



TERM 2 ISSUE 7 · AUGUST 2023

MONTESSORI MATTERS

LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Families,

What a wonderful start to Term 3 we have had. Our new ELC and reception children have settled in beautifully and I would like to thank our big buddies for supporting them. This is a very busy term with lots of special events, starting with a visit to the Primary School from The Bumble Bee Brass Band and a Middle School STEM excursion. Please keep an eye on School Star and What's On Next Week to ensure you stay informed.

Visual Arts Evening

I hope you have now received your invitation to our Visual Arts Evening on Wednesday 6th September. This will be chance for us to share some light refreshments in celebration of the end of our major building project.

You will be able to tour our school and see the newly completed classrooms, library and office areas. While there are certainly still finishing touches to be made, we are excited to show you our new look. Please note that as alcohol will be served at this event, children under the age of eighteen are not permitted.

Many of our students' visual art works will be on display this evening including pieces from the Preschool and Middle School. As well as individual artwork, all primary classes have created a whole class piece which we will auction on the night. All monies raised will be used to build our arts program.

I do hope you are able to join us for this community event.

continued on next the page...



**HEATHER MCINERNEY
PRINCIPAL**

THIS ISSUE:

MONTESSORI MOMENT #5

PAGE 04

PRESCHOOL - SCHOOL HOLIDAY
PROGRAM

PAGE 06

UNDER 7 SOCCER TEAM
FAIR PLAY ROUND

PAGE 11

COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

PAGE 12



Visits to the Primary School

I recently had the pleasure of hosting Onkaparinga Mayor Moira Were, and our local member, The Hon Katrine Hildyard, Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, and Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. I thank Moira and Katrine for taking time out of their busy schedules to visit us. They are both lovely people, great supporters of our school and are very keen to interact with our students and engage with our community.

Mathematics Professional Learning

In Montessori education very little children learn through exploring with their senses. Maria Montessori believed that children could learn maths (in itself an abstract concept) in the same way by developing concrete materials that the child can manipulate.

“This system in which a child is constantly moving objects with his hands and actively exercising his senses, also takes into account a child's special aptitude for mathematics. When they leave the material, the children very easily reach the point where they wish to write out the operation. They thus carry out an abstract mental operation and acquire a kind of natural and spontaneous inclination for mental calculation.”

Every Wednesday afternoon until 5pm, our teachers engage in professional learning. This year our focus is on Mathematics. Teachers have been reviewing the maths curriculum and scope and sequence documents. We have audited the Montessori materials and further developed the resources that support their use and are now considering the capabilities that underpin student flourishing in mathematics:

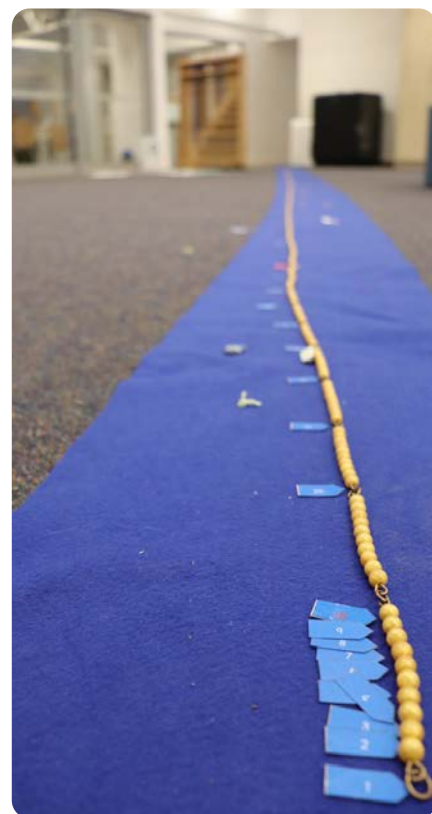
- Knowledge and understanding
- Fluency
- Reasoning
- Problem solving

Professional learning builds our teachers' expertise, ensures consistency across classrooms and authentic, personalised learning opportunities for students.

I hope to see you at our Visual Arts Evening or one of the many other events that are happening this term. As always, please do not hesitate to ask if you have any questions or concerns.

Warm regards,

Heather





MONTESSORI MOMENT #5 - 2023

By Anna Golab

The Body and the Brain

Understanding the human brain is a relatively new science, and learning how the brain works is increasingly helping to shed light on the neurological connections between the human body, the environment, and the process of learning. Does this sound somewhat familiar? Neuroscientists refer to this area of study as "embodied learning," and funnily enough, they acknowledge that this is not new. In fact, they name Maria Montessori as having highlighted the connection between minds and bodies in her 1936 book The Secret of Childhood:

"Movement, or physical activity, is thus an essential factor in intellectual growth, which depends upon the impressions received from outside. Through movement we come in contact with external reality, and it is through these contacts that we eventually acquire even abstract ideas."

Increasingly scientists are proving Montessori was right on track with her observations. Researchers studying the body movements of children as young as four-to-six months old have found earlier and more frequent movement correlates with academic learning down the track.

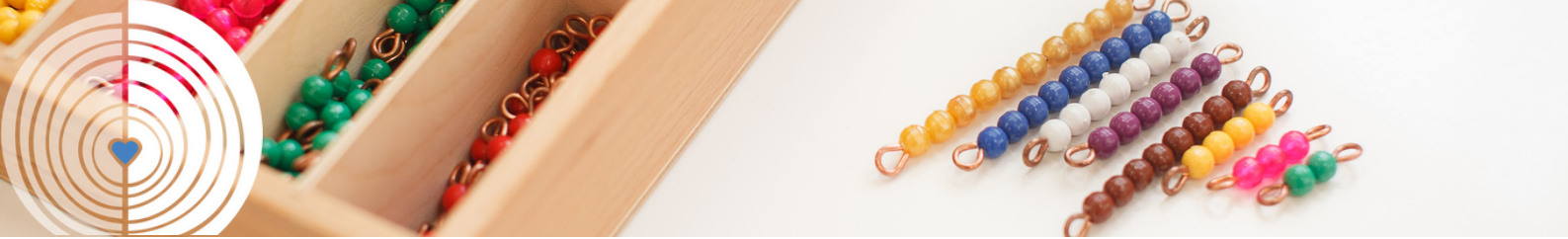
Children who could sit up, sustain "tummy time" longer, and walk were all correlated with future academic success, even when researchers controlled for socioeconomic, family education and type of future education, among other mitigating factors. There is now evidence that using our hands affects the structure and functioning of the brain.

"When children can explore their surroundings, things change." Once children are on the move the adults begin to use directives and other more complicated language forms. As children are guided by their parents, they begin to understand directions and change what/how they do things. Further, when children can do something on their own, they are more likely to internalise what's happening.

In her 2015 book, *How the Body Knows its Mind* Sian Beilock writes, 'as young children move and explore their worlds, they are learning through touch. Early bimanual training correlates with the robustness of the corpus callosum, a part of the brain that facilitates quick communication between the left and right brain hemispheres. This connection between using one's hands and swift communication in the brain may be part of the reason learning to play music is often correlated with math ability.



continued on next the page...



The part of the brain responsible for numerical representation also controls finger motion. Many children first learn to count on their fingers, a physical manifestation of the connection. The studies of very young learners have solidified Beilock's conviction that academic learning is inherently connected to the body. And the connection between bodies and learning doesn't stop with the younger grades. In high school and beyond, classes often focus on listening to a lecture, reading a textbook and doing physics problems. Beilock hypothesized that if students could feel an abstract concept like angular momentum on their bodies, they would both understand and remember it better.

She and her colleagues used a rod with two bicycle wheels attached to test their ideas. Students spun the wheels and then tilted the rod in different directions. As they changed the angle, the force they felt changed dramatically. In her experiment, one set of students got to hold and experience the wheel. Another group just watched the first group and observed the effects they were feeling. They were all quizzed on the material a week later. The students who had more motor activation did better on the test. This experiment strengthens our understanding of the scientific link between hands-on experimentation and powerful learning.

Babies and young children naturally perform what experts in early childhood education call developmental movements. These movements develop the neural connections in the brain, which are essential to learning. The foundational pieces of learning, the infant reflexes and developmental movement patterns, all play a part in the physical and mental growth of a human being.

So, movement is integral to our intellectual processes from the moment of conception, enables us to take in information about the world through our senses, and then anchors this information in our neural networks.

Bottom line? Get your child moving and help them love learning!





PRESCHOOL - SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM

Our ELC staff and children had a blast during our first ever school holiday program. The first week was 'cooking week' and the children made a different delicious dish everyday to share with their friends. The sushi making day was a firm favourite.

The second week was 'science week', where the children participated in a range of science and STEM inquiries. The blue bots were a huge hit and the children learned simple coding.

The third week was 'camping week' where the children set up a tent in the garden, made a pretend camp fire, a river and went 'fishing'. The highlight for many children was making the smores.

The week ended with a pyjama party.

Overall, the school holiday program was the perfect balance of educational activities combined with lots of fun and a break from the usual routine. The atmosphere was relaxed and joyous. We can't wait for the next one.

We will put out a program later in the term for the October school holiday (2nd – 13th October). Please let the Admin Team know if you would like to book in for any additional days in the school holidays before the places fill up.





PRESCHOOL

At preschool this term we have extended on the children's interest in finding and observing different minibeasts. We have begun with looking closer at insects and defining what an insect is: an animal with six legs and a body that is divided into three parts.

Through making observations of different types of insects the children are beginning to learn the characteristics of each, including their appearance, how they move, food choices, habitat and skeleton type.

We have extended on their knowledge, providing vocabulary that relates directly to insects (head, abdomen and thorax) and introduced the medium clay and natural materials for the children to sculpt their own insects. We have discussed the needs of insects and how to respect these living creatures as they play an important role in our ecosystem. The children have grown in confidence as the weeks have continued, with many children creating habitats for their insects.

In addition, this week one of our families will be bringing a pet wolf spider for us to observe. This will give us the opportunity to learn more about the group arachnids.

We began a discussion on the difference between living and non-living and then moved onto our inquiry into minibeasts.

- We compared a toy ant and live ants.

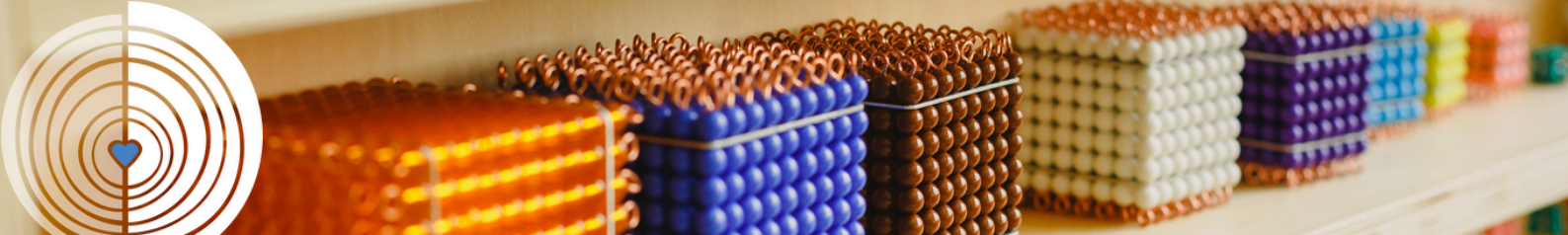
What the children shared..

- The toy ant is not moving, not breathing and can't eat.
- The live ants need food, water, air and dirt.

The children's knowledge of ants..

- They eat food and play in the dirt. - Annabelle
- Inch ants are big. - Ochre
- Ants can bite. - Max L
- Ants go on trees. – Juniper
- They come out at night time. - Willow
- Sometimes they come out in the morning. - Violet





CYCLE 1 - RECEPTION

This term, we have welcomed 9 new families from our preschool into our school community. Over the first few weeks, the children have spent some time getting to know their new classmates, their classroom and the routines and expectations in their new environment. All our new receptions have been very thrilled to learn about new things, use new Montessori materials and try out some of the work their peers are doing. The excitement they have brought into our classroom has been wonderful!

We have spent some time on practical life such as, learning how to unpack and repack our bags at the beginning and end of the day and had lessons on cleaning our tables and contributing as a classroom community to notice things out of place in our environment.



With all the excitement, many of you may have noticed how exhausted some of your children have been. The transition to school is often quite tiring for your child and it is very normal for them to display this in a variety of ways. Please do not hesitate to communicate any concerns you have with your child's teachers, we want to support everyone in the transition process. Here is a link to the [Parent Easy Guide - Starting School](#), published by the South Australian Government for some handy tips and further information.

Our new receptions have also been introduced to their Year 5 Buddies. We have already had the chance to work with our Buddies who came to read with us. The children were eager to meet an older friend who can support them in the yard if they ever need. We often see our Year 5s seek out their buddies at lunch time to say hello and even play together. How lucky we are to have such a close community at school!

Cycle One Team





CYCLE 2

WELCOME TO TERM 3 FROM THE CYCLE 2 TEAM!

This term, Cycle 2 is exploring what life was like in the past through the history of technology, transport, school, toys, and games. To engage the students, we've organized an activity rotation where they get to explore old-fashioned games such as outdoor games like skipping, hopscotch, and hula hoops, board games and games such as marbles and jacks. Additionally, they will learn dances from the past.

In conjunction with our literacy program, each class is reading the book *My Place* by Nadia Wheatly. It's a model text that we use to enhance students' writing as it explores life in the past. The book depicts the history of one piece of land in Sydney from 1788 to 1988 through the stories of various children who have lived there. The students have been fascinated to learn about the differences and similarities in children's lives then and now.

We are thrilled to hear the children's thoughts about the past, and we encourage them to ask their special adults about their own experiences growing up.

Cycle 2 Team





CYCLE 3

CYCLE 3 YEAR GROUP ACTIVITIES

Each Wednesday Cycle 3 students have the opportunity to work in their year group. This is unusual as Montessori pedagogy advocates mixed year groups for learning tasks. However, the session supports students in a few ways that we feel are beneficial.

“The teacher's task is no small or easy one! He has to prepare a huge amount of knowledge to satisfy the child's mental hunger, and he is not, like the ordinary teacher, limited by a syllabus.”

Maria Montessori To Educate the Human Potential, p. 8

Montessori recognised that in the second plane of development students are eager to learn about the world around them and have an inner need to satisfy this desire by working on their own ideas. Our teachers work with the students in these sessions explicitly on building skills that assist the students to do that.

Students find moving to a new cycle has a few big new lessons in store and for the Year 4 group having time to work on skills that are a necessary part of routine in Cycle 3 is most beneficial to them and for their teachers. Learning how to save work on the computer and send emails are just a few of these such skills. These sessions also give our youngest members of the cycle an opportunity to get to know a different teacher.



Year 5 students participate in the Drumming Program. This work not only develops those global skills like concentration and cooperation, it contributes to the knowledge and understanding of music that the students learn in their specialist lessons with Jenny. You might remember last year's drum group had the opportunity to entertain us at the Hopgood Theatre and in the Primary School graduation.

The opportunity to work with those in the same year groups encourages friendships across the cycle. We find this most important in easing anxiety around moving onto Middle School as a cohort and taking part in whole cycle activities such as camps.

The Year 6 students work specifically on tasks that contribute to their confidence in being leaders in the Primary School. For instance, the opportunity to problem solve issues that arise during their work on the Better Buddy program and how to communicate with the participants at Wakefield House during their community service.



CYCLE 4

MIDDLE SCHOOL UPDATE

To celebrate the achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders during NAIDOC Week, Tiahni Adamson, a proud Torres Strait Islander woman descended from the Kaurareg nations of Thursday Island came to speak to the students.

As the students have been learning about landscapes in their Geography Unit, Tiahni's discussions about connecting to Country and her role as an activist for positive environmental and ecological change were invaluable. Tiahni spoke about her career as a passionate land and sea Country custodian, Wildlife Conservation Biologist, Sea Ranger and State Co-Coordinator of Seed in South Australia.

The students were inspired by Tiahni's stories of working in marine conservation and her advice to follow their passions.

Tiahni was trained by Al Gore in 2019 as a Climate Reality Leader, and regularly speaks to a variety of audiences on decolonising systems and solutions to our climate crisis, as well as the impacts of climate change on First Nations communities.

The Cycle 4 Team

U7 SOCCER TEAM

THE NDJSAS INAUGURAL FAIR PLAY ROUND

On Saturday, 29th July, Southern Montessori's U7 Soccer team took part in the NDJSAs inaugural Fair Play Round.

Unfortunately, due to illness, we were a few team members down but the true spirit of the event, our opposing team lent us some players and we went on to have a brilliant game.

All players on the pitch played with integrity and parents cheered both teams on. It was a beautiful day out in the sunshine and a wonderful way to connect with the soccer community!



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.



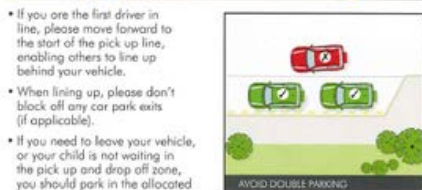
CHILD SAFETY AREA
DROP OFF OR PICK UP ONLY

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 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.
- 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.

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.



ONKAPARINGA

www.onkaparingacity.com

little sunshine

PRELOVED

RENT-A-Rack

SUSTAINABLE SHOPPING FOR BABIES, KIDS AND PARENTHOOD

SELL With Us

Rent a rack to sell your items. Give out-grown clothes a second life and make some extra money by selling your goods in store.

Shop With Us

Perfectly preloved and affordable. Shop our huge range of great quality items for affordable prices. Stock is updated daily and quality assessed.



SCAN ME FOR MORE INFO

COMING SOON

SHOP 1/77A COLLINS PARADE, HACKHAM

www.littlesunshinepreloved.com.au
hello@littlesunshinepreloved.com.au



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!

BRAVE HEARTS | CURIOUS MINDS

