



STAFF HANDBOOK

(Child Protection Policy Included)

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Maria Montessori's vision was the attainment of peace through the preparation of the child.

Dr Maria Montessori, internationally renowned child educator, was originally a medical doctor who brought the scientific methods of observation, experimentation and research to the study of children in the early 1900's. Maria Montessori observed the children in her care to ascertain their developmental patterns. Montessori believed in working on the whole child. To nurture in each child an inner conscience, this teaches children to think about their actions. We can provide the child with the knowledge of right from wrong, but it is for the child to follow through when no one is around, e.g., wasting water, looking after the animals in our environment, not hurting others, the care of the earth, and the love of humanity. Only with time can we measure the success of Montessori's approach by distinguishing those adults who are interested only in personal satisfaction or materialistic gain, to those working actively for the care of the earth, peace and help for others. Montessori is an approach to the education of children. It has been effectively used with normal, gifted, physically handicapped and mentally retarded children in different Countries around the world.

Previously it was considered that children had short attention spans. Dr. Montessori was amazed to observe the length of time that very young children would choose to attend to tasks that interested them.

The Montessori Philosophy

Maria Montessori's vision was the attainment of peace through the preparation of the child

The Montessori Journey views the parents as primary in the education process. The centre ensures we employ the most suitably qualified educators and staff who will have ethical, respectful practices and committed to working in partnership with you. We value the educator's views, strengths, professional experiences, and diversity. Management, educators, and staff have a collaborative relationship, so we can ensure a meaningful experience for your child.

The Montessori Journey views each child and their family as unique individuals and one to be respected for that uniqueness, their circumstances, culture, family structure, customs, language, beliefs, and kinship systems. We believe in building on children's prior and current experiences helping children to feel secure, confident, and connected to familiar people, places, events, and understandings.

Our program is flexible and responsive to each child's individual needs and interests. We let the child construct themselves through work and their own natural laws of development. We will support the children's love of learning. Montessori is an education for independence, preparing not just for school but for Life.

The relationship between management and educators are built on respect. A partnership within the team, we utilise Educators knowledge, their diversity, culture, and professional experience to enhance our program daily.

The Montessori Journey acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land are the Quandamooka people, we pay our respects to the elders both past, present, and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal Australia. We always remember that under the concrete and asphalt this land will always be traditional Aboriginal Land.

**“Tell me, I'll forget”
Show me, I may remember.
“But involve me and I'll understand.”
*Chinese Proverb***

Reconciliation Policy

Aim

The aim is to strengthen relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples, for the benefits of all Australians.

Reconciliation at the Montessori Journey

The Montessori Journey acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land are the Quandamooka people, we pay our respects to the elders both past, present, and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal Australia. We always remember that under the concrete and asphalt this land will always be traditional Aboriginal Land.

Reconciliation is woven into our educational program

The director and educators use different resources to incorporate reconciliation into our educational program in areas including:

- History
- Dance, drama and music
- Health and physical education
- Visual arts
- Science

In addition, we invite indigenous people every year to do a demonstration of their culture for all the children and staff.

Governance and Management Policy

Aim

The efficient and effective management systems allow the service to support all the families. Management makes sure the centre is compliant with the national law, the national regulations, and the national quality standard. We liaise with the regulator authority, inclusion support and other professionals when required. Management makes sure we have an effective compliant operation of the centre.

Educators code of ethical conduct 2023

This code of conduct applies to all management and educators of the Montessori Journey.

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Every person has the right:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To be treated with respect and dignity• To hold and express an opinion.• To work in a positive learning environment.• To work in a clean and safe environment.• To uphold the reputation of our centre with pride.• To have personal privacy and property respected.	<p>Every person has the responsibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To treat all the children, other team members and parents with respect and dignity.• To contribute to a positive caring and teaching environment.• To maintain a clean and safe environment.• To honour and enhance the reputation of our centre.• To respect personal privacy and property of others.• To follow all policies.

Determining the responsible person present

The director/nominated supervisor when present is always the responsible person present, if the director/nominated supervisor is unavailable the early childhood educator of each room is aware of the procedures and policies to take charge of the centre. This will be put up in the foyer person in charge/responsible when the director/nominated supervisor is not in. It will be educator that is on lates.

Management/Early childhood educators communication

We have a room communication book that is only used for the office to your room and your room to the office, in this book you can request specific resources to support the program, if parents tell you if their child is away or has an illness that could be infectious, etc.

Parent communications

Please communicate frequently to all parents, but not get in in-depth conversations. Try and communicate positively about their child. Only early childhood educators are responsible for communicating to parents about how the child is progressing in the room and about the child's behaviour, especially if the behaviour is challenging. Use a variety of methods to communicate with the parents. Ask the parent what the best way would be to communicate to them. Please pass on any information on the child that has been passed on to you by parents to the relevant people. Also communicate anything that the child has done that you may feel would be important to management or the child's teacher. Please ensure the director/nominated supervisor is notified straight away of any concerns that educators may have, or parents have voiced regarding an individual child or the centre.

Early childhood educators performance/Staff reviews

Management will give each staff member ongoing feedback about their performance, or if we have any concerns this will be addressed with you promptly and professionally. Any issues that management is aware of will need to be amended as soon as possible.

First aid

All employees must hold a current First Aid/CPR and Asthma/Anaphylaxis Certificate. It is the responsibility of employees to ensure that their certification remains current and is updated when necessary. The nominated supervisor will follow up with all qualifications.

First aid kits

We have a First Aid box in each room, a main one in the office in the marked drawer and one outside near the carpentry table. If the staff know we are running out of any First Aid supplies, please let the director know. Staff needs to fill in the inventory which is in the First Aid box in the office and leave it on the office desk.

Blue card

All staff must have a current blue card prior to employment and the blue card will be checked to make sure it is current via the website commission of your people and children.

Immunisation requirements for staff

All staff are required to fill in an immunisation form and update it when necessary. Immunisations recommended are Hep A Measles, Mumps and Rubella. Staff who have not completed their immunisation record will also be treated as un-immunised if we have a breakout of anything.

Dress code

The centre has a dress code, all Staff are to wear plain blue and white e.g., a white /navy shirt with sleeves, a pair of navy trousers, skirt or longer shorts with a pair of closed shoes for workplace health and safety. No revealing clothes e.g., things too short or low-cut tops, Jeans or any other colours are not to be worn as this does not give a professional impression. In winter Navy or white jumpers /jackets can be worn. If you are in doubt about the suitability of any clothes, please discuss this with the director/nominated supervisor. The centre will print on any shirts that you bring in. Wide brimmed hats (no caps) must be worn outside to role model sun safety procedures. Joggers are not a preferred choice of shoe.

Meetings

All staff are required to attend staff meetings, parent evenings and training evenings. If you are unable to attend, please notify the director/nominated supervisor personally and as soon as possible. Educators' meetings will cover the EYLF, centre policies and philosophies, any changes within the centre are reviewed and adapted in our Quality Improvement plan (QIP) and incorporated as part of the ongoing procedures within the centre.

Inclusive workplace for staff

We embrace a workplace culture of diversity and inclusion. It enables all the staff to feel safe and valued which can lead to greater employee engagement, satisfaction, innovation and productivity. Every staff is treated fairly and equitably and their unique diversity, skills and qualities are valued in our centre. Their individual needs and changing circumstances will be responded appropriately as well. Some essential guidelines are:

- Respect individual differences and treat all people with dignity.
- Contribute to the creation of an inclusive workplace environment that values and utilises the input of people with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.
- Demonstrate inclusive leadership practices and model constructive workplace behaviours that promote diversity and inclusion practices.
- Communicate the importance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace and always promote appropriate standards of conduct.
- Apply ethical decision-making in circumstances related to employment and diversity and inclusion targets.

Mobile phones

No mobile phones on you, please leave them in the staff room for when you are on a break.

Amenities

Tea and coffee are provided in the kitchen. Please wash your own dishes and do not let lunches accumulate in the refrigerator. We have a staff toilet in the staff room and one in the Van Gogh room. Staff lockers are available which have a key, if the key gets misplaced or lost the educators will be charged a \$25 fee for the replacement.

Lunch breaks and rosters

Lunch breaks will vary on the hours worked. Rosters will be for the hours of:

- 7.30 to 3pm ½ lunch break,
- 8.30 to 3.00pm ½ hour lunch.
- 8.30am to 3.30 ½ hour lunch
- 9.00 to when numbers go down to 22 children, usually around 4.00pm ½ hour lunch break.
- 9.00am to 4.30pm Group Leader/Assistant ½ hour lunch

Most staff hours will be around 33 hours per week. Please do not be late because our obligations are to the children and their parents. If there are problem on any day, then the director/nominated supervisor must be contacted as soon as possible. Persistent lateness will result in dismissal. For every 3.5 hours worked 10 minutes is paid for. If educators work over 7 hours per day 20 minutes is paid for in your lunch break.

Early childhood educators

All early childhood educators within the centre comply with the office for Early Childhood Education and Care Queensland as well as their qualification regulations. We have a total of nine staff, this includes administration, early childhood teachers/educators, maintenance, and casuals.

We have an educational leader who is also the director/nominated supervisor. The educational leader's role is to oversee and provide curriculum direction and guidance to all educators. Support educators to effectively implement the cycle of planning, enhance programs and practices. Lead the development and implement an effective educational program in the service which is guided by the Montessori approach to education and the EYLF.

Procedure to support relief staff to promote continuity of care for children within our centre

- We will endeavour to use the same relief staff, so the children are familiar with the one person.
- Please write down and let all relevant staff know all parent messages.
- The program book must be kept up to date, so any educators can read it and not only the person who wrote it.
- The child individual development planning must be kept up to date and left where other educators will find them.
- The Montessori sheets must be kept up to date, so all educators know where each child is up to within the program.
- Follow the directions of the staff of the room.
- Read all signage in the room especially for children with allergies or special needs.
- Know all the areas that need to be supervised, if not ask a staff member.
- Relief staff like all staff have input in the policies, procedures, contributing to staff meetings, operations of the service etc.

Participation of volunteers/ Students on practicum placements/Parent helpers/Visitors

- Introduce any of the above people to all relevant educators.
- Give the volunteers/students parent helper or visitor a tour of all relevant areas of the centre i.e., the amenities.
- The helpers are welcome to have tea/coffee; however, these are to be consumed in a safe manner away from the children. Refer to our voluntary information and follow accordingly. Only one volunteer/student/parent helper/visitor in a classroom at a time unless discussed with the director/nominated supervisor.

Educators resolving differences/conflict/grievances.

If educators have any concerns within the centre about other educators or management, please try and discuss it with the person involved before it gets out of hand. If you cannot resolve the problem amicably in a respectful and prompt manner, please see the director/nominated supervisor and we can see how the issue can be resolved. Please ensure that problems do not become unsurmountable. If it is to do with the director/nominated supervisor a third party can be involved to see if it can be sorted out. Please know we have an open-door policy for staff to come to me for anything.

Policy on professionalism and confidentiality that apply to educators.

Staff members are expected to always speak professionally about their own centre. Staff members should try to make themselves available to parents when necessary. It is not appropriate for staff to discuss other children or other parents with a parent. All staff including relief staff are to be aware that confidentiality of all matters concerning the centre and its users must be always maintained.

Any child information, e.g., enrolment forms, developmental checklist, child individual development planning, observations and any information related to child protection issues, as well as written or verbal information passed on to you by the parents or guardian., etc. **are fully confidential**. The only persons permitted to see this information are the parents or legal guardians, centre educators and management. If the centre has a student e.g., University, TAFE, the director/nominated supervisor may allow limited access to children's information. For example, the child's first name, date of birth, country of origin and home language should suffice for most tasks assigned in their course of study. Permission must be sought from the parents before any other information is passed on to the student. Parents need to be aware that any information shared with a staff member will remain confidential. Any information written about a child is the property of the centre and will be stored until the child turns 21. The child's information is always available to the child's family.

Staff handbook or other policies changes

Any changes made to the above handbook, policies or procedures will be either told verbally, staff meetings, or a notice will be put up with the changes in the staff room.

Educational Program and Practice

A statement of principles and planning procedures. Building a foundation for lifelong learning

1. The Montessori Journey educational program and practice has a deep respect for the Montessori principles and the Early Years Learning Framework. Our centre philosophy is to maintain a high standard of personal care for each child whilst allowing the child to experience a Montessori education which will encourage the child's love of learning, support their natural potential, and build a foundation for lifelong learning.
2. The Montessori Journey is also approved to run the kindergarten program within a Montessori environment. We follow the kindergarten guidelines as set out by the Office of Early Childhood Education and Care.
3. We believe in providing the child with a carefully prepared environment and curriculum, that has developmentally appropriate activities which is based on the child's individual needs and a routine that is flexible both inside and outside which allows the natural unfolding of the child, physically, emotionally, intellectually, and socially.
4. The Montessori Journey's broader vision is to reinforce your child's learning. The self-correcting material helps the child to achieve the result without adult interference and in the process assists in building the concentration while they work. On their own, children choose to practise things they were trying to master repeatedly - "The love of repetition".
5. We will support the children's freedom of choice as children like to choose things they do. Montessori classrooms are set out for children, so the child has easy access to the materials they would like to work with. Children will choose, take, and replace items without the need of adult assistance. Montessori children are supported to make choices, accept challenges, manage change and cope with frustration. We use a prepared classroom to inspire children to achieve the best outcome for independent learning discoveries. Children learn through hands-on experiences. Dr. Montessori found that young children have a natural inclination for organisation and orderliness.
6. The Montessori Journey focuses on nurturing the inner conscience of the child, which teaches the child to be responsible for their actions, we believe in teaching the children about a sustainable environment, to be less wasteful and more thoughtful.
7. Within this safe and unique learning environment that is child centred and adult guided, we believe in maintaining an orderly, calm, and cheerful environment where the child can feel confident to explore and attempt new skills without fear of failure or judgement. Our teachers interact with all the children throughout the day making sure that they are happy, feel safe and content within their environment.

A child's work is to create the man he will become.

Maria Montessori

Aim

The aim is to maintain a high standard of personal care for each child whilst allowing the child to experience a Montessori education which will encourage the child's love of learning, support their natural potential, and build a foundation for lifelong learning.

General routine/outline of the program

7.30am - 8.30am:	Indoor activities
8.30am - 9.15am:	Outdoor activities (depends on each class)
9.15am - 11.45am:	Group time and morning tea incorporated in our kindergarten/Montessori session
11.45am - 12.00pm:	Clean up our room and group time
12.00pm - 1.00pm:	Lunch
1.00pm - 2.00pm:	Rest time
2.00pm - 3.00pm:	Indoor activities – Montessori, art, music, dramatic play
3.00pm - 4.30pm:	Outdoor activities – home time

Routine/Outline of the program (winter)

7.30am - 8.30am:	Indoor activities
8.30am - 11.00am:	Group time and morning tea incorporated in our kindergarten/Montessori session
11.00am - 11.15am:	Clean up our room and group time
11.15am - 12.00pm:	Outdoor activities (depends on each class)
12.00pm - 1.00pm:	Lunch
1.00pm - 2.00pm:	Rest time
2.00pm - 3.00pm:	Indoor activities – Montessori, art, music, dramatic play
3.00pm - 4.30pm:	Outdoor activities – home time

Goals for educators

(Educators encourage these traits in all children)

- Montessori believed in working on the whole child, teaching children to think about their actions, to have a conscience. We can provide the child with the knowledge of right from wrong, but it is for the child to follow through when no one is around, e.g., wasting water. Looking after the animals in our environment. Not hurting others.
- We do not interfere with the child when concentration has begun. Montessori believed in letting the child concentrate on a piece of work freely chosen, repeating the activity as many times as they need to. Through repetition the child masters the movements of his/her body and mind.
- We encourage the child to use the practical life activities (washing dishes, cleaning tables, preparing food, scrubbing chairs etc.).
- We let the child be independent and do things for him/herself.
- We encourage the child to be responsible for themselves and their belongings.
- Our program is flexible and responsive to each child's individual needs and interests. We let the child construct themselves through work and their own natural laws of development.
- Educators guide the child rather than teach the child as the child has his/her own inner teacher.
- Our centre goals are to maintain a high standard of personal care to each child to satisfy the child's curiosity, physical, emotionally, social and language development.
- Educators are sensitive to the child's needs when parents/guardian have left the Centre.
- All educators are to consistently have meaningful engagements with all the children and their families. Please don't confuse this with personal socialising and forgetting supervision always comes first.

Plans to assist children make a positive transition to school or other learning facilities.

When children are leaving our centre and moving on, please commit to sharing information about each child's knowledge and skills so educators work collaboratively with each child's new educator and other professionals to ensure a successful transition for the child.

Inclusive program

Staff are to make sure all children and families are inclusive of the kindergarten program. Willingness to make reasonable adjustments to their practices and educational program to ensure all children and families are included in the kindergarten community.

Writing observations

Imagine for a moment that we are ten, twenty or even thirty years on from today, and that young child that you are currently documenting observations about is reading your words about themselves. The photos you have taken and the messages you have relayed on that page create a picture about them as a person and indeed about you as a teacher, that extends well beyond this moment in time.

Questions to ask yourself when writing about the child:

- 1) What do we notice about how special this child is?
- 2) What do we collectively want from the children?
- 3) At what point do we notice that the child is beginning to wonder or shine or to benefit from our purpose together?
- 4) Capture the essence of celebrating a child for who they truly are.

We should focus on the questions that drive us to want an answer about the child, and not because we need to write observations on the quantity done per day, week, or month.

Ensure that sufficient information has been collected about the child to provide an accurate record of their participation in the program.

Identify children who may benefit from additional support to achieve particular learning outcomes, how the service can provide that support, or how the service can assist families to access specialist help.

Child Protection Policy

Aim

The aim is to ensure all the staff identify and assess possible sources of harm to the children and then take the appropriate steps to prevent it from occurring. All the staff understand their reporting obligations and their responsibility to protect them from any types of harm. Our centre has a commitment to maintaining the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

Child protection risk management strategy

The approved provider, nominated supervisor, employees and volunteers will implement the child protection risk management strategy to ensure the health, wellbeing and safety of all children at Montessori Journey, protect them from harm as well as the integrity of employees and volunteers. Management and early childhood educators are responsible for monitoring centre compliance with the guidelines set down by the Commission for Children and Young People. Monitoring will occur daily.

Child Protection is a three-phase system:

1. **Prevention** – Teaching all children protective strategies such as ‘7 steps 2 Safety’ (<https://www.napcan.org.au/Programs/7-steps-to-safety/>)
2. **Early intervention** – Identifying high risk families and situations and providing support and community referrals or reporting to authorities.
3. **Response** – Recognising indicators of abuse and reporting to authorities.

Preventive education

Educating children, parents and educators is important and is the first step in the prevention of child abuse. Knowledge builds confidence and empowers children and adults. Children who understand about personal safety are more likely to disclose abuse to others.

Educators can include child protection topics in the program:

- Acceptable/unacceptable behaviours, and appropriate/inappropriate contact in a manner suitable to children’s age and level of understanding
- Children have a right to always feel safe.
- Children should say “no” to anything that makes them feel unsafe.
- Children to learn their own skills to stay alert and be safe.
- Children being able to recognise signs when they do not feel safe.
- There is no secret too awful, no story too terrible, that they can’t share with someone they trust.
- Educators are available for children if they have any concerns.
- Children need to tell educators of any suspicious activities or people.
- Children learn to recognise and express their feelings verbally and non-verbally.

Staff recruitment

All early childhood educators employed in this centre have a current blue card. The centre will send off the details in the form called “The authorisation to confirm a valid blue card” for all new educators. We also have an employee register.

Boundaries for physical touching

Physical touching from caregivers to the children is an important part of quality care and nurturing. Acceptable touching includes hugging (e.g., to greet or farewell a child or to comfort). Rubbing their back for reassurance and comfort, kissing an injured finger, etc. Touching for hygiene reasons includes changing children's clothes, bathing, assisting with toileting, etc.

Children have the right to refuse an adult's touch and need to be taught about acceptable and unacceptable touches in a non-threatening way. The welfare and interests of the children are of paramount importance from any forms of child abuse.

What is harm

According to the *Child Protection Act 1999*, harm, to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing. Harm can be caused by:

- **Physical abuse**, for example, beating, shaking, burning, biting, causing bruise or fracture by inappropriate discipline, giving children alcohol, drugs or inappropriate medication.
- **Emotional or psychological abuse**, for example, constant yelling, insults, swearing, criticism, bullying, not giving children positive support and encouragement.
- **Neglect**, for example, not giving children sufficient food, clothing, enough sleep, hygiene, medical care, learning children alone or children missing school.
- **Sexual abuse or exploitation**, for example, sexual jokes or touching, exposing children to sexual acts or pornography, or having sexual intercourse with a child or young person under 16 years of age (even if the child has consented)

Mandatory reporting in the childcare

With the Mason's Law Amendment which commenced from 1 July 2017, early childhood education and care professionals are the mandatory reporters to make a report to Child Safety. This includes the approved provider, the nominated supervisor, and the educators. If they form a reasonable suspicion, they need to report it immediately.

There are four times when you must report concerns to authorities:

1. If a child tells you, they have been or are being abused.
2. If you see a child being abused.
3. Your own observations of the child's physical condition, behaviours or circumstances cause you to suspect that child abuse has happened or is likely to happen.
4. If another person tells you a child is being or has been abused (remember that other person could be a child).

Remember:

- You need to have formed reliable suspicion or belief in order to report.
- Single isolated acts of child abuse are still abuse.
- When a child harms another child, it becomes abuse when there are circumstances that are not considered normal.
- Other children can also ask other children to perform certain acts that are considered inappropriate, this is considered child abuse.
- If a child arrives at the centre with a significant pre-existing injury, e.g., black eye. Ask parents or carers for an explanation.

How to Report:

- Reports may be written (forms, emails, notes on files)
- Do not inform families of your intention to report.
- Keep on file a copy of all information provided for your report. Keep records safe and confidential, e.g., paper filing system in office.

Who to Report to:

- In House – Director, relevant staff.
- Formal – Authorities (Child Safety Service – Cannon Hill is our nearest centre)

Is it urgent?

- Timing – will perpetrator have access to child?
- Injury – is it severe, is medical treatment required?
- Child – did they disclose abuse?
- History – history of previous abuse or family violence, current or recent episode of violence

Important things to consider for employees in recording a disclosure or suspicion of harm

- Remain calm and listen attentively, actively, and non-judgementally.
- Ensure there is a private place to talk.
- Encourage the person to talk in their own words and ensure just enough open-ended questions are asked to act protectively (e.g. “Can you tell me what happened” ... or “Can you tell me more about that”). Don’t ask leading questions which tend to suggest an answer.

Ensure the person is advised that the disclosure cannot remain a secret and it is necessary to tell someone in order to get help:

- Reassure the child they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Advise the child that you need to tell someone else who can help the child.
- Document the disclosure clearly and accurately and store in child file in the office.
- Follow the process for reporting a disclosure of harm and consider whether there are requirements to report matters to the Queensland Police Service or Child Safety
- If a child comes in with pre-existing injuries and you have doubt, please fill in an accident report and start observations which will be stored in the office in the child’s file.

Abuse or neglect indicators

Physical abuse indicators

- Unexplained injuries – location, size, frequency and shape of bruises, burns, breaks.
- Inconsistent explanations
- Child’s behaviour – submissive, anxious, fears going home, cowers.
- Family history of violence/abuse
- Delay between injury and receiving medical assistance.
- Parent who shows little concern
- Parent isolating a child.
- Admissions by parents

Emotional abuse indicators

- Extremes of behaviour
- Lacks empathy.
- Inappropriately destructive or cruel
- Poor peer relationships
- Delayed development
- Behaviours inappropriate for their age
- Negative emotions – anxiety, fears, shame, depression
- Compulsive behaviours
- Low self esteem
- Uncharacteristic seeking of attention or affection
- Erratic appetites
- Reluctance to go home.
- Rocking, sucking thumbs or self-harming.
- Concerning behaviour involving parent or caregiver

Sexual abuse indicators

- Sexualised behaviour or promiscuity
- Inappropriate or persistent sexual play
- Knowledge of sexual behaviour
- Disclosures through art
- Problems with sexual areas
- Sudden unexplained fears
- Bed wetting and/or soiling.
- Disrupted sleep patterns
- Unusual aggressive behaviour towards others or pets
- Unusual behaviours or changes in behaviours or appetites
- Questions about sexual topics
- Indicators involving parents, caregivers, siblings, other adults.

Neglect indicators

- Signs of malnutrition
- Poor hygiene
- Unattended physical or medical problems
- Inadequate supervision
- Child appears constantly tired.
- Frequent lateness or absence
- Inappropriate clothing
- Alcohol or drug abuse present in the house
- Frequent illness
- Self-comforting behaviours or craving attention
- Home environment inappropriate

Staffing Policy

Aim

The aim is to meet our regulatory requirements in relation to staffing, including that professional standards guide our practices, our responsible person ensures that the service is effectively supervised and managed, and volunteers and students are provided with the necessary training and support.

Implementation

The Montessori Journey believes that no person will be disadvantaged based on gender, marital status, family commitments, religious or ethical beliefs, colour, race, disability, age, political opinion, employment status or sexual orientation. However, only persons with appropriate qualifications will be considered and must be over the age of seventeen. The needs and safety of the children will remain our first and major consideration when selecting staff. All staff will have a police check done by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian.

Staff recruitment and selection

Applicants may apply by phone or in writing in response to a vacancy within our centre. A full resume, referees, references, and past employment details are required.

Applicants are either declined or invited to an interview by the director/nominated supervisor. At the interview, the applicant will be given an overview of the centre's procedures, policies, and a discussion on the job description. The applicants are encouraged to read the policies that are within the centre.

With the applicant's knowledge, referees and past employers may be contacted. Short listed applicants may be asked to spend two hours working with the children and staff before an appointment is made.

When the centre has a position going, in-house staff can apply and if they have the suitable experience or qualifications.

Prime considerations when appointing early childhood educators and our expectations in relation to Educator's performance are:

- Applicants must have the appropriate qualification asked for or willing to train.
- All Applicants must be collaborative, respectful, and ethical in their practices.
- Will engage in First Aid, asthma, anaphylaxis, and child protection training.
- Have a commitment to early childhood education.
- Have appropriate experience for the position or studying.
- Must have the right personal attributes to enhance the team.
- Have a genuine want to learn about our centre and understand all our policies within the Centre.
- The Montessori Journey expects a high standard of personal presentation, punctuality, behaviour, and respect to be displayed at all interactions towards the other educators, staff, children, and families.
- Any staff in training must on a quarterly basis supply proof of their study.
- Will have a current blue card before commencing employment which will be checked by the centre to see if it is still current.

Educators' orientation/Induction procedure

New staff will be guided by other staff during the induction period to enable them to integrate into the Centre, familiarise themselves with the centres routines, programs, and the relevant legislations so the centre can run as smoothly as possible, all policies are to be read within two weeks of employment within the centre. The highlighted areas of the policy need to be read before starting employment within our centre. After the two-week orientation we have an induction period which will be going over any procedures and policies that you would like to discuss or do not understand. Thereafter if you would like to discuss further development of the centre, Ideas, concerns, or anything on your mind please feel free to bring it to the director/nominated supervisor's attention.

Work contracts

A 3-month probation period is for the staff member as well as the employer. Wages are paid fortnightly on every second Thursday. Time sheets are to be filled and left in the office by 3.30pm Wednesday pay week. Casual or permanent educators may have to go home earlier than estimated if the number of children falls below the required amount for child/staff ratios. All staff are required to give two weeks' written notice if they intend to leave employment at the centre.

Early childhood educators training or courses

All educators employed who need to complete their study for their job role will be monitored until the completion date. The centre will pay for half the price of courses for educators to improve on personal and professional development that will improve the performance, care, and education of the children. The director/nominated supervisor will keep educators informed on any available workshops, courses, online training, and current information posted to us. The centre will not pay for the time educators are away on a course but provide relieving educators to enable them to attend. The centre uses an industrial solutions company called Livingstone who determines pay rates.

Holiday and sick leave

All staff must take the two weeks that the centre is closed during the Christmas/New Year period as annual leave. Leave forms must be completed and approved by the director/nominated supervisor at least six weeks prior to leave being taken. Whilst all efforts will be made to accommodate leave requests, they will be on a first come, first serve basis, so as much notice as possible is recommended. Staff must follow the same guidelines as sick children and must contact the director/nominated supervisor as soon as possible. If you are on any medication, which will hinder your performance at work. On the third consecutive day of being away from the workplace due to sickness, staff are required to provide a medical certificate and where possible an estimate of when they are likely to be deemed well enough to resume duties.

Dismissal

All Staff will be given 2 weeks' notice, Staff may be dismissed without notice. Instant dismissal will occur for:

- Allowing a child to leave the centre with an unauthorised person, unless in a dangerous situation.
- Continuing inability to perform duties at an acceptable level.
- Negligence in your duty of care.
- Usage of illegal drugs or alcohol.
- Theft of money or property.
- Abusive language and behaviour.
- Failure to follow staff policies and regulations.

Social Media Policy

Using personal social media

We can't restrict what you post, but we expect you to adhere to our confidentiality policies at all times. We also caution you to avoid posting something that might make your collaboration with your colleagues more difficult (e.g., hate speech against groups where colleagues belong to).

We advise our employees to:

- **Ensure others know that your personal account or statements don't represent our company.** You shouldn't state or imply that your personal opinions and content are authorized or endorsed by our company.
- **Avoid sharing intellectual property** like trademarks on a personal account without approval. Confidentiality policies apply.
- **Avoid any defamatory, offensive, or derogatory content.** It may be considered as a violation of our company's ethos.

Representing our company

Some employees represent our company by handling social media accounts or speak on our company's behalf. When you're sitting behind the business social media account, we expect you to act carefully and responsibly to protect our company's image and reputation. You should:

- Be respectful, polite, and patient, when engaging in conversations on our company's behalf. You should be extra careful when making declarations or promises towards customers and stakeholders.
- Follow our [confidentiality policy](#).
- Avoid deleting or ignoring comments. They should listen and reply to criticism.
- Never post discriminatory, offensive or slanderous content and commentary.

Cyber-safe environment

- The centre does not allow children to access the internet without staff supervision. We may access the internet to learn about faraway places, foods or use the internet as a tool to show the children something that we are trying to explain to further their learning.
- Educators take photos of the children for the purpose of observations and documentations. Photos and videos will be taken for Facebook, Instagram, or our website. The authorisation is on the enrolment form, and it is optional for the parents to sign it. Any footage will be censored before we upload. Photos and videos on Facebook, Instagram and the website will stay on indefinitely.
- All staff are required to leave their mobile phones in the staff room.

Disciplinary Consequences

The Montessori Journey will monitor all social media postings.

We may have to take disciplinary action leading up to and including termination if employees do not follow this policy's guidelines. Examples of non-conformity with the employee social media policy include but are not limited to:

- Disregarding job responsibilities and the use of social media at work.
- Disclosing confidential information through personal or business accounts.
- Directing offensive comments towards other members of the online community.

Assistant/Educator Responsibilities

I will assist in planning and preparing the environment, setting up interest centres, preparing and clearing away materials and supplies. Safety checks when setting up or putting the equipment away.

I will treat each child with dignity and respect. I will be collaborative respectful and ethical with my practices.

I will keep the centre clean and tidy and follow our health and hygiene policy.

I will assist with the observations of each child and inform the lead educator if I feel I see or hear things of importance. (This is not to be discussed with the family)

I will comply with the National Quality Standards abiding with all their principles.

I have read and understood the centre policies that are also handed to the parents, and I will monitor other educators' compliance to these policies.

I will comply with occupational health and safety guidelines to keep myself and others safe.

I mentor new graduates by supporting their induction into the profession.

I will keep my First Aid, CPR, Anaphylaxis and Asthma training current.

I will keep my suitability card current and notify the centre straight away if I lose it.

I will update my professional development plan yearly.

I will not discuss any delicate matters concerning the child or any other child, as this is for the lead educator to do. E.g., Sickness of the child, eating, behaviour, etc. The Lead educator may ask you to pass a message to a parent other than that NO DISCUSSING ANYTHING BUT LIGHT CONVERSATION, to the family.

I will attend and contribute to the educator meetings and be willing to participate in certain training courses where appropriate.

I will attend Montessori training courses especially if I have no Montessori training.

I have read and understood all the centre policies that are also handed to the parents and educators and will fulfil my responsibilities and duties of which I have been employed with the centre.

Employee Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Witness Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

What is the best method to communicate management decisions to you?

Early Childhood Educator Responsibilities

I will be responsible to the nominated supervisor/person in charge and the educational leader for planning and implementing a program suitable to the needs and interests of the children attending the centre. I will be collaborative respectful and ethical with my practices with all educators, families, and children.

I will create a friendly, secure, stimulating & interactive learning environment for the children and will treat each child with dignity and respect. I will plan for the long and short-term needs of each child which is inclusive of all children.

I will stay up to date and comply with the National Quality Standards abiding with all their standards in the national law and Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines (if you are the kindergarten Teacher).

I will keep my First Aid, CPR, Anaphylaxis and Asthma training current.

I will keep my suitability card current and notify the centre straight away if I lose it.

I will create a friendly atmosphere for parents and consult with them about their own child's needs including any delicate matters. I will inform parents about the centres program and policies.

I will mentor new graduates by supporting their induction into the profession.

I will attend and contribute to educator meetings and be willing to participate in certain training courses where appropriate. I will attend Montessori training courses especially if I have no Montessori training.

I have read and understood the centre policies that are also handed to the parents, and I will monitor other educator's compliance to these policies.

I will comply with occupational health and safety guidelines to keep myself and others safe.

I will fulfil all my responsibilities and duties of which I have been employed with the centre and will take responsibilities to the person in charge according to section 34 of the childcare regulations.

I will update my professional development plan yearly.

Employee Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Witness Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

What is the best method to communicate management decisions to you?

Director/Nominated Supervisor Responsibilities

- I will stay up to date and comply with the National Quality Standards abiding with all their principles. Working in partnership with the Department of Children Education and Care.
- Mandatory reporting responsibilities to DEEWA.
- Preparing business activity statements.
- Accounts payable/Accounts receivable.
- I will update my professional development plan yearly.
- Marketing.
- Interviewing appropriate educators and staff that will be collaborative, respectful, and ethical.
- Working in partnership with families, staff and children when considering changes in the centre policies, QIP, procedures and strategies. I will monitor all that attend the service with compliance to these policies.
- I will keep my First Aid, CPR, Anaphylaxis and Asthma training current.
- I will keep my suitability card current and notify the Licensee straight away if I lose it.
- My conduct with educators, family, and children's relationships will be collaborative, respectful, and ethical.
- Stock control.
- Centre shopping.
- Seeing sales reps for what is new in the childcare industry.
- Organising open days, educator's meetings, parent teacher interviews, Christmas party, Easter raffle, excursions, educator's courses, working with the local community, student work experience placements etc.
- Regular inventories on the equipment, books, supplies and teaching materials.
- Making sure educators' programs and child individual development planning are up to date.
- Showing parents around and explaining our centre philosophies and the Montessori program.
- Telephone inquiries.
- Notifying parents of relevant information.
- Room placements for the children and the days required.
- Sending fee accounts out and taking fees and receipting parents.

Employee Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Witness Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

What is the best method to communicate management decisions to you?

Individual Performance and Learning Goals Policy

(Information to be read by all educators)

It is essential that you take the time to read the centre's policies with an Asterix which have highlighted areas before commencing work and the remainder policies within two months of being employed at our centre. Please make yourself aware of all the different forms and information that gets handed out to the parents and staff. Complete the check list as you read the information and hand it to the office. Feedback is always appreciated and considered on the governance of the centre, decision making, policy, QIP and philosophy review.

I have read all the below policies - date and sign _____

*Note: All things with an * means you will need to have read prior to starting or you will need to have it e.g., blue card prior to starting. Most documents will need to be photocopied and handed to the Nominated Supervisor.

Information to be read by Educators	Date
• Staff handbook with our centre philosophies and goals	*
• Staff Health, Hygiene and Safety Policy	*
• Family and Health and Hygiene Handbook (child protection and your responsibilities must be read prior to commencing employment)	*
• Staff Behaviour Policy	*
• Cleaning procedure (staff health and hygiene)	*
• Accident/injury/trauma form (will be shown)	
• Medication form	
• Staff immunisation record	
Please hand this in within two weeks of starting	
• Educators' qualification	
• Personal information at the back of the Educators Handbook	
• Tax file form	
• Superannuation form	
• Photo with brief description	
• First Aid, CPR, Anaphylaxis and Asthma Certificate Signed by J. P	
• Immunisation form	
• Individual professional development and learning goals which meets both centre and Educator's priorities	
• Suitability card/blue card current	*
• Doctors letter to say you are fit to work with children	*