

Essential Elements of Authentic Montessori Practice at Wā Ora Montessori School

1. Wā Ora follows the Montessori planes of development by preparing an environment, which meets the child's learning needs through Montessori pedagogy. We accept current research that is in line with and augments our Montessori practice.
2. Wā Ora is a place where students can flourish in an environment that allows them to follow their dreams, take risks, think laterally and believe in their intrinsic worth.
3. Wā Ora provides students with a prepared Montessori environment that:
 - a. Has a full set of age appropriate Montessori materials in every room incorporating control of error appropriately
 - b. Is peaceful, uncluttered, beautiful, clean and ordered
 - c. Uses supplementary materials to meet targeted objectives
 - d. Uses the outdoors as an extension of the classroom
 - e. Has children in the full 3 - 4 year mixed age range
 - f. Gives children as close to the full 3 hour work cycle to freely choose work as possible
 - g. Allows for freedom of movement
 - h. Where possible, makes use of natural materials
 - i. Refreshes the equipment and activities regularly and unused equipment does not lie on the shelf to gather dust
4. Teaching staff present lessons that:
 - a. Follow the child's interests, needs and sensitivities
 - b. Incorporate the three period lesson where appropriate
 - c. Are intentionally tailored to the individual or group's learning styles
 - d. Are presented with passion, verve, purpose and sensitivity appropriate to the lesson
5. Observation is targeted, and feedback is respectful and constructive, leading to reflection, analysis, and planning.
6. Teachers:
 - a. Who are Head Teachers, are required to have accredited Montessori qualifications
 - b. Experience children as spiritual, thinking, feeling beings
 - c. Display humility of character and genuine love for the children
 - d. Will apply their Montessori principles in their teaching practice and foster within the child a respect for persons, materials and the natural environment
 - e. Are role models in the way they dress and in the way they speak and act with children, parents and each other
7. Respect – Wā Ora will create a respectful atmosphere where the children, the environment and the adults, the staff and parent community, are honoured.
8. The Principal is a leader who has depth of knowledge, through training and experience, of Montessori principles and curriculum.
9. Community:
 - a. Information programmes promote understanding of Montessori principles and curriculum
 - b. Families show commitment to Montessori philosophy throughout the programme. They are in partnership with the teachers
 - c. Will have warm, responsive, reciprocal relationships

- d. Supports and upholds the principles and values of Wa Ora Montessori School
10. Curriculum – Practical life activities from 3 - 12 will encompass control and refinement of movement, care of self and the environment and grace and courtesy activities.
 11. Human tendencies of exploration, repetition, orientation, perfection, order, imagination, manipulation, work, observation and communication are catered for, and appropriate to the age and developmental readiness of the child, in all of the classrooms.
 12. The early childhood curriculum lays the foundation for development by recognising the needs and the sensitive periods of the child between the ages of three and six. It covers the areas of practical life, sensorial education, math, language, culture and environmental studies and extends children up to and beyond the age of 6 years of age.
 13. The primary curriculum has cosmic education as its underpinning. This stems from the impressionistic or great stories that are told giving the big picture. The curriculum then goes from the big picture to the detail in all areas.
 14. The Child will:
 - a. Be given the freedom to meet their needs and interests within the limits of the environment, community and the child's own developmental readiness
 - b. Have the responsibility to nurture and develop their innate love of learning through their work
 15. As a result of this alignment with authentic Montessori Philosophy, by the time a child who started here at the age of three, leaves here at age 15 or 16, he / she will be:
 - a. Able to think for themselves
 - b. Confident, independent, lifelong learners
 - c. Autonomous
 - d. Aware of themselves as part of humanity and the contribution they can make to its development
 - e. Concerned about the environment, able to act on that concern and so, make a difference
 - f. Able to meet their needs while upholding the needs of others
 - g. Reflective, resilient responsible contributors to the society in which they choose to live

Our Values

- **Learning** – to learn is to live fully. We pursue excellence in learning and living by encouraging and equipping people to be independent thinkers, eager to explore and experiment, and conscious of the possibilities and experiences that come from having a balanced, creative and well mixed life.
- **Ecology** – everything natural is interconnected. We are impressed and awed by nature. We must conduct our lives responsibly and sustain ably, for we always affect other natural things.
- **Generosity of spirit** – good people create good people. Human communities make possible the greatest expressions of human goodness and achievement. Through our own school community we live the values that create people who appreciate that sharing, working together, altruism and respect improves the experiences and potential of everyone in that community. We produce people who can bind together communities greater in size than ours – their neighbourhoods, towns and cities, to whole nations and the global community.
- **A mutually supporting community** – we are a thriving, energetic community of families, children and staff. School staff are 'Renaissance' people – capable across a wide range of areas, who challenge themselves to extend their learning and thrive on sharing their passion and mastery with our children. Our families invest their time, energy and trust in the school, bringing their strengths and skills to contribute; forming a support base for the school and for each other. Our children build a community where all are respected and each person's contribution is valued. They take pride in their environment, offer help to each other and experience joy in realising their full potential.