

LET THEM  
*Be*  
**MORE**



## Our School



Wā Ora Montessori School and its community are very special.

Our school is a place for children to be everything they can be, where each child's unique potential is recognised and nurtured.

Nestled in the bush-covered hills of the Hutt Valley, in a sunny and peaceful setting, our school offers children an education designed to help them thrive in the world they will inherit.

A well-rounded Montessori education gives children skills that allow them to be flexible, collaborative problem-solvers; critical thinkers who can sum up issues and make decisions that will benefit society.

Opened in 1988, we are the only school in New Zealand to offer a Montessori education for children from toddler through to teenager. Starting with us at around 14 –18 months of age in playgroup or at 2½ – 3 or so in preschool, a child can move through preschool, primary and high school, emerging at 18 years of age as a competent and confident young person, who knows their strengths and is ready to build on them in order to take their place in adult society.

At Wā Ora we believe in educating and nurturing the whole child. It's a 'learning for life' approach that places importance and value on developing all aspects – intellectual, physical, emotional and social – of the child. During your child's time at Wā Ora we'll support their independence, self-confidence and personal creativity, helping them to discover an innate love of learning that will stay with them through their life.

I invite you to visit our school, to observe in the classrooms and see what students, in charge of their education and guided by highly trained, motivated and enthusiastic teachers, are capable of. You will see independent learners delving into many areas of interest, managing their time and meeting their goals, while being resourceful, focused and community minded.

I look forward to showing you around our school.

Nku noa

**Jan Gaffney**, Principal

THE

POWER

IS IN MY

HANDS



BUSY

CREATING



MYSELF

WHERE  
I am ME

AND YOU ARE

YOU





## A Montessori Education

At Wā Ora we offer an authentic Montessori education. Developed more than 100 years ago by Italian doctor and educator Maria Montessori, it is an education method and philosophy now practiced in more than 22,000 schools across the world. Dr Montessori believed that when placed in a stimulating, specially prepared environment, a child's natural curiosity would help them become a self-motivated, joyful learner. Her approach and ours is based on following the interests of the child and supporting self-discovery.

We believe Montessori offers children and young adults the learning foundation for a lifetime of success.

Our unique combination of Montessori curriculum, learning materials, community and teachers will enable your child to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to live and succeed in today's world.

## The Montessori Classroom

A Montessori classroom has children of different ages, typically a three-year range – 3-6, 6-9, 9-12, 12-15 and 15-18 years. The children learn from each other and because of each other. Older children are important role models for the younger children. The younger child is exposed to the exciting work of older classmates and the older child has a chance to reinforce their knowledge through demonstration to the younger ones.

The children's experience in the classroom is designed to develop independent exploration and discovery, concentration, motivation, self-discipline and a love of learning. Children learn to work independently, at their own speed, according to their own capabilities. Within the calm and orderly teaching spaces, opportunities for children to practise social skills – grace, courtesy and respect for others – occur naturally within everyday classroom life.



# 0-6 Years Preschool

Pre-school is the foundation of a Montessori education. We offer a full preschool programme for children aged three to six years, and a playgroup for toddlers and their parents interested in exploring Montessori.

## Playgroup 0 – 3 years

Our playgroup provides a nurturing Montessori environment for children from around 14 months to three years. Our under-3 community is a wonderful way to explore and learn more about Montessori ideas and approaches. The playgroup environment is designed to support your child's natural development, independence and confidence. Sessions of no more than 12 children are supported by a Montessori co-ordinator, and parents and children can attend one to three mornings each week. When your child is ready, from two and half years onwards, they can transition into our preschool classes.

## Preschool 3 – 6 years

Our preschool programme is designed to support your child's growing curiosity, and encourage them to explore and learn with the guidance of qualified Montessori teachers. The preschool learning environment has specially designed Montessori materials to engage your child to make discoveries and develop their concentration, motivation and self-discipline. The preschool classroom has children aged from two and a half to six years. Your child will learn to cooperate with children of different ages, to respect and celebrate the efforts of other children and to take care of themselves, others and their environment.



*"We believe that Montessori is perhaps decades ahead of its contemporaries in respect to educating the whole person and have watched with joy as our children have flourished."*

*Kirsty Jury, Parent.*



# 6-12 YEARS Primary school

At Wā Ora your child's Montessori education can continue on from preschool into primary. For a child over six, beginning to develop powers of reason, abstraction, and imagination, the universe and all it contains is presented through our primary curriculum.

Wā Ora Montessori is the only state-integrated Montessori primary school, with five primary classrooms located on the same school site as our preschool classes.

The primary child begins to think and wonder about ideas and concepts beyond their own personal experience. In Montessori primary your child's questions are encouraged and provide the basis for their exploration of the world. The child really connects with knowledge when she has initiated the search for answers. At Wā Ora we aim to give your child a vision of interrelated knowledge and a love of learning.

The self-learning structure of our Montessori classrooms frees our teachers to give your child individual attention when interest is high and curiosity aroused. Our teachers plan for each child individually, providing guidance and offering challenges according to the child's strengths and needs. In our Montessori primary classes an attitude to learning is developed where your child will be confident to try new challenges and explore new ideas in depth.



*"Our children are flourishing at Wā Ora. They love their teachers, their classrooms, and their classmates."*  
Sarah Kerkin, Parent.



# 12-18 YEARS

High school

Wā Ora offers the only Montessori high school programme in New Zealand. Our adolescent class caters for 12 to 15 year olds and our college programme for 15-18 year olds progressing through NCEA levels 1, 2 and 3.

In our high school we seek to meet the needs of each individual student and support them through this critical transition into adulthood. We continue to use the Montessori principles of independence, freedom of choice, grace and courtesy, the virtues of curiosity, inquiry and focused work, a balance of tactile and cognitive learning and a reverence for the arts and sciences.

It is the goal of our programme to help our high school community members discover themselves. Adolescence is an age of searching for identity, community and justice. As a community we work together to plan and make decisions, discuss issues, resolve conflict and negotiate solutions. Leadership roles vary and individual strengths are valued. It is a time for students to engage in the wider community, realise the significance of their place and time and become the people they want to be.

*"This is my eleventh year at Wā Ora. I have always liked it here with the style of learning where you have the freedom of choice on what you want to learn about."*

*Dylan Budge, Student.*



## Find out more about Montessori at Wā Ora

Our Pre-Enrolment Evenings, held once each term, explore the Montessori approach to education. Principal Jan Gaffney and Assistant Principal of Preschool, Cathy Wilson talk about the philosophy behind Montessori methods – why it works and how modern science is now supporting methods of learning that Montessori has used for many years. Booking isn't necessary.

## See our community at work

We encourage all parents and caregivers to come along to an Observation Morning. Our Principal, Jan Gaffney will talk to you in a small and personal group setting and answer any questions you have.

The morning usually takes 2 – 2½ hours and you'll get to see our school in action, spending time observing in a 3 – 6, 6 – 9 and 9 – 12 year classrooms throughout the morning.

Spaces are limited, please call or email the school to book.

## Joining Wā Ora

If you are interested in finding out more about our school or pre-enrolling your child please get in touch. We are happy to answer any questions you have.

Choosing a school is a big decision for most families. Before completing a Pre-Enrolment Application parents must attend two information sessions designed to help you get to know our school better and decide if it's right for you and your child.

**Step 1.** Attend an Observation Morning and our Pre-Enrolment Evening

**Step 2.** Complete a Pre-Enrolment Application

Once you have completed a Pre-Enrolment Application your child will be placed on our waiting list until they are ready to start and there is a place for them in the classroom.

Families interested in joining our under-3 playgroup community don't need to attend an information session or complete a Pre-Enrolment Application. You are welcome to visit a playgroup session with your child anytime, simply call the school office to arrange a time.



### Wā Ora Preschool and Primary School

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