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COMMUNICATION:
School communication
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Introduction

Thank you for enrolling your child at Casa Mia Montessori School. Placing your child under another’s guidance and care is a major milestone in the life of your child and yourselves.

It is the aim of Casa Mia Montessori School that each parent will feel very much a part of their child’s life at the school and will take an active role during their time here. The parents’ presence, commitment and communication will enhance their child’s education and continue to uphold the strength of the Casa Mia Montessori School spirit.

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the organisation of Casa Mia Montessori School. With this information, parents will be able to determine how they can best play an active part in their child’s education and the school.

- The first aspect of your involvement is Support. Supporting the educational experience and the Montessori philosophy at home will be the best way for your child to truly benefit from the effort extended by the staff. Suggestions are below each heading.

- The second aspect of your involvement is Commitment. Peruse the handbook to find the activity that best fits your talents, time and energies and then make yourself available either as a School Board member or team member. As part of the school community your attendance and involvement in the school is invaluable as an example to your child and to the culture of the school.

- The third aspect of your involvement, Communication, cannot be emphasised enough. If ever a question or concern arises, do not hesitate to ask a teacher, your Class Liaison, the Principal no matter how trivial you think the matter may be. A molehill in the mind of an adult can be a mountain in the mind of a child. The ability of a child to sense concerns or frustration however subtly portrayed by an adult is truly amazing. In addition, whatever communication you can give to the teacher about the nature of your child’s day to day experience (i.e. grandparents visiting, Daddy/Mummy away on business, a sick pet or nightmares - anything you perceive as affecting the child’s behaviour) can only help them to better understand your child.
SUPPORT

Mission Statement
To foster the development of the whole child.

Vision Statement
To encourage the development of independent and confident students equipped with the skills that will enable them to reach their potential.

Philosophy
We believe in the education of the whole child to enable them to reach their full potential physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually.

Our School Values:

INTEGRITY
We strive to uphold our principles, so that our actions reflect our words and thoughts.

COMMUNITY SPIRIT
We aspire to make a positive impact on our community, by each bringing our best selves and working together towards shared goals.

RESPONSIBILITY
We believe we are accountable for our words, actions and choice

PURPOSEFULNESS
Every moment matters, every effort counts. We endeavour to be present and mindful, to create intentional experiences for ourselves and those around us.

UNITY WITHIN DIVERSITY
Differences enrich us! We promote social inclusion by celebrating individual differences.

Education and Curriculum
Casa Mia aims to follow the Montessori pedagogy which was developed in the early 20th century by Dr. Maria Montessori. From her observation of children and how they learn, she designed and crafted specially prepared learning environments for them. She observed that a foundation for developing a child’s potential was by providing a safe, nurturing environment in which students could engage in and concentrate for long periods on interesting and developmentally appropriate learning activities.

The ideal Montessori classroom environment aims to provide:

- Learning materials especially suited to the child’s needs at each stage of development.
- Learning materials which are sequential in difficulty, provide continual challenge and in the first stage of development, self-correcting, allowing the child independence in learning.
- A three-year span of ages in the classroom which supports the children’s social learning, peer tutoring and promotes cooperation between the younger and older children.
- Self-discipline by providing clear, appropriate behaviour guidelines and academic choices.
- The teacher is the dynamic link between the child and the prepared environment, acting as a facilitator in the learning process.
- Working consistently to teach courteous behaviour and conflict resolution, the teacher balances the needs of each child with the need for order and harmony in the classroom.
<table>
<thead>
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<td>to take care of everyone in the community</td>
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<td>have our belongings safe</td>
<td>to take care of other peoples’ belongings</td>
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<tr>
<td>work in a quiet place</td>
<td>to be quiet in work time to allow other people to work</td>
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<td>be treated fairly</td>
<td>to treat others fairly</td>
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<td>work in a clean school</td>
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<td>use school materials and equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>be heard and have our opinion heard</td>
<td>to listen and pay attention to other peoples’ opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be respected personally</td>
<td>to respect everyone in the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learn</td>
<td>to allow others to learn</td>
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School Routine & Procedures

Absences

The roll is called at 8.45am.

If a child is absent for any reason the parent or guardian should contact the school either by:

- telephoning the school office (the Administration Office maintains a message book for recording verbal absence advice which is passed on to the class teacher.)

- sending an email to admin@casamiamontessori.wa.edu.au by 8.45am on the day of the absence or the day before the foreseeable absence.

If the child is unaccounted for by 9.00 am the School will contact the family to notify them of the absence.

The first day of attendance following the absence, a note is required explaining the absence which must be sent with the child and given to the Class teacher.

The Class teacher records the type of absence in the register and stores the absentee note or medical certificate in the classroom.

If a child is absent for two consecutive days without explanation the Principal will make contact with the family by telephone or email.

If after making thorough enquiries the Principal does not receive a satisfactory explanation for the absence the matter will be referred to the School.Tracking@education.wa.edu.au.

Families of children that take extended leave of absence, for longer than three days, which is not due to illness are sent a letter reminding them that from pre-primary (5yrs old) school attendance is compulsory.

School attendance is compulsory for enrolled children during school hours.
Arrival Routine

School Hours

½ days:     Arrive 8.30am   finish    12.00pm
Full days:  Arrive 8.30am   finish      3.00pm

Office Hours

The School Officer is available to answer any administrative queries or concerns between the hours of 8.00am and 2.00pm Monday to Friday. An answering machine is available after these hours for messages and these will be checked regularly.

Children's House

Your child will appreciate arriving at the School at 8.30am prompt. Children love to work together and do not enjoy feeling left out or different.

On your child's first day, the starting time is staggered to allow the teachers to settle the rest of the children before the new arrivals require attention.

Any concerns regarding separation in the mornings should be discussed with the relevant teacher. Remember, all children are individuals and may handle separation in a variety of ways.

Recommendations:

• Deal with your own anxieties first. Find out as much as you can about the School. Make an effort to meet other families who are in the School already or also about to join. Think about your own school days and recall the happy parts.
• Talk to your child about the bits that you loved at school.
• Over a number of weeks, with your child, collect the various pieces of clothing, the school bag, the snack/lunch box, water bottle, hat and shoes, one at a time.
• Make a place at home where the school bag and belongings will be kept. A hook at an appropriate height for the bag and hat and an appropriate place for the school shoes below.
• With your child, name all their possessions and help your child to recognise their name.
• Have dummy runs using the snack/lunch box. Take a look at the recommend list of food and choose with your child what to put in. Prepare the food together. Help your child practise opening and closing the box until they can do it on their own. Celebrate!
• Have your child use the water bottle. Have your child practise opening and closing the water bottle.
• Practise together, packing the school bag. Practise taking out the snack box and water bottle and decide where it is to be put at home in readiness for washing and filling for the next day.
• Read the book the School has sent to help your child begin to make connections with the School.
• Make a plan for the first day. When getting out of the car, help your child put their bag on their back, hat on their head, take their hand and walk firmly and
confidently to the classroom door. Give a firm loving good bye and hand your
child over to the teacher. The quicker this is, the easier it is on everyone: your
child, yourself, the teacher and the rest of the children in the class.
• Be prompt for collection. Give your child a big hug. Do not ask any leading
questions. Wait for your child to tell you about their day.
• Make a plan for yourself for the first day. Everyone finds the first day
challenging.

Lower & Upper Primary

Arrival time is 8.30am sharp

There are two “Kiss & Drop” parks (red cones) for Lower and Upper Primary children
directly in front of the main gate on the west side.

Arriving on time

It is of utmost importance to your child that he/she arrives at School on time and has
the opportunity to prepare him or herself for the day’s activities.

Arriving late means your child will miss the day’s setup routine and be out of sync for
the rest of the day gaining very little from the day at school.

The late arrivals also disrupt the rest of the children who have already settled.

Being punctual for school also gives your child the clear message that you think that
school is important.

What to bring to school?

Food for morning snack and lunch

Parents are asked to provide nutritious snacks and lunch in a labelled lunch box.
Wholesome food such as a sandwich and a piece of fruit is a suggestion.
Children will be asked to take uneaten food home, rather than to throw it away.
This will help you determine how much your child is eating whilst at school.

The School has a Health Policy that gives recommendations for the food consumed
at school: do not send cakes, biscuits, chocolate or other high sugar content foods.
Highly processed food is also discouraged, such as packaged cheeses, savoury
biscuits etc. These are special occasion foods and will be sent home with a note from
the staff.

Each child needs to bring a named water bottle every day.

The School may notify you from time-to-time of other foods not to bring to the school.
The children are not allowed to share foods; however, it is possible that they will do.

Include your child in the preparation of their snack and lunch from a choice of no
more than three acceptable foods. This will help them develop awareness of food
preparation and self-awareness leading to independence.

From the age of four children are able to help assemble simple food dishes and from
the age of nine are able to prepare simple meals from scratch. It does take a bit of
time doing these activities with a child but vital for the child in their work in becoming
an adult.
“The child can develop fully by means of experience in his environment. We call such experiences ‘work.” Maria Montessori

Recommendations:

- Think about what your child likes to eat at home and try to translate that into a snack/lunch box option.
- Carrot sticks, cucumber sticks, sugar peas or a handful of cherry tomatoes.
- Fruit – apple pieces, orange quarters, smaller fruit such as berries in a small container and soft fruit such as melon in a container.
- If you include ice blocks, a small container of yoghurt. A word of caution – show your child how to open the container and how to eat it; make sure the yoghurt is low sugar.
- Small blocks of cheese cut from a large block of cheese. Avoid the highly processed cheeses.
- Try putting together a small picnic in the lunch box - slices of tomato, ham, grated carrot, grated cheese and some bread and butter - so your child can build their own sandwich.
- Homemade pikelets are a great snack, easy to make ahead of time.
- Visit websites such as http://www.kidspot.com.au/Back-to-School-Lunch-box-nutrition-Nutritious-lunch-boxes for ideas
- Aim for homemade, as close to source, reduced salt, sugar free food (whatever the form of sugar). In the long run, the effort is worth it on so many fronts.
- Sit down to meals with your child at home. Model the table manners that ensure people are able to eat together – keeping the food together on the plate, taking small bites, chewing with the mouth closed, speaking when the mouth is empty, speaking quietly, and listening.
- Show your child how to clean up after a meal – where plates are placed, sweeping the floor around the table.
- Model washing hands before and after a meal.

School bag

The school bag should be

- suitable to carry a lunch box and drink bottle.
- easily managed by your child to accommodate extra clothes, raincoats, schoolwork etc.
- of a size that your child can carry it on their back without injury. Carrying their own bag to and from the car is essential for your child to develop their muscles.
- Walking into school and the classroom is an important step to developing independence
- To support your child’s independence, MAKE SURE THAT EVERYTHING IS LABELLED WITH YOUR CHILD’S NAME. In this way the child can take ownership of their possessions and develop a sense of responsibility.
Birthdays

Each child’s birthday is celebrated with a special ceremony in the classroom. If your child would like to bring in a treat for the other children it is suggested that it is either a platter of fruit or lightly iced individual cupcakes. Discuss the arrangements with the class teacher.

If you plan to invite other children to a birthday party place the invitations in the family pigeonhole. This makes it less obvious to those children who do not receive one.

Recommendations:

- Take the opportunity to create a ‘Time Line’ book for your child. These books have a page for each year of your child’s life with a photograph and a short paragraph describing your child’s activities for the year. The book is intended as a celebration of your child’s life and a visual prompt of the passing of time. The book will be shared with the class on your child’s birthday. For an example of a ‘Time Line’ Book ask your class teacher.
- Find out from the teacher when the birthday celebration will take place and see if you will be able to attend.
- Share the celebration and be in the moment. Taking photographs distracts the child’s attention from the lesson.

Clothing

As a Montessori School that places emphasis on providing the children with opportunities to develop agency, Casa Mia Montessori does not expect the children to wear a school uniform each day to school.

It is encouraged that the uniform be worn on special occasions and excursion/incursion days as a minimum. This expectation is for two reasons. Firstly, on an excursion, from a safety and duty of care stance, the children are easily identified by their uniform. Secondly, children wearing the uniform represent the school to the public.

When the children reach around six years old they are going into an intense social period when they want to belong to a group. This is when they will in all probability ask to wear the uniform regularly.

The uniform consists of a blue polo shirt, blue bush hat or legionnaire’s hat and a blue zip jacket for winter. All items have the school logo printed on them. The bottom half of clothing should be navy blue but otherwise of the child’s choice. The uniform is ordered through the office at the beginning of each term for an expected delivery at the beginning of the following term. A stock of hats is kept in the office.

It is advised that when the children are not wearing the uniform, comfortable play clothes that are easy to take on and off are most suitable. “Sunday best” clothes are not advisable as some of the activities can be messy. Likewise, ‘dress up’ clothes are not suitable and are a distraction for the children. Appropriate clothing includes t-shirts (no shoestring straps, micro tops or singlets) shorts or skirts just above the knee, track suit pants, jeans jumpers and windcheaters. Girls wearing short shorts must wear tights under the shorts. There should be no offensive language, slogans or military fatigues.
Toileting

*Children must be able to use the bathroom independently before they start at school.*

In case of bathroom mishaps in the Children’s House, please put a spare set of clothes in a plastic bag and leave it in your child’s bag.

In the event of a mishap, it is necessary that your child is able to change their clothes unaided. Consideration must be given to the remaining children who remain in the care of only one adult whilst your child is being attended to.

If child has frequent toileting mishaps, the teacher will arrange for your child to be picked up immediately.

The Principal will then arrange a meeting with the parents to review current arrangements to the child’s enrolment.

**Recommendations:**

- With your child, sort their wardrobe into school and non-school clothes.
- Together, sort out sun smart clothes and non-sun smart clothes and make a pile of school clothes.
- Starting at three years old, let your child choose their own clothes to wear to school from a choice of three sets.
- Ensure that your child has a full set of school uniform for excursions and incursions.
- Give your child the experience of different fastenings to assist their fine motor coordination.
- Spend time helping your child learn to dress and undress themselves.
- Spend time helping your child become toilet trained.

**Naming of Personal Belongings**

All personal items should be labelled in waterproof pen with your child’s name in lower case letters e.g. Paul and not PAUL.

**Recommendations:**

- Do the naming with your child; help them learn the different ways their name can be written.

**Hats**

The School has a "no hat, no play" policy.
A hat should be kept in your child’s bag.
The hat must shade the face, the tops of ears, neck – CAPS ARE NOT ACCEPTED.

Hats are worn:
- To and from school. The sun is out all day, not just at playtime.
- Whenever the children are outside.
Sunscreen:
The children are taught how to apply sunscreen in their classes and the daily routine includes the children applying sunscreen before going out to play. If your child needs a specific sunscreen, send a bottle well labelled for use in the class.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that you model wearing hats at home
- Encourage your child to wear a hat at all times when outside
- Show your child how to apply their own sunscreen at home. Apply sunscreen in the morning before coming to school. Most sunscreens are effective for approximately 4 hours.
- When your child stays in for playtime due to not bringing a hat to school, greet the news matter of factly. Then discuss how to ensure that this will not happen again. Support the decisions that your child makes to solve the problem even if you know they will not work! When it happens again, help your child go through the problem again. Support your child’s developing independence.
- If your child does not remember their hat, do not make another journey to school. The quickest way to learn is by making mistakes. Honour your child’s right to learn.

Shoes

The children are on the verandas, in the playground and do fitness every day of the week. The children need to wear shoes or sandals that support their feet for these activities.

Recommendations:

- Find shoes the child can put on themselves; this builds their confidence.
- Practise putting the shoes on and off at home.
- Laces are recommended from around five years old. Being able to tie laces is a valuable fine motor skill and activity to build the memory.
Health

School Immunisation Policy

On enrolment of a child at the School, parents will have provided the School with a copy of the child's immunisation records or alternatively an Immunisation Abstention Form if the child is not immunised. If you suspect your child has a communicable disease, have your diagnosis confirmed by a doctor and inform the School immediately. The doctor will inform you of the period of time your child will need to be out of contact.

The School adheres to the Department of Health recommendations requiring non-immunised children to be kept home in the event of a child at the school contracting an infectious disease that suggests quarantine according to the Health Department Guidelines. The School will contact families of children not immunised immediately.

Contact the office if there you have any queries.

Health Procedures

1. If your child has had a fever, diarrhoea or been vomiting during the night, they must not be brought to school.

2. If it is obvious that a child is unwell at school, then a parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to collect the child as soon as possible.

3. The class teacher will contact the Office, who will contact the parents. On arrival at school the parent will follow the procedure – Children leaving school during school hours

Medication/Allergies

If it is necessary for your child to take medication during school hours, drugs and instructions may be left with the teacher. The teacher will endeavour to ensure the medication is given but no responsibility will be taken for missed medications. Parents are encouraged to ring the School at the time the medication is due to remind the child/teacher. All medications with no exceptions must stay in the possession of an adult at all times i.e. parents to hand medications directly to the teacher in charge with clear instructions.

The medication must be supplied in a measured single dose clearly labelled with the child’s name, volume & type of medicine. (e.g. 5mls of Panadol for John Smith to be given at 12 noon). The instructions must be recorded and signed for on the Class medical sheet.

All children have an emergency contact and medical information form completed on enrolment. This form will be updated yearly. Any allergies or medical conditions must be noted on this form. In the case of serious or potentially life threatening conditions an Action Plan must be supplied by the parent/guardian. The Action Plan will include a recent photograph and be reviewed by the parent with the class teacher. Copies will be kept throughout the School and taken on excursions. Where required an
EpiPen or asthma reliever must be supplied by the parent (and kept in date) to the class teacher to be kept in the class first aid kit.

**Head lice**

Children with head lice are to remain at home until the infestation has been treated. If a child is found to have head lice at school, the child will be sent home immediately. The School will inform all families so that precautions can be taken to reduce the likelihood of infestation and cross-contamination.

**School Nurse**

Casa Mia Montessori School does not have a resident School Nurse.

The School does use the services of the School Health Nurse provided by the Department of Health. The services offered include screening and education programmes.

**Accidents and incidents**

If your child is involved in a minor accident or incident a report will be written up by the attending member of staff. A copy of the report will be handed over to parents/guardians on collection.

A report will be written up for anything more than a minor incident. Parents will be called in the event of a major accident. In the event of a behavioural incident, the parents may be called if the principal considers it necessary to provide cooling down/thinking space.
Delivering and Collecting

Parking

Casa Mia Montessori School is fortunate to have access to ample public parking in the street and in the carpark towards the bowling club and tennis courts. The two bays opposite the school gate are marked with red cones. These two bays are “KISS and DROP” bays. Children in the Lower and Upper Primary classes may be dropped from these bays with parents/guardians watching as they enter the school grounds before leaving. DRIVERS MAY NOT LEAVE THEIR VEHICLE WHEN PARKING IN THESE 2 BAYS.

Two bays under the trees are reserved for Parents with babies. Please keep them free for that use.

Children’s House

Plan to be at the School a few minutes before the session is over so that your child is reassured. For the half day children, pick up is 12 noon, for the full day children, 3:00pm from the southern verandas. Wait quietly on the benches outside the rooms on the west side. The children are released directly to their care givers.

Lower Primary

Pick up is 3.00pm from the west veranda.

Upper Primary

Pick up is 3.00pm from the east veranda.

Late Pick up

In the event of a late pick up due to unforeseen circumstances, a student will be escorted to the Principal’s Office where he/she will wait until his/her parent/guardian arrives to collect him/her. Administration Office hours are 8.00am to 2.00pm daily. The Principal and staff do answer the telephone until 3.30pm. If pickup will be later than 4.00pm the parent/guardian of the student is required to make alternative arrangements for the pickup of the student and to inform the School of the arrangements that have been made.
Safety

Emergency response

In the event of an emergency situation the Principal (or Senior Staff member) becomes the person in charge and assumes the role of Emergency Response Coordinator and is responsible for liaising with emergency services personnel. The School has emergency evacuation and lock-down procedures and instructions for dealing with threatening situations. All staff and students regularly participate in evacuation and lock down procedures.

After School Responsibility

Students are collected promptly from their classes at 12.00 or 3.00pm by their parents or a designated person. Children are not permitted to play in the playground before or after school as they are not supervised by staff members. Parents/guardians are asked to vacate the premises within 15 minutes of the end of school unless they have specific business in the School. Children must be supervised by their parents/guardians at all time.

While families are on the School property, all School policies must be adhered to including Sun Protection and clothing.

Access to Students

On enrolment, families notify the School which persons are entitled to have access to students whilst they are in the care of the School, including those people able to collect their child/children from school.

The School must have written notice of any Family court orders relating to restricted access to any child in the School.

Children leaving school during school hours

To support the School staff in providing care for your child the following procedure must be followed. The procedure applies to all children who have been delivered to school at the start of the session but need to leave during the course of the day for various reasons that are not to do with the educational programmes:

• Medical appointment
• Taken ill
• Miscellaneous

Procedure
1. If the appointment, session or meeting has been pre-arranged, an email to enrolments from the parent(s)/guardian(s) stating the time and date the children will be absent from school is required. Contact the Office on 9279 2209 or email admin@casamiamontessori.wa.edu.au

2. The person with permission to collect the child is required to sign out the child in the administration office prior to picking the child up from the classroom.

3. The teacher is to record the child as absent if the child is to miss half a day. If the child is arriving late due to an appointment in the morning the child will be recorded as late.
4. If the child is only going out for an appointment and returning to school that day, the parent/guardian is required to sign the child both out and back in at the administration office.

**Outcome**
Once a child has been delivered to the school for a day session, the school staff is aware of the location of the child and who the child is with.

**Child Protection**
The School has a duty of care to all its students to ensure they are protected from harm. The School has a particular responsibility to protect the children while they are on school premises and also to report when it is believed that a child is at risk outside the School. It is compulsory for the School to report concerns they may have relating to the abuse of children.

**Harassment, Discrimination and Bully**
Harassment, discrimination and bullying against another member of the School community is not acceptable. This includes, but is not limited to, child-to-child, teacher-to-child and parent-to-teacher situations. The School expects all its community members to treat one another with respect and courtesy at all times. Where a complaint is raised, the Grievance policy process will be undertaken to ensure all parties receive a fair hearing.

**Physical Restraint**
Physical restraint of students will be used only as a last resort and where safety of self or others is threatened.

**Excursions**
Excursions outside the School provide great learning opportunities for the students as well as being very enjoyable. Information regarding any excursions to be undertaken by the various classes will be provided to parents/guardians prior to participating in the activity. Written consent is required before a child can attend an excursion and will need to be passed to the teacher involved. Where a child cannot participate in the excursion alternative supervision will be available during school hours.

**Occupational Health and Safety**
Casa Mia’s Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) policy and procedures have been developed with the interests of the children, staff and volunteers in mind. The School undertakes to:
- Manage the School environment and activities to comply with applicable safety laws and regulations.
- Regularly review any incident/accident reports and assess any corrective measures undertaken.
- Apply the principles of hazard identification, risk assessment and controls.
- Ensure appropriate training is undertaken by the staff and updated as required by law.
- Ensure that all staff, volunteers and contractors undertake safe work practices, communicating these to others in their activities at the School.
School life

Excursions

School excursions will be notified through the class notice boards/family pigeon holes, the School calendar and the written notice. Permission from both parents/guardians is given by signing the Excursion Permission Form. If your child has not had the permission signed they will be required to remain under supervision at school during the excursion.

Christmas and Easter

Cards may be given to other children by placement in pigeon holes. In keeping with the School Health Policy – Healthy food; the giving of lollies and chocolate gifts is not encouraged.

Birthday Invitations

Please do not hand out birthday invitations, place them in the family pigeon holes for collection.

Toys and electronic devices

While some children have favourite toys or new gifts they would like to show at school, these items must be left at home. If the toy/device comes to school, it will held by the teacher and returned when the child is collected. There are many interesting activities and materials available in the rooms. The children may bring anything natural that they may have collected or found themselves, flowers, rocks, shells etc. which may be of general interest for sharing. Books are also of interest to the other children.

Student Bag Hooks

Each child has their own hook. Children are required to carry and hang their own bags on their hooks.

In the Children’s House the hooks will be named with the children’s names and this will be one of their first ‘reading’ experiences.

Lost Property Box

Clothing that is marked is generally returned to the child immediately.

All items that are not labelled are placed in the Lost Property Boxes located below the tables at the entrance of each classroom. The box is cleared at the end of each term. School uniforms are put into the second hand uniform box and the remainder goes to the Salvos.

Second Hand Uniforms

Second Hand Uniforms are available from the office for $5 per item. These monies will go toward fundraising.
Toileting

All children enrolled at Casa Mia Montessori must be able to use the bathroom independently. In case of an occasional toileting accident, the child should be able to independently clean themselves and change their clothes. Children must wear clothing that they can easily and independently manage – dress for success! If the child needs help they must be able to ask the adults for help.

If a child has a messy soiling accident the teacher will arrange for the child to be picked up by the parents immediately. If accidents are continual, (three or more in a week) the Principal will then arrange a meeting with the parents to review current arrangements to the child’s enrolments.

“Children should be actively involved in changing wet/soiled clothes, wiping their own bodies and cleaning any area where they have had an accident. This is teaching logical consequences. Parents who continue to do these personal acts for their children are limiting the development of important personal skills”.
Julie Jenkins Sathe – “Enlightened Discipline”

http://enlighteneddiscipline.com/toilettraining.html (recommended reading)

Recommendations

- Spend time helping your child learn to dress and undress themselves
- Spend time helping your child become toilet trained
- Spend time role playing asking for help

Transition from half day to full day attendance

Children who have turned four (4yrs), transition gradually to 5 full days a week. The process starts with two afternoons a week for one term or 10 weeks, whichever comes first, building up to 4 full days by the beginning of the next term. By the time a child is five years old they must be attending five full days a week. Speak to your child’s teacher about the finer details.

Observations in the Classroom

Parents are encouraged to observe their child in the classroom, once a term. The children appreciate your interest and the experience helps parents to learn more about the Montessori Method of education. There are usually no observations in the first four weeks of Term 1 in Children’s House as we give the new children time to settle.

Parents of new children will need to wait until their child’s second term to observe. Note that your child’s behaviour may be influenced by your presence, so it may not be a typical day for him/her.
Class Contact Lists

In the interest of privacy, class lists for parents are voluntary. If you do not mind being contacted by other families in your child’s class, fill in your privacy act and permission slip. The list will be copied and distributed to each class.

Parent Information Sessions

Parent sessions are held on a regular basis. These are intended to help parents understand what their children are undertaking at the school. The sessions are enjoyable and informative and will give you a better appreciation of your child’s educational and social growth. It is also an opportunity to meet other parents and to express any thoughts about the school’s functioning. Parents will be notified of these sessions through the Newsletter and via email.

Orientation Sessions

Orientation Sessions are held regularly to assist the induction of new families to the School and to allow existing families to learn about their child’s next school “phase”. It is very important that a representative of each new family and those with children transitioning from Children’s House to Lower or Upper Primary during the year attends these sessions.

Community Days

The School holds one Open Day a term when parents are invited to join their children in an activity either inside or outside the classroom. The dates are found on the school calendar (e.g. Harmony Day, Mums Tea, Dads Breakfast).

Whole School Get-togethers

An end of term get together is held each term. The dates are found on the School calendar.

Reporting

Written reports on the children’s activities are given in Term 2 and Term 4 of each year for children aged 4 and older.

Parent/Teacher Meetings

Parents are encouraged to attend formal consultations to discuss their child’s progress. Meeting times are posted on classroom notice boards at the end of each semester.

The teachers are available to meet parents after school hours during the year. It is inappropriate to discuss matters with the teachers at the classroom door or during class hours unless invited to do so by the teacher. All teachers have a communication book in which parents can write any concerns or requests to the teachers.

Each teacher has a school email address that can be found in the class handbook.
**School Calendar**

The school year dates are published in the Newsletter and Website and a term calendar is sent out in the first week of each term with the newsletter.

**Homework**

The child’s work is to construct a ‘man’ orientated to his time and place in the world. The greatest gift a parent can give a child is the time to share their life. This gives the child the chance to understand the experiences that they need to become adults adapted to their place and time in the world.

As partners in your child’s education it is anticipated that you will sow the seeds of learning; that you will model and share your literacy and numeracy skills. Within reason, you will share your daily life and include your child in the home chores. It is faster to do everything yourself but this will be failing in your duties as a parent.

**Suggestions:**

- Read to/with your child every day from a variety of sources: books, magazines, newspapers, instructions on packets, street signs
- Use numbers with your child everyday: names of numbers, value of numbers, how many, how long, how much, how much more/less
- Read the time and talk time with your child
- Talk with your child about sequence: what comes next, before, after.
- Use real money with your child giving them an idea of value of money and indirect lessons in the decimal system.
- Include your child in the cooking; even if they never become a great chef they will be able to measure.
- Consult websites about reasonable expectations of a child’s work at home. e.g. you-can’t-hurry-love-homework-the-Montessori
- The activities should be real and in context. Try to avoid artificial learning. E.g. cramming centres.

As your child moves through the school there will be formal activities sent home for you to share with your child.

- Spelling lists
- Readers

Unspoken is the expectation that you will be doing number facts with your child; playing games such as SNAP when the snap is +1 or -1 of the number previously put down; when they are slick with that then 2 etc.
**Commitment**

**Parent Involvement**

There are many ways in which you can become involved in your child's life at Casa Mia Montessori and in the School. Refer to the brochure - Being a Parent at Casa Mia Montessori School.

There are the must do activities such as attending the School open days – Harmony Day, Dads' Breakfast, Mums' Tea, to reading the Newsletter and Facebook with your child on-line; reading your child’s report with them and attending the semester meetings with your child’s teacher; to being part of the audience at the Whole School Get Togethers; boning up on the Montessori Method of Education through the School’s website and other recommended websites; coming to parent information sessions during the school day or evening and helping out in the classroom at the teachers request.

**Parent Information Sessions**

The School provides Parent Information Sessions during the year. These sessions may include information about Montessori and a range of relevant topics.

**Community days**

The School aims to have one ‘community day’ each term when parents are invited into the classrooms to spend time with their child in the learning environment. e.g. Harmony Day, Mums Tea and Dads Breakfast.

There is also a Whole School get together at the end of each term for the children to perform for their families.

**Communications about home situations**

The home environment has a great impact on children. It would assist staff in understanding your child’s behaviour if they are informed of significant changes in the family circumstances and household routines.

**School Support and Fundraising hours**

The School Support Levy is an amount payable per term for the upkeep of the grounds and buildings. This levy can be fully offset by undertaking five (5) hours of specified duties at the School or it can be actioned on a pro-rata basis.

School support hours are an integral part of the community aspect of the School and are essential in the education of the children on the rights and responsibilities of being part of a community.

Each term’s hours are undertaken in that term and cannot be done in one term. The hours are given to both up keep of the School and fundraising activities.

**Laundry**

Each Friday, a parent from the Children's house and one from Karak are rostered to take home the class laundry home for washing. It is appreciated it is returned on the next school day.
**Board members**

People with governance and business skills are welcome to volunteer to sit on the School Board. The Board meets once a month during the school terms and is responsible for the governance and long term future of the School.

**P&F members**

Members of the P&F are responsible for the community life of the families and do fundraising for specified projects for the School.
Communication

School Communication

Communication is via a variety of means depending on the nature of the communication.

Parent Notice Board

A parent notice board is situated outside each classroom and one is outside the Office. The classroom board is usually classroom specific. The Administration Office board is for community notices such as P&F activities.

Pigeon holes

Each family has a pigeonhole outside their child’s classroom, which is used for School communication to individual families, receipts for fees etc and personal communications such as birthday invitations. It is most important that these are checked daily.
Notes for members of the School Board may be left in the relevant pigeonholes.

Notes in the child’s bag

These are usually invitations to school functions or a child specific letter for the parents.

Permission Forms and Excursion Information sheets

Parental permission for outings e.g. excursion into the city.

Newsletter

A Newsletter is generated on alternate fortnights. The newsletter is sent by email, unless specifically requested otherwise. Please notify the office if you DO NOT wish to receive the notification: admin@casamiamontessori.wa.edu.au

The Children

Oral messages from the children.

Montessori Literature

To assist with your Montessori education, the School has a small number of Montessori books to loan. Please ask at the office.

Class Handbook

Each class has a handbook specific to each class. These books are handed out at the start of each term by the teachers.

Facebook – open and secret

The School maintains two Facebook sites to give up-to-date information about the activities in the School. The secret site is for current families and it is not possible to share the information and pictures from this site.
Parent Communication

**You have a query or a question?**

Is it about education or non-education?

**Non education:**

1\textsuperscript{st} stop this book, class handbook, parent orientation session, parent coffee morning, class notice board, school notice board, school website, newsletter  
2\textsuperscript{nd} stop Office  
3\textsuperscript{rd} stop Class teacher  
4\textsuperscript{th} stop School Principal

**Education:**

1\textsuperscript{st} stop Class teacher  
2\textsuperscript{nd} stop School Principal

The email addresses of your class teacher and the School Office are in the class hand book.  
There is a communication book outside each classroom or send in a letter.

**Communication book outside the classroom**

These are for daily communications with the teacher about pick-ups or the child.
Grievances

All members of the community have the right to express a grievance or concern. Below are the main aspects of the policy which need to be considered and adhered to:

- All persons in the School community, students, staff board members and parents, have the right to be treated with respect and courtesy.
- In all matters, the welfare of all children in the School is the first priority.
- Procedural fairness is afforded to all parties.
- Confidentiality is maintained to the extent consistent with the other principles contained here.
- Gossip and discussion behind people’s backs is actively discouraged.
- The person who is the subject of the complaint is informed of the complaint and complainant.

In the case of an issue becoming a grievance, the following chart indicates the communication process.
Organisation of the School

Ownership & Governance

Casa Mia is responsible to the Department of Education Services for the educational and funding aspects of the School and to the Department of Commerce for the operating structure and Incorporation. The registration and incorporation certificates are located in the Administration Office.

The School is run by a Board of Governance for all strategic and governance issues and by the Principal for all educational, management and daily operational issues. The Principal reports to the Chair of the School Board.

The Board of Governance consists of volunteer parent members who fill the roles of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and two Ordinary Members. There is also provision for an independent Member. The Principal is a non-voting member of the Board. All Board positions, with the exception of the Principal, become vacant at the Annual General Meeting held prior to April 30th each year. All school members are eligible to nominate for a position on the Board.

The School’s operations are governed by its’ Rules of Association, as per the Associations Incorporation Act 1987. Copies of the current Rules of Association are available to all school members and can be obtained from the Administration Office.

Strategic Vision

The Board of Governance makes its strategic decisions based on the Strategic Plan for the School. The Strategic Plan is devised at planning days to which all school members are invited to attend and participate in.

A copy of the current strategic plan is available on the School’s website.

Administration

Role of School Administration positions:

Principal
Non-voting member of School Board responsible for the leadership and management of Casa Mia that are consistent with Montessori values and practices and the schools mission, vision and philosophy values.

Administration Officer
Performs a wide range of administrative tasks, including school fees and general accounts; responsible with the Principal for all financial and reporting directions. Liaises closely with the Principal over administrative matters.
Finances

As is the case with all private, independent schools, Casa Mia Montessori School receives income from a number of sources.

The main income comes from the families of the School community. The remainder of the income comes from State and Federal funding. The level of funding is based on the Socio Economic Score of the families of the school, the age of the child and 90% attendance of the total number of school days in the year.

The Finance Committee, a sub-committee of the School Board is charged with governing the financial affairs of the school and setting of the fees.

The fees will go up annually, in line with the Education Cost Price Index.

Failure to maintain fee payments will exclude family members from voting at General Meetings or from stand for Board of Governance positions.

Fees (for the full version refer to the Business Arrangements of the School Website)

Please Note  All fees, discounts, bonds and levies are subject to change. Notification of the changes will be made via the newsletter and the website.

Application Fee
Payable on application to the School. This fee is non-refundable.

Confirmation Fee
Paid on acceptance of a place in the School within ten working days of the offer or as specified. This fee is non-refundable.

Enrolment Bond
Paid on acceptance of a place in the school, within ten working days of the offer or as specified. This fee is refundable on completion of nine years at the School.

Tuition Fees
Payable at the commencement of each school term. Refer to the current Business Arrangements.

School Support Levy
All families are expected to participate in the maintenance of the School through the School Support Levy. This can be done in one of two ways:
1. Payment of the School Support Levy at the commencement of each term.
2. Undertake 3 (three) hours of work for the School each term. These hours are recorded with one of the following people:
   ✓ The Administration Officer
   ✓ The School Care Hours Coordinator

Any shortfall of hours worked are to be paid for at the commencement of the new term for families returning to the School. For families leaving at the end of that term, the money is to be paid prior to the refunding of the Enrolment Bond.

Building Fund Levy
The Building levy is paid each year and is incorporated into the Fee Payment option. Funds from this account are used to maintain the buildings and grounds of the School.
Specialist and Excursion Levy
This levy is used to provide students with learning opportunities through excursions and incursions and specialist programmes such as French and music. This levy is attached to the chosen fee payment option along with the tuition fees.

Stationery Levy
The Stationary Levy is paid at the commencement of the school year and is not incorporated into the fee paying options. The levy is used to purchase consumable materials for the classrooms.

Additional Fees
Extra fees are due from the last year in Lower Primary. The fees are for further extracurricular activities or camp fees. These fees are payable as stated in the fee statement related to the activity.

Discounts

Sibling Discount
The rate of the Sibling Discount is recorded on the current business arrangements. Sibling Discounts are automatically deducted from the family invoice.

Late Starts
When a new child commences after the end of the second week of a term, a pro rata Tuition Fee for that term will be charged. Any children who commence during the first two weeks of term will be charged full tuition fees.

Short-term students from overseas/interstate
Students who will attend the School for a period less than or equal to one year are to be charged standard tuition fees with 50% loading. This loading is to be a payment to the Casa Mia Montessori School Building Fund.
For non-Australia citizens, the student must hold a permanent or temporary residence visa. Casa Mia is not registered to accept overseas students travelling on a student visa.

Refund of Enrolment Bond
The Enrolment Bond will be refunded in full after the last date of attendance for nine years, provided a full term’s notice of a child leaving the school has been given in writing.

If a full term’s notice in writing is not given, the bond will be forfeited to the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intended Withdrawal – at the end of:</th>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>Term 3</th>
<th>Term 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notice required by the last day of the term stated</td>
<td>End Term 4 of previous year</td>
<td>End Term 1</td>
<td>End Term 2</td>
<td>End Term 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Payment of Accounts
The School will issue a Fee Statement before the start of each term and as required during term.
Fees may be paid by money order, cheque payable to “Casa Mia Montessori School” or direct account transfer to BSB 306-043 Account No: 4153530 (include invoice number and child’s name as reference) or a direct debit arrangement. For security reasons the payment of fees in cash cannot be accepted.

**Financial Assistance**

The School is registered with the Family Assistance Office. At the end of each term the School will issue a Children Benefit receipt to those parents requesting it.

Please contact the Office immediately if you have difficulty in paying the fees by the due date.

**Fundraising**

The P&F has different fundraising activities throughout the school year. Refer to the Newsletter or school notice board for details.

**Privacy Statement**

The information Casa Mia Montessori School collects and holds may include sensitive information about-

- a. Students and their parents/guardians before, during and after their time at the school e.g. forms, meetings, interviews, phone calls.
- b. Members of staff, job applicants, volunteers e.g. references, resumes, police clearance for employment purposes, child protection.
- c. Other people coming into contact with the School such as parents doing classroom observations, introduction evenings eg driver’s licence and other forms of ID address and phone numbers.

The purposes of keeping and using this information includes school administration and to be able to contact parents/guardians concerning their child’s educational, social and medical needs. The School will keep this information private and secure and will use all information held for the purpose for which it was provided.

**Parents and Friends (P&F)**

The Parents and Family (P&F) operates under the auspices of the School Board and is charged with enhancing the School’s internal community and with raising funds for specific P&F projects and events.

If you would like to volunteer, speak to the Office and they will point you in the right direct.

**Policies & Procedures**

The Board of Casa Mia Montessori School has a duty of care to look after the educational standards, health, wellbeing and safety of all community members and the business. There are polices and guidelines which apply to all members of the community.

It is the responsibility of all parents/guardians and staff to provide the School with required information and provide the Administration Officer in writing of any situations where a heightened responsibility is required.

*Refer to the school website to view the list of Policies.*