



MONTESSORI STEPPING STONES

MONTESSORI STEPPING STONES PHILOSOPHY

We believe in equality of opportunity for all those in our care and the empowerment of children and staff alike (**being**) to develop themselves as individuals (**becoming**) and in turn, the communities to which they belong (**belonging**).

Sincere relationships with children, their parents and families, as well as our colleagues are the foundation for constructive and joyful learning and development.

By **embracing diversity and difference** we commit ourselves to an unbiased and non-discriminative approach towards children, their parents and families and their respective cultures and community.

By **acknowledging the rights of each child** we acknowledge their being, their voices, their thoughts and wishes - and can **critically reflect** and discuss - thereby make informed decisions to intentionally guide, learn and grow within our centre community.

We believe in natural learning environments and activities, where possible in the use of natural materials, which provide for enriching learning and developmental journeys for children, where also the child's natural explorative risk taking characteristics for learning and development are acknowledged and allowed (controlled risk environments and activities).

Together, to learn and practice to reduce, re-use and recycle.

Through sincere relationships, **embracing the diversity of children** and following their rights, through ongoing **collective reflection** and **learning and professional development**, we commit ourselves to an ongoing process of improvement of quality



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MONTESSORI STEPPING STONES

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Montessori Stepping Stones (MSS) seeks to enable children to realize their full potential, as life-long learners and as responsible citizens of their community by introducing dynamic learning experiences according to Montessori principles. Education at Montessori Stepping Stones™ is based on the principles developed by Dr Maria Montessori. At the heart of our approach is the belief that children will reach their potential by having the freedom to learn in an environment specially prepared for exploring and discovering under the careful guidance of educators.

Maria Montessori believes that play is the work of the child. It is through creative work/play with the jobs and materials as often and for as long as the child needs that true understanding and knowledge is obtained. In both the indoor and outdoor prepared environments children engage in social play in groups of diverse backgrounds. Play helps build relationships and form trust and values such as respect and inclusiveness - whilst it is naturally relaxing and fun.

At Montessori Stepping Stones we believe that care and education are inherently one – we see ourselves as guides, facilitators, navigators and explorers - participants in the child's attempts to understand and gain knowledge of the world. We are the child's educational assistants together with the environments we have prepared for them. Together with the cultural, physical social, family, community and spiritual environments - we become educators.

OVERARCHING AIMS

We endeavour to:

- ▷ Nurture and promote a community of young people who are warm and welcoming.
- ▷ Instil a belief in and respect for ethical practice, for other people and for oneself and empathy with other races, religions and cultures with particular reference to the host cultures.
- ▷ Encourage political and environmental awareness and prepare our children to become active members and leaders of local and international communities.
- ▷ Empower our children through active participation in planning and activities which rewards individual and collective achievement and which prepares for life long, independent learning.
- ▷ Provide every child with access to a caring and educational experience of the highest standard possible.
- ▷ Provide care and education that values and builds on the unique experiences of every child according to Maria Montessori's philosophy and educational approach.
- ▷ Provide a programme to ensure breadth, balance, depth, relevance and to facilitate progression and continuity.
- ▷ Help children develop a positive sense of self and develop self-esteem. *(continued on next page)*
- ▷ Encourage and value individual creativity and achievement.
- ▷ Help children reach a high level of proficiency in language in order to facilitate cross-cultural interaction and to contribute to peaceful conflict resolution.
- ▷ Provide a basis of mathematical, scientific and technical knowledge enabling young people to learn the essential skills needed in a fast changing world.
- ▷ To achieve enjoyment of ongoing learning, development and independence.

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Policy review

Montessori Stepping Stones (MSS) encourages staff and parents and families to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, MSS will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part its commitment to quality improvement. WOSHC consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

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