



Melbourne Montessori School Quality Improvement Plan 2018

APRIL 1, 2018

Additional Notes:

- The Principal and Cycle One staff worked collaboratively on putting together the Melbourne Montessori School (MMS) Quality Improvement Plan 2018. During Cycle One meetings staff shared MMS strengths and opportunities for improvement which we included in our document. We have chosen the main elements from these for further improvements.
- Hard copies of these documents have been placed in a folder with other MMS ongoing QIP working document for all staff to review in the Staff Room.

Service details

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| Service name | | Service approval number | |
| Melbourne Montessori school | | SE00002775 | |
| Primary contacts at service | | | |
| Principal Gay Wales | | | |
| Physical location of service | | Physical location contact details | |
| Street | 741 Hawthorn Road, | Telephone | 95284478 |
| Suburb | Brighton East | Mobile | |
| State/territory | Victoria | Fax | 95284031 |
| Postcode | 3187 | Email | principal@mms.vic.edu.au |
| Approved Provider | | Nominated Supervisor | |
| Primary contact | John Bourikas | Name | Manojini Gamage |
| Telephone | 95284478 | Telephone | 95284478 |
| Mobile | | Mobile | |
| Fax | 95284031 | Fax | 95284031 |
| Email | bmanager@mms.vic.edu.au | Email | ManojiniG@mms.vic.edu.au |

Operating hours

The following table outlines our hours of operation, during which time children are in attendance at the service.

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|--------------|---------|---------|-----------|----------|---------|----------|--------|
| Opening time | 8.30 am | 8.30 am | 8.30 am | 8.30 am | 8.30 am | | |
| Closing time | 15.00pm | 15.00pm | 15.00pm | 15.00pm | 15.00pm | | |

Additional information about Melbourne Montessori School

We have street parking for visitors.

Provide additional information about your service—parking, school holiday dates, pupil-free days, etc.

We have street parking for visitors. We follow the standard Victorian state school term dates except in July when we have 3 weeks' holiday.

We have pupil – free days on 29th/30th January, 8th June, 16th July, 17th August, 8th October, 2nd November.

How are the children grouped at your service?

The children are in classes of approx. 22 children each.

Age 3-6 are in the one classroom.

2-year-old program is a class of 8 children.

Early Learners 2- 3

Write the name and position of person(s) responsible for submitting this Quality Improvement Plan

Principal, Gay Wales

For family day care services, indicate the number of educators currently registered in the service and attach a list of the educators and their addresses.

No. of educators:

Philosophy & Curriculum Approach of MMS

Developmental Approach to Education: Our educational approach is centred on the stages of human development. This approach includes keeping abreast of current theories on development, regular student observation, and a constant evaluation of the curriculum to ensure that it is appropriate for the developmental stages of our students. We recognise that the first six years are critical to a person's development. For that reason, the programs in toddler and early childhood are as important as any other level of the school. Investment of resources in the early childhood years will be made accordingly.

Individualisation: We follow the Montessori curriculum which, by design, is adaptable to different paces and styles of learning. Each child works within an established curricular framework that includes the school's expectations for basic academic achievement. If a child needs more direction at certain times or is not internally motivated in a given area, we feel it is our responsibility to acknowledge the personal preference but to guide the child toward that necessary work.

Active learning: We promote active rather than passive ("lecture and drill") learning by: encouraging students to pursue studies in areas of their personal interests; using hands-on, experiential learning, such as concrete manipulative learning materials, experimental discovery seminar discussions, independent library research, field investigation; creating an environment in which the child's personal success is the motivation for learning.

The Passage to Abstraction: We consistently work from a very concrete level of experience to the abstract. We begin with "the big picture" and work toward an increasing level of detail. This model is supported by a spiralling curriculum in which skills and concepts are presented and reintroduced at increasing levels of complexity and abstraction over the years.

Freedom within limits: We strive for a balance between freedom, order, and responsibility.

This is delivered through the Curriculum Organisation Policy, the Planning Policy, the Student Assessment and Reporting Policy and the Policies of the Board, the National Montessori Curriculum which includes Grace and Courtesy lessons, Bounce Back program, School Assemblies and through Staff Policies, Staff Meetings, individual meetings and regular Professional Development.

Values and Objectives

The Montessori Approach: The Montessori approach to learning in its most authentic understanding is the framework of our educational program. We understand that Maria Montessori's methods and materials are not a closed system; however, we commit to apply the words, wisdom, and practical advice of Maria Montessori and her closest associates e.g. Piaget, as the lens through which we select, design, and evaluate our program and curriculum.

- We believe that self-esteem, human dignity, and emotional well-being, as well as the ability to communicate and cooperate effectively with others, whether adult to adult, adult to child or child to child, must be valued as highly as academic and material success.
- We affirm that we will support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy including the commitment to elected government, the rule of law, equal rights for all before the law, freedom of religion, freedom of speech and association and the values of openness and tolerance.
- We affirm that we will support the ideal that all beings are interdependent and that every form of life has value regardless of its worth to human beings. We will support and promote the belief that we need to **protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life; and to** manage the use of renewable resources such as water, soil, forest products, and marine life in ways that do not exceed rates of regeneration and that protect the health of eco-systems.
- We affirm that education begins at birth and continues throughout life and that therefore all our values apply equally to adults, parents, teachers, guardians and all children in the School. We believe that intelligence is not rare among human beings.

- We nurture intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, and physical growth for the development of a whole, healthful being:

Emotional: Our emotions are complex and powerful and it is important that we learn to feel them fully and without fear, identify them correctly (in ourselves and others), respect them, and accept them. It is equally important, however, that we learn to harness their power and not let them control our lives unchecked.

Social: Our ability to interact positively with each other is essential to creating a peaceful world.

Physical: We acknowledge our place in the physical world and seek to discover, understand, and adopt the lifestyle habits most appropriate and beneficial for our bodies and minds.

Spiritual: While we feel it is each person's task to develop his or her own understanding of the nature of the universe and the individual's place in it, we proceed on the premise that our world is a beautiful, positive, loving place, a setting that provides the potential for each person to lead a full, free, joyful, and healthy life.

Intellectual: The intellect is an important tool in the shaping of our world. Through the development of our thinking abilities we refine our emotional responses, and we clarify our picture of the universe.

- We approach learning seeking to understand our students' uniqueness and guide them individually and at their own pace, so they fully realise their potential.
- We celebrate the natural diversity of human beings.
- We affirm the ideal of the Renaissance person. Our ultimate goal is to produce individuals who not only have learned how to learn, but also have a love of learning, a wide range of interests, and an openness to new ideas and possibilities.
- We affirm that self-esteem is one of the crucial ingredients for the full expression of a person's potential. We strive to nurture self-esteem at every level of learning.
- We believe true success is achieved through the willingness to take risks. Individual success and failure are simply feedback mechanisms by which growth and progress are achieved.
- We believe that wisdom can be cultivated, and consists of the ability to listen to your heart and know how best to put your intelligence to work for you.

Our mission at MMS is to:

- Provide an enriched and welcoming learning community that embodies the Montessori principles of respect for self, respect for others and respect for the environment as well as respect for our country's freedoms and democratic principles.
- Nurture, inspire and support each child's individual development.
- Foster the growth of self-confidence, independence, self-discipline, personal and social responsibility.
- Foster children's innate love of learning and to make their introduction to education a joyful and purposeful start to a journey of life-long learning.

The National Quality Standard

Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice

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| Standard 1.1 | The educational program enhances each child's learning and development. | |
| Approved learning framework | Element 1.1.1 | Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, and confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators. |
| Child-centred | Element 1.1.2 | Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program. |
| Program learning opportunities | Element 1.1.3 | All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning. |
| Standard 1.2 | Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development. | |
| Intentional teaching | Element 1.2.1 | Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions. |
| Responsive teaching and scaffolding | Element 1.2.2 | Educators respond to children's ideas and play and extend children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback. |
| Child directed learning | Element 1.2.3 | Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world. |
| Standard 1.3 | Educators and co-ordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child. | |
| Assessment and planning cycle | Element 1.3.1 | Each child's learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection. |
| Critical reflection | Element 1.3.2 | Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation. |
| Information for families | Element 1.3.3 | Families are informed about the program and their child's progress. |

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

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| Standard 2.1 | Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted. | |
| Wellbeing and comfort | Element 2.1.1 | Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation. |
| Health practices and procedures | Element 2.1.2 | Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented. |
| Healthy lifestyle | Element 2.1.3 | Healthy eating and physical activity is promoted and is appropriate for each child. |
| Standard 2.2 | Each child is protected. | |
| Supervision | Element 2.2.1 | At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard. |
| Incident and emergency management | Element 2.2.2 | Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented. |
| Child protection | Element 2.2.3 | Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect. |

Quality Area 3: Physical environment

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| Standard 3.1 | The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service. | |
| Fir for purpose | Element 3.1.1 | Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child. |
| Upkeep | Element 3.1.2 | Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained. |
| Standard 3.2 | The service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning. | |
| Inclusive environment | Element 3.2.1 | Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments. |
| Resources support play-based learning | Element 3.2.2 | Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning. |
| Environmentally responsible | Element 3.2.3 | The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible. |

Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements

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| Standard 4.1 | Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development. | |
| Organisation of educators | Element 4.1.1 | The organisation of educators across the service supports children's learning and development. |
| Continuity of staff | Element 4.1.2 | Every effort is made for children to experience continuity of educators at the service. |
| Standard 4.2 | Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical. | |
| Professional collaboration | Element 4.2.1 | Management, educators and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills. |
| Professional standards | Element 4.2.2 | Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships. |

Quality Area 5: Relationships with children

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| Standard 5.1 | Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child. | |
| Positive educator to child interactions | Element 5.1.1 | Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included. |
| Dignity and rights of the child | Element 5.1.2 | The dignity and the rights of every child are maintained. |
| Standard 5.2 | Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships. | |
| Collaborative learning | Element 5.2.1 | Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other. |
| Self-regulation | Element 5.2.2 | Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts. |

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities.

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| Standard 6.1 | Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role. | |
| Engagement with the service | Element 6.1.1 | Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions. |
| Parent views are respected | Element 6.1.2 | The expertise, culture, values, beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing. |
| Families are supported | Element 6.1.3 | Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing. |
| Standard 6.2 | Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing. | |
| Transitions | Element 6.2.1 | Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing relevant information and clarifying responsibilities. |
| Access and participation | Element 6.2.2 | Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program. |
| Community engagement | Element 6.2.3 | The service builds relationships and engages with its community. |

Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership

| Standard 7.1 | | Governance supports the operation of a quality service. |
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| Service philosophy and purpose | Element 7.1.1 | A statement of philosophy is developed and guides all aspects of the service's operations. |
| Management systems | Element 7.1.2 | Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service. |
| Roles and responsibilities | Element 7.1.3 | Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service. |
| Standard 7.2 | | Effective leadership build and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community. |
| Continuous improvement | Element 7.2.1 | There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place. |
| Educational leadership | Element 7.2.2 | The educational leader is supported and leads the development and implementation of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle. |
| Development of professionals | Element 7.2.3 | Educators, co-ordinators and staff members' performance is regularly evaluated and individual plans are in place to support learning and development. |

Melbourne Montessori Strengths:

During a period of reflection, staff felt that the following outlined the key strengths of our service:

- Provision of a safe and caring environment.
- Children's learning is closely observed and planned for accordingly. Programs are flexible and follow the interests of each child. We also have an area focused on cultural studies integrated into the Montessori Curriculum.
- Programs are based on individual children's abilities and interests. All Montessori environments encourage children to make choices. They always encourage children to solve their problems and develop independence.
- The children participate and work collaboratively in their daily routines and older children are encouraged to support the younger ones.
- Documentation on each child's learning is kept and made available when requested by the family. There is a blog site for each classroom that inform families of current learning outcomes for the group as well as special and cultural activities and celebrations.
- Teachers are provided weekly preparation time to prepare the learning environment and critically reflect on their observations of each child. Every child has an Individual Learning Plan as it is only with a deep understanding of the skills of the child in the classroom that all planning is developed week by week, and term by term.
- Teachers also have formal and informal meetings with Parents at regular intervals and reports are completed twice a year.
- Children are kept within sight of supervising staff at all times both inside and outside the classroom.
- Staff ratios are maintained at all times. Rosters are kept up to date and a process is in place to replace absent staff. Children are versed in safe practices through Grace and Courtesy lessons.
- Parent representatives are nominated for each class to organise social activities and inform all parents of class-based activities for example assisting new parents to the MMS community. This is a two-way street where Room Representatives meet with the Principal once per month to feedback any comments/requests/suggestions to changes in organisation/timing/curriculum/teaching methods.

- The School Board is made up of Parents and Board Meetings provide opportunities for their input for ongoing improvements to the school.
- The Parent Association is entirely made up of parents and meet monthly. They help develop a Wish List of changes for the School.
- The School Foundation is parent-based and they look at wider opportunities for pursuing grants to support change in the School.
- Parents are invited to provide support in various lessons: cooking, gardening, sports, excursions, incursions and cultural celebrations.
- Parent involvement in working bee and school open days.
- Grace and Courtesy lessons that teach children to manage their own behaviours are an integral part of the environment.
- The Bounce Back Resiliency Program is in place and geared to the needs of each group.
- There are large group times when children have an opportunity to listen to others and express their own point of view.
- Staff have the opportunity to undertake Professional Development in areas of interest or where they feel greater need for skill development. Other Professional Development opportunities include: Child Safety Programs for all staff, updates on health related/first aid aspects, guest speakers.

Melbourne Montessori School

2018 Opportunities for Improvement

During a period of self-assessment, staff determined the following opportunities for improvement.

| Quality Area | Issue identified during self-assessment What outcome or goal do we seek? | Priority | How will we get this outcome? | Who will be responsible for the work | Ongoing Reflection |
|---------------------------|---|----------|---|---|--------------------|
| QA 3 –3.1.1 | Outdoor play areas require greater areas of shade for protection from the elements & to provide areas for protected play during high heat/UV periods | H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plantings – determined in conjunction with School Administration Purchase/Erection of temporary and/or permanent shade providing structures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children/Staff School Administration | |
| QA3 - 3.1.1 & 3.2.3 | Better organisation of outdoor space to allow for easy access of materials for both children and staff that will allow for proper care of the materials and environment as well as providing for the children to be independently engaged in the pack away process. | H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sorting current storage Labelling of storage to allow easy access and pack away of materials Storing key materials in such a way that they are accessible by the children Examining additional storage facilities Replacing current storage along top sandpit area to improve safety and accessibility by children/staff. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education Staff working bee to sort/label materials Education Staff working with School Administration to determine options for additional storage & replacement of current storage. The Children | |

| Quality Area | Issue identified during self-assessment What outcome or goal do we seek? | Priority | How will we get this outcome? | Who will be responsible for the work | Ongoing Reflection |
|---|--|----------|--|--|--------------------|
| QA1 –QA3 1.1, 3.1.1 3.2.1, 3.2.2 | Creation of outdoor opportunities for the children that reflect the indoor environment and provide greater challenge for the children. | H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with the children for their opinion on experiences they would like to see in the outdoor environment • Use of materials that can be used in a flexible manner so that experiences can be changed according to children’s observed needs. • Determining future equipment needs that will meet the flexibility objective. • Observation of the children to determine needs. • Working as a team to determine types of activities that may meet this objective. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Children • Educator team • School Administration | |
| QA3 - 3.1.1 | Future purchase of equipment should be fit for purpose i.e.: for outdoor environment to ensure longevity of materials, thereby being more cost effective over the long term. | M | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate future equipment purchases to ensure they are specifically designed for use in the outdoor environment and constructed of robust materials. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators • School Administration | |

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| QA3 -3.1.2. | Cleanliness and ongoing maintenance of outdoor materials | M | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with the children as to how we could best care for our outdoor materials. • Development of procedure to ensure regular cleaning of outdoor materials • Development of procedure to ensure materials requiring maintenance or disposal are identified in a timely manner. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff working party | |
| QA3 - 3.1 | Determination for new furniture and/or maintenance of current classroom furniture. | M | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a procedure to determine need & timeline for new classroom furniture. • Development of a process to ensure regular maintenance of current classroom furniture and identification of furniture for preplacement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Administration | |
| QA3 -3.1.2 | Issues identified with ongoing building maintenance in regards to repair of physical damage/deterioration and pest issues. | M | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During a Cycle Meeting revisiting current process for identifying and prioritising building maintenance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Administration & Staff | |
| QA3 | <p>Issues identified with ventilation in Hall being inadequate during hot weather.</p> <p>Issues identified with Hall being left in a workable manner by all parties ready for ongoing use.</p> | M | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestions for workable solutions by hall users and School Administration. • Working with all hall users to develop a procedure for leaving hall in workable manner at the conclusion of use. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff/students who utilise hall • School Administration | |
| QA2 - 2.1.1 | To provide a supervised space within the classroom where an | M | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a classroom rest pack that can be easily stored, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff working party | |

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| | unwell child is able to rest whilst waiting to be picked up. | | maintained and accessed for use in such circumstances. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine whether this needs to be classroom based or a number of packs created for central storage. | | |
| QA1, QA2, QA6 - 6.2.3 | To increase opportunities for children & staff to engage and connect with the broader community. | M | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities for children to engage in excursions in the local community within walking distance of the school. Look at opportunities to incorporate Road Safety as elements of these excursion. Investigate opportunities to engage local resources, school community in incursions to the school. Consult the children for suggestions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff working party The Children Families | |
| QA1, QA3 - 3.2.3 | To reconnect with sustainability practices within our service such as recycling and composting. | H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation of opportunities to integrate practices into day to day practices Engaging the children to assist in developing such practices Looking to further integrate practises into program learning opportunities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff member as a sustainability advocate The Children | |
| QA4 - 4.2 | Increased opportunities for all educators to observe in other classrooms and settings | M | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities & means for staff to observe in other MMS classrooms across cycles. Investigate opportunities & means outside of MMS for staff to visit both Montessori and Non-Montessori based environments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Staff Staff working party | |

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| QA1, QA2, QA5, QA6 | Providing greater assistance to children and families from different cultural backgrounds. | H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff (including LDU) engaging in PD to increase knowledge of working with children and families who have EAL. • Sharing between staff of classroom strategies in place for EAL students/families • Translation of key school documents such as Parent Handbook into primary school community languages other than English e.g.: Mandarin • Investigating other relevant multi-lingual community resources that could be sourced by the school for use with school families. • Strategies for best supporting EAL families around key periods such as report and parent teacher interviews. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff • Staff working party | |
| QA7 – 7.1.3 & 7.1.2 QA6 | Communication in regards to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children commencing at the school • Parent communication in general and in particular during an instance of grievance. | H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To drill down further to pinpoint key areas of concern. • Examine current school procedures for improvement opportunities in procedure or staff following of procedure. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Administration • Education staff | |