



Montessori Gardens

Parent Handbook

Updated 26/09/2023

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History of the Centre

Montessori Gardens is situated in a purpose built building on the edge of the beautiful Swan Valley. It has operated for many years as a mainstream child care centre until being bought by the Montessori Gardens Company in October of 2015. This Company was a partnership between Rachel Walker and Naomi Stuckey and is now solely owned by Naomi Stuckey.

Governance and management

The centre is owned and operated by Naomi Stuckey as director of Montessori Gardens Pty Ltd as Trustee the Stuckey Family Trust.

Naomi Stuckey is the Educational Leader and Director of the centre and is responsible for managing the educational environment together with the classroom directresses. As well as being responsible for managing the administration of the centre with the assistance of Melissa Prince.

If you have any queries regarding your child's education and social development etc, then please speak to your child's classroom directress to make an appointment. Every parent is entitled to request a meeting at any time in addition to the scheduled parent teacher meetings which are held every 6 months.

Any educational issues or day to day issues or issues regarding fees and payments should be discussed with Naomi Stuckey.

Educational Leader

Naomi Stuckey is the Educational Leader of the centre and ensures that the centre maintains the highest level of Montessori education and ensures compliance with the requirements of the early years learning framework. Naomi is present in the centre at a variety of times and on most days so that she is accessible to educators at different times and can observe the running of the centre and offer support to the educators at various times and under a variety of circumstances. Naomi is available to the other educators in the centre for mentorship and support in all areas of the program,

Montessori philosophy and professional growth both while she is present in the centre and also by phone or email outside of centre hours.

Supervision of the centre

Under the regulations a centre must have a nominated supervisor who is responsible for the day to day management of the centre. Whenever the nominated supervisor is not on the premises then one of the authorised supervisors will be the responsible person for managing the centre at that time. The authorised supervisors act in the following order.

Nominated Supervisor	Naomi Stuckey
Authorised Supervisors (in Order)	Dariah Maitland Devon Lovelady Ambily Madhavan Kit Stuckey Naomi Nathoo

Our classrooms

There are two classrooms located at Montessori Gardens.

Wrens- aged approximately 15 months to 2 ½ years

Magpies- aged approximately 2 ½ years to 5years.

The centre is managed by Naomi Stuckey Director and owner.
Each classroom is managed by the lead educator for that specific classroom.

The lead educator for Wren's classroom is Dariah Maitland.

The lead educator for Magpie's classroom is Devon Lovelady.

If you have any queries on the operation of the classroom then please speak to your classroom educators first.

Responsible Person

Each classroom will have a responsible person who is charged with the wellbeing of the specific children in their group. There is a hierarchy for this responsible person which is displayed in the foyer and in the staff room. If the person at the top of the chain is present, they are considered to be the responsible person for the children in the group they are supervising, if they are not in a position to be responsible (their shift has ended,

they are on break, they are injured or incapacitated) then the next person in the chain is automatically the responsible person. The two classrooms will each have someone considered to be the responsible person unless the classes are combined. Then there is one responsible person for the combined group. This is indicated in the chain of command (hierarchy of responsible persons). If an Authorised Supervisor is present, they supersede the responsible person in **centre** responsibility, but the responsible person remains in charge of the specific classroom/group. Copies of this responsible person chain of command can be found in the foyer and in the staff room.

Philosophy of the school

Ethos of the Centre

Philosophy and Aims for the Child.

Montessori Gardens Children's House seeks to enable students to thrive as life-long learners and responsible citizens of their community. We offer dynamic learning experiences according to Montessori principles and strive to make a positive difference in the lives of the families we serve.

We strive to provide the highest quality of care and education for the children in our centre. We value the importance of a safe and nurturing environment and are committed to providing individualized learning experiences that are both engaging and educational.

At the heart of our practice is the belief that all children flourish by having the freedom to learn in an educational environment specially prepared for engagement under the careful guidance of trained educators. We understand that children learn best when they are given the opportunity to explore and discover their world at their own pace. We create a stimulating and supportive atmosphere that encourages children to be independent and develop their own unique skills and abilities.

Our goal is to help our students to become healthy, self-confident, aware individuals who are excited by learning and have a great thirst for knowledge.

We are committed to ensuring that all children and adults feel safe, comfortable, and confident in our centre by creating an inclusive and welcoming environment that celebrates the unique backgrounds, identities and experiences of all children and families. Montessori Gardens values diversity and authentic acceptance of all national origins, ethnicities, gender identities, abilities, sexual orientations, and religious beliefs. We strive to include children of all abilities, backgrounds, and dispositions and believe strongly in inclusivity and embracing differences.

Our Montessori educators believe that play is the work of the child, that it is through working / playing with the materials as often and for as long as the child needs, that

deep, lasting knowledge is obtained. Children have access to a variety of experiences and equipment to utilize and explore. We emphasize mixed age groups in each of our classrooms, and our goal is to maintain higher staffing levels than required to maximize supervision and individualized attention. We endeavor to employ Montessori-trained educators, who understand child development and take a personal interest in seeing that every child succeeds as a learner.

Each child is encouraged to have supervised free choice of educational activities and freedom of movement based on his or her interests, so long as these activities do not disrupt the wellbeing of other children or the environment. Materials are structured and presented to enable self-teaching, peer learning and independent activity. We provided a supportive, carefully prepared environment, scaled to the needs of the child, and designed to promote a sense of responsibility and agency for every child.

We strive to foster strong relationships with families, and to create a sense of belonging for everyone. We promote the engagement of children in meaningful conversations with their peers, families, and educators. We work to create meaningful partnerships with families, our local community, and allied agencies to ensure that our children and families have access to diverse and enriching opportunities, and we as a centre have the resources and information needed to better serve their needs.

Our service aims:

We emphasize a mixed age group, in each of our classrooms, with low student-teacher ratios. We endeavor to employ Montessori-trained teachers who take a personal interest in seeing that each child succeeds as a learner, and we have a classroom designed for children to use and enjoy.

Each child is allowed supervised free choice of classroom activities and freedom of movement based on his or her interests, so long as these activities do not disrupt the wellbeing of the class. This promotes initiative and self-confidence:

The children can work on their own or in small groups as they choose. New material is presented to a child individually or in small groups of children at the same level of development.

Materials are structured and presented to enable self-teaching and independent activity, which develops self-reliance. This emphasis is learning through the use of tangible sensory objects, which reinforces memory and understanding.

It provides a supportive, carefully prepared environment scaled to the needs of the child and designed to teach a sense of responsibility and self-discipline.

Role of the family

The role of the family is very important to the development of the child and their experiences in the classroom. Parents are welcome to visit the classroom at any time and are actively encouraged to become involved in their child's school life and assist with any activity they have an interest in such as cooking, art, gardening etc.

When the family and the centre understand each other and work together we can achieve the best outcome for your child.

Parents are encouraged to attend parent meetings which can be held throughout the year. These enable us to receive valuable feedback and insight from you to further develop our program and policies.

Curriculum

Montessori Garden offers an age-appropriate developmental curriculum for children aged 0 to 6 years old. The curriculum is organised into the following learning areas.

Practical Life Activities

Also known as daily living skills, these activities enhance a child's skills, concentration, knowledge of the world and self-esteem. These experiences are designed to develop children's independence, coordination, sense of order, and care for the environment.

Sensorial Materials

These activities are generally self-correcting and aimed at activating and enhancing the children's senses. These introductory Montessori materials cultivate students' ability to make accurate judgments and comparisons of size, shape, colour, sound, and texture to enable them to become more perceptive and analytical in their observations. These materials prepare the child developmentally for mathematics and other academic learning.

Language Development

These activities contribute to language development and are at the core of the Montessori experience for 3- and 4-year-olds. Language is taught phonetically in order to provide students with the skills for reading as soon as they are ready.

Mathematics

Montessori math materials enable students to learn about numbers concretely by working with specially designed manipulative materials which give a solid grounding in mathematics and promote a love of this subject.

Science Exploration

Students' appreciation of nature is enhanced with regular hands-on experiments and exploration.

Geography and Culture

This subject focusses on cultural diversity, customs, maps, and landforms. They are presented in a concrete way that the children can access according to their interest.

Social Emphasis

Within our centre children are taught skills to support their interactions with others, how to use appropriate social gestures and behaviours and how to respect the rights, work and bodies of others. This facilitates them becoming connected citizens of their local and more widespread communities.

Closures During the Year

Montessori Gardens is open 52 weeks a year. The centre will be closed only for public holidays. You are not charged for the public holidays.

School Hours

We are a long day care service and are open from 7.00am to 6pm. We recommend that all children arrive for the school day by 8.30 am or 9am at the latest, as it is between 8.30am/9am and 11.30am/12.30pm that the Montessori work cycle occurs. It is during this time that new concepts are introduced and your child's progress is recorded.

Daily Schedule

Our school day includes core subjects, Montessori manipulatives, reading, and writing, language arts, math and critical thinking skills.

Here is an example of our typical daily schedule:

Daily Routine

Summer

7.00am – 7.30am	Classroom activities
7.30am- 8.30am	Outside Play

8.30am- 11.45am	Children choose their own work, individually or in small groups. Morning tea is available during this period
12.00pm	Lunch
12.30pm – 2.30pm	Sleep time or continued activities.
2.30-2.45pm	Group singing /Story/ Poems etc
2.45pm	Afternoon tea
3.00 pm- 3.30/4pm	Culture activities, group play and educator led activities
3.30 /4 pm on	Outside play, group play, late snack , relaxation session until home time

Winter

7.00am – 8am	Classroom activities
8am- 8.45am	Outside Play
8.45am- 11.45am	Children choose their own work, individually or in small groups. Morning tea is available during this period
12.00pm	Lunch
12.30pm – 2.30pm	Sleep time or continued activities.
2.30-2.45pm	Group singing /Story/ Poems etc
2.45pm	Afternoon tea
3.00 pm- 4.45pm	Outside play.
4.45pm pm on	Culture activities, group play and educator led activities, late snack, relaxation session until home time

Our curriculum is flexible so it can be adjusted as required for situations such as extreme heat or wet weather.

Supervision practices

Classroom

When operating at capacity each of our classrooms is staffed with a minimum of three staff. Our licence requires a ratio of 1 adult to every 10 children for children aged over 3 years, 1 adult to every 5 children for children aged 2 – 3 years, and a ratio of 1 adult to every 4 children aged 0-2 years.

Playground

We still follow the above ratios when our children are in the playground in the morning and in the afternoon. The class follows the playground rules so as to avoid any untoward incidents.

The teachers supervising the playground are stationed throughout the play area (e.g. sand pit, on the grass, on the veranda) monitoring every child for their safety.

Emergency Situations

The school is required to have at least two (2) emergency contacts listed besides the parents or guardians. In case of a medical emergency, the educators will be in charge of the ill or injured child until a parent or guardian can arrive and take responsibility for the child. Depending on how severe the situation is, we either administer first aid or call 000 and accompany the child to the hospital until the parent/guardian arrives. Parents are responsible for all costs.

Excursions

Whenever we go out on an excursion, we adjust our adult-child ratio to 1 adult to every 4 children. We make sure that each parent or adult have with them a copy of the emergency contact numbers of the children that are in their care in case any untoward incident happens. Teachers also carry with them the classroom's emergency pack which includes a first aid kit.

Your child will only be taken on an excursion if you have given your written permission.

Complaints Procedures

Families are actively encouraged to be involved in all aspects of our service delivery, which is based on the principles of equity, affordability, and accountability. For families to have confidence in the quality of care provided by our service; it is important that they are aware of their ability to influence the nature of the service.

This means that families know they have a right to comment on or appeal against any action or decision, which has consequences for them or their children. This grievance policy is formal recognition, promotion and protection of each family's rights.

Grievances will normally be resolved by discussion and clarification of the needs or wishes of the family or by clarification by the staff member of the centre procedures or policies. If the family member does not wish to speak with the particular staff-member involved, then they may approach another staff-member with whom they do feel comfortable. With the family's consent, this staff member may then approach the original person and explain the grievance.

Alternatively the family may raise their grievance with Naomi Stuckey, either via email on Info@montessorigardens.com.au or on 9377 5577 if you wish to make a complaint. This can be done initially or if the previous step does not produce a satisfactory outcome to the parties involved or if the person concerned feels it is not appropriate.

Families are asked to raise all grievances at centre-level first. This will give those most closely involved an opportunity to address any issues in the light of a detailed awareness of the everyday issues faced at the centre and a detailed knowledge of the family and child.

If satisfactory resolution could not be met at these levels the issue may be raised at

Education and Care Regulatory Unit
111 Wellington Street
East Perth WA 6004

Telephone No 6551 8333

Fax No 6210 3300

More details regarding our complaints procedure is included in our policies and procedures manual which is located in the front office.

In addition a full copy of the complaints procedure is also displayed in the front reception area.

Education and Care Regulatory Unit

The Education and care regulatory unit (ECRU) is the government body which is responsible for ensuring a satisfactory level of care is maintained in all childcare centres.

Their vision is quality child care experiences for all children enrolled in Australia. Their mission is to work in partnership with families, services, government & other key stakeholders to facilitate and support continuous improvement to the quality of child care provided for children in Australia.

They aim to achieve their vision and mission through the administration of the child care quality assurance system for children's services and through advocacy for children.

They endeavour to assist child care professionals to deliver quality child care by providing services with advice, support and resources. They also assist families to understand the value of quality care and make informed decisions when selecting a child care provider.

Accreditation process

Quality Improvement Plan

The staff at the centre are continually planning for our improvement by working on our quality improvement plan. This is reviewed regularly to ensure we are achieving our goals. This is sent to ECRU when requested.

Accreditation Visit

ECRU then sends someone to conduct an accreditation assessment. They use a variety of means to assess the service and grade it on the performance they observe and find evidence for. These results are then assessed to ensure that the service is providing quality care. The results of which are on display in the foyer.

Financial and Administration

Fees and Statements

All fees are to be paid for the week in which the child is enrolled regardless of whether they attend the centre or are absent unless arrangements are made with the center for holiday days. Fees are charged at the completion of each week and then the invoice is generated and emailed to parents/guardians. This means that fees are invoiced the week after the child's attendance. The fees are reviewed in July each year and parents will be advised at least one month in advance of any fee increases.

All parents are required to sign up to direct debit on enrollment. Payments will be taken every second Thursday. Parents can place a cap on their account if they wish to

regulate payments and arrange for a different day for their fees to be deducted from their account.

If parents want to make other/extra payments this can be done into our account via internet or online banking. Our bank details are as follows:

Account Name	Montessori Gardens
BSB	086 288
Account No	20 407 3295

We do not accept payment in cash due to security issues.

Invoices for Fees.

These are produced every Tuesday for the previous week and will be emailed to you.

This statement covers 4 weeks of invoices and receipts.

If you have any queries, then please speak to Naomi (info@montessorigardens.com.au) or Melissa (admin@montessorigardens.com.au).

Termination of Place

If you need to terminate your place or reduce your days, then four weeks' notice in writing needs to be given. If notice is not given, then four weeks full fee will be charged.

“Pausing” a Place

It is not possible to “pause” an enrollment. If you know you will not be needing the place for a significant period of time you can choose to pay for the place while your child is absent. Or you can terminate the place and reapply when you require the place again. We will give priority to previous students, however there is no guarantee that the place will be available when you wish to return.

Enrolment and Orientation

Priority of Access

At Montessori Garden we follow the priority of access requirements which are,

- Firstly, Children at risk of abuse or neglect
- Secondly Children of a single parent who works / studies or is training.
- Thirdly any other child.

When considering these situations priority is also given to

- Aboriginal & Torres strait islander children
- Children with an intellectual or physical challenge or those who are neurodivergent
- Children from low-income families
- Children from socially isolated or non-English speaking families
- Children who may experience exclusion due to the sexual orientation, gender identity or composition of their family
- Single parents

We also offer a sibling priority to ensure children from the same family all have the opportunity to attend the one centre.

Public Holidays

The centre is closed on government designated public holidays. You will not be charged for days on which the centre is closed for a public holiday.

General Policies

Detailed policies and procedures

A detailed policies and procedures manual are kept in the front reception area. This provides more information on the policies listed below and other general policies. This is available for parents to view at any time. If you would like a copy of the detailed policies and procedures then please ask at the office.

Parent feedback / comments

Parent feedback / suggestions are important as they help us to provide a better service to our families. If you have any feedback / suggestions then it is best to discuss the issues with your classroom directress who if necessary will discuss it at the next staff meeting.

Alternatively you may complete a **Compliments, feedback and complaints form** (which are located outside the front door) and can either be handed in to the office staff on completion or feel free to leave anonymously on the small desk in the front reception area.

Lunch

The Children bring their own lunch in a lunch box from home and a piece of fruit that is cut up and shared for morning tea. The Centre provides a nutritious afternoon tea and late snack for each child present at the times these meals are served.

Snacks

Every child is required to bring a piece of fruit every day to be placed in the fruit bowl. This fruit is cut up for the children to share during the morning. We ask any food that is provided by the parents to comply with our healthy food policy.

MONTESSORI GARDENS IS A NUT FREE ENVIRONMENT, please do not provide food containing nuts of any kind to your child, or for sharing.

Change of Clothing

Children need an extra set of clothing, and usually several pairs of knickers or jocks, as toileting mishaps are common. During the day, your child may become wet, sandy or splattered with paint. We help by using washable paint and providing aprons, however some colours are difficult to wash out. We do not want your child to be afraid to

participate because he or she might get dirty. So please make sure the clothes your child wears to day care are not their best ones and are able to be exposed to dirt and possible stains.

The temperature does change during the day and staff will ensure that your child is dressed for the current weather conditions by adding or removing clothing when necessary. Please include jackets, cardigans and socks in the winter so that we can keep your child comfortable if it becomes cold.

Please label all items with your child's full name and be sure they are appropriate to the season. When a bag of soiled clothing comes home, please replace it right away.

Sun Protection

Each child is required to bring a clearly labelled hat to school every day. We wear hats all year round. We have a no hat no play policy, so it is important that your child brings their hat to the centre every day. It is also important that the hat gives good protection so please make sure it has a wide brim and protection for their neck.

In the summer the children are required to wear sunscreen. We ask you apply this before you leave home so that it has a chance to soak in and become effective by the time they reach the centre. We do understand that some mornings can be chaotic and if you have not been able to apply sunscreen before arriving at the centre you can do so once you arrive. Sunscreen is located at the front door to assist with this. If you are unable to apply the sunscreen please ensure the staff are aware your child is not wearing sunscreen so they can apply it before the child goes out to play.

If the children go out to play in the afternoon they will all have sunscreen reapplied before doing so. We use a 50+ sunscreen designed for children. If you would like your child to use a specific sunscreen please provide us with a bottle of the sunscreen you wish used, to stay at the centre, and the staff will be happy to use this one for your child.

Parents also need to ensure that children wear a t-shirt or other top that covers the child's shoulders and back for playing outside.

If the temperature exceeds 35 degrees or the UV is high, then the children will not be allowed outside to play. In this situation we adjust our program so they play outside longer in the morning or have appropriate indoor play that still meets their gross motor needs.

Pick up and Drop off Procedures

Authorised Pickup of Children

Montessori Garden will only release children to parents, guardians or those persons whom parents have authorized in writing. Please be sure to list all authorized people on the enrolment form.

Even if an authorized person is coming to collect your child we ask that you let us know that morning by speaking with an educator, or inform us via email or on the phone. It is essential that we are informed that someone other than the expected person will be collecting your child. If we are unaware we will not release the child without confirming with the child's parent first.

If an unforeseen circumstance arises and you need to send someone other than an authorized person to collect your child then you must ring us in advance and provide us with details of the person who will be collecting them. We will check the person's identification on collection.

If a person who is expected to pick up a child is easily recognized by the educator releasing the child into their care AND that educator knows that their ID has been photocopied at least 3 times, that educator may release the child to that expected and recognized adult without photocopying their identification in that instance. If any doubt exists the ID will be photocopied and the time, date and details of the person releasing the child will be recorded on the photocopied document.

Please note that by placing a person on the emergency contact list the parent is stating that this person can collect their child in an emergency. To this end if a child needs to be picked up from the centre urgently and we are unable to reach the parents or guardians we will contact the emergency contact and require them to come and pick up the child. We will also release a child into the care of someone on their emergency contact list if we are unable to contact any guardian or parent, although we will always try to confirm that they are supposed to be collecting the child, if we are unable to confirm it we WILL release a child to someone on the emergency contact list. We will not release a child to anyone who is NOT an emergency contact without specific instructions, for that particular pick up from a parent or guardian, even if that adult has collected that child before.

Pick up and drop off times

Children cannot be dropped off at the centre before our opening time which is 7.00am. Although the staff may be here before that time they will not open the classrooms until the centre officially opens.

Our closing time is 6pm however parents must arrive by 5.55pm at the latest. This then allows time for the parent to collect the child's belongings and sign the child out so the staff can lock the centre at 6pm.

If an emergency occurs and you are unable to collect your child before 6pm or you need to send someone else to collect your child please ring us as soon as possible.

Children not collected

If a parent has not collected their child by 6pm then the educators on duty need to contact the parents and find out why they have not collected the child and when they will be collecting the child.

If the parents cannot be contacted then educators will contact the child's emergency contacts and will arrange for them to collect the child as soon as possible. Educators will remain with the child until collected and will continue to try to contact the parents up to the time the child is collected.

If the child is collected by the emergency contacts then educators will leave a note fixed on the front door of the centre advising them who has collected the child.

In all cases when a child is not collected by 6pm the educators on duty need to contact Naomi Stuckey, the Nominated Supervisor immediately.

If no one can be contacted to collect the child then educators need to remain with the child until Naomi can return to the centre. If parents and emergency contact persons cannot be contacted in a reasonable time then Naomi will continue care of the child and contact the necessary authorities.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

When arriving at school, parents are required to sign children in. This is done online using the daily QR code located on the whiteboard at the front door. Alternatively parents may sign their child in with a pin specific to each child, using the tablet in the foyer.

Signing your child in is a legal requirement and is a condition of receiving CCS payments.

After sign-in, parents say goodbye to their child on the doorstep and hand over to the staff member that has come to answer the door and fetch the child. If the child has a preference of staff member, we will do our best to accommodate this. Our priority is to support the child in transitioning into the centre from home. The emotional wellbeing of the children is always our priority and this procedure has shown to greatly assist this.

Please understand that it will not always be possible for your child to be “taken” by their educator of choice, due to the needs of other children, the shifts of educators or their absence.

The staff member will then walk the child into the centre to put their belongings away and then to the classroom or outside play area.

We have found the handover at the door has greatly increased the calmness of the morning drops offs and facilitated separation from the parents for the children.

We do encourage the families to come into the centre at pick up time so that they can see their child’s environment and have a chance to talk with the educators and exchange information about the child. It is important that parents and guardians feel welcome and included in the centre, so please do use this time to come into the center, connect with the educators and see what your child has been up to.

At departure time, parents are required to sign out their child before they can pick up their child in the classroom or at the playground.

Please note that our detailed policies and procedures on child protection against abuse are detailed in our policies and procedures manual which is kept in the front office and is available to anyone upon request.

Sign in sheets & allowable absences

Every time your drop off and collect your child you need to digitally sign the attendance sheets. If your child does not attend on one of their days then “absent” will be marked on the record.

The reason for this is that the government need to ensure that children are actually attending the service on the days the government is paying child care benefit. In addition this is also a record of the days the children did not attend.

Under the child care benefit scheme the government will pay its share for 42 days when the child did not attend. These 42 days fall in the period 1st July to 30th June each year. When the 42 days have been used the government will no longer pay part of the fees when the child does not attend and the family will be required to pay the full fees for those days.

Some absences are excluded from the 42 days and these include

- The parent works shifts or has a rostered day off and does not bring the child that day. A letter is required from the employer confirming their agreement to this.

- The child is visiting a parent under a court order. We will require a copy of the orders and a letter from the parent stating the child was visiting the other parent.

Illness and Vaccinations

In the event your child will be absent due to illness or vacation we ask that you notify the school as soon as possible. When you call to report your child is absent, we will ask you whether your child is ill. If your child has a known illness of a contagious nature, we will notify the parents of other children. Children must stay out of school until they are **symptom free for 24 hours**. This includes but is not limited to:

illnesses/symptoms:

- Chicken Pox
- Conjunctivitis
- Diarrhoea
- Fever
- Hepatitis
- Impetigo
- Measles
- Meningitis
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Vomiting
- Covid 19

When a child becomes sick

The State of WA requires that children be in good health to attend daycare. There will be an informal health check of each child as they arrive at school. If a child becomes ill during the day, a parent must collect the child as soon as possible after being called or arrange for someone else to collect them.

Children's behaviour can suggest illnesses when combined with fever, diarrhoea, several loose bowel movements, unusual mucus discharge, deep coughing, or other symptoms.

Children must remain home for 24 hours after a normal temperature has recorded **without** the use of Ibuprofen or Panadol before returning to the centre.

The centre is required to have at least two (2) emergency contacts listed besides the parents or guardians. In case of a medical emergency, the educators will be in charge of the child until the parent arrives. We make every effort to reduce contact between a child who is unwell and other children or objects other children will come in contact with, immediately upon determination of illness. If we feel it is necessary or beneficial to

completely isolate the ill child an educator or other staff member stays with the child until the parent arrives to pick-up his/her child.

Immunizations and Medical Records

Montessori Garden maintains up-to-date medical records including immunizations on all of the attending students. Children's vaccinations must be up to date or the child must be on an approved catch up schedule as indicated on the child's AIR Immunisation History Statement or has an approved exemption. We implement a policy of exclusion when a vaccine preventable disease is present or suspected at the school. The period of exclusion depends on the type of outbreak.

Incident/Injury Reporting

Montessori Garden will report all accidents occurring on the school grounds to the parent. All staff members are trained in first aid and will administer first aid as deemed appropriate. If the incident is serious then we will contact you immediately. For minor injuries you will be advised when you collect your child.

If your child has had an accident away from school, such as a hit on the head, bruises, cuts, sprains, or broken bones, you must report it to a staff member when your child arrives at school. We will then fill out an ***Injury on Intake form*** for you to sign. This helps us keep track of anything which may happen while your child is with us, and not spend time investigating the origin of injuries that did not happen at the centre.

Medications

If your child must take a medicine while attending school, you must fill out and sign a medication form. There is a space in your child's Health History form to list allergies and chronic illnesses. Please fill this out carefully. A doctor's certificate is required before a child attends the centre after contracting an infectious disease. Please inform the school immediately an infectious condition has been discovered in your family. This supports us in making other families aware of what they should be keeping a look out for and enables us to minimise the spread of illness through our centre which helps all families including yours.

Disaster Preparedness

We display emergency evacuation drill plans next to each major exit. We practice Emergency drills at least four times a year. These drills cover fire, armed intruder, bomb, bushfire and snake.

Excursions

Seasonal Walks, library visits travelling by Library Bus, trips to the park or other excursions may be arranged. We will give you advance notice for all field trips. You must sign a permission slip before we will allow your child to go on the field trip. Teachers and staff will supervise all field trips with help from parent volunteers.

Rest Time

Rest Time is a routine made easier for children when they follow a regular schedule. As children mature they begin to give up their nap. If you have a specific request regarding whether your child sleeps please advise us. Otherwise the children themselves determine whether they need to sleep. All children will however be asked to rest, even if they do not sleep. This rest will constitute them laying or sitting still, calm and quiet for a period of 15 or 20 minutes. This may be with a book or other quiet activity. Periods of rest and relaxation are important for all people including children.

Belongings

Toys

The school is enriched with many activities and carefully selected Montessori educational materials, which fill your child's day. Please leave personal toys and playthings at home. The school is not responsible for items that may get lost or broken and bringing personal toys to school can spark disputes between children. If your child is insistent on bringing a particular toy or has a comfort item they rely on, they will be supported in this. To protect the toy/item and to minimise any conflict the child will be given options of where the item can be safely placed, where other children will not touch and possibly damage it. Please note it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure the item comes home with the child at the end of the day. The educators will make every effort to remind the child to take the item home but take no responsibility for ensuring it goes home with the child or that it remains undamaged while in the centre. Unless your child needs the item for their security and wellbeing it is usually best that personal toys and other items stay and "wait for the child" in the car or at home.

Lost and Found

Please label everything that comes to school with your child's name, including their bags, even their initials on the washing label will help. Items forgotten by the children are kept in a lost and found for a month and then donated to charity.

Communications and art work

All newsletters and other information will be emailed to you and placed on the website. We use a platform called KindyHub which through which the educators can keep you updated on your child's progress and experiences during the day. Your child's artwork will be placed in their bag.

Behaviour Management and Guidance

Positive guidance of child behaviour

Self-discipline in the Montessori classroom is established for the child by giving them an environment that encourages them to move freely about and choose activity. We encourage children to respect each other and their environment in an atmosphere of joy and caring. Courtesy and grace are modelled for the child by the staff. Misbehaviour is redirected into positive action and children are encouraged to express themselves verbally.

When children receive positive, non-violent and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concept, problem solving abilities and self-discipline. Based on this belief of how children learn and develop values Montessori Garden will practise the following behaviour management policy.

WE DO	WE DO NOT
Encourage children	Use physical punishment
Reason with children	Threaten or verbally abuse
Model appropriate behavior	Shame children
Modify the environment to help child	Deny food, rest as punishment
Listen to children	Relate discipline to eating, or sleeping
Re direct inappropriate behavior	Leave the child alone unsupervised
Provide the children with natural and logical consequences	Allow discipline of children by children
Treat children as people and respect their needs, desires and feelings	Criticise or belittle
Use conflict/resolution dramatic play	Ignore a problem the child cannot resolve

Occasionally, a child may need time to collect their thoughts and feelings. When this happens, the teacher may invite the child to choose between participating in an activity and staying close to the teacher for a while, with an open invitation to return when the child feels ready to join in with the others.

When circumstances involve recurring behaviour difficulties, we ask that you work with the school toward redirecting your child's misbehaviour. Physical punishment is never used. Support for parents and staff may be sought with written permission however, continued aggression may result in a request that the parents withdraw the child from the program.

The Individual Learning Needs of Children

We actively foster the healthy growth and development of each child in our care according to their individual needs.

Individual developmental programs are used in the following areas:

- **Physical Development** - we promote each child's growth and general health.
- **Intellectual Development** - We assist each child in developing language skills, problem solving ability and perception.
- **Emotional & Social Development** - we help each child develop a positive self-esteem and the self-confidence needed for daily living. We assist each child in the development of positive interpersonal skills including values, attitudes, fairness, co-operation and conflict resolution strategies such as social reasoning and negotiation.
- **Motor Skills** - We help each child develop fine and gross motor skills appropriate to his/her age.
- **Creativity** - We allow each child to develop creative potential.
- **Self-Help Skills** - We encourage each child to develop skills and independence in caring for him/herself.

We strive to develop the learning potential of our environments, both inside and outside, through regular reflection and observation to adjust and modify to increase their effectiveness in supporting children's learning and engagement.

Children with Challenges or Special Needs.

We actively encourage the attendance of children with disabilities and special needs. We believe that the interaction between children with differing abilities and challenges is of benefit to all children. We role model this by the inclusion and valuing of our educators who also have differences, and some of whom could be considered to have challenges.

Inclusion is not just a tag line for us but is a lived principle.

The environment has been prepared to allow access to all classroom activities, for all children, including those who may have mobility challenges, including but not limited to wheelchairs and walkers. Children have individual programs that allow development in all areas at their own pace. Flexibility of the use of materials can be adapted to meet specific developmental needs of a child, whatever those may be and regardless of whether they differ largely from the norm.

Networking with Communicare and Child Australia allows us to ensure each child's developmental needs are met and to obtain specialized equipment, if and when needed. Educators attend relevant training courses for special needs, if and when needed and regularly assess the engagement of the children and suitability of the environments for inclusivity.

Aggression in the Centre

We understand that children may at times find circumstances difficult to manage emotionally and we support a child's right to experience "big feelings" without judgement or recrimination, however we do not tolerate excessive aggression or violence by any member of our community towards any other member of our community.

A first instance of excessive aggression or violence will prompt the staff to inform the parents of the incidence of aggression or violence. A second instance will prompt the scheduling of a meeting between parents and management and if the situation cannot be resolved or a third instance occurs then the parents will be asked to pick the child up immediately and keep the child away from the centre for the rest of the day. After 3 instances of being asked to temporarily remove the child from the centre the parents will be asked to withdraw the child from the centre permanently and terminate the child's enrollment. This will not affect the enrolment of any other children from that family and the child will be welcome to re-enroll once the issues of aggression and or violence have been appropriately addressed and no longer pose a threat to the wellbeing and sense of safety of the other children or adults in the centre.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Inclusion and anti-bias policies.

Montessori Garden respects all racial origins, religious cultures, languages, gender identities, sexual orientations, and specific needs so that each child, parent, or caregiver is valued as an individual, without racial or other stereotyping.

Between the educators and children many languages are spoken, and this resource is used to help settle children and families into the centre. External government resources are also used when necessary.

We aim to provide an environment in which all people can have a positive self-image of themselves. In all areas of development and in all opportunities during programming culturally relevant activities are sought.

For example:

- Singing regularly in other languages
- Greeting words are used regularly from other languages
- Maps and picture albums for each continent
- Flags of different countries
- Stories of other cultures
- Cultural art activities
- Festivals and celebrations
- Regular displays of pictures, artefacts, art etc from different continents
- Wide representations of family types in books, images and puzzles and other representations)
- Wide representations of abilities and challenges in books, images and puzzles and other representations)
- Balanced representation of gender roles and abilities (no stereotyping or restrictions based on gender in books, images and puzzles and other representations)
- Inclusion of representations of all gender identities and orientations.

We have a non-competitive environment where every child is respected as an individual regardless of ability, race, gender identity, sexual orientation or religion.

Through observation of holistic development an individual program is presented allowing children to develop at their own pace.

An anti-bias policy has been introduced throughout our programming and our environment. This ensures that bias is eliminated using books, music and song, cooking, art and craft, clothing and play equipment etc. from various cultures.

Parents from non-English speaking backgrounds will be encouraged to contribute knowledge of their culture to enhance the program and experience of all children.

Educators will be encouraged to attend training that supports knowledge and support of all persons and assists them in addressing issues that may be experienced by families in our community and causes our centre to be welcoming for all individuals.

No activities at the service will contain negative or discriminating images of other cultures, gender identities, orientations, or abilities.

Support Workers will provide help and support as required by children with special needs, or from another culture, or any other challenge which could lead to a feeling of exclusion or discrimination. With the goal of allowing these children to fully participate in the program and feel welcome and valued in our centre.

Our classroom activities are chosen based on cultural relevance. When required we also liaise with Support Workers or Communicare who can help us in developing our programme to meet the needs of children with a disability, non-English speaking children or children with an Aboriginal background.

Unlawful Harassment

Montessori Gardens is committed to providing an educational environment free of unlawful harassment and discrimination. Montessori Gardens will not tolerate actions, comments, words or jokes based on an individual's sex, race, ethnicity, age, religion, or any other legally protected characteristic. Any person who becomes aware of possible unlawful harassment should promptly advise a member of staff who will communicate with Naomi to ensure that we handle the matter quickly and confidentially.

Reviewed 26/09/2023