



TERM 4 ISSUE 10 · NOVEMBER 2023

# MONTESSORI MATTERS

## LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Families,

I hope you enjoyed a restful spring break and have been enjoying Term 4. I would like to offer a very special welcome to all our new students and their families. I trust you will soon feel part of the Southern Montessori community.

Thank you to everyone who was able to attend Sports Day last week. It was a wonderful day and a lovely opportunity to catch up with so many families! As always, the Middle School students organised and ran the events as well as managed the catering. They are great role models for the younger children and I am so proud of them.

Each term, the day before school officially returns, our staff all engage in professional learning. On Monday 16th October, we were pleased to host the staff from The Hills Montessori School in a combined professional development day. We spent the morning enjoying a presentation, Discovering our Relationship with Montessori, from Montessori leader, Bill Conway.

Bill's presentation encouraged us to explore our relationship with Montessori philosophy and its guiding force, Montessori's writings. He asked us to consider the characteristics of the "Prepared Adult" and where we sit on the continuum.



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**HEATHER MCINERNEY**  
PRINCIPAL

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Bill choose the quote below to beautifully illustrate the teacher's role and responsibility as a guide:

*"(The child) is a traveller through life... We are the guides of these travellers just entering the great world of human thought. We should see to it that we are intelligent and cultured guides, not losing ourselves in vain discourse, but illustrating briefly and concisely the work of art in which the traveller shows himself interested, and we should then respectfully allow him to observe it as long as he wishes to."*

Maria Montessori, The Montessori Method, p.237

Bill left us feeling inspired to continue our work empowering children to embrace the challenges of their future with confidence, joy and resilience.

On the first day of Term 2, Jo, James and I engaged in professional learning with a number of other independent school leaders exploring innovative new practices for futures education. I would like to thank Year 8 student, Bonnie and Year 9 student, Liam for joining us on the day.

The students from all the schools spent some time together thinking about what they hope education will look like in 2030. While they shared many interesting ideas including walking alongside their teachers and having greater choice and agency in their learning, it was reassuring to hear that our students feel that this is how our school currently operates.

This certainly doesn't mean that we can relax. We are continually seeking to follow a more authentic Montessori pathway, realising our purpose to empower our learners to flourish in life. Listening to our students talk about the education they want is an important part of this process.

We are looking forward to a busy and exciting final term and I hope to have the chance to catch up with you at one of our many special events.

With best wishes for Term 4,

Heather

## MONTESSORI MOMENT #7 - 2023

By Anna Golab

*Education is the best weapon for peace.*

Maria Montessori

Many of us are familiar with Maria Montessori's approach to education. But Montessori's far-reaching influence wasn't confined to education. In addition to being a brilliant scientist, philosopher, and physician, Montessori was also a tireless advocate for women's rights and peace through education. After surviving two world wars and spending a lifetime observing the development of children, Montessori fully understood the connection between peace and the way we educate our children.



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## MONTESSORI MOMENT #7 - 2023

It is important to start at an early age to build capacity and equip children to engage with issues of peace and conflict as this is when attitudes are shaped. Her writings explicitly make a connection to education for peace. She passionately argued that education was a means—perhaps the only genuine means—of eliminating war once and for all. Without explicit and intentional ethical education, she believed, humankind would inevitably revert to its habit of war.

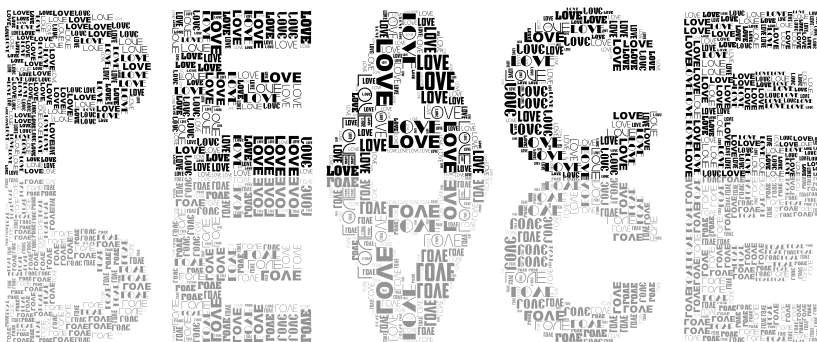
\*Values such as global citizenship, personal responsibility, and respect for diversity, she argued, must be both an implicit and explicit part of every child's education. These values in Montessori education are every bit as crucial as the subjects of math, language, or science. She wrote in *Education and Peace*, *"Peace is a goal that can only be attained through common accord, and the means to achieve this unity for peace are twofold: first, an immediate effort to resolve conflicts without recourse to violence—in other words, to prevent war—and second, a long-term effort to establish a lasting peace among men"* (Montessori, 1949, p. 27).

Consciously developing the habit of critical and independent thought can protect us from falling prey to propaganda which paints biased, one-sided, and therefore limited views of complex, multifaceted issues. Yet, despite the passage of time, and the recurrence of political conflicts, we seem to learn very slowly, if at all. Our world is not a peaceful place and the need to find ways to respond more effectively grows daily. Violence affects everyone. It divides, prevents communities from developing, stops children going to school, destroys vital infrastructure that has taken generations to establish and millions to maintain...who benefits then?

Peacebuilding is a long-term process of encouraging people to talk, repairing relationships, and reforming governments and institutions. For positive change to last, everyone affected must be involved in the process of bridge-building. It means bringing different groups together to discuss the issues and listen to the viewpoints of others respectfully, even when we do not agree. Peace is built when we break down stereotypes and when different groups work together.

In our school we endeavour to use restorative justice practices which include:

- Understanding the impact of one's actions
- Taking responsibility for our choices
- Identifying ways to repair and prevent future conflict
- Working to build healthy relationships
- Developing conflict resolution skills
- Creating a sense of belonging and agency.



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## MONTESSORI MOMENT #7 - 2023

If we aspire to raising mindful, peaceful children we might also consider the following:

### 1 Listen first, then listen more...

Before we can understand, we need to grasp what the child is feeling – and it's easy to leap to conclusions. By listening attentively, giving them our undivided attention in that moment, and thinking calmly about all they're telling us, we show respect. Listening and responding this way also shows children how to do the same thing in their interactions with others. It helps them develop good listening and communication skills from an early age.

### 2. Unplug

Unplugging from the constant social chatter and 24-hour news feed, gives us an opportunity to recenter. It quiets our thoughts, helps us think creatively and independently, allows us to work through struggles, problem solve, and navigate emotional territory with greater clarity. Children need role-models and who better to fulfil this role than we, the parents? Children learn by watch us.

### 3. Carve out time to just be together

There is a lot going on around us all the time. And with the constant contact and stimulus of phones and social media, it can seem downright impossible to find a moment to 'smell those roses!'. But, having a shared pursuit, a walk, a bike ride, a bedtime snuggle, a chapter story that you both can't wait to return to, can offer windows of calmness and connectedness.

*'Every journey begins with a single step.'*

Lao Tzu

*\*Duckworth, C. (2006). Teaching peace: a dialogue on the Montessori method. Journal of Peace Education, 3(1), 39-53.*

## MEET THE BOARD MEMBERS

### Tiffany Newman



#### **What are your hobbies?**

Gardening and reading

#### **What are you passionate about?**

Lifelong learning and taking care of the most vulnerable within our community, including animals

#### **What skill would you most like to learn?**

Another language

#### **What makes you unique?**

My hair!

#### **What is one thing that instantly makes your day better?**

Spending time with my family





## PRESCHOOL

### *Measurement in the Preschool*

This term in the preschool we are having a maths focus on measurement.

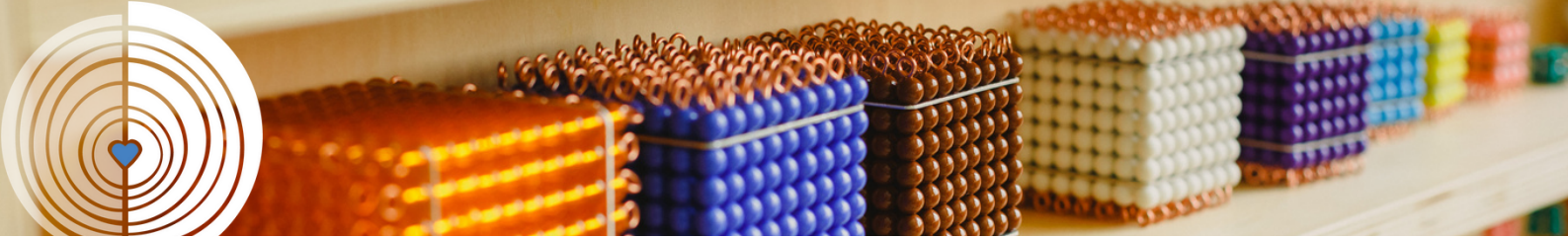
When exploring concepts like measurement with very young children we do it in a very hands on and practical way. At this young age, it is all about introducing the basic vocabulary and giving them the opportunities to inquire, compare and make discoveries for themselves.

Our term started with basic measurement of length. We compared our heights and measured a range of familiar objects using non-standard measurement at first (cubes). We then moved on to a measurement hunt around the school and playground with a meter long piece of string to find things, longer, shorter and the same. We introduced a meter ruler, to begin to introduce the concept of a standard unit of measure.

Last week we began to explore volume and capacity. This involved lots of scooping, pouring, funnels and jars. We introduced the vocabulary of empty, full, nearly empty, nearly full and half full. The children had the opportunity to hypothesize on which cup would hold most and then count how many scoops each cup could hold.

One of the most fun, practical activities to teach measurement is cooking. Cooking activities involve both non-standard (such as 'a pinch') and standard units of measure (cup, grams, mls). Over the next few weeks we will explore other forms of measurement, such as weight and time.





## CYCLE 1 - RECEPTION

It's hard to believe we are already nearing the end of your child's first year of school! Even so, we are still extremely busy, and the children are doing a great job keeping up with the pace as they continue to learn and experience new things.

A snapshot of some of the learning we are enjoying and things we will be doing this term includes:

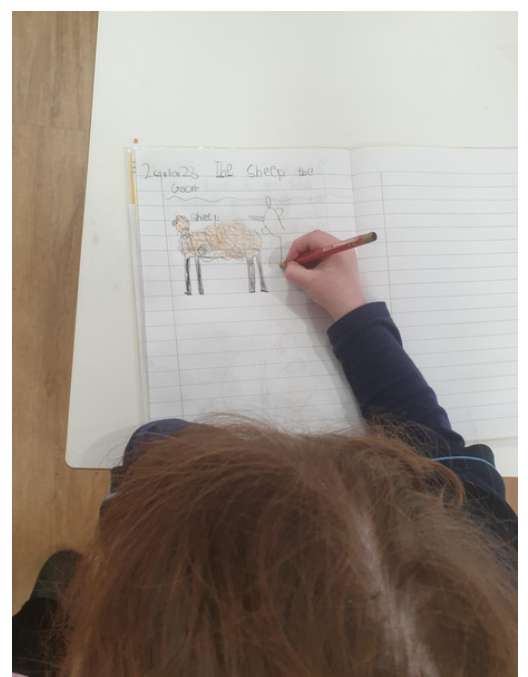
- Zoology, where we will focus on the five classes of vertebrates. We will also be focusing specifically on mammals and animal habitats.
- The narrative story of The Sheep and the Goat
- Sport's Day
- Excursion to the Adelaide Zoo
- Learning about our Five Senses in Science
- Transition sessions to our new classrooms for next year
- Reception Graduation Ceremony

We will also have a whole school excursion, as well as a range of fun end of year activities. We will keep you updated as the term progresses with the details of these events.

The Cycle One team look forward to a wonderful and exciting last term with you all. As always, keep up the reading!

All the best,

Karen, Rachel, Helen, Demi and Amanda







## CYCLE 2

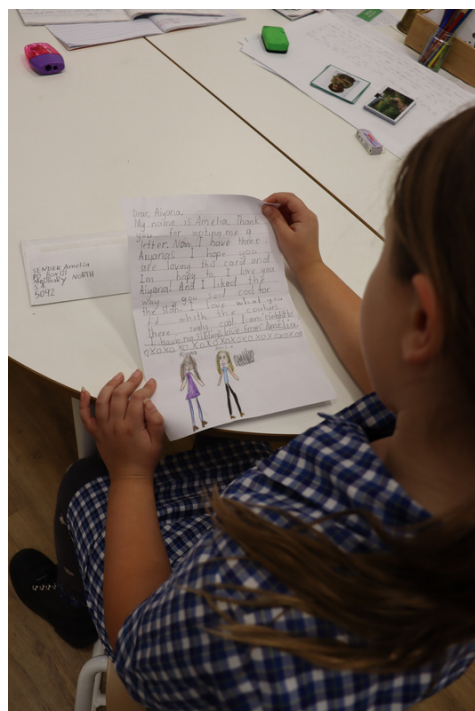
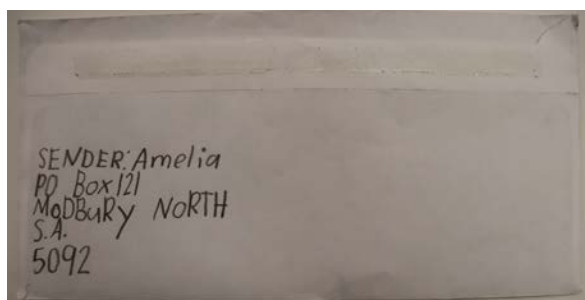
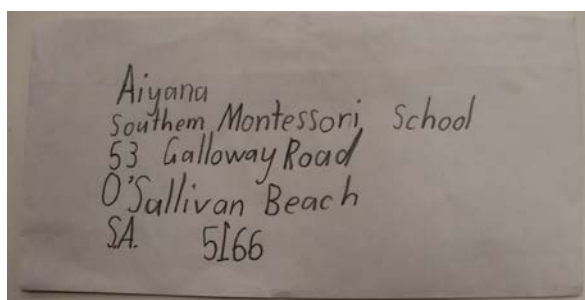
Over the course of this Semester, Cycle 2 have been thinking about “Our Place”. We’ve discussed how places that are special to us make us feel safe and happy and are most often familiar spaces such as school and home. It was wonderful to hear how many of the children chose our classrooms as the place they feel safest – what a testament to how we welcome and nurture our pupils!

Kookaburra and Emu class began writing to pen pals from a school in Para Hills and we began sharing maps and descriptions of our school and other places that mean a great deal to us. The children learnt important mapping skills as well as how to apply some of the grammar we have been learning to make our letters interesting to read. We drafted our letters before replying which allowed us to perfect them before we sent them. When we got replies it was incredibly exciting. Although the other school is only about an hour away, they have a very different surrounding environment and it was fascinating to read their descriptions of the playground and areas around their school. We hope to continue writing to our new pen pals!

As part of this unit, and with summer around the corner, we have also been discussing how to stay safe in the sun! The children have been learning the “slip, slop, slap, seek slide” (try saying that fast!) song and have created some wonderful artwork to remind everyone about the best ways to protect our body from sun damage. It was great to see everyone slapping on a hat and slopping on sunscreen during our warm and sunny sports day!

For the next part of this topic we will be learning about water safety, particularly relevant with the summer holidays coming up, and long, sunny days at the beach (hopefully) in store. So if you’re not quite sure how to stay safe at the sunny beach this year? Ask a Cycle 2 Student!

The Cycle 2 Team





## CYCLE 3

Term 4 has begun with a bang...excursions, sports day, and days spent working at Middle School.

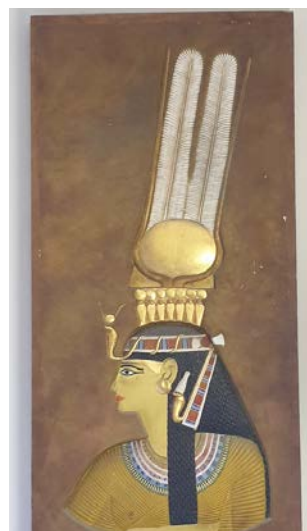
Term 4 is always a real highlight in Cycle 3 as the students drive their own learning with their work for our major project to be displayed at showcase night. This year we are learning about Ancient Civilizations, with a strong focus on Ancient Egypt. The project will centre around learning about how ancient civilizations met their Fundamental Needs, and the implications that their discoveries and inventions have on our lives today.

We look forward to welcoming families on Friday 8th December to view the students' completed projects. In Week 3 we visited the South Australian Museum and Adelaide Botanic Gardens to learn more about Ancient Egypt. In the gardens we were able to see plants that were important to the civilization. These included: papyrus, which grew abundantly along the Nile and was used to make paper; trees used to craft boats and furniture; and herbs used for medicinal purposes and mummification. The students loved their time at the museum, not only learning more about Ancient Egypt but enjoying exploring the whole museum. Such a fun day out in town.

- I enjoyed trying to decipher the Rosetta Stone in the Egyptian room at the museum.
- The Egyptian room was really cool, and I enjoyed seeing the mammals.
- I enjoyed seeing the Giant Squid and learning how long it was.
- I learnt about mummies and that males were wrapped in red.
- I enjoyed seeing the Papyrus plant at the Botanic Gardens.

Last week the students of Cycle 3 'took over' the Middle School campus for two days whilst the Year 7, 8 and 9 students are away on camp. This gave students the opportunity to work in this environment without the older students present and become familiar with the facilities and local area. During these two days the students participated in an outdoor photo scavenger hunt, some Egyptian art, a STEM challenge and enjoyed making and eating some yummy snacks.

The Cycle 3 Team







## CYCLE 4

### SPORTS DAY PREPARATION

Practical learning and community engagement are key attributes of a Montessori Adolescent Program and every year our Middle School students undertake the task of organising the 'Sports Day' for our Primary students. With responsibility and consideration, students carefully plan and oversee all pivotal roles for this event to make the day a success.

With support from their teachers, students collaboratively put together a series of activities they believe will cater to the interests and abilities of the younger students. The events include traditional athletics-based sports, such as 100m sprints, but extends to interactive team games, ensuring inclusivity and engagement for students of all abilities.

In addition to coordinating the sporting events, the Middle School students take on the big responsibility of catering to those who order lunch. They will also set up their coffee machine and sell hot drinks to parents who will be there to watch their children.

The focus of Week 2 has been preparation for this event, and it is wonderful to see how it all comes together. While the activities on the day are full of fun, the collaboration, leadership, and deep sense of community within our school are what make 'Sports Day' special and unique.

#### The Cycle 4 Team





# C O M M U N I T Y

## COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

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### SPACETALK SCHOOLS

MGM and Spacetalk are different divisions of the same company.

We're unifying our approach and coming together as one brand, Spacetalk Schools.

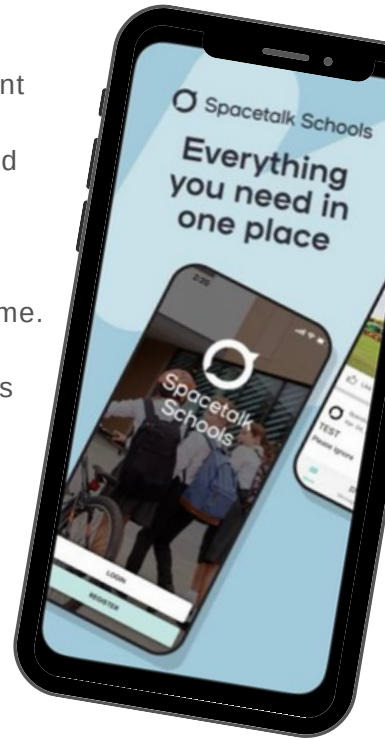
Only our name is changing, everything else will stay the same.

Spacetalk provides safety products for people at all stages in life. Although we're best

known for our work in keeping children safe to and from school, we also keep

families connected.

As part of the re-brand, the Schools Star app has been replaced with a new app called Spacetalk Schools.



The Spacetalk Schools App allows you to access up-to-date information about the school and your child.

Features include:

- View the school news feed.
- Receive messages from the school.
- View the school events calendar.

The Spacetalk Schools App is available to download on iOS and Android.

For more information, please [click here](#).

### 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!

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