



Montessori Primary
@ Huapai District School



Enrolment Information



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What is Montessori?

The basis of Montessori philosophy is that each child has an innate desire to learn. For this learning to occur a prepared environment must exist, designed for the child's interest and in which he can choose his own activities. The focus in Montessori is on the child's learning, and not on the teacher's teaching.

Montessori education recognises that each child learns with a unique style and pace. It is a child-centred, holistic approach acknowledging that the child's development and education takes place on many levels: physical, cognitive, social, emotional, moral and spiritual.

The learning community is a peaceful, culturally-sensitive, collaborative place where the children feel respected and nurtured. The children strive to realise their own potential, solve their own problems and master their own skills. They can explore, discover and learn independently; and they have uninterrupted time in which to experiment, engage in and complete their work.

Every child is valued for their contribution to the group. This gives all the children the chance to interact with a wide range of people and provides motivation and opportunities to share their skills and strengths. They acquire qualities of citizenship and an understanding of the natural world so they may cherish it and live harmoniously within it, and with each other. Learning how to work and play together with others in a peaceful and caring community, is perhaps the most critical life skill that Montessori teaches.

How the Montessori Primary Programme Works

Key Characteristics of Montessori Primary

The Montessori primary programme reflects the special needs of the six to twelve year old child. This is a **period of stability** after the rapid developments of the first six years of life and before the upheavals of puberty.

At this stage children are **thirsty for knowledge**. They want to know everything about everything. They can cope with research and begin to understand cause and effect. During this plane of development they move towards **ever more abstract concepts**.

Socially, there is a **herd instinct**. They like to cluster together even if they are working independently. They enjoy taking control of their own games and outdoor activities, developing these themselves, without adult intervention.

Six to twelve year olds are also busy developing **an awareness of morality and social conscience**. They understand the links between their acts and the needs and rights of others. They are receptive to learning about values – justice, tolerance, honesty. Because this is an age in which children are prone to hero worship, it is important to try to introduce good role models.

The primary programme is structured around all these development needs. For example, it feeds the thirst for knowledge with the five 'Great Lessons' and numerous minor ones which are connected stories that cross huge spans of time and space. The first is the 'Creation of the Universe and Coming into Being of Earth'. When children hear about the formation of planets, continents and landforms they are often filled with awe. The second Great Lesson is called 'The Coming of Life'. It tells the story of life on earth and introduces the children to the study of biology. The third Great Lesson is called 'The Coming of Human Beings' and introduces the children to the study of history and the progress of human civilisation. The fourth Great Lesson, 'The Story of Communication in

Signs', represents an introductory experience for the youngest children who are just beginning to develop their understanding of reading and writing. The older children go into more depth and study different alphabets and kinds of writing and investigate the origins of paper and writing utensils, the printing press and its influence in history along with the computer and fax machine. The last Great Lesson is called 'The Story of Numbers', and emphasises how human beings needed a language for their inventions so that they could convey measurement and how things were made.

Each story triggers questions that the children pursue in different ways, according to their interests. Some children will form little project groups. Others will be encouraged by the teacher towards materials like timelines in response to the questions they ask. Children can listen to the same story at the ages of 6, 8, 10 and 12 and each time explore in a fresh direction. All the stories provide a core from which specific disciplines emerge eg science and language; children can then study these in detail. The approach is holistic and the children can see the 'interconnectedness of everything'.

While the children's imaginations help them explore the universe, they also need concrete materials to help them on the way to more abstract ideas. The materials offer children several pathways to this goal. For example, to build language skills, the grammar materials have symbols and colours to help children discover sentence structure and parts of speech.

The class is a mixture of six to twelve year olds. The mix of ages lets younger children aspire to the work of their older colleagues, while the latter can act as 'little teachers', consolidating their own learning. Children like to work in groups and most lessons are given in small groups of four to six children, according to interest and need.

Lessons are drawn from the Montessori curriculum and supported by many materials. Montessori pupils are allowed choice in how they explore concepts and practice skills but the curriculum is still very specific and ensures each child learns fundamental concepts and skills.

Our class must also deliver the New Zealand curriculum because we are part of a state school.

Goals of the Montessori Primary Programme

The general educational objectives of the Montessori primary programme are broad and include:

Physical Goals

- Developing a body - the movements of which are mastered and controlled
- Developing the fine co-ordination needed for writing and handling materials
- Learning sports which can be enjoyed into adulthood

Emotional Goals

- An awareness of one's own feelings and of one's effect on others
- Sensitivity to and consideration of the feelings of others
- Developing a positive self-image

Intellectual Goals

- The mastery of the necessary tools or skills (such as reading, writing, etc.) in order to be able to pursue knowledge
- An understanding of how to find information and use various media
- To become a learner who becomes independent of the adult
- To develop a life-long love of learning

Philosophical Goals

- Understanding the evolution of life and the inter-dependence of humankind and nature to build a sense of responsibility to helping an ecological whole
- An understanding that all people have the same basic needs and an appreciation for the variety of ways in which those needs are met.

Benefits of the Montessori Primary Programme

The two main goals for primary school children are to gain confidence and to build their love of learning. The Montessori philosophy provides children with extended time in which to develop their emerging intellectual abilities in all areas of the curriculum. Each can take each step as s/he becomes ready, without feeling threatened by being pushed ahead too fast, or stifled by being made to wait for others to catch up.

Learning is self-paced, based on children's own needs. Some six year olds may be working with reading and writing materials nominally intended for eight year olds; equally, a nine year old may need to review maths lessons designed for a seven year old. Each successful step in the learning process builds the child's confidence to take further risks and make wider explorations. This plan offers challenging activities while providing opportunities to succeed and reducing frustration.

The multi-age class gives children more room to match their temperaments to friends: timid, older children can become confident with younger ones, and self-confident ones can build leadership skills. This class structure also encourages tolerance for difference.

How the Montessori class is run

Administration

Montessori at Huapai District School is recognised as a Special Program by the Ministry of Education. The significance of this status is important to the security and ongoing development of Montessori at Huapai. It ensures that, where criteria for entry are met, all children enrolled in the Special Program attract operational and property funding for the school, including children who live outside the school's enrolment zone. Property funding requires a separate roll to be kept for the Special Program, and out of zone children are accepted onto this separate roll.

On a day-to-day basis, Room 17 runs under the policies of the Huapai District School's Board of Trustees and the teachers are answerable to the Principal. However the Trust, itself, is independent of Huapai District School. It is responsible for supporting the provision of Montessori education including the curriculum, teachers, training and professional development, specialised materials and equipment and gathering term fees to make this all possible.

Integration with Huapai District School

We strive towards as much integration as possible without compromising the Montessori style of education. Achievement testing carried out in the classroom is held to the minimum allowed by the Ministry of Education. Homework other than reading is rarely set unless to address an area of weakness observed by the teacher as the children work on task for most of the day and tend to achieve more as a result. The children take part in the three-hour morning work-cycle from Mondays to Thursdays and participate in other subjects offered outside of the classroom e.g., physical education or music. On Fridays the children may join in with any of the activities offered by

the wider school e.g., assembly, Maori language and culture, choir etc. Room 17 pupils share in the school's facilities and extra-curricular activities as well as school-wide events and outings. The class is called Room 17 rather than the Montessori class. Room 17 parents are automatically part of the Huapai Parent Teacher Association. Through this body they have the opportunity to discuss school-wide issues and to help raise money for the broader community. We also have specific fundraising events for Room 17 which are actively encouraged.

Class Structure and Size

We currently have almost 30 children in the classroom and are working towards a maximum roll of 75 over the next three to four years. This includes provisioning of classrooms designed for Montessori education within the new development at Huapai District School. It is an exciting work in progress.

Teaching Staff

Claudine Noronha – lead teacher

Claudine has over 25 years of experience in teaching and learning, and holds two Bachelors degrees, a Masters in early childcare and education, as well as a Diploma and Postgraduate Diploma in Montessori education and early childhood education. Claudine has worked as a Principal, a Montessori Directress and an Educational consultant for many years, and has attended and presented at many international conferences. Claudine has a husband, two children and two grandchildren. In her spare time she loves to go for long drives, cook and spend time with family and friends.

Karen Robertson

Karen has a Bachelor of Education majoring in Montessori. Her introduction to Montessori at University changed the way she views teaching and learning, the natural environment and world events. Karen has been selected by WAMT to receive a scholarship to complete an intensive 10 month AMI training course in Italy, commencing September 2016. Prior to the commencement of her scholarship, Karen spent a term teaching in the classroom, which she thoroughly enjoyed.

Samantha Carter

Samantha is a youthful and creative teacher, and was a Montessori student herself. While yet to undergo AMI training, Samantha has worked at both Coast Montessori and Birkenhead Point Montessori, and studied Montessori pedagogy while at teachers' college. She is very excited to be assisting Claudine in the classroom.

Family Commitment

The Montessori classroom is a multi-dimensional partnership between the guiding adults and the child, and between and among the children. There is also an unwritten partnership between the teacher, the child, children with the parents, and between the parents with each other. As part of the enrolment process parents and caregivers are also invited to develop understanding of the Montessori philosophy by participating in a series of six online workshops called Seeing Your Child the Montessori Way. It is an opportunity to consider whether Montessori practise (e.g., community participation, courtesy, mutual respect, ongoing learning) works well with each family's philosophy. Families need to agree to support the West Auckland Montessori Trust, the Montessori teachers and the Trust's relationship with the Huapai District School's Board of Trustees, management and community.

Some of the activities where parent participation is essential are:

- *Fundraising Help* – We have been lucky enough to have been the gate and parking team at the Helensville A&P show for the last decade and for our help receive 10% of the gate take, the amount of which grows each year. **This event is held on the last Saturday in February and all families enrolled or waiting to come are expected to fully support this fundraiser.** Other fundraisers are organised by our parent fundraising committee, overseen by our fundraising officer. Suggestions for these are always welcome and each family is expected to assist.
- *Working Bee Help* – this can include inventory stock-takes of our Montessori materials for insurance purposes and repairing shelves and furniture. We try to make the ‘bees’ a bit of a social get-together, too.
- *Equipment-making* – some educational materials for the classroom can be made rather than bought. This includes colouring, laminating, cutting out, binding, sewing, etc.
- *Curriculum Contributions* – Amber welcomes parents with particular skills and interests. Amber requests these where there is a curriculum need.
- *Parent Information Evenings* – these give parents the opportunity to learn more about different aspects of Montessori and are held each term with the teachers. The focus of the parent evening is generally on an area of the curriculum the children are working on. The teachers demonstrate the Montessori materials in a convivial atmosphere and aid parents’ understanding of how the materials engage the children and the learning that occurs.

Fundraising and why we do it

In establishing our Montessori classroom in 2005 we wanted to build a classroom and beyond that a community where our children might understand how we co-operate to get a job done. Our job was, and is, to provide a Montessori education that children can enjoy that will nurture them and provide a pathway to making a difference in the world.

Fundraising is one of the means we have chosen to get the job done and fits with our philosophy of ensuring our Montessori environment is entrusted to everyone’s care.

We engage in the organised activity of raising funds for various reasons:

- We are incorporated as a charitable trust and as such have obligations to fulfil in order to keep our charitable status – one of those objects is to make Montessori accessible to many rather than a few.
- It assists us to pay for resources, training and professional development for our current and future teachers and softens the cost of fees our parents pay to enrol their children.
- It provides a valuable model for our children of collegially achieving common goals, using our hands, minds and time for helping and not our wallets.
- Collectively we are stewards and guardians rather than owners of a pathway to peace, jointly creating what evolves, led by our children.

Who is Eligible?

When selecting children for places in the Montessori class, the school, in the interests of the well-being of the classroom, will enrol those children best prepared for the Montessori primary environment. An eligible child will need to have **completed the 3 to 6 cycle at a Montessori pre-school**. It is a requirement that **from the age of five years children attend a minimum of four full days** before entry to the primary school classroom at around age six. Children are ready for the Second Plane of Development (Primary) around the age of six. They come across to us in the term they fall six.

We do not accept either five or five and a half year-olds. The final year at a Montessori pre-school is a very important year in the life of a five-year old child. During this time he/she begins to develop leadership qualities, takes on more responsible roles as well as understands the links of his/her acts and the needs and rights of others. Younger children in the classroom aspire to the work of their older classmates who in turn act as 'little teachers' consolidating their own learning. This last year at pre-school also allows the child to further develop their social skills thus aiding their transition to primary.

We welcome older children transferring in from Montessori primaries out of town or from overseas Montessori schools. On receipt of a completed enrolment form, the Enrolment Committee informs parents if there is space for the child, and if not, when space may become available. Where possible a day's visit will be scheduled for the teacher to assess the child's educational level and self-directed learning ability.

We intend to provide places for brothers and sisters of pupils currently enrolled or attending Room 17. The sibling should nevertheless have the **required three years Montessori pre-school experience**.

Children with Montessori backgrounds who have attended mainstream schools since leaving Montessori pre-school **may apply if they attended their Montessori pre-school until they were six**. An enrolment decision will depend on the eligibility and suitability of the child as well as available space in the class. In the case of these children the Trust requires the child to spend up to two weeks in the Montessori classroom to give the teacher a chance to assess how well the child appears to cope with self-directed learning and the multi-age grouping.

Special needs: The school reserves the right to limit the number of children with diagnosed special needs to ensure we can meet their requirements as well as the needs of our existing children. The school will maintain a workable Montessori class in the interests of all children attending.

We will not accept a child who has little or no Montessori experience. Montessori pre-school prepares the children for the primary class in many ways. For example, children learn to respect the equipment and become used to working independently and purposefully. Montessori pre-school also helps children learn to manage themselves and their environment. Primary builds on these skills but it cannot teach them. This is why it is hard to accept a Montessori novice into a primary class.

Allocation of Places

Selection will be based on a variety of factors. These include date enrolled on waiting list, the child's history of learning in the Montessori environment and their overall suitability, commitment of the family to a Montessori education, willingness of the family to participate in activities to support the class and the ability of the Enrolment Committee to make places available for siblings. The Enrolment Committee retains the right to make all enquiries necessary to obtain information which may assist it to reach a decision in any particular case. All enquiries will remain confidential.

Waiting List

A child's name may be placed on the waiting list at any time. An application fee of \$65 is requested per child at the time of application. Please submit this with the application form.

From time to time we may contact enrolled families to request reconfirmation of their intention to remain on our waiting list.

Overview of the Enrolment Process

The following steps outline the process used to enrol a child in the Montessori class.

- Parents make an enquiry about entry to the Montessori class by filling out the Expression of Interest form on our website (www.westaucklandmontessoriprimary.co.nz).
- Parents receive an Application Pack via email.
- Parents attend an Open Day at the school. These are hosted twice per year.
- If parents wish to proceed with enrolment, they complete the Application Form. Once this has been received, parents will be contacted by the Enrolment Officer to arrange their subscription to the Seeing Your Child the Montessori Way (SYCMW) course. This is a six week course for parents to complete.
- Once parents have begun participating in the SYCMW course, they can with the Enrolment Officer arrange an observation of the classroom. This observation is optional but highly recommended.
- If this is taken up, the parent is welcome to contact the Enrolment Officer after the observation to ask questions and discuss next steps.
- Applications for prospective children are discussed quarterly at Montessori Management Committee (MMC) meetings and involve representatives from HDS School Management, Board of Trustees, Lead Teacher and WAMT.
- Successful applicants are advised by email. Acceptance of a place by the parents is requested by email or letter within one week of the place being offered.
- Parents will be asked to participate in a fundraiser before their child joins the class.
- The child will start in Room 17 on the first day of the term in which they turn six. If their birthday falls in the school holidays they will start on the first day of the following term.
- The child has two full-day visits generally in weeks six and seven of the term that precedes their entry to Room 17 to familiarise themselves with classroom routine and the school layout. All visits are conducted without parents remaining to watch.
- A month in advance of the child's start date, parents will be sent a Welcome Pack which includes orientation information for Huapai District School and Room 17. An enrolment form for Huapai District School is included which must be completed before the child starts school.
- After a place has been accepted and just before the child joins the class the parents organise a 45 minute meeting with the Principal and the applicant child for the Principal to get to know the family. Organising this after the class visit in week seven of the term preceding entry is recommended.

Visiting the Class/Observations

Adult visits

Parents who have participated in the SYCMW course and whose child is five or older are welcome to come for an **observation visit without their child**. Observations are held on the first Wednesday of each month. Interested parents should contact our Enrolment Officer by email info@westaucklandmontessoriprimary.co.nz. Appointments are necessary to limit the number of adults in the class and keep disruption to a minimum.

An observation visit takes about one hour. After a brief introduction, you will be given a seat near the edge of the class from which to observe and an Observation Sheet. This will guide your observation and you can use it to record any questions that may arise as you watch. We ask that

you try to avoid engaging the children in conversation, simply so that they can continue to work undisturbed. At the end of the observation you are welcome to quietly leave and send any questions to the Enrolment Officer at the email address given above.

Children's visits

For Montessori pre-schoolers progressing through to primary there are full-day **orientation visits** which are available. These typically take place for one full day in each of weeks six and seven of the term before the child starts. The aim is to familiarise the new entrant with class routine and school layout. The Enrolment Officer will arrange these visits with the parents.

Seeing Your Child the Montessori Way (SYCMW) course

As part of the enrolment process, parents are invited to participate in a short six week workshop series. Maren Schmidt, who presents the workshop series, is an AMI-trained teacher who also holds a Masters in Education, has run a Montessori school for a number of years, and is an author and speaker. The six week series covers both preschool and primary (elementary) development cycles and looks critically at the core Montessori practices that are strongholds in our classroom, as well as addressing many parent FAQ's. Maren also offers the opportunity to do a bit of one-on-one coaching through the series so that parents' questions can be asked in safety.

The workshop series asks for about four to six hours of parents' time over the six week cycle; it is however, made available for a 12 month period to allow parents to fit it into their schedules. Parents have the option to watch online, download and listen to an audio version, or print and read.

Fees

The class receives partial payments from the Ministry of Education towards the teachers' salaries, which are determined by roll growth. A portion of the salary, equipment and any additional teacher costs are funded by Montessori parents, through the Trust. The fees requested are set at an amount deemed necessary by the Trust to support and develop the class. The Trust reserves the right to vary the contributions it asks for as necessary.

The following table lists the requested fees which are explained further below:

Fees	Amount	Comment	When Requested
Upon application (includes GST)	\$ 65.00	One-off, non-refundable	Upon application
Development contribution (includes GST)	\$1,265.00 for 1 st child \$1,092.50 for 2 nd child \$ 920 for 3 rd child	One-off, non-refundable	Upon acceptance of place
Bond (includes GST)	\$ 862.50	One-off, refundable if sufficient notice provided to the Trust of parent's intention to withdraw the child from the class	Requested one term prior to entry
Term fees (includes GST)	\$ 862.50 for 1 st child \$ 646.88 for subsequent siblings	Each term, non-refundable A 25% sibling discount is applied for second and third children and so on	Two weeks in advance of new term starting

Stationery fee (includes GST)	\$ 65.00	Term One each year	Two weeks in advance of new term starting
MANZ membership fee (includes GST)	\$ 46.00	Annual per family	As advised
Huapai District School donation (tax deductible)	\$ 200.00 for one child \$ 350 for two \$ 375 for three or more	Annual	Term One each year

Fee upon Application: we request that completed application forms be accompanied by an application fee of \$65 per child. This does not guarantee a place in the class, it places a family on the waiting list.

Development Contribution: this is requested in full within a month of accepting a place in the class. The development contribution fund is used to build resources, maintain and/or replace essential Montessori materials for the children's use.

Bond: this is equal to a term's fees and is requested one term prior to start date. The bond will be returned on the child's departure from the class or offset against the child's final term donation. Written notice of one full term is required when a child is leaving the class. If inadequate notice is given, and no suitable replacement can be found for the departing child, the bond will be kept as a contribution towards the cost of running the class for the term following the child's departure.

Term's Fees: each term there will be an invoice sent for \$862.50. This is payable to the West Auckland Montessori Trust (WAMT) by cheque or automatic payment direct into the West Auckland Montessori Trust's bank account. The invoice is sent approximately two weeks before the commencement of term, with payment in full requested during the term. Please contact the Trust's Treasurer if you need to discuss other options.

Stationery Fee: this is requested at the beginning of the year with the Term One fee (or proportionally throughout the year if your child joins the class part way through the year) and allows the teacher to buy the necessary stationery materials for your child throughout the year.

MANZ Membership Fee: our class is a 'Montessori Association of New Zealand' (MANZ) member school. Each family is required to pay **annually** a **\$46 incl GST** membership fee. If you have a younger child attending a MANZ member pre-school, you are not required to pay twice.

Huapai District School Donation: as an enrolled member of Huapai District School you are asked to pay these. In 2016 annual donations are set at \$200 per child, \$350 for two children or \$375 per family of three or more. This donation enables the children to be part of the wider community of social and sporting activities, have equitable use of the facilities and access to all educational support available in a state-funded school.

Miscellaneous Matters

If the Enrolment Committee discovers that an application contains a false statement, the Enrolment Committee may reverse the enrolment decision to accept a child. In this circumstance the development contribution would be forfeited.

Examples of situations that would be considered false statements (this is not intended to be an exhaustive list) are:

- If a child attends a lesser number of pre-school sessions after acceptance than is stated on the application form
- Failure to disclose all information regarding a child's behaviour and educational needs at the time of application or failure to disclose a change in circumstances following application.

The onus is on the applicant to notify the Trust of any changes to any information relied on by the Enrolment Committee during the enrolment process.

Trust Officers' Details

Trust email: info@westaucklandmontessoriprimary.co.nz

Haydn Cooper	Chairperson
Paul Owen	Treasurer
Melanie Khan	Secretary & Enrolment Officer
Brendan O'Connell	Board of Trustees Representative
Francis Joung	Marketing
Christine Choi	

Recommended Reading Materials

Montessori Today by Paula Polk Lillard (1996)

Published by New York: Random House

A descriptive book that covers the theory of Montessori relating to children from birth to adulthood. An informative book that is easy to read.

The Montessori Way – An Education for Life by Tim Seldin and Paul Epstein, Ph.D

Published by: The Montessori Foundation

The Montessori Way is an in-depth, yet easy-to-read book, explaining Montessori education in layperson's terms, from the early years through to secondary school. An excellent read.

The Montessori Controversy by John Chattin-McNichols (1992)

Published by New York: Delmar Publishers

An academic book examining Montessori in the context of current theory and practice in Montessori schools today.

The Absorbent Mind by Maria Montessori (1949)

Published by India: Theosophical Publishing House

A discussion of the development of infants and young children, birth to three years.

To Educate the Human Potential by Maria Montessori (1948)

Published by India: Kalakshetra Publications

The needs of the primary-aged child regarding the acquisition of culture.

Montessori Madness by Trevor Eissler (2009)

Published by: Sevenoff LLC

A parent to parent argument for Montessori education.

Peace and Education by Maria Montessori (1943)

Can be downloaded at http://archive.org/details/Peace_And_Education

Informative Web Sites

The Montessori Foundation www.montessori.org

MichaelOlaf.net

Montessori Aotearoa New Zealand www.montessori.org.nz

North American Montessori Teachers Association www.montessori-namta.org
(books listed above can be ordered through this site)

For Montessori families www.montessorifamilyconnection.com