



# **Tamworth Montessori Preschool**

## Family Handbook

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with Families and Communities

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Welcome to our Preschool,

Our Family Handbook explains essential information you need to be aware of whilst your child is at our Preschool.

## COVID Smart Measures

Tamworth Montessori Preschool is taking COVID Smart Measures to try and keep our children, staff and families safe.

As a result, some of the information in this Handbook has been temporarily modified. The main changes are:

- we have ceased parents/carers signing in and out of the children. The staff member who opens the door will sign your child/ren in or out and note who has dropped off or picked up the child.
- we have ceased our social occasions.
- Flag Day still occurs, but we are not asking the parents/carers to come in and put the Preschool flag up or take it down.
- *News* is only *Telling News*. We will let you know when we go back to allowing *Showing News* again.

## Service Philosophy

Tamworth Montessori Preschool is a parent-run, community based Preschool caring for children aged between three and five years.

At Tamworth Montessori Preschool we seek to understand, interpret and implement the teachings of the Early Years Learning Framework and the Montessori Method of Education. We believe that by combining these complimentary curriculums we give our children the best possible start in life.

We believe that access to a quality early childhood education is the right of every child and provides an important foundation for those children, by developing within them a positive attitude and approach to education and to the wider world. By providing a quality early childhood education we aim for our children to have a positive self-image, develop positive relationships with others and increase their capacity to problem solve, be competent, thoughtful and contributing members of society.

At Tamworth Montessori Preschool we encourage a holistic view of the child. We are interested in the development of the *whole child*. We believe that children are self-motivated learners who explore their world as they pass through what Maria Montessori called *sensitive periods*. That is times of intense attraction to certain activities in different developmental areas.

Both these educational philosophies foster a love of learning and encourage independence by providing a learning environment full of opportunities for children to engage in spontaneous, purposeful activities which we refer to as *work* as a mark of respect and to highlight the importance of what the child is doing.

We also acknowledge the vital importance of play defined by the Early Years Learning Framework as

*a context for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds, they engage actively with people, objects and representations.*

Through play we believe that children have the opportunities to talk, to listen and explore language. Play provides opportunities to be social, to explore, experiment and solve problems.

Our fully qualified Educators play a vitally important part in supporting our children's learning, through them we provide a warm, nurturing and friendly environment. A place where our children can develop individually and socially. Our Educators have a guiding role, offering opportunities for both child led and intentional teaching. Our Educators are observers, unobtrusively yet carefully managing each child's development, recognising and interpreting each child's needs. Our Educators are calm, consistent, courteous, caring and completely focussed on each child's total wellbeing. We recognise that our Educators are individuals and respect the knowledge, skills, training and experience they bring to their role.

We support all areas of our curriculum through a combination of play based learning and enabling our children to engage with the Montessori materials in our prepared learning environment. The key principles which underpin our children's learning are:

Independence - our classroom is set up to enable the children to become as physically independent as possible from the adults, they are encouraged to do things for themselves. This is achieved by the way that the materials and activities are prepared and the approach and attitude of the Educators.

Indirect preparation - just about every activity in our learning environment has two purposes, one direct and one indirect. The direct goal provides the child with a skill they can use and develop in the present, the indirect goal focuses on preparation for skills used in later life.

Order - this is not just about the physical set up of our learning environment, but also about consistency of Educators and their approach, the order of presentation and social order in the classroom.

Choice - the environment gives our children the opportunity to choose what they do from a range of activities suitable to their developmental needs.

Freedom within limits - our children have the freedom to choose their activity, to work as long as they want on that activity without interruption providing that their activity does not interfere with other children's ability to do the same.

Mixed age range - we believe that by having a mixed age range we encourage our children to learn from each other. Our older children act as guides to the younger ones which increases the older child's sense of self-worth and agency and inspires the younger ones. With such a variety of levels, each child can work at their own pace in a non-competitive, cooperative environment which directly prepares them for living in society.

Movement - we acknowledge the importance of movement in learning. Our children move freely within our learning environment, working at tables and on floormats, going from the Inside Learning Environment to Outside Learning Environment.

At Tamworth Montessori Preschool we will act as advocates for our children and acknowledge our duty of care. We believe that our children have the right to be safe, happy, nurtured and well cared for. In an attempt to ensure this we have embedded into our program the teaching of protective behaviours through programs such as Seemore Safety, Kids and Traffic, and SAFE Series.

Tamworth Montessori Preschool acknowledges the importance of critical reflection in all that we do.

Tamworth Montessori Preschool recognises that the first nations of Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of learning will enrich our whole preschool community and we will strive to embed their unique cultural and spiritual connection to our land into our program. We acknowledge the Gamilaraay people as the traditional custodians of the land we are on. We recognise our Gamilaraay community and have the utmost respect for their elders past, present and future.

Tamworth Montessori Preschool acknowledges and respects the uniqueness of each of our children, their families, culture, language, beliefs and customs. We acknowledge that children learn within the context of their family and community and bring a wide variety of experiences with them to our Preschool. It is our aim to encourage a partnership with our families and encourage them to be active participants in our Preschool and embed all of these cultures into our program and thus ensure that it is meaningful and accessible to all children. We will support and include children and families with diverse abilities and alternative perspectives. This inclusivity is extended to all our children, our staff and visitors.

We will look outwards and strive to form connections with people and places outside of our preschool walls. We believe it is important that everyone, children and adults,

have an understanding of what it is to belong to a community and we endeavour to help our children to understand what it is to belong in a number of contexts. We believe that children are citizens in their own right and should therefore be given the opportunity to engage, participate and contribute meaningfully with their communities.

At Tamworth Montessori Preschool we acknowledge the importance of teaching our children about sustainability and in giving them the opportunity to learn about and participate in caring for our environment.

At Tamworth Montessori Preschool we believe in the importance of teaching our children about the benefits of physical activity and healthy eating. Activities which promote these benefits are embedded into our daily program. Each day there are several opportunities for physical activity - our gym program and outdoor playtimes. Our Outdoor Learning Environment provides our children with the freedom to develop a wide range of skills. Our staff model healthy eating and we take the opportunity to discuss healthy lifestyle choices during our daily group times.

At Tamworth Montessori Preschool we have a supportive culture of ongoing quality improvement in which the learning and development of each child and each staff member is highly valued. We recognise the importance of providing opportunities for our staff to have professional development. This is driven by and reflected in the management and governance of our Preschool.

We view our philosophy as a living document and will endeavour to continually evolve and improve it in the light of new early childhood research and from the contributions of our children, families, staff, and management.



# The Montessori Early Years Learning Programme



The outdoor environment is an extension of the indoor program where children interact with nature by taking responsibility for tending the garden, caring for the plants and trees and discovering the inter-relationship of plants and animals. Creative play spaces also provide opportunities for children to engage in the social and physical activity of free play.

Children in a Montessori environment are immersed in pre-literacy learning through a vast array of experiences with music, stories and sounds. The richness and beauty of language as an expression of emotion and as a form of communication is enhanced as children are exposed to quality literature and culturally diverse music and language. The Montessori philosophy encourages children to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas through verbal and written communication. Montessori materials extend on this experience by allowing children to master the foundations of written composition and reading.

The Montessori Mathematics curriculum introduces children to the concepts of time, distance, dimension, currency and quantity. An extensive array of materials are available throughout the classroom that reinforce the numerical hierarchy of zero to ten. As children work with the materials they gain a strong recognition of these numbers and their corresponding quantities. From this solid foundation the children are then introduced to much larger numbers and to the mathematical operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The Montessori materials provide concrete representation of numerical value and this gives the children an ability to easily understand each concept before it is presented in its abstract form.

In the context of a Montessori classroom the Cultural curriculum consists of the study of science, geography, botany, history, biology, art, music and multi-cultural society. Children make interesting discoveries about the world they live in. Lessons present factual information to help children to identify, name and classify the things around them. Understanding the inter-relationship of plants, animals and people enables children to gain respect for all living things and for their environment.

The precisely crafted Sensorial materials provide the children with an opportunity to explore concepts of dimension, colour, shape, weight, volume, texture, scent, taste and sound. The materials encourage comparison, observation and problem solving. The lessons accompanying the Sensorial materials provide children with diverse descriptive language and a heightened sense of awareness to intelligently observe their environment.

Practical Life activities support the child in developing the essential skills to successfully deal with day to day experiences. Practical Life activities allow children to engage in meaningful tasks such as cleaning, food preparation, arranging flowers, gardening or caring for animals. Children can access child sized tools such as kitchen utensils, mops, sponges, sweeping brushes and watering cans that enable them to participate in the care of their classroom and outdoor environment. Practical Life activities assist children to refine and coordinate their movements, to develop concentration and to build skills that will allow them to contribute to society in an independent and responsible manner.

Children in a Montessori classroom are encouraged to move freely from one activity to another based on their interest and self-motivation. Children can work alone, with a friend or as a participant in a group activity. Social etiquette and safe conduct form an essential component of a Montessori classroom. Respect is also a fundamental element of the Montessori philosophy and reciprocal respect is present in all of the relationships within the classroom community.

## Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)

| Outcome 1                                | Outcome 2   | Outcome 3                                 | Outcome 4                                    | Outcome 5                            |
|--|---|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| Children have a strong sense of identity | Children are connected with and contribute to their world | Children have a strong sense of wellbeing | Children are involved and confident learners | Children are effective communicators |



# Children's rights

You have the right to:

**1.**  
be treated fairly  
no matter what

**2.**  
have a say  
about decisions  
affecting you

**3.**  
live and grow  
up healthy

**4.**  
have people  
do what is best  
for you

**5.**  
know who you  
are and where  
you come from

**6.**  
believe what  
you want

**7.**  
privacy

**8.**  
find out  
information and  
express yourself

**9.**  
be safe no  
matter where  
you are

**10.**  
be cared for and  
have a home

**11.**  
education,  
play and cultural  
activities

**12.**  
help and  
protection if  
you need it

Adapted from the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

For more information on children's rights, go to [www.humanrights.gov.au/childrights](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/childrights)

To tell a story about your rights, go to [somethingincommon.gov.au/thebigbanter](http://somethingincommon.gov.au/thebigbanter)

## **Management**

Our Preschool's day-to-day running is shared by Mariko, our Preschool Manager and Fiona, our Teaching Director. They are overseen by the Board of Management, a group made up of parents and community members.

Each family of an enrolled child must be a member of the Tamworth Montessori Association Inc. This costs \$10.00 per annum. The Annual General Meeting is usually held in September of each year.

## **Regulatory Authority**

Our Preschool complies with the National Quality Framework (NQF), including the National Quality Standard (NQS), the Early Years Learning Framework, the Montessori Early Years Learning Program (which is another Government Approved Framework) and the National Regulations (Education and Care Services National Regulations).

Our Preschool is regulated by the national body for early education and care – the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) as well as the state licensing department in New South Wales.

To contact our Regulatory Authority, please refer to the contact details below:

NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate  
Department of Education and Communities [www.det.nsw.edu.au](http://www.det.nsw.edu.au)  
1800 619 113, [ececd@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ececd@det.nsw.edu.au), Locked Bag 5107 PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

## **Educator Ratio**

We meet all legal requirements concerning the child to educator ratios and the qualifications of our educators.

Our Educators are continually evaluating how our curriculum meets the educational needs of our children and reflecting on ways to improve children's learning and development. They are encouraged to attend further professional training and development.

## **Preschool Information**

Our Preschool caters for children aged between 3 years and 6 years. We are open from 8.30 am until 4.00 pm Monday to Friday during NSW Public School Terms. We are closed during NSW Public Holidays and NSW Public School Holidays.

All Preschool families are members of the Tamworth Montessori Association Inc and pay an annual association fee. This association is the Approved Provider of the

Preschool. Board members are elected each year at our Annual General Meeting. The members of the Board include President, Treasurer, Secretary, parent representatives and community representatives. In addition, the Teaching Director and Preschool Manager are non-elected permanent members of the Board.

## Contact Information

Service Provider: Tamworth Montessori Preschool

Directors: Teaching Director -Fiona Cook  
Preschool Manager – Mariko Batho

Telephone Number: (02) 6766 7750  
Mobile Number: 0432 277 370  
Email: office.tammont@gmail.com



Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/Tamworth-Montessori-Preschool-102102195664114>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/montessoritam/>  
Website: <https://www.montessoripreschool.com.au>

## Emergency Drills

Each Term, there is an Emergency Rehearsal Week. We will notify our families when this is happening. There will be an SMS sent out to families of the day to say, "We had an emergency rehearsal today. All went well".

If there is a real emergency, the Teaching Director and Preschool Manager will speak to every child's family on that day to let them know that it happened.

An emergency evacuation plan is displayed in every room.

## Immunisation

Under the *NSW Public Health Act 2010*, an approved immunisation form from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) must be provided at enrolment and also after the child has completed their four-year-old immunisations.

An Immunisation History Statement is automatically sent to the parents after their child has completed their four-year-old immunisations. However, parents can obtain an updated statement at any time (up to the child being 14 years of age) by:

- Using their Medicare online account through myGov at <https://my.gov.au/>
- Using the Medicare Express Plus App at [www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/express-plus-mobile-apps](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/express-plus-mobile-apps)
- Calling the Australian Immunisation Register General Enquiries Line on 1800 653 809

Other immunisation records, such as the Blue Book, a GP letter or an overseas immunisation record, are **not** acceptable.

Children who are on a Catch-Up Schedule or have a Medical Contradiction to a vaccine will be excluded if there is an outbreak of that disease. These children will be excluded for the duration of the outbreak. Families will still have to pay for days that their child has been excluded.

## Fees / Start Up Costs

Fees vary from year to year. Daily fees are dependent on the funding the Preschool receives from the New South Wales Department of Education. Currently, the New South Wales Department of Education is covering the Daily Fee. The costs are:

|                    |          |
|--------------------|----------|
| Daily Fee:         | \$0.00   |
| Association Fee    | \$10.00  |
| Administration Fee | \$80.00  |
| Bond:              | \$320.00 |

Your initial invoice will include:

- Daily Fee – all families will be invoiced for the number of days that their child/ren will attend Preschool for that Term.
- Association Fee – all families are required to be members of the Tamworth Montessori Association Inc. Currently, this Fee is \$10.00 per family annually.
- Administration Fee – are charged yearly and invoiced in Term 1.
- Bond – all families are required to pay a bond. This money will be refunded if your costs are fully paid and if you give the Preschool four weeks written notice prior to your child/ren leaving Preschool. The four weeks notice must be during term time. Children transitioning to school will have their bond refunded in their Term 4 invoice.

Our fees are very competitive and are considerably less than most long daycare centres.

Fees are paid in advance and are due by week four of each Term. These fees can be paid by: correct cash or cheque to the preschool office or by Electronic Funds Transfer through your financial institution. Please note that the Preschool does not have EFTPOS facilities.

The Preschool's banking details are printed on each invoice. Our banking details are:

|              |                                      |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| Bank         | ANZ Bank                             |
| BSB          | 012-830                              |
| Account No   | 2083 81439                           |
| Account Name | Tamworth Montessori Association Inc. |

If you would like to arrange a payment plan please see the Preschool Manager. We reserve the right to terminate an enrolment if these conditions are not met.



## **Absences**

Tamworth Montessori Preschool requires families to pay for any absent days and public holidays.

Families that are going to be absent for long periods have a choice of paying the current daily Fee for the period of the absence to maintain their position at Preschool, or they can give four weeks written notice if they would like to cease enrolment. Please be aware if you choose the

second option, there is no guarantee of a place for your child on your return. If you require a place, they would go on the waiting list.

## **Two Day Places**

Currently, the Preschool is only offering children two-day places.

## **Make-up Days**

There are no formal Make-up Days as we are at full capacity and are bound by the legislation as to the maximum number of children that we can have per day.

## **Extra Days**

We appreciate that at times families may need an extra ad hoc day. If we have space we will endeavour to accommodate this and you will be charged at your normal daily Fee. Please be aware that this cannot be regular as we are not occasional care.



## Preschool Closing Time and Late Fees

Please be aware that the children's end of the day is 4.00 pm. We are not licensed or insured to have children on the premises after 4.00 pm or before 8.30 am. In the event of an unavoidable late pickup, please let the Preschool know as soon as you can.

The Late Fee is \$50.00 per child for every 15 minutes or part thereof and will be invoiced. The Late Fee is strictly adhered to, as two staff members must remain until all children have been collected.

If we are unable to contact a parent/carer or a person nominated on the Enrolment Form to arrange collection of the child/ren within an hour of the Preschool closing. In that case, we will contact the Department of Family Services and the Police to take responsibility of your child/ren.



## Privacy and Confidentiality

We are committed to protecting your privacy. We support and are bound by privacy laws to maintain strict confidentiality.

We do not disclose personal information about you or your child to other people or organisations without your consent unless we are required to do so by law. We do not ask for personal information about you or your child from other professionals or organisations without your consent. You can look at the information in your child's file at any time or request a copy of the information in the file.

## Preschool Policies and Procedures

Preschool Policies and Procedures are available for families to read in the office. If you would like to see these, please ask either the Teaching Director or Preschool Manager. We expect all at our Preschool to adhere to our policies and procedures to ensure we maintain compliance and abide by the National Laws and Regulations.

We are constantly reviewing our policies and procedures and ask for staff and family participation to ensure that they adhere to our families' needs and meet required National Laws and Regulations. Your involvement is greatly appreciated.



## Family Information

When you enrolled your child/ren at our Preschool, you were required to complete all our enrolment documentation. Please understand that it is essential that we have the latest up to date information in case of an emergency. You must notify management of ANY changes to enrolment information. Including:

- Address
- Health issues
- Immunisation information
- Telephone or mobile phone numbers
- Contact details
- Family changes
- Emergency contact information

It is essential that we have copies of your child's birth certificate. If your child has a birth certificate in a language other than English, we may require a translation.

There is a large amount of information available to our families. This information is in various places, notice boards, foyer and the office. If you are looking for any information and cannot find it, please ask the Teaching Director or Preschool Manager, and we will be more than happy to assist you.

## Communication Between Home and Preschool

We hope to work in partnership with your family, but please be aware that drop off and pick up is not the best time to talk confidentially about your child.

If you have anything that you wish to discuss with either the Teaching Director or Preschool Manager about your child, the best way is to ask for an appropriate time to call or visit.



General information for all families is distributed by newsletter, notices beside the Sign-in Sheet, letters in the Parent Pockets, and email.

Information for a specific family will be through a letter in the Parent Pocket or, if necessary, a telephone call.

Biannually, we have Parent-Teacher meetings where you can specifically speak about your

child's development. However, these are brief, and a follow-up meeting can be arranged.

A New South Wales Transition to School Statement is completed and sent via email to your child's new school when your child is transitioning to school.

## **Court Orders**

Parents must notify the Preschool if there are any Court Orders affecting the residency of their child/ren, and a copy is required for the Preschool. *Without a Court Order, we cannot stop a biological parent from collecting a child.*

## **Arrival and Departure**

For safety and security reasons, ALL children must be signed in on arrival and signed out on departure. The times must be noted. The Sign In/Sign Out sheets are on the window sill in the front foyer. A child can only be signed in or out by an adult.

No child will be allowed to leave our Preschool with a person not stated on the enrolment form unless prior arrangements are made with the Teaching Director or Preschool Manager.

We do understand that occasionally you cannot get someone to Preschool who is on the enrolment form. If this occurs, please ring the Preschool and give us the full name of the person collecting your child and their address. When they arrive, they will need photographic identification before we allow them to take your child. When you next drop your child off, there is a form to sign confirming you made these arrangements.

## **What to bring to Preschool**

Preschool will provide a shirt, water bottle, personal care pack and a sun-safe hat for your child/ren to use whilst they are at Preschool.

### **Morning Tea, Lunch and Afternoon Tea**

We ask that each child brings one piece of fruit or vegetable per day. All the children share this for Morning and Afternoon Tea. Children also have wholemeal bread and butter for Morning and Afternoon Tea.

Please refer to our Nutrition and Food Safety Policy and Healthy Food Guidelines when packing or planning your child's lunch. We do NOT allow chocolate, nuts and chips.

Children are asked to bring their lunch in a lunchbox with a lid that they can open. As all lunches are placed into the fridge, please do not send in an insulated bag as these are not effective and take up too much room in the refrigerator. We ask that you put

your child's name on both the bottom and the lid of their box. Any other container you send to Preschool must also have your child's name.

### **Drinks**

Your child must bring a water bottle to Preschool each day. If your child/ren drinks all their water, we will refill their water bottle with chilled boiled water.

### **Clothing**

Send your child in practical and non-restrictive, easy to wash old clothes. Throughout the day, children must be able to get messy and dirty. Also, be aware that your child needs to be able to take off their clothing to go to the toilet, cross their legs, bend, climb, and do gym.

Please send a complete change of clothes from head to toe, including undies, socks and jumper. All clothes need to be labelled and sun-safe.

Now and then, accidents do occur. If your child has diarrhoea or is vomiting, we will throw away any badly soiled clothing items for health and safety reasons.

### **Shoes**

During appropriate weather, the children can take off their shoes in outdoor and indoor learning environments. We would prefer it if they did not wear gumboots or thongs as these can pose a safety risk. Sandals, enclosed shoes or joggers are best.

### **Hats**

Your child will be given a sun-safe hat which stays at Preschool. This hat is washed regularly.

### **News**

Our children love to share *News* with their friends. There is a news time most days. Your child can bring something appropriate from home to show their friends. However, they will not be allowed to play with this toy. Violent toys, such as guns, water pistols, and swords, should not be brought. Small items that can be swallowed are not to be brought either.

*News* items are to be placed into the *News Box* as soon as your child arrives. These items are not allowed to be taken outside. Once your child has shown their *News*, the item then goes into your child's bag, ready to go home. Your child can also share *Telling News* if there is something they want to talk about. A roster for News is given out at the beginning of each Term.

## Our Staff

We are extremely fortunate at Tamworth Montessori Preschool. We have a small dedicated staff who want the best for our children. Therefore, if we have a sick educator, we replace them with an existing staff member. This benefits your child because they know the routines and the children.



### **Fiona**

Fiona trained as an early childhood and infants teacher in the United Kingdom. She has been at Tamworth Montessori Preschool for many years. Fiona is at preschool everyday.

Fiona is our Teaching Director, Early Childhood Teacher, Educational Leader and Nominated Supervisor. She has also been assessed by NESA as a Proficient Teacher. Fiona also has a Certificate in Montessori Studies 0-5 Years.

Fiona has a current first aid and child protection qualifications as well as a valid Working with Children Check.



### **Mariko**

Mariko has many experiences of Tamworth Montessori Preschool, as a parent, Administrator, Board Member and now as the Preschool Manager. She keeps coming back to Preschool. Mariko is at preschool everyday.

Mariko has many years' experience in business and administration and has relevant qualifications as well as being a director of several companies.

Mariko has undertaken studies in Early Childhood Education studies and has current first aid and child protection qualifications as well as a valid Working with Children Check.



### **Dee**

Dee has worked at Tamworth Montessori Preschool since 2017. She has many years experience working with young children. Dee is at preschool alternate Fridays.

She has a Certificate III in Children's Services and has current first-aid qualifications as well as a valid Working with Children Check.

### **Sandy**

Sandy has worked for many years as our Cleaner. She cleans our preschool every afternoon.

Most children do not see Sandy as she comes in after they have left for the day.

Sandy has a valid Working With Children Check.



## **Our Program**

"Early childhood education is the key to the betterment of society".

Maria Montessori

We follow the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the Montessori Early Years Learning Program. We aim to extend and enrich children's learning from three to five years and through the transition to *Big School*. We are committed to providing a developmental and educational program that caters for each child's individual needs, abilities and interests. Our program will continue to develop as we use the relationships children have with their families and communities, working in partnership with families to ensure that each child's knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of our program.

The Educators carefully plan learning experiences according to your child's interests, strengths and the progress they make towards the five learning outcomes of the Early



Years Learning Framework and the seven educational outcomes of the Montessori Early Years Learning Program.

### **Montessori Early Years Learning Program**

**OUTDOOR** – Becoming an active and healthy participant in the care of our environment

The outdoor environment is an extension of the indoor program where children interact with nature by taking responsibility for tending the garden, caring for the plants and trees and discovering the inter-relationship of plants and animals. Creative play spaces also provide opportunities for children to engage in the social and physical activity of free play.

**LITERACY** – Communicating through expressive and written language

Children in a Montessori environment are immersed in pre-literacy learning through a vast array of experiences with music, stories and sounds. The richness and beauty of language as an expression of emotion and as a form of communication is enhanced as children are exposed to quality literature and culturally diverse music and language. The Montessori philosophy encourages children to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas through verbal and written communication. Montessori materials extend on this experience by allowing children to master the foundations of written composition and reading.



**NUMERACY** – Understanding the value of the number system

The Montessori Mathematics curriculum introduces children to the concepts of time, distance, dimension, currency and quantity. An extensive array of materials are available throughout the classroom that reinforce the numerical hierarchy of zero to ten. As children work with the materials they gain a strong recognition of these numbers and their corresponding quantities. From this solid foundation the children are then introduced to much larger numbers and the mathematical operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The Montessori materials provide concrete representation of numerical value and this gives the children an ability to easily understand each concept before it is presented in its abstract form.

**CULTURAL** – Discovering the world we live in

In the context of a Montessori classroom the Cultural curriculum consists of the study of science, geography, botany, history, biology, art, music and multi-cultural society. Children make interesting discoveries about the world they live in. Lessons present factual information to help children to identify, name and classify the things around



them. Understanding the inter-relationship of plants, animals and people enables children to gain respect for all living things and for their environment.

#### SENSORIAL – Preparing the mind for intelligent observation

The precisely crafted Sensorial materials provide the children with an opportunity to explore concepts of dimension, colour, shape, weight, volume, texture, scent, taste and sound. The material encourage comparison , observation and problem solving. The lessons accompanying the Sensorial materials provide children with diverse descriptive language and a heightened sense of awareness to intelligently observe their environment.

#### PRACTICAL LIFE – Preparing the hands and mind to work toward independent thought and action.

Practical Life activities support the child in developing the essential skills to successfully deal with day to day experiences. Practical Life activities allow children to engage in meaningful tasks such as cleaning, food preparation, arranging flowers, gardening or caring for animals. Children can access child sized tools such as kitchen utensils, mops, sponges, sweeping brushes and watering cans that enable them to participate in the care of their classroom and outdoor environment. Practical Life activities assist children to refine and coordinate their movements, to develop concentration and to build skills that will allow them to contribute to society in an independent and responsible manner.

#### SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL – Learning to be socially responsible and competent

Children in a Montessori classroom are encouraged to move freely from one activity to another based on their interest and self-motivation. Children can work alone , with a friend or as a participant in a group activity. Social etiquette and safe conduct form an essential component of a Montessori classroom. Respect is also a fundamental element of the Montessori philosophy and reciprocal respect is present in all of the relationships within the classroom community.



#### **Early Years Learning Framework**

Fundamental to the Framework is a view of children's lives as characterised by belonging, being and becoming. From before birth, children are connected to family, community, culture and place. Their earliest development and learning takes place through these relationships, particularly within families, who are children's first and most influential educators. As children participate in everyday life, they develop interests

and construct their own identities and understandings of the world.

## BELONGING

Experiencing belonging – knowing where and with whom you belong – is integral to human existence. Children belong first to a family, a cultural group, a neighbourhood and a wider community. Belonging acknowledges children's interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities. In early childhood and throughout life, relationships are crucial to a sense of belonging. Belonging is central to being and becoming in that it shapes who children are and who they can become.

## BEING

Childhood is a time to be, to seek and make meaning of the world. Being recognises the significance of the here and now in children's lives. It is about the present and them knowing themselves, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging with life's joys and complexities, and meeting challenges in everyday life. The early childhood years are not solely preparation for the future but also about the present.

## BECOMING

Children's identities, knowledge, understandings, capacities, skills and relationships change during childhood. They are shaped by many different events and circumstances. Becoming reflects this process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as young children learn and grow. It emphasises learning to participate fully and actively in society.

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

- Children feel safe, secure, and supported
- Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency
- Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities
- Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect

Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

- Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation
- Children respond to diversity with respect
- Children become aware of fairness
- Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

- Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing
- Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

- Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity

- Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, enquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating
- Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another
- Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

#### Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

- Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
- Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts
- Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media
- Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
- Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

### Summer Program

|  |
|--|
| Children arrive and are greeted. Each child does their <i>Morning Routine</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morning Tea sharing fruit/vegetable in the basket</li> <li>• Lunch placed in green tub</li> <li>• Water bottle is placed on the pigeon holes.</li> <li>• Bag placed on a hook</li> <li>• Each child is helped to put on sunscreen</li> <li>• Hand Towel hung on their hook</li> <li>• Each child is helped to wash their hands</li> <li>• Each child puts on their hat</li> </ul> |
| All children are outside for free outside playtime.  |
| Hand washing and Group Morning Tea   |
| All children are outside for free outside playtime.  |
| Big Pack Away bell is rung, and the toys are packed away. Children are to be grouped and then sent to have a drink on their way to the Ellipse one at a time.  |
| Gym (Music & Movement)   |
| Little Group Time, including Telling News.   |
| Big Group Time on the Ellipse is run by E <sub>2</sub> and includes storytime.   |

|  |
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| From the Ellipse, the children have a drink of water, wash their hands and go to the tables for lunch. E <sub>1</sub> supervises lunch and the children's bathroom.  |
| Individual work time. The children select pieces of work from the shelves and work independently. Educators supervise and, if possible, sit and offer support to individual children as needed.                |
| Big Pack away  |
| Group time including – on Ellipse. This is run by E <sub>1</sub> . Sunscreen is to be put on children before they wash their hands. Children also have a drink from the tray on their way back to the Ellipse. |
| Inside Free Play   |



## Winter Program

| Task   |
|--|
| Children arrive and are greeted. Each child does their <i>Morning Routine</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lunch placed on Kitchen Bench</li> <li>• Morning Tea sharing fruit/vegetable in the basket</li> <li>• Each child hangs their hat on an outside hook</li> <li>• Hand Towel hung on their hook in the bathroom</li> <li>• Each child is helped to wash their hands</li> <li>• Each child comes inside and chooses some individual work</li> </ul> |
| Individual work time. The children select pieces of work from the shelves and work independently. Educators sit and demonstrate activities and offer support to individual children as needed.   |
| Big pack away  |
| Little Group Time  |
| Gym  |
| Outside Play   |
| Big Group Time   |
| Inside/Outside Lunch   |
| Playtime (Outside)   |
| Big Pack Away  |

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|   |
| Afternoon Tea on back verandah/inside                     |
| Outside Free Play   |
| Children come inside for quiet play in the carpeted area. |

Please note the program is subject to change according to the needs of the children and the day.

## Preparing your child for Preschool

Each family is invited for an initial Family Orientation to decide if they would like their child/ren to be enrolled at our Preschool. If you decide to enrol your child/ren we encourage each child to attend, in the company of a family member, twice before they start with us.

This gives you and your child the opportunity to gain an understanding of our program and familiarises your child with our Preschool environment.

Communication between families and Preschool is particularly important during this transition period.

## Saying Good-bye

Whilst we welcome families into our Preschool, there are certain times when we will ask you not to come into the Learning Area Environment. It is our policy to ask families to drop children off as quickly as possible at the door. The reason for this is it lessens the distress of your child and the other children. Even though your child may be clinging, crying or upset it is better to say a cheerful *Goodbye*, reassure your child you or your family member will pick them up and leave. We are all very experienced Educators, and if your child is unreasonably upset or hysterical, we will contact you. However, Mariko is more than happy for you to call her if you are worried.

## Behaviour Guidance

Educators follow our Behaviour Guidance Policy giving consistency of expectations by all Educators. This policy allows children to develop self-discipline, and respect for others, property, and self whilst learning to regulate their behaviour. If you require further information on this policy, please ask the Teaching Director or Preschool Manager.

## **Portfolios**

Every child will have their own personal portfolio comprising of:

- Family goals and hopes for their child
- Educators' observations of your child's development
- Work and art samples selected by Educators and your child

We will email copies of your child/ren's observations at the end of each Term, and at the end of their time at Preschool, you will receive a hardcopy portfolio.

You may request to see your child's observations or Work/Art folder at any time. We ask that you look at this information at Preschool.

## **Family Participation**

We acknowledge the vital importance of a partnership between families and Preschool in providing quality education and actively seek and encourage our families' involvement in our program.

There are a variety of ways you can participate:

- -Evaluating and adding input to our program displayed at the entrance.
- -Sharing observations you have made of your child
- -Helping out at a working bee or Bunnings BBQ
- -Sharing skills, interests and talents.
- -Sharing your home culture
- -Attending special social events which are put on throughout the year

## **Sustainability**

Our Preschool is passionate about sustainability. We believe in supporting our children to appreciate and care for our environment by embedding sustainable practice into our daily program and the daily operation of our Preschool infrastructure and teaching. In order to empower our sustainability program, we emphasise children's ability to make a difference. We are enabling them to learn and appreciate their environment in an engaging, fun and exciting manner. This is done by engaging the children in discussion about sustainable practice, encouraging them to participate in recycling, reducing energy use and conserving WATER. We aim to provide our children with the foundations to become environmentally responsible.

As a result of our passion for being sustainable, there will be times when our yard reflects drought conditions. However, we do not feel that it is fair to teach water conservation to the children and then continue to water the grass.



## Flag Day

Your child will have at least one flag day each Term. This is a special day when they are the helpers for the day. Some of the jobs they help with are - ringing the bell at *pack away*, handing out the lunchboxes, and putting up and bringing down the preschool flag.

When it is your child's Flag Day we ask that you take a little extra time to raise and lower the flag with your child at the beginning and end of the day.

## Suggestions

We welcome suggestions, ideas and constructive criticism. You can speak with the Teaching Director or Preschool Manager, email or put a note in the letterbox.

## Feedback

We welcome your feedback. Both positive and negative. Please feel free to speak with the Teaching Director or Preschool Manager about anything. Drop off and pick up times only allow a brief conversation. For any in-depth conversations, please make an appointment with the Teaching Director or Preschool Manager.

If you would like your feedback to be anonymous, please leave it in the letterbox or send it directly to the president of the preschool board. Whose name and address are displayed in the entrance foyer.

## Sun Safety

We are a Cancer Council Sunsmart Preschool. Children, educators and visitors will wear sun-safe hats, appropriate clothing, and suitable sunscreen (at least SPF30+) when outside.

Please ensure your child is wearing sun-safe clothing. This means that shoulders must be covered.

Staff will encourage children, including by way of modelling behaviour, to avoid excessive exposure to the sun.

We ask that in summer, children come to Preschool with sunscreen already applied, so they are able to participate in outdoor play immediately and do not



have to wait 20 minutes after the application of sunscreen. We are happy to reapply sunscreen when necessary. If your child requires sensitive sunscreen, we are happy to apply it. Please bring a bottle to Preschool for us to use on your child.

## Rest and Sleep

Rest and sleep routines vary according to individual needs. There is no set rest or sleep time for all at our Preschool. However, we accommodate the needs of individual children by allowing a child to have a rest or sleep if they need it. We provide a mat and sheets. If a family feels that their child needs sleep, they can ask at drop off. Staff may also see that a child needs a sleep. A child can ask for a mat to have a rest or sleep at any time.

## Parent Pocket

Every family has a Parent Pocket. These are underneath the window sill in the front foyer. The name of the child is on the pocket to avoid any confusion with names. Your invoices and some correspondence also will have your child/ren's name on them. Even though it has your child/ren's name on it, it is for you. Please check your Parent Pocket daily. This is where all information goes that you need to be aware of. We do not put anything in a child's bag as it often gets lost.

If you have information or anything for us, please hand it to either the Teaching Director or Preschool Manager. Do not put it in your child's bag. Do NOT put medications in your child's bag.

## Birthdays

Birthdays at Tamworth are very special. We see your child's whole life would be helpful if you representing each year newborn through to Some brief information, child was born, who birth etc., would also be the children develop a time passing.

At Big Group, all the the Ellipse. An unlit sun will be placed in the birthday child holds a



Montessori Preschool this as a celebration of story. For this reason, it could send in a photo of your child's life from their age this birthday. such as where your was present at their helpful as this will help sense of history and of

children will sit around candle to represent the centre of the room. The globe in their hands and

walks around the Ellipse the same number of times as their age. Each circuit represents a year of their life. We will look at the photos and discuss the birthday child's life, achievements and milestones. After this, we sing happy birthday.

You are welcome to send in a birthday treat or snack to be shared by all the children, but please make it in accordance with our Nutrition and Food Safety Policy.

## **Medication and Medical Conditions**

It is vital that we are aware of any medical conditions that your child/ren may have. You will need to fill in the relevant sections of our enrolment form and inform the Teaching Director and Preschool Manager. You must also provide a diagnosis from a registered medical practitioner, who will provide an Action Plan. This Action Plan needs to be updated immediately, if there are any changes or every twelve (12) months. A meeting between your family and management must be made so that a Risk Minimisation Plan can be completed.

Educators can only administer prescription medication prescribed by a doctor.

Educators can only administer medication to a child from its original packaging with a pharmacy instruction sticker.

On arrival at the Preschool, families must give medication to Educators for safe storage and complete a medication authorisation form. Under no circumstances should medication be left in children's bags.

If your child requires administration of medication long term, you will be required to complete a long term medication authorisation form. Each form can last for a maximum of one Term. However, a new form can be completed each Term. If any changes to the medication are required, please notify the Preschool immediately. We are happy to administer medication. However, the medication must be in original packaging, have the child's name, doctor's name and dosage shown on the Pharmacy's sticker, and you should allow an extra ten minutes to complete the Short Term Medication form. You must also remember what time you last gave your child medication.



## Infectious Diseases

The National Health and Medical Research Council have supplied the following information regarding exclusion from the Preschool of a child suffering from the following diseases/ailments. Please inform staff if your child has any of the following so that we can let families and Health Department know if something is going around and avoid an epidemic. (Privacy and confidentiality are always maintained).

| CONDITION                        | EXCLUSION  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| HAND, FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE     | Until all blisters have dried.   |
| HIB                              | Exclude until they have completed a course of appropriate antibiotics.   |
| HEPATITIS A                      | Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness.                                     |
| HERPES – COLD SORES              | Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible. |
| INFLUENZA AND FLU-LIKE ILLNESSES | Exclude until well.  |
| IMPETIGO (SCHOOL SORES)          | Exclude until antibiotic treatment has commenced. Any sores on exposed skin should be covered with a watertight dressing.                                      |
| MEASLES                          | Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash.   |
| MENINGITIS (BACTERIAL)           | Exclude until well.  |
| MENINGOCOCCAL INFECTION          | Exclude until they have completed a course of an appropriate antibiotic.   |
| MUMPS                            | Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down.  |
| POLIOMYELITIS                    | Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Return after receiving medical certificate of recovery.   |
| RUBELLA (GERMAN MEASLES)         | Exclude for at least 4 days after the onset of rash and until the person feels well.   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| SALMONELLA, SHIGELLA                                 | Exclude until diarrhoea has ceased for 48 hours.  |
| STREPTOCOCCAL INFECTION<br>(INCLUDING SCARLET FEVER) | Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well. |
| TUBERCULOSIS   | Exclude until a medical certificate from an appropriate health authority is received.                     |
| WHOOPING COUGH                                       | Exclude the child for 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment.   |
| WORMS (INTESTINAL)                                   | Exclude if diarrhoea present.   |

## When should I not Send my Child

We are not equipped to care for sick children. However, we will do everything we can to comfort a child who becomes sick whilst in our care until someone can pick them up.

Please do not send your child to Preschool if they have:

- A runny, yellowy-green discharge from the nose
- High temperature
- Diarrhoea
- Red swollen or discharging eyes
- Vomiting
- Rashes
- Irritability
- Unusually tired or lethargic

Children who have been vomiting or had diarrhoea must not return to Preschool until forty-eight (48) hours after the last episode. Your child should not attend Preschool if they have had paracetamol (Panadol) or Ibuprofen (Nurofen) in the last 24 hours for a temperature.



## Incidents, Accident and Emergencies

The Teaching Director or Preschool Manager will contact parents or carers as soon as practically possible if your child is involved in a serious incident or accident or if they have a head injury of any kind.

Please make sure your emergency contact details are up to date at all times.

An incident report will be filled in for accidents, injuries and illnesses. This will contain details of the accident, incident, injury or illness, any first aid administered and signed by the educator, responsible person, and parent.

## **Children's Safety**

Never leave other children in the car while collecting your child/ren from Preschool

Always hold your child's hand when arriving and leaving the service.

Never leave a door or gate open. Do not hold the door or gate for another parent or child.

All staff have a valid Working with Children Check. These are checked regularly.

## **Work Health and Safety**

We welcome all feedback regarding the safety of our Preschool. If you see something that concerns you regarding safe work practices, the safety of building and equipment or general Work health and safety, please contact the Teaching Director or Preschool Manager immediately.