

The Montessori Programme

Montessori is a unique methodology and offers a full, developmentally appropriate continuum from early childhood to adolescence. The benefits of a Montessori education are evident from the earliest stages of development and grow continuously through the years.

Our Montessori early education programme is for children 2 - 6 years old and children are expected to attend until they are 6 yrs old. Ideally, children will then transition to our Montessori education programme for 6 – 12 years old.

We are particularly committed to delivering a full and authentic Montessori programme. This requires regular attendance until children are ready to transition to the 6-9 year old programme.

This policy gives priority to children whose families are open to considering this long term commitment.

Reading material is available which documents the many benefits of the full early childhood programme.

Information about Montessori will be provided, including open days and education evenings which parents will be expected to attend.

Admissions Policy

Children may be pre-enrolled at any time and will commence sometime after their 2nd birthday.

- i. Children will not commence under the age of 2 years. Children older than 3 years, 6 months who have not previously attended a Montessori programme will not normally be considered for entry.
- ii. A child's readiness for entry will be determined in consultation with the 2-6 years Programme Manager and Head of School.
- iii. Children who have been attending a Montessori Centre elsewhere, wishing to transfer to our Centre, will be considered at any age if places are available.
- iv. Siblings of children who have attended/are attending the Centre may be given priority. However, if children are withdrawn before completing the full 3-6 year programme, this will not apply.
- v. Entry of all children is dependent on available places. The Head of School may choose to leave places unfilled and reserves the right to limit the number of children in a class.
- vi. All allocation of places is at the discretion of the Head of School and all places are subject to review at any time.
- vii. Parents commit to the minimum enrolment requirements and to extending their child's attendance hours as recommended by the Programme Manager.
- viii. Priority will be given to families who are committed to the full Montessori programme we offer, i.e. 2 years – 12 years old.

The Application Process

All prospective children and their parents will be required to visit Waikato Montessori Education Centre prior to the enrolment application. This gives parents the opportunity to assure themselves they are committed to the Montessori approach and the full programme that is offered. An appointment will be scheduled to arrange this. During this time, the Head of School and Guides will be available to answer questions. A tour of the Centre and the children's activities will be given.

A pre-enrolment application must then be submitted. On receipt, it will be dated and reviewed by the Head of School. Your child will be placed on the waiting list and an assessment of the availability of a place made. Parents will be advised their child is wait listed and the status of their enrolment. Generally children will need to be enrolled before their 2nd birthday to be confident of a place being available.

Parents will be required to attend a scheduled Parent Event prior to their application being finalised.

Entry of all and any child is at the discretion of the Head of School, taking into account the welfare of the class as a whole. Where a child meets the selection requirements (see above) and a place is available but the child is deemed unsuitable and/or the inclusion of the child is considered detrimental to the class, the Head of School reserves the right to refuse entry. This does not preclude the inclusion of children with Special Needs. No places are confirmed until an acceptance letter is sent out. This letter will include an invoice for a non-refundable enrolment fee, and request for further enrolment information (e.g. a copy of birth certificate and immunisation records). Upon receiving this information and payment, a letter of commencement confirmation will be sent. Prior to the child commencing, there will be two Centre visits arranged. These will be close to the start date. The first visit will be a short morning visit with a parent. The second will be a 1 hour morning visit for the child on their own. A commencement date will be finalised at that time.

Special and High Needs

The Head of School reserves the right to limit the number of children with special and high individual needs to ensure we are able to cater for the requirements of those children as well as the needs of all the remaining children. The Head of School must be informed at the time of enrolment of any special or high needs your child may have.

Enrolment and Attendance Hours

The Centre is licensed for 60 children. On acceptance of enrolment, a full time place is allocated for each child. This allows the child to attend the Montessori programme at any stage. The Centre operates during the hours 8.30am to 3pm. The morning programme is 8.30am-12.00pm, followed by a lunchtime. This shared lunchtime involves developing practical life skills, social and eating etiquette. The programme continues until 2.45pm when the children will be ready for collection by 3pm. The Montessori programme requires children to attend as many consecutive days as practical. This assists them to master the new skills they are developing, as well as socialise with other children. Regular attendance also provides the children with a routine which is important at this age. The children form a community of young learners and become comfortable with the same group of peers each day. Newly enrolled children must attend for a minimum of 3 mornings. Over time, children will increase this to attending every morning, with the option of complete full days as they are determined to be ready by the Programme Manager. As the child progresses, we build attendance to a complete school week by the time the child is 5 years old. In all cases, the Programme Manager will discuss the child's readiness for an extension of hours with parents.

Notice of Children Leaving

A minimum of two weeks prior written notice is required for children leaving. In order to plan the roll, a longer period of notice would be appreciated.