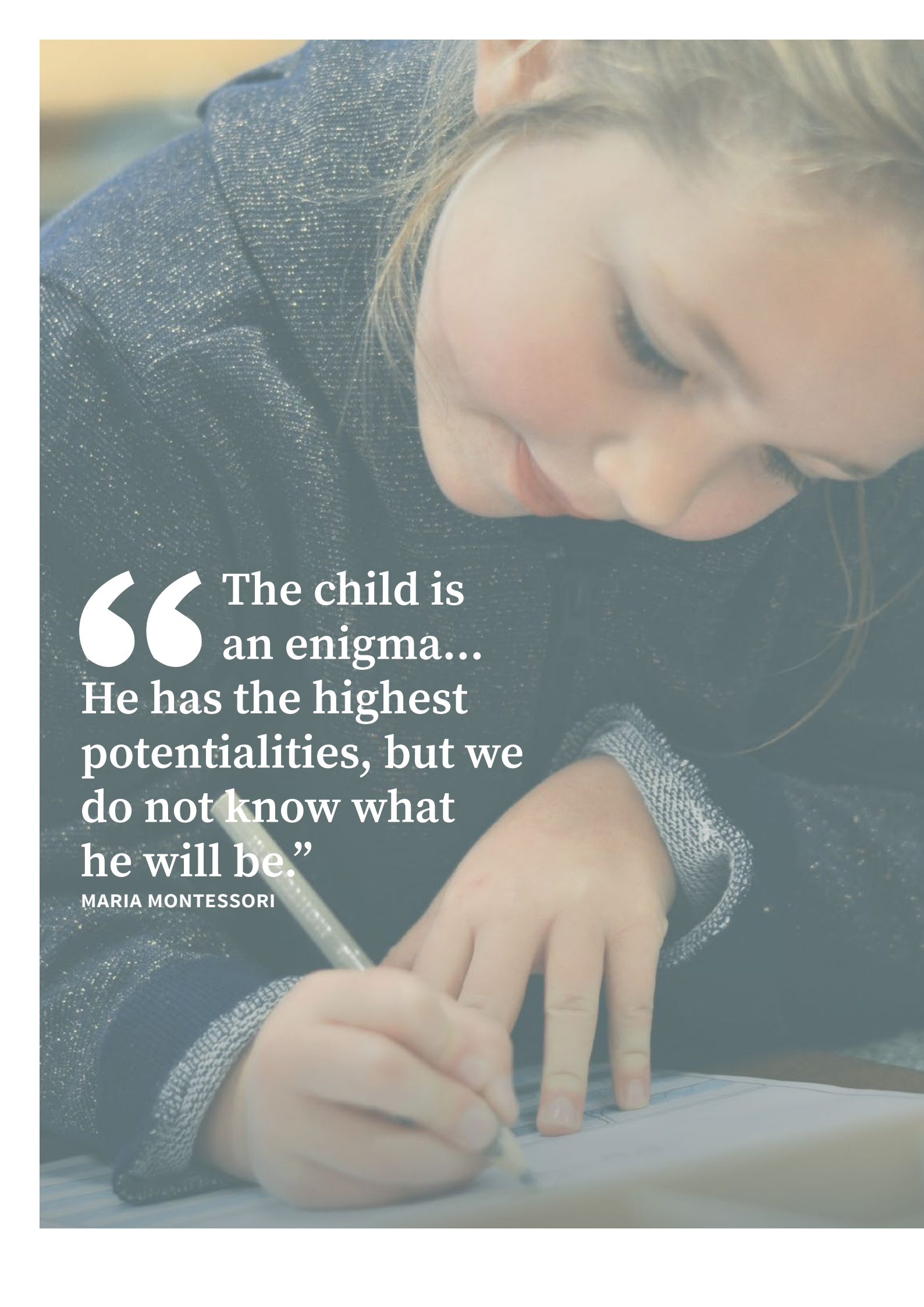


PROSPECTUS



WAIKATO
MONTESSORI
EDUCATION CENTRE

Preparing children to live
life uniquely, unrepeatably,
respectfully, and admirably,
and to be unconditionally
accepted as one of life's most
marvelous expressions.



“ The child is
an enigma...
He has the highest
potentialities, but we
do not know what
he will be.”

MARIA MONTESSORI



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“ Free choice
is one of the
highest of all the
mental processes.”

MARIA MONTESSORI

INTRODUCTION

Welcome

“ The Montessori approach assumes that we are all born intelligent, we simply learn in different ways and progress at our own individual pace. At Waikato Montessori Education Centre children learn through hands-on experience and investigation. A complete Montessori curriculum is provided in a calm, respectful environment.”

We respect that an important responsibility parents have is to make decisions to determine the best environment in which to place their child at this most sensitive time in their development.

The values and experiences presented to the child now will have the greatest influence on shaping their character as an adult. Everything they are exposed to will create an impression in their mind and Montessori supports this in the most positive way.

We aim to support parents in this decision-making role with an offering geared to the development of your child's natural human tendencies and developing characteristics.

We are committed to developing an educational experience you and your child will cherish forever. One that prepares your child fully for their future; where your child's unique talents are awakened and nurtured; where you feel involved and your contribution is valued. This Montessori Centre will deliver lasting value for you and your child and the Waikato community. We have researched approaches in Montessori schools for a number of years, both in New Zealand and internationally. We believe we have created a programme which will demonstrate how Montessori is unique in the world of education, how Montessori deals holistically with developmental stages and how Montessori places no limits on a child's potential in any area.

Using good judgement and being able to take responsibility for our choices is a skill that is developed by experience and is one of the fundamental principles that is embedded in all our programmes, even from 3 years old. Our approach to life and our personality is developed at such a young age, therefore our Montessori programmes are here to support the growth in academic and authentic character development through all these childhood years.

“ Today, more than ever before, we each need to be able to think deeply and independently, and to be able to make effective decisions so we can positively contribute to our rapidly changing times for the better of all humanity.”

Children will have access to a full academic curriculum, have the benefit of a large outdoor environment, and will be embraced with respect and modelled etiquette. The values used in our Montessori programme help to create a community where friendships are valued and communication is open. You will always be welcome to ask questions and request information.

We belong to national and international networks within the Montessori community and aspire to be a world class school. We have stable and committed educational leadership and will continue to achieve our goals with the ongoing support of you all.

Diane Bhana
HEAD OF SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

Our founder, Dr Maria Montessori

Maria Montessori was born on the 31st August 1870 in the town of Chiaravalle, Italy. Her father, Alessandro, was an accountant in the civil service, and her mother, Renilde Stoppani, was a well-educated woman who loved to read. In 1875 the Montessori family moved to Rome and in 1876 Maria was enrolled in the local state school on the Via di San Nicolo da Tolentino. As her education progressed, she began to break through the barriers which constrained women's careers.

From 1886 to 1890 she studied at the Regio Istituto Tecnico Leonardo da Vinci, which she entered with the intention of becoming an engineer. This was unusual at the time as most girls studied the classics rather than going to technical school.

Upon her graduation, Maria's parents encouraged her to take up a career in teaching, one of the few occupations open to women at the time, but she was determined to enter medical school and become a doctor. Her father opposed this course, as medical school was, at that time, an all-male domain and initially Maria was refused entry.

However, she was undeterred and in 1890, with the help of Pope Leo XIII, she enrolled at the University of Rome to study physics, maths and natural sciences — receiving her diploma two years later. Maria then entered the Faculty of Medicine, and became the first woman to enter medical school in Italy. She stood out not only because of her gender, but because of how hard she worked at her studies. She even managed to pay for most of her medical education herself through a series of scholarships she was awarded at medical school and the money she earned through private tuition.

“ Although medical school was not easy due to the prejudice from her male colleagues, she was a dedicated student and on the 10th July 1896 became the first woman to qualify as a doctor in Italy, and became known across the country.”

She was immediately employed in the San Giovanni Hospital attached to the University. Later that year she was asked to represent Italy at the International Congress for Women's Rights in Berlin, and in her speech to the Congress she developed a thesis for social reform, arguing that women should be entitled to equal wages with men. A reporter covering the event asked her how her patients responded to a female doctor. She replied, "They know intuitively when someone really cares about them.... It is only the upper classes that have a prejudice against women leading a useful existence."

In November 1896, Maria was employed as a surgical assistant at Santo Spirito Hospital in Rome, where she worked with the poor and their children — making sure they were warm and properly fed as well as diagnosing and treating their illnesses. In 1897 she volunteered to join a research programme at the psychiatric clinic of the University of Rome.

As part of her work at the clinic she would visit Rome's asylums, seeking patients for treatment at the clinic. On one visit, the caretaker of a children's asylum told her with disgust how the children grabbed crumbs off the floor after their meal. Maria realised that in such a bare, unfurnished room the children were desperate for sensorial stimulation and activities for their hands, and depriving them of it worsened the children's abilities.

She began to read about the subject of children with intellectual disabilities and translated the ground-breaking work of two early 19th century Frenchmen (Jean-Marc Itard and Edouard Séguin) into Italian so she could properly understand it. Itard had developed a technique of education through the senses, which Séguin later tried to adapt to mainstream education. Séguin, who was highly critical of the regimented schooling system, emphasised respect and understanding for each individual child. He created practical apparatus and equipment to help develop the child's sensory perceptions and motor skills, which Montessori would later use in new ways.

During 1897-98, Maria extended her knowledge of teaching methods — studying the works of Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel. In 1898, a 28-year-old Maria was asked to address the National Medical Congress in Turin about her work in the field of children with intellectual disabilities. Here she explained her controversial theory that the lack of adequate provision for these children was a cause of their disabilities. The following year, she addressed the National Pedagogical Congress and presented a vision of social progress and political economy rooted in educational measures. This notion of social reform through education was an idea that was to develop and mature in Montessori's thinking throughout her life.

Maria became co-director of a new institution called the Orthophrenic School which took children with a broad spectrum of disorders. Here she was able to put her theories into practice and her professional identity shifted from physician to educator. Montessori spent two years at the school, bringing a scientific, analytical attitude to the work; teaching and observing the children by day and writing up her notes by night. In 1901 Montessori left the Orthophrenic School and studied educational philosophy and anthropology.

In 1904 she took up a post as a lecturer at the Pedagogic School of the University of Rome, which she held until 1908. In one lecture she told her students:

“ The subject of our study is humanity; our purpose is to become teachers. Now, what really makes a teacher is love for the human child; for it is love that transforms the social duty of the educator into the higher consciousness of a mission.”

During this period Rome was growing very rapidly and in the haste of speculative development some construction companies went bankrupt, leaving unfinished building projects behind. One such development, in the San Lorenzo district, was rescued by a group of wealthy bankers who reformed it into small units for impoverished working families. With their parents out at work all day, the younger children wreaked havoc on the newly-completed buildings and this prompted the developers to approach Dr Montessori to provide ways of occupying the children during the day to prevent further damage to the premises.

Montessori grasped the opportunity of working with the children, and she soon established her first Casa dei Bambini or 'Children's House', which opened on the 6th January 1907.

There was only a small opening ceremony and not many had high expectations for the project. However, Montessori felt differently, "I had a strange feeling which made me announce emphatically that here was the opening of an undertaking of which the whole world would one day speak."

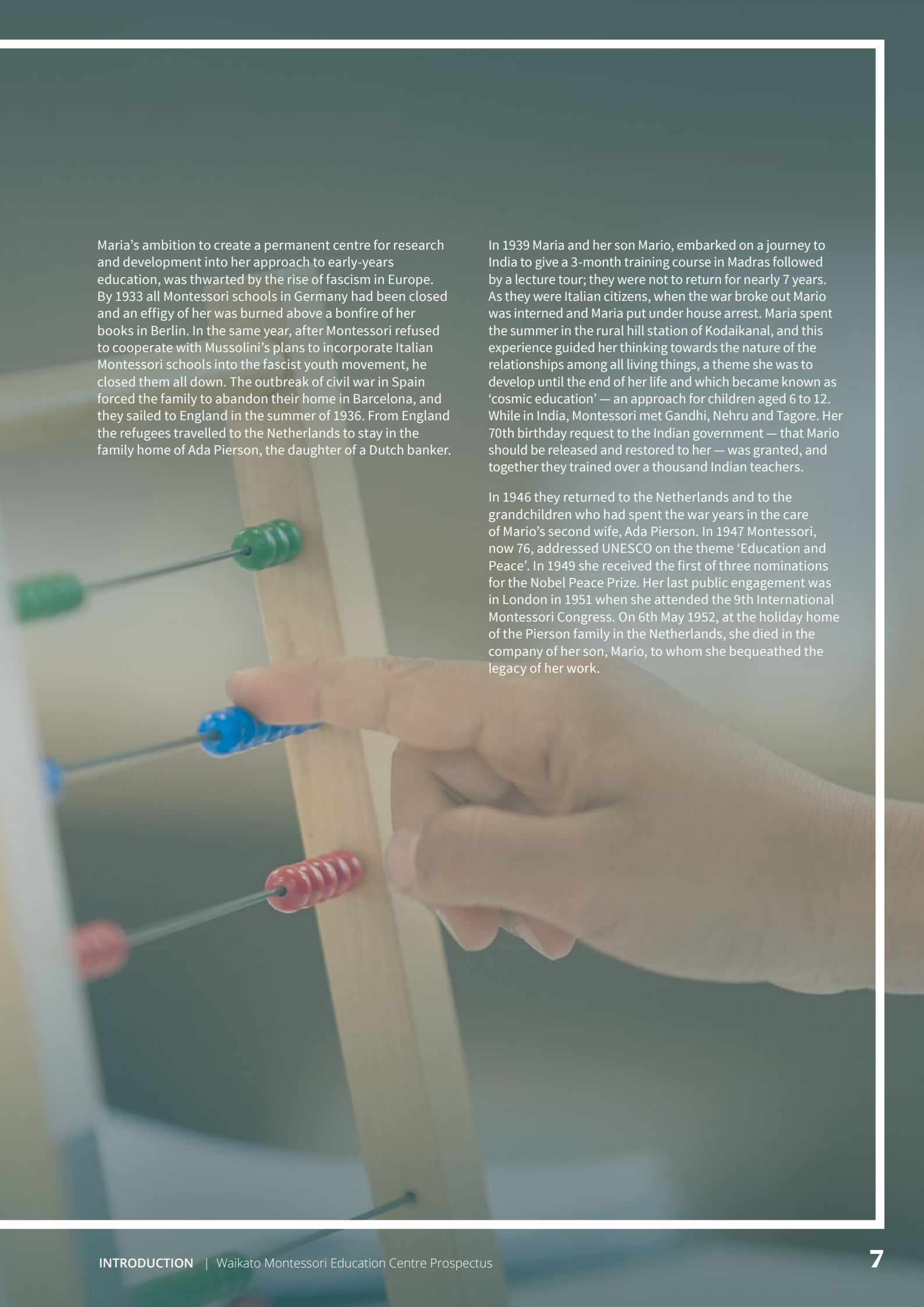
She put many different activities and materials into the children's environment but kept only those that engaged them. She then realised that children who were placed in an environment where activities were designed to support their natural development had the power to educate themselves. This was referred to later on as 'auto-education'. In 1914 she wrote, "I did not invent a method of education, I simply gave some little children a chance to live".

By 1908 there were five Casa dei Bambini operating, four in Rome and one in Milan. The children made extraordinary progress and news of Montessori's new approach spread rapidly. Within a year the Italian speaking part of Switzerland began transforming its kindergartens into Casa dei Bambini, and the spread of the new educational approach began.

In 1909 Dr Montessori gave the first training course in her approach to around 100 students and published her first book in Italy. This was translated in the United States in 1912 as 'The Montessori Method', and reached second place on the U.S. non-fiction bestseller list. Soon afterwards it was translated into 20 different languages and has become a major influence in the field of education.

The Montessori approach expanded with Montessori societies, training programmes and schools appearing worldwide and Dr Montessori travelled to America, the UK and throughout Europe speaking and lecturing. Montessori devoted herself entirely to spreading the approach she had developed, however, much of this was disrupted by the events of the First World War.

On returning from the USA in 1917, Maria based herself in Barcelona, Spain, where a Seminari-Laboratori de Pedagogiá had been created for her. Her son and his new wife joined her, and her four grandchildren were born there: Mario Jr, Rolando, Marilena and Renilde. Her youngest grandchild, Renilde, was the General Secretary and then President of the 'Association Montessori Internationale', the organisation set up by Maria Montessori in 1929 to continue her work.

A close-up photograph of a hand interacting with a wooden Montessori bead chain toy. The hand is positioned to move a blue bead along a metal wire that is threaded through a series of holes in a vertical wooden rod. Other beads in green, red, and pink are visible on the same rod. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue.

Maria's ambition to create a permanent centre for research and development into her approach to early-years education, was thwarted by the rise of fascism in Europe. By 1933 all Montessori schools in Germany had been closed and an effigy of her was burned above a bonfire of her books in Berlin. In the same year, after Montessori refused to cooperate with Mussolini's plans to incorporate Italian Montessori schools into the fascist youth movement, he closed them all down. The outbreak of civil war in Spain forced the family to abandon their home in Barcelona, and they sailed to England in the summer of 1936. From England the refugees travelled to the Netherlands to stay in the family home of Ada Pierson, the daughter of a Dutch banker.

In 1939 Maria and her son Mario, embarked on a journey to India to give a 3-month training course in Madras followed by a lecture tour; they were not to return for nearly 7 years. As they were Italian citizens, when the war broke out Mario was interned and Maria put under house arrest. Maria spent the summer in the rural hill station of Kodaikanal, and this experience guided her thinking towards the nature of the relationships among all living things, a theme she was to develop until the end of her life and which became known as 'cosmic education' — an approach for children aged 6 to 12. While in India, Montessori met Gandhi, Nehru and Tagore. Her 70th birthday request to the Indian government — that Mario should be released and restored to her — was granted, and together they trained over a thousand Indian teachers.

In 1946 they returned to the Netherlands and to the grandchildren who had spent the war years in the care of Mario's second wife, Ada Pierson. In 1947 Montessori, now 76, addressed UNESCO on the theme 'Education and Peace'. In 1949 she received the first of three nominations for the Nobel Peace Prize. Her last public engagement was in London in 1951 when she attended the 9th International Montessori Congress. On 6th May 1952, at the holiday home of the Pierson family in the Netherlands, she died in the company of her son, Mario, to whom she bequeathed the legacy of her work.

ABOUT US

Alumni and advocates

Alexander Graham Bell

INVENTOR, INNOVATOR, MONTESSORI EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOUNDER

Jeff Bezos

AMAZON FOUNDER

Julia Child

CELEBRITY CHEF AND AUTHOR

George Clooney

ACADEMY AWARD-WINNING ACTOR, FORMER UNITED NATIONS MESSENGER OF PEACE

Peter Drucker

"THE FATHER OF MODERN MANAGEMENT"

Thomas Edison

INVENTOR, U.S. MONTESSORI SCHOOL FOUNDER

Anne Frank

MEMOIRIST AND AUTHOR

Bill Gates

INVENTOR, FOUNDER OF MICROSOFT

Prince George of Cambridge

MEMBER OF THE BRITISH ROYAL FAMILY

Katharine Graham

PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING AUTHOR, FORMER OWNER AND EDITOR OF THE WASHINGTON POST

Friedensreich Hundertwasser

VIENNESE ARTIST AND ARCHITECT

Beyoncé Knowles

SINGER, SONGWRITER, ACTRESS, FASHION DESIGNER, 16-TIME GRAMMY AWARD-WINNER

Yo Yo Ma

UNITED NATIONS PEACE AMBASSADOR, WINNER OF 15 GRAMMY AWARDS, PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM AND NATIONAL MEDAL OF THE ARTS

Gabriel Garcia Marquez

NOBEL PRIZE WINNER FOR LITERATURE

Taylor Swift

GRAMMY AWARD-WINNING SINGER/SONGWRITER

Jimmy Wales

FOUNDER OF WIKIPEDIA

Will Wright

CREATOR OF "THE SIMS" VIDEO GAME

Sergey Brin & Larry Page

GOOGLE FOUNDERS

Prince William and Prince Harry

MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH ROYAL FAMILY

Testimonials

"As a parent, you want the best for your children. Waikato Montessori has provided the best possible start to our children's education. We have been attending the centre for 10 years now, and have seen the centre grow in numbers and facilities while retaining its unique atmosphere. After their first couple of days at the centre, both girls (aged 3) would see me off at the door with a "you can go now." They were always happy to be there with their friends and in an environment set up especially for them.

One of the biggest things about Montessori for me is that it is child driven and my children could choose what they wanted to do and when. The self-motivation and self-discipline they learn at an early age at Montessori has allowed my eldest daughter to assimilate very easily into the next stage of her education and given her the skills needed to succeed in a different learning environment. My eldest daughter has gone on to be in the top streamed class for the past two years. She has now been identified as a gifted and talented student as she is achieving at an exceptional level when compared to others of a similar age. I strongly believe her years of Montessori education has played a large part in her scholastic achievements so far. I am truly thankful to all the staff at Waikato Montessori for the support and encouragement they have shown, and continue to show, my children." [Judith Blincoe-Eddy](#)

"Thank you for being part of our lives. Thank you for the love, kindness, nurturing and teaching that you've shown to our children." [Jason and Remail Mitchell](#)

"Your devotion to the programme, dedication to the children, never-ending patience as well as your caring natures, have been consistently reassuring in our decision to choose Waikato Montessori. As a parent I have always known that my child has been in a safe, supportive environment and I have been 100% confident in your teaching abilities as well as certain that we chose the right people to be part of shaping the person our son is today.

His journey with you for the last two years has helped him develop into an independent, confident, strong, assertive, happy, caring and helpful individual - and all at his own pace. We are sad that the time to say goodbye has arrived. The next chapter in his life is sure to be quite different and we take confidence in the fact that our informed decisions have proven to be strong ones." [Anita and Nick Jurgens](#)

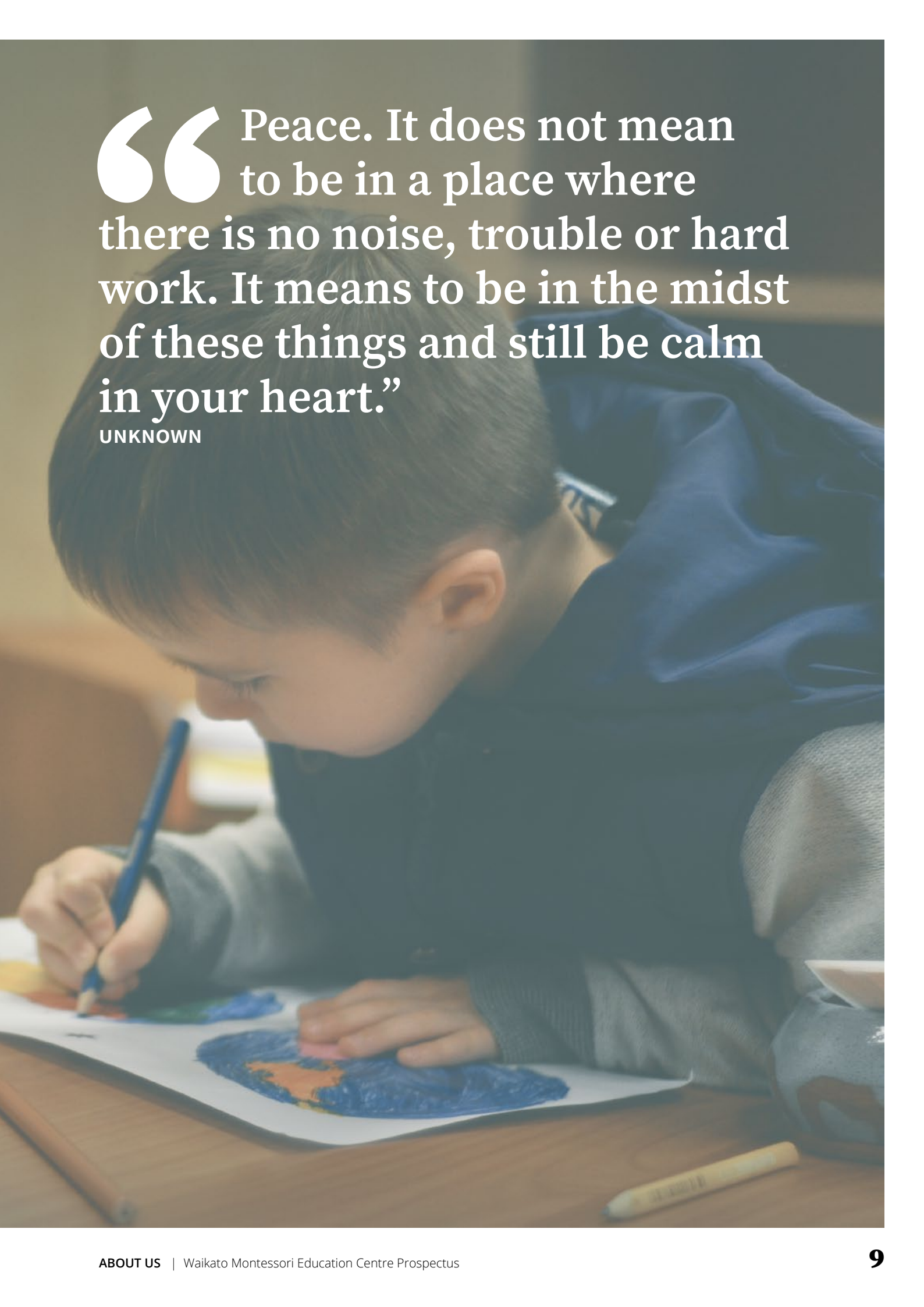
"Your love, care, diligence and professional styles makes you some of the best teachers we have had any experience of. Amelia has thoroughly enjoyed her days with you and you will continue to hold a special place in our hearts." [Alison Mallett](#)

"Bella has had a wonderful two years at Montessori thanks to the dedicated and passionate teachers at her pre-school. John and I have always been amazed (and proud) of how happy and confident Bella has become over the last couple of years."

[Paula and John Anderson](#)

"We are very grateful for the direction, development and growth that we have seen in our children while they have been at Montessori. A lot of the credit must go to you for the way you run your school." [The Griffiths Family](#)

"We appreciate the role of the Montessori principles and your delivery of them contributing to Holly's growth. Thank you for all of the hard work, time and energy you have put into Holly's care and education. The last three years have seen Holly develop into a confident, kind and happy wee person." [Tracey and Ricky Daji](#)



“Peace. It does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble or hard work. It means to be in the midst of these things and still be calm in your heart.”

UNKNOWN

“ Education is a natural process carried out by the child and is not acquired by listening to words but by experiences in the environment.”

MARIA MONTESSORI



ABOUT US

The Waikato Montessori Education Centre is owned and administered by The Golden Beads Charitable Trust. This trust was founded by Diane Bhana with Shayne Frickey as co-trustee and has been established to further the development of Montessori schooling in the Waikato. We have a range of skilled Montessori Guides to nurture the children.

Montessori is not a franchise and there is no head office or controlling body. Schools are free to offer their unique blend of facilities and local personality. We welcome your enquiry and review of our beautiful semi-rural Montessori Centre in Hamilton.

The classroom is the childrens' home away from home, it is carefully designed to facilitate the development of independence and a sense of personal empowerment. We allow children to learn for themselves, to learn at their own pace, to cultivate a positive attitude to mistakes, to choose activities for themselves, and to be allowed to repeat actions as often as necessary.

Children select their own activities — parents are very welcome to ask the Guides about the equipment and attend open times to explore the classroom for themselves.

Parental involvement

The Montessori classroom does not offer active parental participation at the same level as, for example, Playcentre. The Montessori Guides are specially trained to work and observe the children in their activities. The undistracted interaction of the Guide with the child, and the child with other children, is an important aspect of the programme. Parents with a particular skill or interest are encouraged to assist the Guide as required with activities such as foreign languages, cooking, plant care, animal care, storytelling or music. The enrolment form asks parents of any particular area in which they would like to contribute.

Parents are also expected and encouraged to learn about the Montessori philosophy and how this can be applied in the home. Parent evenings are held regularly to provide this opportunity, and for the parents to meet each other. Parent voluntary assistance with maintenance of building and grounds is always welcome.

Facilities

Surroundings have a great deal to do with the creation of an atmosphere of learning. We have a beautiful semi-rural property on the southern outskirts of Hamilton city at Tamahere. The site includes our two 3–6 years classrooms and allows space for outdoor activities including gardening and animal care.

The two 6–12 years classrooms are fully resourced with Montessori materials and equipment, reading and literacy resources, maps, charts, fossils, historical artifacts and natural science displays. Our classrooms are our students' home away from home, and we make them as attractive and comfortable as possible.

Our classrooms are carefully prepared to stimulate children's independence and intellectual development. You will not find rows of desks, instead, the room will be set up to facilitate discussions and stimulate collaborative learning.

ABOUT US

What we do

Dr Montessori observed...

...that human development occurs in planes; periods with distinct physical and psychological characteristics. Each plane of development has sensitive periods of learning particular to the stage of the child.

... the children show natural tendencies to explore, move, share with a group, to be independent and make decisions, create order, develop self-control, abstract ideas from experience, use the creative imagination, work hard, repeat, concentrate, and perfect one's efforts and creations.

...all intelligences and styles of learning need to be nurtured.

...the 'prepared environment' best meets the needs of the children.

...the benefits of character education.

How we do it

Children are grouped in 3 year age spans. There is constant interaction, problem solving, child-to-child teaching, and socialisation. Each age range has a specific learning environment prepared with materials and trained adults focused on the child's developmental needs for self-construction.

Our 3–6 years programme supports the development of the child as an individual. Assisting the child with age-appropriate qualities and facts about their world.

Our 6–12 years programme extends the development of the intellect within the social community of the class room. An integrated curriculum is delivered to support the child's growing 'reasoning mind'.

Children completing the full programme are naturally transformed as unique individuals fully prepared for the next step in their educational journey.

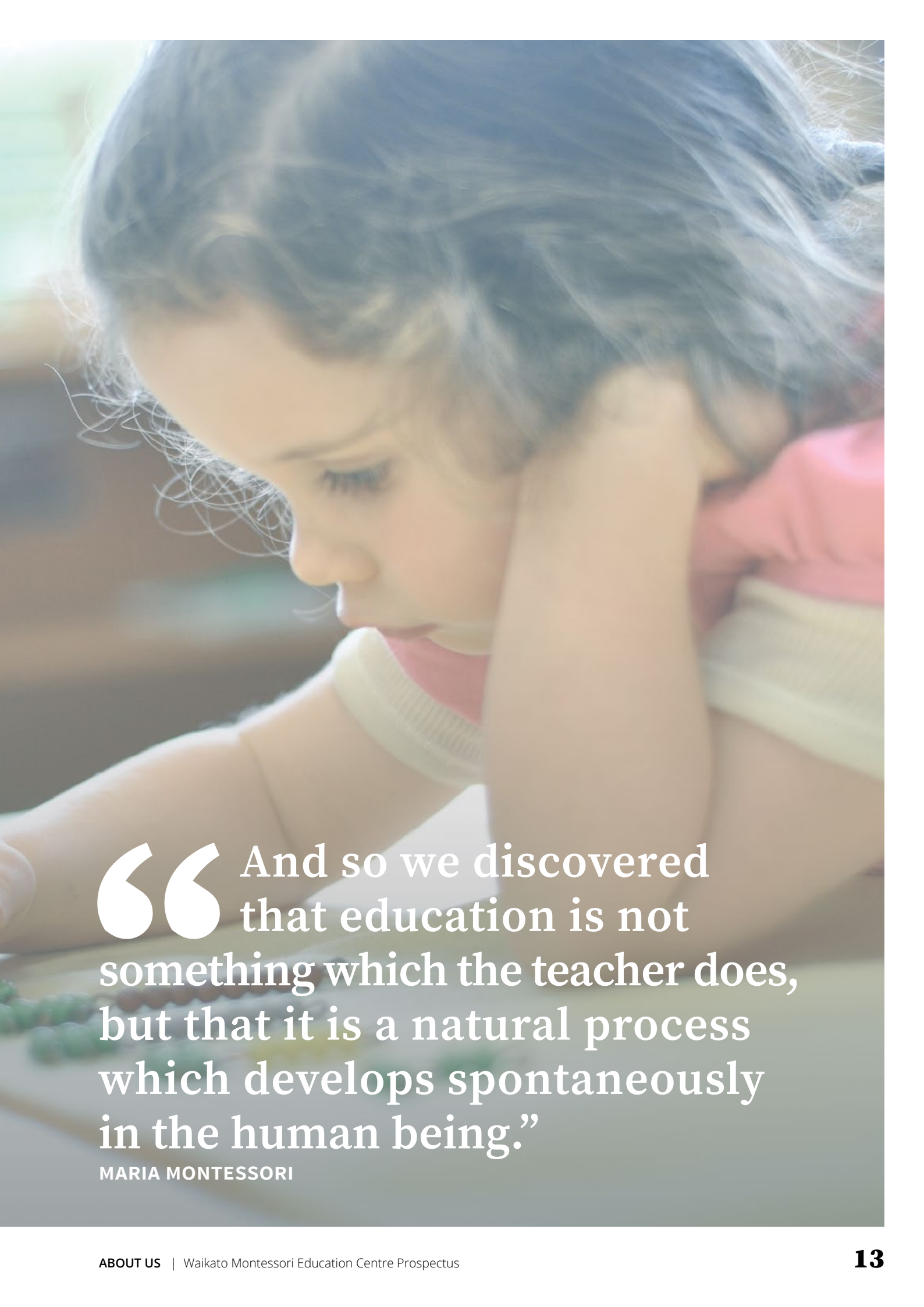
The practical application of the Montessori method is based upon these. The programme integrates opportunities for the 'human tendencies' to be exercised at every level.

Individualised observation and preparation: guides observe and introduce new lessons to each child linked across all areas of study according to the particular child's age, ability and interest.

The classroom is arranged in subject areas with children free to move around the room and work with an activity with no time limit.

Children are initially linked to the materials through lessons which they are then free to repeat until they have understood.

Children learn to take care of themselves, their environment, and each other; use social etiquette; moving gracefully, speaking politely, being considerate and helpful. They will learn to make good choices, take responsibility for their actions and know what is right for the common good.



“ And so we discovered that education is not something which the teacher does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being.”

MARIA MONTESSORI

VALUES

Our fundamental values and beliefs as a Montessori school

1. We believe that every member of our community has a fundamental right to be treated with respect, regardless of age.
2. In keeping with the true meaning of the word discipline, which is to teach, we prefer to model and encourage appropriate, kind, and considerate ways to behave in various situations.
3. Intelligence is not rare. We do not subscribe to the “Bell Curve” theory for measuring performance, and respectfully submit that the vast majority of people have the intelligence and natural ability required to learn everything they need to lead full, happy and productive lives.
4. Wisdom can be cultivated. We believe that true wisdom is the ability to listen to your heart and know how best to put your intelligence to work for you. In order to achieve this goal, self- esteem, human dignity, and emotional well-being, as well as the ability to communicate and cooperate effectively with others, must be valued at least as highly as academic and material success.
5. Self-esteem is the crucial ingredient for the full expression of a person’s potential.
6. The School’s expectations: In all cases we set our expectations high, not asking individuals to do more than they are capable of, but consistently stressing at all levels the importance of careful work and pride in accomplishment. We carefully build a supportive environment for the unhurried mind to move steadily toward the pursuit of excellence.
7. The School is centered around the stages of personal development.
8. Active learning: We promote active rather than passive learning.
9. Practical life: To facilitate and encourage a sense of independence, we deliberately teach a wide range of practical life skills appropriate to each child’s level of development. We regard this as a vital element affecting the design of our entire curriculum.
10. Health and Safety: the development of sound habits of safety, nutrition and hygiene.
11. Commitment to the community: We expect all members of our community, students, parents, guides and support staff to be committed, contributing members of the community, and to show support for the rules, regulations and principles established by the community, and we are prepared to support them in this effort as in some cases it may involve a paradigm shift.



“ The environment must be rich in motives which lend interest to activity and invite the child to conduct his own experiences.”

MARIA MONTESSORI



“ Only through freedom and environmental experience is it practically possible for human development to occur.”

MARIA MONTESSORI



OUTCOMES

The outcomes of a Montessori education

A child passing through all our Montessori programmes has the best chance of emerging as a strong young adult. They will:

- be able to make up their own mind,
- take their place in society as a responsible member,
- make choices and think independently,
- understand consequences of their actions and decisions, and
- have some idea of their own life's mission and be able to start to work towards this.

The Montessori approach supports development of:

Intrinsic motivation: Intrinsic motivation is the innate desire that drives the child to engage in an activity for enjoyment and satisfaction.

Ability to handle external authority: The child is able to accept the ground rules established by external authority as appropriate boundaries in his or her interactions within the school community. These ground rules are internalised, enabling the child to function with or without the presence of the external authority.

Creativity and originality of thought: Children are confident using the knowledge and skills they have acquired to express their own ideas and creativity. They recognise the value of their own ideas, respect the creative process of others and are willing to share regardless of risk. Children find joy and satisfaction in self-expression.

Social responsibility: Social responsibility requires the awareness that our actions impact the welfare of the group and that we cannot attain complete independence and autonomy until we contribute constructively in a group process. Individuals are able to make a positive contribution to their community and groups within that community.

Autonomy: The autonomous child is self-directed, composed and morally independent.

Confidence and competence: The confident and competent child perceives himself as being successful, has a realistic understanding of accomplishment and has the ability to learn from his/her mistakes. Competence is the capability for success through taking risks, reflection and self-correction.

Academic preparation: Providing students with skills that allow them to become independently functioning adults and life-long learners. As students master one level of academic skills they are able to go further and apply themselves to increasingly challenging materials across various academic disciplines. They recognise that there is always room to grow in their abilities to read, write, speak, and think clearly and thoughtfully. Children learn how to learn by doing — experiential learning. Students are encouraged to explore materials, integrate new concepts, analyse data, and think critically.

Spiritual awareness: Spiritual awareness is embodied in the child who is compassionate, empathetic, and sensitive to the natural world and humanity.

PROGRAMMES

Overview

The child's capacity to learn from birth to 6 years is like that of a sponge, soaking in knowledge from all senses.

The 3–6 year Montessori curriculum covers practical life exercises, sensorial materials, and academic materials to awaken each child's interest in reading, mathematics, science, botany, biology, geography and history. Individual work is supplemented with group singing, music, art and outdoor activities.

The programme has been designed to incorporate all aspects of a rich and traditional Montessori programme. This includes making full use of the extensive and beautiful outdoor environment.

Elements of the Montessori method include:

- classes bringing children together in multi-age groups spanning three years,
- children progressing as they are ready at an individual level,
- concrete learning materials which the children freely access and are actively engaged with, and
- the understanding that children have developmental periods where they are particularly sensitive for learning.

The 3–6 year child has special sensitivities which include:

- a love of order,
- a readiness to develop focus and concentration,
- relating to their environment through movement to organise themselves and gain independence,
- seeking out and responding to oral and written language, and
- a phonetic approach to language.

The 3–6 year period of development is the commencement of 'self construction' as an individual and prepares children for wider society. A strong foundation in reality-based activities supports development of children's natural talents. Montessori consciously teaches children to be kind and considerate of each other; a community of respectful learners is formed.

On completion of the Early Childhood programme children are eligible to enrol in the 6–12 years programme.


Useful resources for information:

www.waikatomontessori.org.nz

www.montessori.org.nz
(Montessori Association New Zealand)

www.montessori.org
(Montessori Foundation)

www.montessori-ami.org
(Association Montessori Internationale)



“ He who is served
is limited in his
independence.”

MARIA MONTESSORI

PROGRAMMES

3-6 years: The Absorbent Mind

The catch cry of the 3-6 year child is "Help me to do it myself". This is a natural drive to want to act independently which is supported through our specifically prepared environment.

A 3 year old child entering our programme will be warmly welcomed into the community of children and will be introduced to activities in all areas of the classroom.

Activities are demonstrated to children so that they may then choose to do this work on their own. Children 'work' intensely hard during their time here, as they develop and grow. We do not refer to this as 'play' to give respect for their efforts.

Areas of work activities

PRACTICAL LIFE

Exercises within the Practical Life area include transferring items between bowls, pouring with jugs, matching pairs of objects and pictures, identifying and creating patterns, food preparation and completing puzzles. These activities provide;

- co-ordination and control (refinement) of movement,
- independence, and
- concentration,

whilst meeting the child's need for order.

Children are empowered and assume responsibility within their community, soon acting for the good of the group rather than to satisfy their own desires.

SENSORY DEVELOPMENT

Refinement of the senses is encouraged with activities to isolate visual discrimination, identify tastes and smells, develop a lightness of touch and listening skills to associate sounds to objects. Beautifully crafted materials are used for each activity and these often lead into a math or science activity at a later point in the programme. The 3-6 year child is absorbing everything from the environment sensorially and in an almost unconscious manner. An appreciation for different styles of music is introduced by having soft background instrumental music playing during the day. Each day children come together for a short group song time where rhythm and actions are introduced.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Both receptive and expressive language are developed through engaging children in conversation, telling stories, listening to them and encouraging self-expression. This is all done through numerous games and activities throughout the classroom. The development of writing involves two distinct processes: motoric or mechanical development (muscular and physical skills) and intellectual development (understanding of a symbol or letter representing sounds in words). The child's work in the Montessori classroom involves activities to develop both these processes. Children who experience a full Montessori programme generally make amazing progress in the development of reading and writing. Typically they have advanced vocabulary, use of language and can undertake simple research projects and creative storytelling.

MATHEMATICS

Nourishing the development of the 'mathematical mind' is the place of the Montessori classroom. Montessori math materials introduce children to quantities and how to write the symbols for numbers. This quickly moves from counting to building numbers within the Decimal System and using numbers for mathematical operations. The Montessori materials and curriculum inspire children to;

- think logically, investigate and measure;
- use analysis, comparison, calculation and reasoning.

In Montessori we aim to make mathematics exciting and fun.

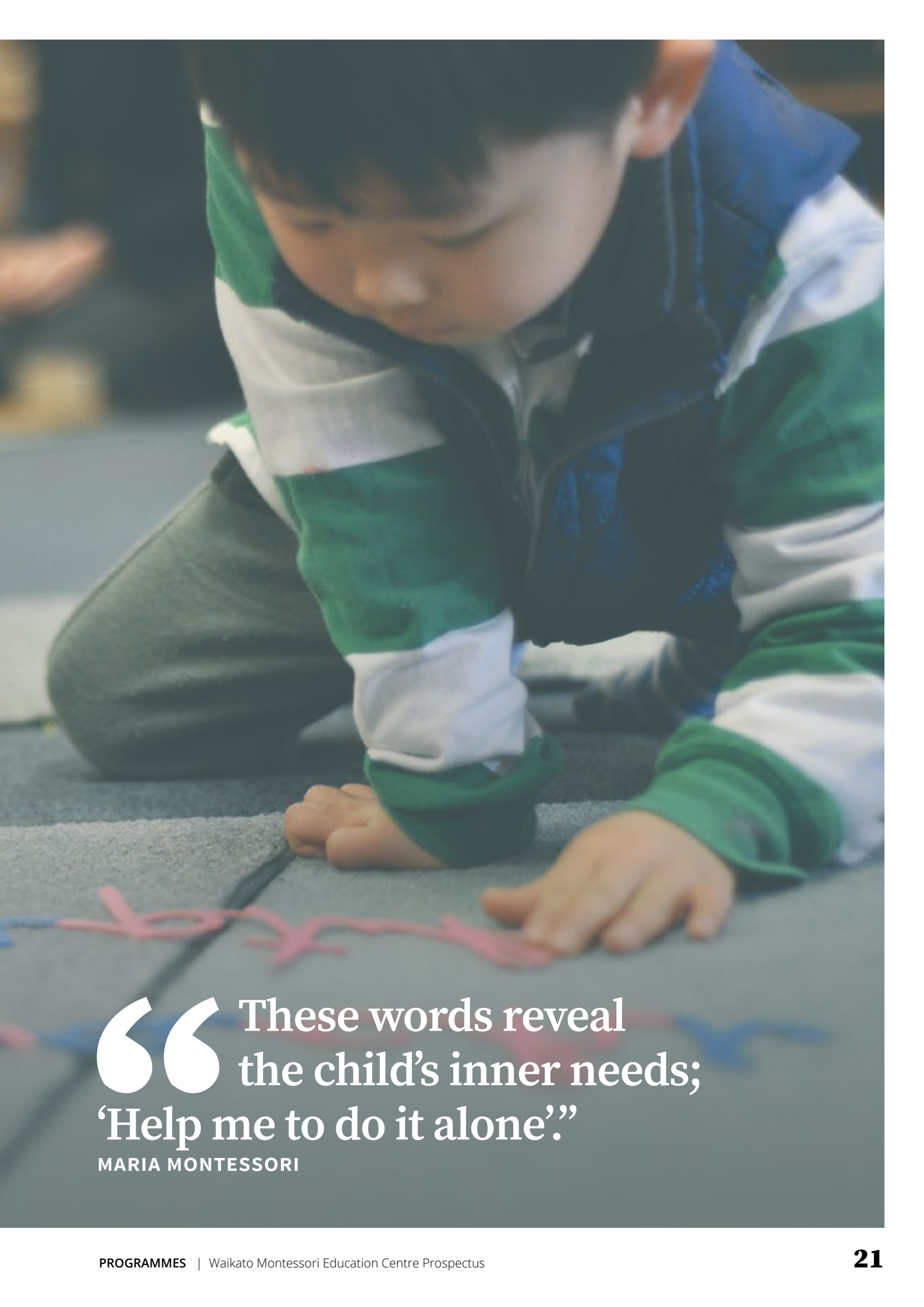
GEOGRAPHY AND CULTURAL AREAS

Children are very interested in people and animals from around the world. We encourage this by introducing them to the continents and countries of the world, the foods, flags, traditional dress, types of houses and transport, art and music, plants and animal life. Our own beautiful environment gives children an early exposure to nature and we hope to create a reverence for life and a style of living which consciously makes an effort to conserve our natural resources and ecology.

Our model of the 3-6 years programme fosters a love of learning, independence, curiosity, confidence, responsibility, self-discipline and respect. It is a transformational experience for children which truly prepares them for the intellectual journey of the 6-12 years period.

We are preparing and building the foundation for a thinking and rational human being. Our ability to think is what defines us as humans. We can think and reflect, we can imagine into the future.

It is the responsibility of the First Plane (0-6 years) to build a solid foundation for that growing being before he or she comes to the Second Plane (6-12 years). In the Second Plane the child can only build upon what was accomplished in the First Plane.



“ These words reveal
the child’s inner needs;
‘Help me to do it alone.’”

MARIA MONTESSORI

PROGRAMMES

6-12 years: The Reasoning Mind

A Montessori 6–12 years programme is more than simply a continuum of the 3–6 years programme that you may have experienced.

It is an individualised educational approach, tailored to the changing needs, talents and skills of the child. The 6–12 year olds are at a state of development where exploration of the world, and wonder, are intrinsic to learning.

The stars, nature, technology and social life evoke great questions which are heeded and nurtured, allowing the child to really connect with knowledge.

The fundamentals of writing, reading and math (that were introduced in the 3–6 year programme are continued and become internalised), are the tools the child uses to undertake research, prepare projects and presentations, and go out into their environment with increasing levels of independence. The children become proficient communicators, take a deep interest in matters they choose, think critically and theorise on issues of the world. They are guided to challenge themselves in all areas and master concepts beyond those normally expected of children this age.

Habits of life-long learning become instilled and an entrepreneurial spirit is inspired.

The Montessori curriculum

Children who have been in a Montessori Early Childhood programme are usually well-grounded with the basic skills of reading, spelling and mathematics and are ready to move into a more integrated curriculum.

Children want to know the reason why things are as they are found in the world. They are oriented toward intellectual investigation and discovery.

The Montessori basic curriculum therefore also includes access to skills in science, history, the arts, great literature, world culture, politics, economics and philosophy.

An integrated curriculum is used to present these to the children. At the 6–12 years level Montessori students learn to think for themselves. They are encouraged to do their own research, analyse what they have found and come to their own conclusions.

The foundation of a good education is to learn how to learn, Montessori does this and teaches children how to think for themselves using their developing 'reasoning mind'.

We are not teaching children what they need to learn, we are teaching them how to reason so they can teach themselves what they need to learn for the rest of their life.

ELEMENTS OF THE CURRICULUM

Mastery of fundamental skills and basic core knowledge. This includes the realms of mathematics, science and technology, myth and great literature, history, geography, economics, anthropology.

DR MONTESSORI'S GREAT LESSONS

These are five key areas of interconnected study which explore how the world came to be, the development of life on Earth, the story of humankind, the development of language, writing and mathematics.

INDIVIDUALLY CHOSEN RESEARCH

Children are encouraged to explore topics using library research and reference materials. They prepare oral and written reports.

MONTESSORI MATERIALS AND THE PASSAGE TO ABSTRACTION

Learning continues to be a hands on experience using advanced Montessori materials. The goal through the 6–12 years period is to lead the child away from dependency on concrete models towards the ability to solve problems by grasping abstract concepts. The background in using the Montessori materials enhances children's ability to do this as the materials have made the abstract real and helped them visualise the abstraction.

Programme content

We focus on children as whole human beings, creating a balance between personal development and academics. The classes are arranged in three-year age spans where students collaborate with each other learning to accomplish a goal collaboratively.

To inspire the children's interest and stir up their curiosity we deliver exciting lessons and stories so that they will want to explore further and actively use their developing intellect for great work and big projects.

Our course of study encompasses the full substance of the traditional New Zealand Curriculum, and goes beyond to teach students how to think clearly, do their own research, express themselves well in writing and speech, and to put their knowledge to practical application.

The standards and outcomes of the New Zealand Curriculum will be comfortably met by our Montessori programme. We will monitor children's progress and report to parents on this.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Team sports are introduced within the formal Physical Education sessions held during the school week. The school participates in inter-school events such as cross country, athletics, hockey and cricket (with parental support) based on the interest of the children.



“ The first essential for the child’s development is concentration. The child who concentrates is immensely happy.”

MARIA MONTESSORI



GUIDELINES & CONCLUSION

Guidelines for parents

Montessori builds upon the family environment and children will therefore do best if there is consistency in the expectations made of them at school and at home. The Montessori philosophy should align to your family values and compliment your parenting style. There are ways in which parents can support and reinforce the development that is occurring in your child.

These include:

- Always model the actions expected of your children; you are giving them examples of conduct and language which they will copy.
- Use real names for objects and articles.
- Read to your child as often as you can (children love repetition of the same story), let them see you reading for pleasure too, take your child to the library and make a small selection for them. Choose books with photographic, real pictures rather than cartoons or fantasy story lines.
- Let your children work alongside you at home, joining in with household tasks — small tools appropriate for your child's size and strength will help. Manual activities that allow intelligent use of the hand require an intelligent mind to guide it.
- Let them spend as long as they need on an activity in which they seem engrossed — don't interrupt, they are building concentration.
- Maintain a system of tidiness, keeping their clothes and activities in specific places that they may access. Rotate the choice of activities rather than have everything available all the time. Shelves are more appropriate than a large toy chest.
- Children's toys at home should be carefully chosen — Dr Montessori says "children become like the things they love." Toys that invite a child into an activity have a distinct advantage over those that simply require them to push buttons.
- Establish routines — a pleasurable bedtime routine is especially useful.
- Control TV viewing — not only is the programme content mostly questionable, the advertising is highly influential on children. Limit TV to common areas of the house so children are not watching TV alone or unsupervised. No TV before school or during meals, and limit viewing to a few hours per week.
- Control access to computer games as children need multisensory experiences and movement. Computer games often result in a "right" or "wrong" decision and do not allow experimentation.
- Agree on broad guidelines of conduct and follow these through; empty threats are ineffective.

Conclusion

Parents who are first considering Montessori often have many questions, we hope we have provided information to help you decide if we are a good match for what you are looking for. Our goal is to help every prospective family make the best decision possible about their child's long term education. A decision to enrol a child should be based on the parents' and school's mutual belief that this will be a good fit for the family's values and goals. We look forward to working in partnership with you as your child discovers the joy of learning in the Montessori way. We welcome your application for enrolment and encourage you to ask about any questions you may have.

**“ I beg the dear
all powerful
children to unite with
me for the building of
peace in Man and in
the World.”**

MARIA MONTESSORI



WAIKATO
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EDUCATION CENTRE



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