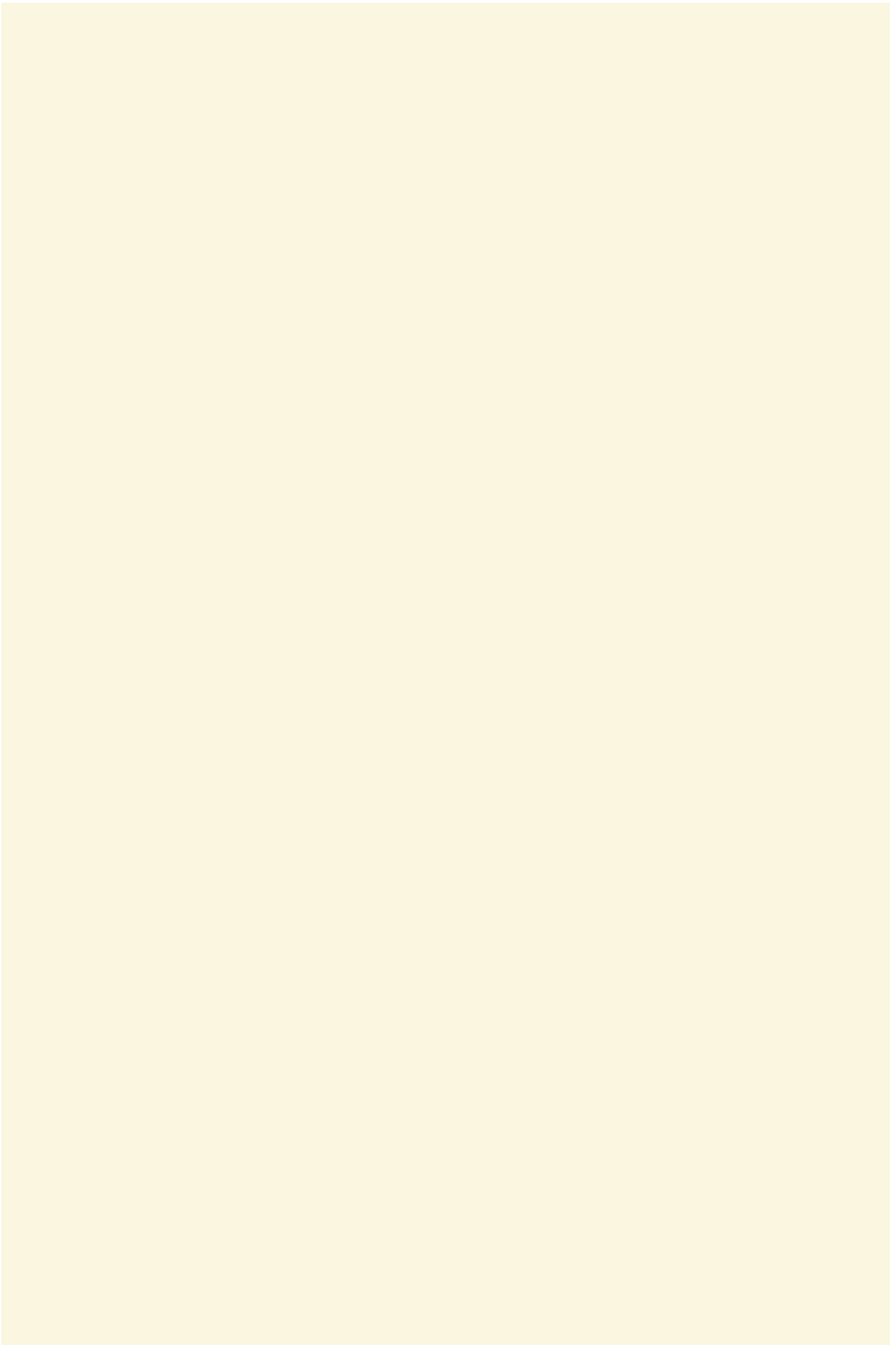
At Northside in Primary, we have a very good collection of books both in the classrooms and in the Library. This collection takes a huge amount of work to manage and we are extremely fortunate to have Katherine Haylock and her mother Robyn who have been devoted to this task for a long time now. The tasks required to manage the library include, re-cataloguing, sorting, re-covering and returning books, just to name a few, and they have worked tirelessly to get everything in order for our students.

We would like to take this opportunity to recognise their amazing contribution and to thank them for all of their incredible work. It doesn't go unnoticed and we are very grateful.

They have a few parent helpers but could do with more hands. If you have some time in the week and would like to assist with the Library, please contact Sandra Sin. I am sure the help would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you again Katherine and Robyn.







NORTHSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL  
42 BOBBIN HEAD ROAD PYMBLE NSW 2073  
[WWW.NORTHSIDEMONTESSORI.NSW.EDU.AU](http://WWW.NORTHSIDEMONTESSORI.NSW.EDU.AU)

STEPPING STONES MONTESSORI LONG DAY CARE  
196 BOBBIN HEAD ROAD TURRAMURRA NSW 2074  
[WWW.STEPPINGSTONESMONTESSORI.COM.AU](http://WWW.STEPPINGSTONESMONTESSORI.COM.AU)