

Bush Babes Playgroup 0-3 Year Old Program

‘How much fuller and richer life would be if we saw the child in all their greatness, all their beauty, instead of focusing on all their little mistakes?’ ~ Maria Montessori

Introduction to the Montessori Theory

Maria Montessori was a remarkable Doctor and pioneer in education who developed her theory during the 1890’s in Italy. Through her observations she discovered that the child’s own natural desire to learn was achieved by allowing them the excitement of learning by choice in a calm, ordered, non-repetitive and cooperative environment in which intellectual and social development are linked.

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

Dr Montessori developed materials and lessons based on this concept. 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.

The Montessori approach is child-centred but adult guided, structured but free for learning and emphasises basics in an enjoyable way. Mutual respect, tolerance and concern for others is considered a paramount aspect of the Montessori community.

Montessori 0-3 Program

It has been well researched that the first six years of life are the most fundamental in the development of human beings and their potential. (Montessori Australia Foundation). This is when children learn instinctively from their environment using an unconscious process of absorption (Maria Montessori, *The Absorbent Mind*). Language acquisition is a clear example of this.

The indoor and outdoor learning environment reflects order, beauty and simplicity and is 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.

Early Learning from birth upwards; What makes Bush Babes 0-3 Playgroup unique?

- The “Whole Child” Approach
- Focus on exploring 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.

Under the direction of an early childhood Program Facilitator, the holistic program allows the child to experience the joy of learning, gives the child time to enjoy the process, ensures development of self-esteem and provides the experiences from which children create their knowledge.

Session Overview

Unlike a 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 and work available, which have been carefully prepared for 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.

We aim for a calm atmosphere and value the child's opportunity to develop quiet focus and, therefore, enjoyment in exploring 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)

enrolments@margmont.wa.edu.au (Thurs/Fri)



www.margmont.wa.edu.au • www.facebook.com/margaretrivermontessori
4-6 Clarke Road, Margaret River, Western Australia 6285
(08) 9757 2564 • montessori@margmont.wa.edu.au

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