



TERM 2 ISSUE 6 · JUNE 2023

# MONTESSORI MATTERS

## LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Families,

The end of Term 2 is now quickly approaching. Despite the chilly weather and dark evenings, we hope that you have had the opportunity to participate in one of our parents events this term.

Some highlights have included our parent information sessions, Coffee with a Dash of Montessori, Little Brains, Big Emotions, and the new Reception and Middle School information evenings. We hope that you have found them informative. Please don't hesitate to let us know if there is something you would like to know more about in the future.

Thank you to families who have attended our assemblies this term. When your child's class is running assembly, you will receive an invitation to come and watch. The children have made me cry twice now with their beautiful singing of We are Australian, both in English and in Kaurua. I feel very proud of them. As our wonderful music program has grown, we can clearly see how much the children enjoy singing and how much their musical skills and abilities have advanced.

Thank you to all families who attended our Quiz Afternoon. While the questions were very challenging, we spent a lovely afternoon together. A huge thank you to our Middle School quiz masters, Delilah and Elroy as well as to the staff members who dedicated their time to allow the afternoon to go ahead: Hannah, Raelene, Jaime, Danielle and Anna.

Our children have had a wonderful term of learning and I have very much enjoyed popping into their classrooms are looking at their work. They are always very proud of their achievements. Congratulations to the Environmental Committee who competently represented our school on World Environment Day and appeared on Behind the News.

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**HEATHER MCINERNEY**  
**PRINCIPAL**

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## STRATEGIC PLANNING

Thank you to everyone who completed the Strategic Planning Survey. We have now gathered lots of data from both this survey and the Parent Engagement Survey as well as from our students. We will continue to develop our 2024 to 2026 Strategic Plan over the rest of this year so please do not hesitate to let us know if you have a suggestion to share.

## BUILDING WORKS

If you have walked past the front entrance of the school recently, you would have noticed that the new office space is finally taking shape and the scaffolding is coming down. We are hopeful that the new administration offices will be finished by Week 3 of next term with the outside being completed in September. This work has been a major undertaking for our school, but we are extremely pleased with the result.

I hope you are all able to enjoy some rest and relaxation over the holiday break and I look forward to welcoming you back to school for Term 3.

Warmest regards,  
Heather

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

This term our students have participated in Strategic Planning in their classes. Below are some of the things that children listed that they **LOVE** about Southern Montessori School:

### LEARNING



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## RELATIONSHIPS

*Meeting new friends*  
*Kind teachers and assistants*  
*No bullies or swearing*  
*Feel safe* *Teamwork*  
*Nice people* *Helping each other*  
*Enjoy sharing learning with others*  
*Welcoming* **Caring** *Accepting*  
*Everyone is included* *Friends* *Equals*  
*Calling teachers by their first name*  
*Children are supportive*  
*Respectful* *Friendships*  
*Kind and supporting teachers and principal*  
*The community – everyone cares*

## MONTESSORI MOMENT #4 - 2023

By Anna Golab

*Happy Children...?*

On a cold, wet night in Week 6, some braved the weather and gathered to hear Katy Walker – Talk Therapist & Well-being Educator give a talk entitled: **Little Brains, Big Emotions**. She examined some of the reasons why children present with challenging behaviours and offered some practical strategies – tools if you like, that might support to guide children's behaviour more effectively.

There were many excellent points raised during the presentation, but one that resonated strongly was the statement:

***I don't particularly want my children to be 'happy', I'd rather them be 'able'.***

Naturally, as parents, we want the best for our children. We want to spare them from physical and emotional pain. We want them to be 'happy'. This protective instinct is natural, and it could argued, is what makes us 'good' parents. But could it be that a little hardship is beneficial?

So, what exactly it meant by 'a little hardship'? Well, it involves the temporary experience of negative or unpleasant emotions. It might be feeling angry, left out, sad, hurt, uncomfortable, inadequate, defeated or troubled. It could last an hour, a day, or a week. If it goes beyond this, then it will need more thought and deeper investigation.

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But, when it is a temporary state, there's learning in it, and the learning could actually make our children's experience of happiness even richer by comparison. Knowing what's on the other side of the happiness coin contributes to our social and emotional growth by allowing us to develop empathy and perspective. Psychologist, Dr Vanessa Lapointe puts it this way:

*'Social and emotional development cannot be taught; it needs to be experienced.'*

In other words, to become emotionally intelligent human beings, children need to experience a whole spectrum of human feelings, not just happiness.

Katy Walker stressed that we don't want children to think that some emotions are 'good' and some are 'bad'. Instead, we need them to know that ***"they have our permission to feel their emotions. All of them. Even the ones that make us (and them) uncomfortable"***. She also emphasised that, ***"the first step to regulating an emotion is recognising it, and that 'BIG' emotions need a mirror, not a makeover."***

Children **do** need us to listen, recognise, identify, acknowledge, and accept their emotions.

- "I can see you are feeling angry. That's okay. We all feel angry sometimes." Angry bodies need to move, shall we go outside together?

They also often need us to give them space and time to sit with their emotions before they are in a position to 'tell' us about what may be worrying them.

- "I can see you are feeling scared. That is how our brain tries to tell us to protect ourselves. Would you like me to move away and give you some space, or sit close?"
- "You're not okay, I can tell. I want you to know that that's alright. We all feel yucky sometimes. I am here. Let me know if you want to talk."

In contrast, if we teach children, ***'to be averse to emotional discomfort; to mask sadness, avoid anger, or escape anxiety, it is like teaching them they can control the weather'***.

***"Many kind, caring adults, with the best intentions, are willing to do 'anything' to help a child struggling with uncomfortable emotions, anything except just let the child be uncomfortable."***

Yet, children need to stay with their emotions, not be rushed out of them, and we need to teach them how. This is incredibly hard...*mostly for us!*

When children see that they can and will come out the other side of a negative experience in one piece, they become more confident in their ability to cope with life's ups and downs.

When we shield them from unpleasantness, children do not get the opportunity to learn just how capable of managing they are, nor do they get the chance to develop the coping strategies that will allow them to do it.

*Emotions are where social and emotional learning happens.*

Katy Walker went on to emphasise the importance of having firm, clear boundaries.

- ***I know it's not what you wanted to do, and it's okay to feel resentful. I don't expect you to feel happy right now. But I need you to get in the car as Grandma is waiting for us, and we promised to be there at 10 o'clock."***

Boundary lines define the playing field and if you step outside, you are, at least temporarily, out of the game. Emotional boundaries operate in the same way. The tricky part is that they are influenced by our culture, our belief systems, our community, and our own upbringing. What is okay in one setting, may not be acceptable in another.

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Irrespective of where they originate, boundaries are vital as they create:

- safety
- knowledge
- autonomy and personal power
- space between emotions and behaviour/choice

***“You are absolutely allowed to feel as angry as you need to be. But I will not let you hit. Here is what we do with angry hands...” “I get you are upset. That’s understandable. But those words are not ok. Let’s try this again with different words.”***

To be effective boundaries need to be:

- Communicated
- Clear
- Collaborative
- Consistent
- Compassionate

***“I know you’re feeling really frightened right now. Getting an injection can be scary. I know that it will hurt a bit, but I also know that it is not dangerous, and that it will help protect you from getting sick, so I’m going to help you to be brave. Would you like to be brave by holding my hand, or brave by walking in on your own?”***

Lectures or long explanations on the ‘why we have this or that rule’ often fall on deaf ears, and **‘because I say so’** doesn’t sit well in today’s world where we want children to be capable and confident decision makers. Besides, this approach does not provide opportunities to build and practice self-regulation.

Giving choices, on the other hand, can be highly effective because it helps children:

- avoid battles and power struggles
- take responsibility for their actions
- feel involved in decision-making
- to feel valued and respected
- and gives them a sense of control over their lives

Questions are another way to guide children and to help them consider the possibilities of a course of action by themselves. These questions can emerge from the goals and desires the child holds dear. For example,

***“I know you love your train sets. How do you think we can keep them safe when you are not playing with them?” What if mum walks through the living room with a snack in her hand and doesn’t look down and steps on your train?”***

Wait patiently for their response. Allow them to do some thinking about the rules and household safety. Even if their response is not exactly on target, at least they are thinking about problem. Talking through possible consequences can help them practice thinking ahead to the logical outcomes of an action or inaction.

Children need our backup support as they learn to appreciate that they are in charge of their own behavioural choices. That they are ‘the boss’ of their body and how they choose to use it. And with that **great power** comes **great responsibility**.

Encouraging their awareness of their own self-control and giving them opportunities to make decisions helps children exercise their self-regulatory skills. To achieve this, they require regular opportunities to practice making appropriate choices, and learn from their mistakes. And the first and best place to do this is within the consistent boundary lines of home.



## TODDLER TALK

Every so often it is wise to reflect on how we interact with the children in our care. As parents and caregivers, the way we respond and react to our children has huge impacts on their growth and development. Recent brain research has shown this to be all too true. Children learn from their environment and those closest to them. We can strive to make that environment as caring and nurturing as possible guiding our children along the pathway to adulthood.

A few ideas that may be useful are:

- Listen to children with your full attention.
- Acknowledge their feelings and give their feelings a name: anger, frustration, gladness, joy, etc.
- Encourage autonomy by letting children make choices and then show respect for those choices.
- Instead of using praise (“good girl/boy”, “that’s wonderful” or clapping hands) use words to describe how you feel, what you see or how you appreciate the child’s assistance.
- If undesirable behaviour occurs: express strong disapproval without attacking the child’s character; state your expectations; show the child how to make amends; point out a way to be helpful; give a choice.
- Be prepared to negotiate. Negotiation means that both parties move and often ends in a compromise.
- Try saying “stop” instead of “no”. “No” is negative and often unclear as to what is required. “Stop” indicates an action is required. A child usually responds quickly, allowing you to step in and assist in the situation.

Food for thought,  
Cheryl



## PRESCHOOL

### What’s been happening in the classroom?

Throughout Term 2 we investigated five of our senses.

We began with the sense of sight incorporating many of the Montessori materials such as the pink tower, brown stair, red rods and knobbed cylinders which help children develop a visual understanding of size. Next we moved onto the auditory sense; children use their ears to take in information from their environment. Like other skills that children learn, listening takes practice. The children were introduced to different Montessori materials that support listening skills including the sound cylinders and the bells. In addition, we played lots of listening games and introduced the vocabulary of quiet and loud. We listened to a beautiful book, “The Listening Walk” and extended on this to take a walk around the oval and the school grounds listening to different sounds.

At the end of the walk Stephanie asked the children to share the sounds they had heard....

“Footsteps” - Nora

“Wind” - Lincoln

“Beeping from the construction” - Charlie

“Talking at the school” - Franklin



“Buses, magpies” - Annabelle

“Aeroplane” - Liam

“Birds” - Jacob

“Trees” - Arlo

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For the sense of smell we introduced the smelling bottles. The children matched the smells in the bottles to picture cards that represented each smell. We also made some cinnamon flavoured playdough. For taste Stephanie bought four types of apples for the children to taste and we compared the texture and sweetness. The following week we tasted foods that were salty, sweet, bitter, sour and umami (savoury). We then voted on our favourite flavour. Most of the children tried the different foods with strawberries being voted the favourite! We finished with a toasting experience where the children were introduced to native jams, green ant marmalade and guandong to incorporate an Indigenous perspective.

We finished our investigation working with different materials that support the sense of touch. The Montessori classroom has so many materials to work with including the touch tablets, matching different fabrics and a favourite, the mystery bag. We extended on this to include sensory materials like gloop. Along the way we introduced vocabulary such as sticky, spiky, bumpy, rough and smooth. So many learning opportunities and so much fun exploring together!!!

Some of these experiences we have shared on transparent classroom and it has been lovely to begin receiving some feedback from parents. Educators enjoy sharing your children's learning in the classroom and it's lovely to hear from parents about how that transfers into the home environment.

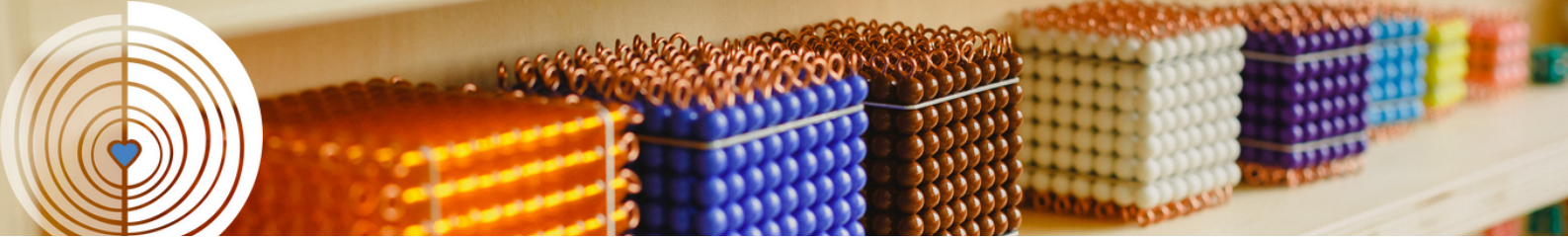
### What's on

Fire night on the 23rd of June. We are looking forward to seeing everyone there!

Regards,  
Preschool Educators







## CYCLE 1 - RECEPTION

What a busy term we have had!

In Week 4, both Reception classes went to the Dunstan Playhouse to see 'Possum Magic' the stage show. The children thoroughly enjoyed the show, particularly the magical parts. After the show we took a short walk to the South Australian Museum to eat lunch and have a brief wonder around. The giant squid was the highlight!

In Week 6, we celebrated National Simultaneous Story Time with our Year 6 Buddies. The older children read the story and then in small groups the children completed an acrostic poem about sloths. It is always great fun when our buddies come to visit.

In amongst all the special events we have been celebrating, we have been doing some exciting lessons in our classrooms. In Science, children have been learning about movement. They have used their bodies as well as items to explore different movements, including push, pull, roll and spin.

Continuing with our work on Geography, children have been exploring using symbols to represent features on maps. To support our mapping work, children have been learning about positional language by moving a teddy around the room and then stating where the teddy is. 'The teddy is on the table'.

We wish our families a great three week break and look forward to seeing everyone back in Term 3!

The Cycle 1 Team





## CYCLE 2

It has been a busy term for the Cycle 2's with lots of learning experiences and exciting discoveries. On the 17th May, the students were treated to an excursion to the Dream Big Festival, where they attended a theatre production of Erth's "Prehistoric World". They also got to stretch their imaginations and build their collaborative skills in the Festival Theatre's Maker's Space.

Other learning in our cycle has included a focus on early humans. Children have been looking at the classification system, and developing an understanding of how life has evolved and changed over many, many years. Children have been investigating the tools, life skills and dwellings of early humans.

In Mathematics there has been a focus on geometry, with students exploring lines, angles, nets, tessellations and transformations. The Montessori geometry material provides students with an engaging, concrete experience of shape. The children have been working in mixed age groups to explore the concepts and build on their mathematical understandings. Working in a group means that children can help each other and work together to achieve a common goal."

Here are some quotes from the Cycle 2 students about what they've enjoyed so far this term:

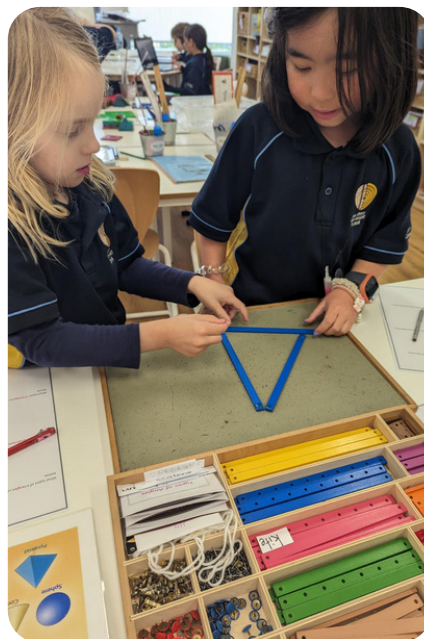
"I like using the stick box because it helps me with my geometric shapes" – Maya

"I like doing maths because it helps my brain think more" – Sayaka

"I've been enjoying learning about early humans and where their names come from and what they mean. I like writing about them too". – Noah

"I liked going out to the creek and acting like an early human, and making shelters and making noises like early humans" - Zoe

The Cycle 2 Team







## CYCLE 3

Michelle and Alison's class joined with Allie's Cycle 2 students to participate in a digital poetry workshop, to recognize Reconciliation Week and World Environment Day. Celebrated author, Helena Fox, guided students through writing activities to help craft nature poems associated with sustainability and First Nations cultures and histories.

Here is some student work from the session:



### POEM FOR A FOREST

By OLIVIA

A tree holds life  
Warm, covered  
For birds of all kinds  
Safe, mothered  
A gently breeze drifts past  
Cold, alone  
Soft moss lay on some bark  
Laying, waiting  
The starless sky is gone underneath the  
canopy  
They all dream of one thing:  
They sense a disaster coming...

Down goes the trees  
Up goes the smoke  
A battle scene from the latest game  
The machines swim around like sharks  
Fire, chaos  
Birds flee, forest dwellers go to sleep and  
never wake up  
The wind turns to storm  
No more life left to live  
Only death

### BEACHES

By PROGGA

Beaches all have one thing in common: water,  
wind and life.

The waves are a relentless army of snakes,  
striking the earth before slithering back, ordering  
the next armada forward.

They transform rocks, one minute coarse, the next  
as shiny as a polished, brass button.

The wind whips and wavers like the slashing of a  
thousand swords.

And yet it whispers in the rustling of the golden  
wattles.

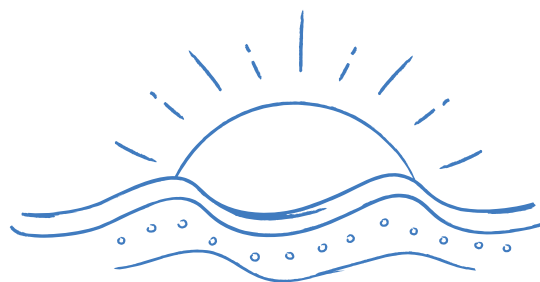
Rocks pools offer shelter for barnacles, blennies  
and blue-ringed octopi, rising and falling to the  
sea's commands.

Strong smells of salty water, seaweed and sand  
scale through my nostrils, tempting me onward.

Crabs poke their heads out of their burrows,  
unable to resist the aromas that amble in their  
way.

Seagulls wrestle and screech for fish and chips,  
while other forbearanced, feathered friends fly in  
formation for food.

When night dawns, crickets trill their melodies,  
flowers droop in disappointment, and the moon  
casts her eerie glow across the ocean, erecting an  
elegant, shimmering scene.



The Cycle 3 Team





## CYCLE 4

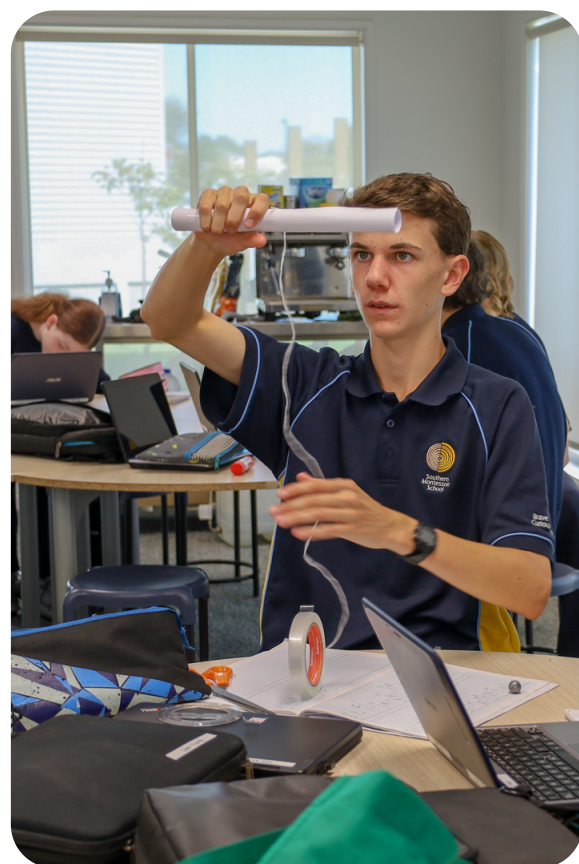
### MIDDLE SCHOOL UPDATE

Students have been energetic and enthusiastic throughout their learning experiences during Term 2. One of the teaching approaches in Montessori schools is practical use of 'head-and-hands' to deepen understanding of theoretical concepts and engage student curiosity. While investigating Trigonometry in mathematics, students made inclinometers using paper, string, protractor, and a small weight. This is a device that can be used to measure incline angles. Students used the inclinometers to work out the angle of elevation of buildings and tall trees, allowing them to make calculations about how tall these things were using trigonometric ratios. They took time to investigate how accurate their calculations were and reflected on the accuracy of their inclinometers. Practical applications of learning such as this aim to assist students in understanding the context of the work they are doing and test their skills in different scenarios.

Middle School staff create units of work that integrate different subject areas, and this term students have been working through a combined math and science topic focused on Earth in space. The provocation for this unit is 'if planets orbit the sun in an ellipse, why do they not collide?' where students explored a range of different concepts through this lens. Tasks within this unit involved students making moving models of a planet of their choice and how it orbits the sun, and an independent research project where students had to create their own inquiry questions on aspects of Earth and space they would like to investigate further. It has been great to watch students work creatively and with curiosity, as well as applying their math and science knowledge in a range of different ways.

Out of the classroom, three of our students were involved in the recent school surfing competition located at Goolwa Beach. Mitchell, Priya, and Maia represented Southern Montessori with dignity and enthusiasm. Performing strongly, the students achieved some wonderful results. It was wonderful to see Southern Montessori represented strongly with many of our past graduates also involved. Well done.

The Cycle 4 Team





# C O M M U N I T Y

## COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

### PICK UP AND DROP OFF ZONE

(KISS & DROP FACILITY)

#### What is a pick up and drop off zone?

This is a designated area outside schools that is usually located near a pedestrian exit gate, for drivers to pick up children or drop them off.

#### What does a pick up and drop off zone look like?

- It can be an indented bay or along the school's footpath.
- A sign like this will clearly identify the designated zone.



**CHILD SAFETY AREA**  
**DROP OFF OR PICK UP ONLY**

#### How does it work?

During school 'start and finish' times, use this area to drop off and pick up students or goods only, and not for parking for longer periods.

- 'No parking' signs apply at the pick up and drop off zone.

• **NO PARKING:** The driver of a vehicle must not stop in a no parking area. The driver must remain with the vehicle and wait no more than 2 minutes to drop off or pick up students or goods.



- If you are the first driver in line, please move forward to the start of the pick up line, enabling others to line up behind your vehicle.

- When lining up, please don't block off any car park exits (if applicable).

- If you need to leave your vehicle, or your child is not waiting in the pick up and drop off zone, you should park in the allocated parking provided around the school - not the pick up and drop off zone.

#### Hints for drivers parking around schools in the pick up and drop off zone

- Slow down near schools, school buses and parked cars as there is a greater chance that a child could run out from in between them.
- Ensure your children enter your vehicle via the door on the left-hand side, next to the footpath and away from the traffic.
- Don't double park as your child will need to pass between vehicles to reach you.



#### How you can help:

- Teach your child to wait on the footpath within the pick up and drop off area, and to only enter the vehicle once it has stopped.
- If someone else picks up your child, please explain the pick up and drop off zone procedure to them.
- Talk to your child about what to do if you are not there.
- Children take notice of what you do, so set a good example by behaving safely - obey the parking signs and restrictions around schools.
- Consider the safety of other children as well as your own.

ONKAPARINGA

www.onkapingcity.com

### Free Kid's activities

These School holidays, IKEA Adelaide has a huge range of free kid's activities through out the July School Holidays.



Scan the QR code to view IKEA Adelaide's School Holiday activities.



**f Find us on Facebook**



Uniform can be purchased at  
Lowe's, Colonnades  
54 Beach Rd, Noarlunga Centre SA 5168  
Monday 9am–5:30pm  
Tuesday 9am–5:30pm  
Wednesday 9am–5:30pm  
Thursday 9am–9pm  
Friday 9am–5:30pm  
Saturday 9am–5pm  
Sunday 11am–5pm

### FACEBOOK

To do this, simply search 'Southern Montessori School.' Choose the one with the school logo and click 'Like.' You will then be able to view all recent posts, relevant links and photos. You'll be kept up to date with student achievement, upcoming events and more!



**STAY INFORMED  
SCHOOL NEWS,  
REMINDERS,  
EVENTS,  
CANCELLATIONS  
AND EVERYTHING  
YOU NEED TO  
KNOW!**

