

Bush Babes Playgroup

0-3 Year Old Program

“Let the children...run outside when it is raining; ... and, when the grass of the meadows is damp with dew, let them run on it ... with their bare feet; let them rest peacefully when a tree invites them to sleep beneath its shade; let them shout and laugh when the sun wakes them in the morning... When children come into contact with nature, they reveal their strength.”

Maria Montessori, The Discovery of the Child.

It has been well researched that the earliest years of a child's life are the most influential in the development of their brain. A pioneer in the field of educational research, Dr Maria Montessori observed that, during these years, children learn instinctively within their environment, absorbing information unconsciously to build their sense of identity and culture - a phenomenon she referred to as The Absorbent Mind*. When that environment is calm, ordered and cooperative it excites natural learning within the child, nurturing their intellectual, physical and social/emotional development.

*Refer to The Absorbent Mind [book] by Maria Montessori, first published in 1949.

Montessori Theory - the basics

Montessori Education focuses on helping children reach their full potential in all areas of life, encouraging personal growth at each child's own individual pace and development.

The Montessori approach is child-centred but adult guided, in a prepared environment that enables freedom of learning within structure. Mutual respect, tolerance and concern for others are considered paramount virtues of the Montessori community.

Dr Montessori developed materials and lessons based on these principles. The materials have a built-in control of error to enable the child to learn by correcting themselves rather than relying on adults to correct them. This builds the internal drive to persist through challenges and develops intrinsic motivation.

Early Learning in The Margaret River Montessori 0-3 Program

Our holistic program enables children and families to experience the joy of learning, providing experiences from which they can create knowledge and giving them time to enjoy the process.

The indoor and outdoor learning environments reflect order, beauty and simplicity and are set up in a way that allows children to choose and use the materials with minimal adult assistance. Parents are shown the importance of allowing their child to complete and repeat tasks without interruption or interference, as well as many other Montessori principles and practical ideas that can be transferred to the home environment.

The daily rhythms and culture of our program aim to develop self-esteem within the child and nurture a natural love of learning. Our time together aims to foster connection within ourselves, with one another and our natural environment.

What makes Bush Babes 0-3 Playgroup unique?

- The “Whole Child” Approach – understanding each child's individual human needs and tendencies.
- Focus on exploring the interconnectedness of nature and valuing our place in the natural world.
- The primary goal of a Montessori program is to help each child reach full potential in all areas of life. The 0-3 program facilitates the child's growing need for independence, order, self-discipline, movement and language and to increase the parents' awareness of their child's capabilities and needs.
- Activities promote the development of social skills, emotional growth and physical coordination as well as cognitive preparation.

Unlike a mainstream playgroup, the children are actively encouraged to participate with little adult assistance; to complete and repeat tasks without interruption or interference. This builds the child's attention span and sense of self- accomplishment whilst increasing the adult's awareness of the child's capabilities and quest for independence.

There is a wide range of age-appropriate activities available, which have been carefully prepared by an early childhood Program Facilitator who will observe, guide and offer support where necessary.

A range of activities is offered, including;

- **Language enrichment** - Literacy learning begins before birth. Talking and being read to are the first steps. Language enrichment activities include sound awareness games, a library corner, group sing-a-longs and story time.
- **Mathematical concepts** - Early concrete mathematical concepts are introduced in the form of puzzles, blocks and counting activities.
- **Exercises to refine eye-hand coordination** – Through use of puzzles and specific materials in the room.
- **Visual discrimination activities** – These allow the child to communicate and discriminate using their senses.
- **Practical life exercises** - Things that we do every day in caring for ourselves and our home. It also includes the social graces and courtesies we extend in maintaining harmonious social relations. For example: sweeping, pouring, washing dishes, using 'manners' and sharing.
- **Art and Cultural activities** - Include elements of the nature of the earth, its people, plants and animals. For example: working in the school's vegetable garden, developing fine and gross motor skills such as learning to sit up and hold a pencil, art and craft activities, music and dance.
- **Sensorial development** - These assist in awakening the mind to the stimuli that are received through the senses and organising and labelling them. For example: smelling jars, weight cylinders, mystery bag.

Together, we cultivate a calm atmosphere and value the child's opportunity to develop quiet focus and enjoyment as they explore their environment.

Sessions: 9:00 – 11:00am Tuesday and Wednesday

Fees: \$180 per child / per term (50% discount for second sibling)

Location: Margaret River Montessori School, 4-6 Clarke Road, Margaret River

Contact: Margaret River Montessori School Office, (08) 9757 2564 (Mon-Fri)

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“The education of even a small child, therefore, does not aim at preparing [them] for school, but for life.”

Maria Montessori.
