

PRINCIPLES (MONTESSORI PRINCIPLES)

1. Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships. (RESPECT FOR THE CHILD)

Educators who positively interact with the young child in their learning, providing consistent emotional support to develop the skills and understandings they need to interact positively with others. They also help children to learn about their responsibilities to others, to appreciate their connectedness and interdependence as learners and to value collaboration and teamwork.

2. Partnerships. (ABSORBENT MIND)

Educators work in partnership with families. Partnerships are based on the foundations of understanding each other's expectations and attitudes and build on the strength of each other's knowledge.

3. High expectations and equity. (SENSITIVE PERIODS)

Educators who are committed to equity believe in all children's capacity to succeed regardless of diverse circumstances and abilities, who recognise and respond to barriers to children achieving educational success. (Developing professional knowledge and working with other services)

4. Respect for diversity. (PREPARED ENVIRONMENT – auto education)

Respecting diversity means within the total environment (curriculum) valuing and reflecting the practises, values and beliefs of families – respecting the difference in families' home lives. Educators promote greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing and being.

Educators provide opportunities to learn about similarities and differences and about interdependence and how we can learn to live together.

5. Ongoing learning and reflective practice. (THE PREPARED ADULT)

Educators continually seek ways to build their professional knowledge and develop learning communities from the child, family, community including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders.

Educators engage in questions of philosophy, ethics and practice to support decision making about children's learning.

Critical reflection involves closely examining all aspects of events and experiences from different perspectives.

Critical reflective guide:

What is my understanding of each child?

What theories, philosophies and understandings shape and assist my work?

Who is advantaged when I work this way? Who is disadvantaged?

What questions do I have about my work? What am I challenged by? What am I curious about? What am I confronted by?

What aspects of my work are not helped by the theories and guidance that I usually draw on to make sense of what I do?

Are there other theories or knowledge that could help me to understand better what I have observed or experienced? What are they? How might those theories and that knowledge affect my practice?

PRACTICE (MONTESSORI PRACTICE)

Holistic approaches (Holistic)

Holistic approaches to teaching and learning recognise the connectedness of mind, body and spirit.

Responsiveness to children. (Follow the child)

Educators are responsive to all children's strengths abilities and interests.

Responsiveness enables educators to respectfully enter children's play and ongoing projects stimulate their thinking and enrich their learning.

Learning through play. (Play = work)

Play provides a supportive environment where children can ask questions, solve problems and engage in critical thinking. Children learn as they discover create improvise and imagine.

Intentional teaching. (Lessons/presentations)

Intentional teaching is deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful. They document and monitor children's learning.

Learning environments. (Prepared environment)

Learning environments are welcoming spaces when they reflect and enrich the lives and identities of children and families participating in the setting and respond to their interests and needs.

Cultural competence. (Multi-sensory approaches/ Cultural Areas)

Educators who are culturally competent respect multiple cultural ways of knowing seeing and living celebrate the benefits of diversity and have an ability to understand and honour differences.

Continuity of learning and transitions. (Importance of Transition Process)

In partnership with families educators ensure that children have an active role in preparing for transitions.

Assessment for learning. (Individual programme - strengths based)

Assessment for children's learning refers to the process of gathering and analysing information as evidence about what children know, can do and understand. It is an ongoing cycle that includes planning, documentation and evaluating children's learning.

The five Learning Outcomes in this Framework as outlined later provide educators with key reference points against which children's progress can be identified documented and communicated to families, other early childhood professionals and educators in schools.