

Charter of Airdmhor Montessori

Educators at Airdmhor Montessori will enhance children's learning and development through:

a) Relationships and interactions which are responsive, reciprocal, positive and encouraging by:

- Ensuring working conditions at the centre encourage low staff turnover, which will make it possible for responsive and reciprocal long-term relationships to be formed between teachers and children.
- The day to day running of the centre allowing flexibility for under and over two children to mix together during the day as is appropriate. We feel this is extremely important to enable older peers to scaffold learning for younger children, and to ensure all children are familiar with all the staff at the centre.

b) Extending children's thinking and actions through sensitive and informed guidance, interventions and support by:

- Having an image of the child as a capable and confident learner, who has the ability to think about the consequences and the different responses to a given situation or problem, if they see this modelled by adults and peers in their environment.
- Listening to children instead of talking too much. Encouraging problem solving and alternative thinking, to enable children to make decisions and control the play

c) Respecting children's preferences and involving children in decisions about their participation in activities by:

- As Montessori teachers we believe children between 0-6 are endowed with special powers to absorb the culture in which they live. Our philosophy is to 'follow the child' and allowing children freedom in the prepared environment

enables them to make choices about their leaning, and use their preferred learning style.

- Demonstrating in practice that they regard each child as competent.

d) Planning and evaluating the physical environment and providing resources to support the needs of each child and to facilitate quality curriculum interactions by:

- Providing an environment suited to the size, strength and interests of children, to encourage independence and creativity and enable them to have control over their environment, to manipulate it to suit their needs and imagination.

e) Modelling non-discriminatory behaviour and promoting this with children by:

- Ensuring that our own behaviour does not discriminate and by being warm, welcoming and accepting to everyone, whom we come in to contact with.
- Guiding children and other adults in the use of non-discriminatory language and behaviour.
- Using te reo Maori, where appropriate, and by showing respect for Maori protocol in learning experiences and service practices.
- Providing puzzles, books and posters that reflect ethnic diversity and a balance of genders.
- Ensuring the wall decorations, posters and artefacts and the arrangement of the service environment reflect the cultures of the families using the centre.

f) Implementing strategies to include all children by:

- Valuing, accepting and welcoming a wide variety of cultures and family structures.
- Recognising that a child's first language is a valuable tool for learning.

- Developing teaching strategies that cater for children's different abilities, ways of learning, interests, and family circumstances.
- Encouraging children to interact and to learn from each other.
- Ensuring that our language and references to family/whanau include all the children in the service.

We will demonstrate an understanding of current theory and principles of learning and development and the different characteristics of infants toddlers and young children by:

- Employing teachers who have completed, or have nearly completed their Diploma of Teaching in Early Childhood. As well as this qualification many have already completed or are at present completing further professional development, including Montessori Diplomas, and studies towards the completion of their Bachelor of Teaching and Learning Degree.
- Being committed to Montessori theory of learning and development, but constantly continuing our professional development by reading, attending workshops, subscribing to professional journals, attending conferences and belonging to professional organisations.
- Being committed to regularly discussing practice in terms of current theory and research and working collaboratively as a team planning flexible programmes, which take into account the different abilities, dispositions and characteristics of infants, toddlers and young children.
- Being strongly committed to recognising, planning for and interacting with children in ways that acknowledge their differences and individual characteristics.

We will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the learning and development of each child, identify learning goals for individual children, and use this information as a basis for planning, evaluating and improving curriculum programmes by:

- Being committed to our philosophy of working in partnership with parents to provide a safe, creative and loving environment, where each child is nurtured and their individuality is acknowledged and enhanced.
- Implementing our observation and assessment policy, which ensures that observations are meaningful, linked to theory, and used to improve practice.
- All children have an individual 'learning journey' file which is kept on the shelves by the doorway leading to the Practical Life room. Parents and children are welcome to view their file at any time, though they must stay on the premises. We will gift the file to the child when they leave the Centre. Parents may not look at another child's file.

Each teacher will be given a group of children that they will be responsible for. They will make formal and informal observations, record the child's learning and challenges. They will encourage dialogue with whanau and record parent's voice as it is appropriate.

They will collect evidence of art and reflect on the learning that has occurred. In June and December of each year, the teacher will arrange a 20 minute interview with the parents. These interviews will be held at Airdmhor at a time convenient with the parent and teacher. They will go through the child's file and together plan for the learning outcomes in the coming 6 months.

Following the interview, the teacher will be given a new group of children to oversee. This will allow for the diversity of our staff to be shown in the way that each teacher will notice and celebrate an area of progress whilst working within our centre philosophy. Staff will be responsible for viewing the child's previous planning to help them implement a programme for that child.

A file is kept in the office which contains a copy of each child's latest report together with planning and parents aspirations for the coming 6 months. A form will be compiled which lists the planning and aspirations for each individual

child.

Each month staff must complete at least 1 form of planning assessment such as a learning story and 2 photo snapshots showing learning occurring. Our assessments of children will be through a disposition lens under a Te Whāriki umbrella.

Staff will team in pairs to check each others work for spelling, grammar and content. The 6 monthly report will be given to Elaine to read before the parent interview.

- Management recognising the importance of teachers having the time and space to record each child's significant learning achievements and allowing time for ongoing record keeping in the programme.
- When required working collaboratively with specialist services to implement individual development plans for children with special education needs.

Implement curriculum and assessment policies which reflect the holistic way that children learn by:

- Understanding and implementing Te Whāriki, the early childhood curriculum into our programme planning.
- Implementing the observation and assessment policy as outlined above.

Reflecting the reciprocal relationships between the child, people, and the learning environment by:

- Following our centre philosophy, which states "We believe that children are endowed with special powers to absorb the culture in which they live. Our aim is to work in partnership with parents to provide a safe, creative and loving environment, where each child is nurtured and their individuality is acknowledged and enhanced. If the adults in a child's learning environment value and model respect for others, independence, collaboration, wonder at the world, a sense of joy and peaceful relationships, these are what young children will absorb"

Involving parents/guardians and where appropriate, whānau by:

- All teachers being open, welcoming, non-judgemental and making time for parents, at the beginning and end of the day, so that they feel comfortable about sharing ideas about their children with us.
- Implementing our assessment and evaluation policy.

Enhancing children's sense of themselves as capable people and competent learners by:

- Believing in the Montessori philosophy of "the secret of childhood". This is the analogy that children can be likened to seeds, and teachers likened to the gardener, who prepares the environment and tends to the needs of the seeds as they grow. We believe in the ability of the children to become competent learners, as seeds are the promise of the plant they will grow into. Therefore, it is our role to nurture the children, by providing conditions conducive to each child's growth and development into adulthood.

We will plan, implement and evaluate curriculum for children in which their health is promoted and emotional well-being nurtured; and they are kept safe from harm by:

- Ensuring infants are held in a calm and caring way.
- Combining hygienic practices with warm nurturing relationships.
- Talking constantly to infants and use eye and full-face contact with each infant as often as possible. Giving infants every opportunity to hear how language is produced.
- Being aware that many Maori and Pacific Islands children feel uncomfortable making eye contact when speaking to adults, and not misinterpret this avoidance.
- Responding appropriately when children express themselves, helping them to understand their feelings.

Connecting links with the family and wider world are affirmed and extended; children know they have a place and feel comfortable with routines, customs and regular events; and children know the limits and boundaries of acceptable behaviour by:

- Routines being integrated into the curriculum as important, social learning experiences.
- Being aware that a child's name embodies a sense of belonging and identify that the correct pronunciation of names is extremely important.
- Understanding young children's need for security and comfort and accept special playthings from home.
- Ensuring a consistent, caring educator is nearby to greet young children, especially infants and toddlers when they wake up from sleep
- Providing opportunities to meet with parents to discuss child management and ways of enabling children to grow into self-regulated adults.
- Liaising with local tangata whenua and demonstrating respect for Papatuanuku (mother nature).

There are equitable opportunities for learning for each child, irrespective of gender, ability, age, ethnicity or background; children are affirmed as individuals; and children are encouraged to work alongside others by:

- Ensuring that the size of the groups encourage meaningful interactions among children and teachers.
- Ensuring that teachers have time and the opportunity to observe children while out of ratio.
- Talking frequently to infants about what the other children are doing, encouraging eye contact, watching facial expressions, and fostering communication skills by encouraging children to respond positively to infant's overtures. Also when possible, allowing under and over two children to have contact with each other.
- Encouraging children to interact frequently with adults.

- Reinforcing children's involvement in learning experiences that help them develop initial reading skills.
- Providing enough adults and equipment, and arranging the facilities to enable children with special needs to participate fully.

Children develop verbal and non-verbal communication skills for a range of purposes; children experience the stories and symbols of their own and other cultures; and children discover and develop different ways to be creative and expressive by:

- Encouraging children to initiate and sustain conversations with us that are longer than three turn-takings.
- Using routines, especially mealtimes, hand washing, and toileting times as opportunities for conversations with children.
- Using and supporting children's home language and communication styles.
- Ensuring a variety of languages, art, dances, stories, legends and chants are part of our curriculum.
- Ensuring children have access to a wide variety of materials for use in creative and expressive arts and that they are given opportunities to experiment and combine them in new and different ways.

Children's play is valued as meaningful and the importance of spontaneous play is recognised; children gain confidence in and control of their bodies; children learn strategies for active exploration, thinking and reasoning; and children develop working theories for making sense of the natural, social, physical and material worlds by:

- Promoting the use of natural materials
- Providing a stimulating environment based on the developmental needs and interests of the children, so they can initiate and make decisions about their own learning.

- By believing our role as teachers is to help children to develop the skills that will enable them to adjust their sails to always reach their destination.
- Sharing with children our own feelings of not knowing, being uncertain, and wanting to know and model ways of finding answers.
- Promoting opportunities for children to mix with children older and younger than themselves, during the course of the day.
- Encouraging toddlers to find out how things work by letting them do the actions, while we provide the language. Modelling this for older children so, they learn how to help their peers in this way.
- Provide infants with a variety of indoor and outdoor play spaces and surfaces, such as smooth floors, carpet, grass and sand.