

TRINITY COLLEGE MONTESSORI
Information For New Families





Welcome

Montessori: Learning for life

We are pleased to welcome you and your child to our Preschool and hope that your time with us is a positive and rewarding one.

For many children this will be their first experience away from home and we aim to make this transition as gentle as possible. We hope that the information contained in this booklet will assist this process.

Each child will bring with them to Preschool a variety of abilities, experiences, values and attitudes that have already been constructed in the context of their family and social settings.

We aim to broaden this existing knowledge and provide the next step in each child's education as we work with them in an interesting and stimulating environment.

We believe that the Montessori programme we offer has many benefits which will develop your child's skills, attitudes and habits, while providing an excellent foundation for all of their future education.

We are sure that your child will really enjoy their time with us. Please take the chance to get to know each of the staff members and feel free to approach your child's teacher with any comments, questions or concerns you may have.

Montessori education

Montessori education derives its name from Dr Maria Montessori who was the first female doctor in Italy in the early 1900's.

Dr Montessori developed her approach during her many years of observing and working with children. She believed that the first six years of life are the most formative with patterns of learning being developed during these years.

Dr Montessori designed materials to aid a child's learning. Her materials and philosophies are common to all Montessori schools throughout the world.

The environment within a Montessori classroom caters for purposeful activity providing children with the freedom to practise skills at their own pace, to develop independence and self-confidence.



Montessori curriculum

The Montessori classroom activities are divided into the following three main groups:

Practical Life

Practical Life activities provide the child with an understanding of the environment and how it works. Through these activities students gain skills needed for everyday living like pouring water, sifting flour or doing up buttons and shoe laces.

Sensorial Materials

Sensorial Materials use the child's powers of observation to understand the world around them. Children use the materials to differentiate and learn about height, weight, length, colour, smell and shape.

Academic Materials

As children show an interest and readiness to advance, they are introduced to pre-reading and pre-maths activities. These activities are combined with academic materials and offer excellent preparation and provide logical, fun progression.

The Montessori materials offer exceptional teaching experiences. Incorporating Montessori activities with other kindergarten methods provides a creative environment for all children.

Montessori activities

Montessori activities are introduced to students on an individual basis as they show an interest and a readiness to learn. Parents will often ask their child, "What did you do today?" to which the child will reply "Play." Other parents may measure their child's level of activity by the number of paintings they bring home at the end of a day.

We would like to highlight that with Montessori activities there is often not anything for the child to physically show for their period of play. The belief that children will always produce something to take home places value on the product rather than the process.

When children are actively involved in these activities they will not have as much to bring home because they are very busy with equipment which is teaching and developing them in so many ways.

Montessori staff work as a team to plan a programme offering a diverse range of activities and experiences.

When programming for individual children we identify their strengths and areas which require further development and address each of these appropriately.

A summary of our planned programme for each week is displayed in the Bag Room. We encourage parents to follow up any particular theme or topic covered at home with your child.

Information and newsletters are emailed to families throughout the term.

The Montessori page on the Trinity College website is also a valuable communication tool. The website features the most current Montessori eNews, term dates, upcoming events, news and photos.

Visit www.trinity.sa.edu.au

Teachers

Sue Reynolds *Dip T. (Early Childhood)*
Director - Early Learning Centre

Sue was a kindergarten teacher and Director at Kingscote on Kangaroo Island where she was also in charge of a mobile Kindergarten and worked to establish a centre at Penneshaw. She was the Director of the Burra Preschool before moving to Gawler and establishing the College's Out of School Hours Care Programme and the Montessori Preschool.

Donna Skoda *Dip T*
Teacher

Donna has had a range of teaching experiences and has also completed Montessori training which enables her to combine the best methods of early childhood education when teaching children.

Jodie Both *Adv Dip Community Sector Management, Dip Early Childhood Educ & Care. Cert III Montessori studies.*

Jodie has been a member of the Montessori Preschool staff for 13 years during which time she has completed further studies enabling her to take up a teaching role in the Preschool in 2017.

Sue, Donna and Jodie have completed Montessori curriculum workshops and further studies, are members of the Montessori Association of Australia, and have links with Montessori Preschools around the state.

Julie Dorey *B Ed.*
Teacher

Julie has had a long association at Trinity College as a parent, relief teacher and with the Music Programme. She now teaches part time at the Preschool.

Class Assistants

Jodie Both, Tracy Longrigg, Kylie Harrison and Josie Puccini

Our class assistants are all qualified with a minimum Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care and work with the teaching staff to provide much needed support.

This creates a 'child to teacher ratio' of at least 1:10. All staff work together to implement a new, fun and rich learning environment for the children at each session.

Enrolment Officer

Anita Borchard

Anita is responsible for enrolments, invoicing, phone enquiries and all other day to day Montessori matters.



Daily routines

Morning Preschool Session: 8.30am - 11.30am

Lunch: 11.30am - 12.30pm

Afternoon Preschool Session: 12.30pm - 3.15pm

Onsite OSHC: 3.15pm - 4.30pm

Our fees are inclusive of lunch care for children attending morning sessions. Onsite OSHC is available for children attending afternoon sessions if required. Lunch care and onsite OSHC are available for children attending the preschool for a full day.

**Sessions are planned to include the following routines.
The order may vary depending on weather or other factors.**

Activity time

As well as art and craft, construction games and drawing activities, the children are free to choose their own activities inside from our prepared environment which fosters their desire to experiment and learn. The equipment that your child uses will help them develop concentration, coordination, and working habits which will stand them in good stead for all future learning.

The programme is purposefully structured to reinforce self discipline, independence, responsibility of equipment, manners, cooperation and the caring and respect for others and their environment.

All activities are 'hands on' and include all areas of the curriculum for example: Practical Life Activities, Art and Craft, Science, Geography, Social Studies, Technology, Maths and Language.

All children have the opportunity to work individually, in pairs or in small groups. The staff will observe, interact and invite children to take part in individually planned lessons. Records and checklists are kept of individual progress and necessary follow up which is discussed with parents on a regular basis.

Snack time

As well as being a time to satisfy hungry children, this is a wonderful chance for social interaction. The children eat morning or afternoon tea sitting at a table or enjoying a picnic with their friends.

Story and group time

Stories, singing, dance and sharing are all part of group time. The children enjoy this time as a class group where they discuss the theme for the session - the days of the week, months of the year or seasons and descriptions of weather.

It is a valuable time for the children to practise concentration, listening skills, manners, and speaking to a group. In addition, we may also demonstrate the new activities which will be available during the session.

Outdoor free play

Because the children have been working so hard and their minds have been absorbing so much, this is a time to relax and unwind. Outdoor play involves exercising gross motor skills, socialising and simply allowing the children to release excess energy. This time of relaxation and play may also incorporate activities such as playdough, bike riding, bubble blowing, chalk drawing and gardening. Each class may also have the opportunity to visit the College facilities such as the playgrounds, Agricultural Centre, STARplex Gym or one of the three Trinity College ovals.



General Information

If your child is continuing their education at Trinity College, they will benefit from a comprehensive, ongoing transition programme.

Sessions

Sessions will not commence earlier than the allocated time as it is important the classroom is prepared and teachers are ready to greet each child as they arrive. We appreciate parents and children waiting in the reception area until classrooms open. However, should your child require care before or after a session, please advise us of your requirements.

Car parking

Car parking is available outside the preschool. We ask that children be collected promptly at the end of each session unless other arrangements have been organised in advance for additional care.

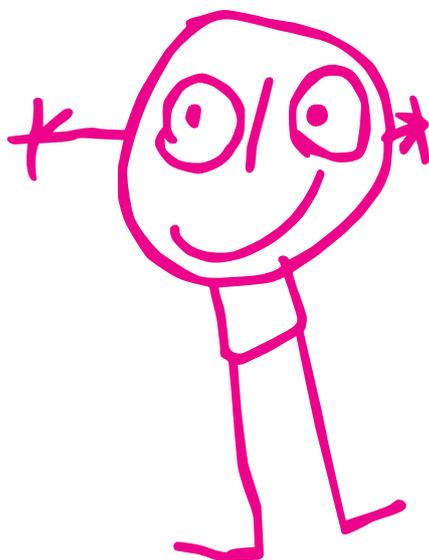
Absences

It is College policy that we are unable to make up sessions or refund fees due to holidays or illness. Please speak to the Enrolment Officer regarding exceptional circumstances. Parents are asked to notify us via Kids Xap or by phone on 8522 0660 before 9.15am if their child will be absent from their session.

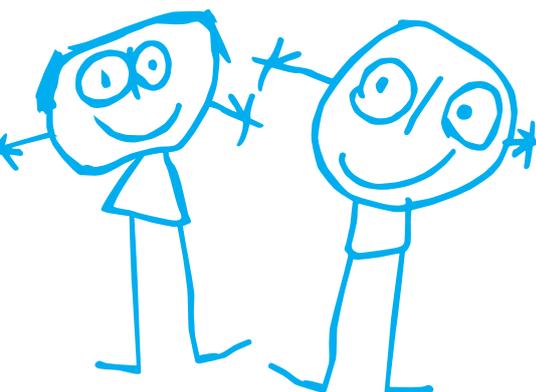
Assessment

As previously mentioned, continual assessment of your child and their progress is made by the teachers in charge of their session. Each term a written report on a different aspect of your child's development will be provided. When students move to school a portfolio will offer a significant record of their time at Montessori.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss your child's progress with you directly. Please approach us after the session to make a convenient time.



General Information



Communication

Communication between the Preschool and parents will be through email and Kids Xap. Staff are also always available to speak to at the beginning and end of each session.

Christian education

We are a part of Trinity College which is a Christian School aiming to share God's love with the children. This occurs quite naturally in everyday activities such as music, stories, prayers, and grace before meals. It is also evident in the way we treat the children and in the way that we encourage them to treat each other, with love and respect.

School transition

Children attending Trinity College will commence their schooling in Term 2 for the mid year intake and Term 4 for those starting the following year. This programme includes visits to the classrooms, a chance to meet their new teacher and assists with a smooth transition for all involved. This formal programme will complete your child's familiarisation with Trinity College.

Many opportunities are provided for the Preschool children to familiarise with the College before starting school. Walks to the library, playgrounds, farm, STARplex and classrooms are ongoing during each child's time at Preschool.

Fees

An in arrears invoice will be emailed each week, and will also be available to view on Kids Xap.

If you are entitled to claim CCB/CCR, you can elect to have the CCB/CCR deducted from your weekly fee account, or claim as a lump sum at the end of the financial year. We recommend families take CCB/CCR as a weekly fee reduction. In which case, you need to ensure the Family Assistance Office/ Centrelink is aware of your choice. This can be done by telephone.

In accordance with the enrolment contact, a full term notice of intention to leave is required in writing. Alternatively, a full term fees will be charged in lieu of written notice. Please address this advice to the Enrolment Officer.

Uniform and general food requirements

We ask that children wear the Montessori uniform, this is a requirement and not an option. These are available for purchase at the STARplex Uniform Shop. To each session your child also needs to bring a bag which contains:

- Comfortable shoes suitable for a day of activity (no crocs or thongs).
- A complete change of clothes.
- A piece of fruit for morning or afternoon tea and a packed lunch.
Two pieces of fruit if your child is enrolled for the day.

It is a requirement that each child brings a labelled drink bottle of water to each session.

We are a nut free centre so please **do not** send any products containing nuts to Preschool.

A focus on healthy eating and nutrition and our policies ask that children do not bring cake, lollies or chips in their lunch boxes. (These policies are available for you to read if you wish to).

When the UV rating is 3 or above, our outdoor policy is 'no hat - play in the shade'. Hats are an important part of the Montessori uniform and may be purchased at the STARplex Uniform Shop.

During the summer months please apply sunscreen to your child before they arrive. Children who stay all day will have sunscreen reapplied at lunch time.

Parents are asked to read the safe food handling and healthy eating policies. To comply with these policies, we are unable to share food such as birthday cake, Christmas or Easter treats etc. Our staff will create special ways to celebrate and make your child feel important on their birthday without risking children with food sensitivities and allergies.

Property

Please ensure that everything your child brings to Preschool is clearly named. This includes all items of clothing, lunch boxes and bags. We ask that children do not bring toys from home.

If your child has something special to share then they are able to do so during group time, once a week. We are unable to accept the responsibility for lost or damaged property.

Medications

If your child requires medication, either regularly or on an occasional basis, a Medication Form must be completed by the prescribing doctor and lodged with the Preschool. Forms can be collected from the Front Counter or download from the Montessori pages of the College website.

Medication will be administered when required in accordance with the prescribing doctor's written instructions and staff will keep appropriate records. We are not permitted to administer over the counter medications.

For further information, please talk to a staff member.

Infectious diseases

Our policies are in accord with those of Trinity College. Please see the College website for full details. Should your child be diagnosed with an infectious disease, please notify the centre as soon as possible. In the instance that the Preschool receives notice of the occurrence of an infectious disease we will provide the following for your information:

Disease	Exclusion period
Chicken Pox/Slap Face	Seven days from onset or until the last lesion/rash has healed.
Measles and Rubella	Seven days from appearance of rash or medical certificate of recovery.
Mumps	Minimum fourteen days after onset of symptoms.
Head Lice	Extremely common in schools. Please examine your child's hair regularly and where evidence of lice is discovered, consult your chemist.
Impetigo (school sores)	Until healed, especially on exposed parts of body.
Conjunctivitis	See Doctor immediately. Child should be absent during acute stage of the infection.





Settling your child into a new centre and programme

Feeling confident

Your child will be able to sense if you are confident about leaving them. They will feel a lot more secure and settle more quickly if you show that you feel this is a good place to be. On the other hand, if you are hesitant and uncertain about leaving your child this will add to their anxiety.

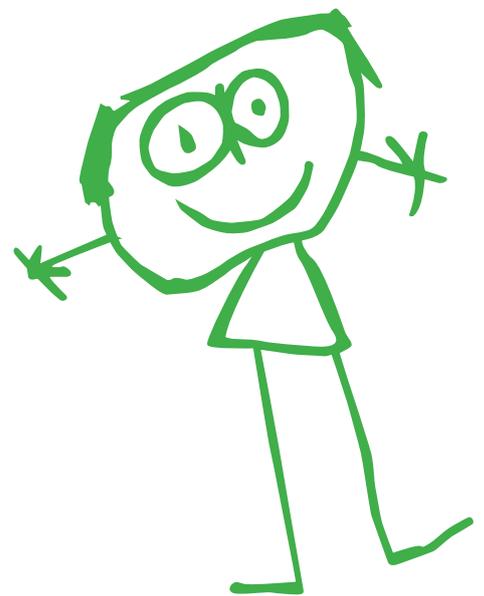
It's not unusual for children to cry when their parents leave - after all they like being with you!

Staff are skilled at settling children; and you can have every confidence that the distress will not last for long.

Saying goodbye

When the time has come to leave your child - do it confidently, quickly and with a minimum of fuss. Don't drag out your goodbye, but do say goodbye.

Your child may seem upset when you leave but most children settle down quite happily as soon as their parent is out of sight. If you are worried about how your child has settled, you are very welcome to ring and find out. We will of course contact you if your child becomes too distressed and we are unable to settle them.



We are confident that your child will settle quickly into Montessori, and enjoy their time with us.



Alexander Ave
Evanston South SA 5116
Telephone: 8522 0660
Email: montessori.office@trinity.sa.edu.au

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