

PRINCIPLES OF MONTESSORI EDUCATION



Developed by Dr. Maria Montessori in 1897, Montessori education is characterised by an emphasis on independence, freedom within limits, and respect for a child's natural psychological development.

Dr. Montessori gave the world a scientific method, practical and tested, for bringing forth the very best in young human beings. She taught adults how to respect individual differences, and to emphasize social interaction and the education of the whole personality rather than the teaching of a specific body of knowledge.

Montessori practice is always up-to-date and dynamic because observation, and the meeting of needs, is continual and specific for each child. When physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional needs are met children glow with excitement and a drive to play and work with enthusiasm, to learn, and to create. They exhibit a desire to teach, help, and care for others and for their environment.

The high level of academic achievement so common in Montessori schools is a natural outcome of experience in such a supportive environment. The Montessori method of education is a model that serves the needs of children of all levels of mental and physical ability as they live and learn in a natural, mixed-age group, which is very much like the society they will live in as adults.

The discoveries of Maria Montessori are valuable for anyone living and working with children in any situation.

The main objective of Montessori Education is to help each and every child to reach their full potential and to become valuable, caring and responsible members of adult society. It lays the foundation for successful learning and opens the doors of intellect, inspiring the child to learn and achieve.

At Bobtails, we believe that every child should have the freedom to grow, and learn, at their own pace without pressure or fear of failure. Most of us learn best through hand on experiences and the Montessori Method stimulates the senses and inspires the child to seek out new experiences and explore the world in which they live.

Children are encouraged to work independently as well as in a group and to establish effective relationships with both adults and other children. They learn to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and to exhibit appropriate behaviour within the structured guidelines of the classroom. This fosters independence, self-discipline, co-operation and an awareness of their own abilities and the strengths and weaknesses of others.

Children are guided by their teacher and learn, by example, how to behave and care for themselves and the world around them. Maria Montessori believed that children have a natural ability and a desire for learning and that we should watch for the optimum time in each child's development to introduce new experiences and knowledge.

Each child will be cherished as an individual and learning programmes support and encourage intellectual and physical growth.

In order to learn a child must first achieve a level of concentration. Montessori materials are designed to allow the child to practice for as long and often as they wish and are able to correct their own mistakes.



PRINCIPLES OF MONTESSORI EDUCATION CONT'D...



This encourages them to increase their powers of concentration, dexterity, balance and control in easy stages.

Only when a child is happy, confident and secure in their environment can a sound foundation for happy and successful learning be established. The Montessori curriculum provides an organised and structured environment that links all areas of learning and lays the basis for further knowledge.

As Maria Montessori said:

“To influence society we must turn our attention to childhood. Out of this truth comes the importance of nursery schools, for it is the little ones who are building mankind and they work only on the materials we give them ... for the children are the makers of men”.

Maria Montessori, The Absorbent Mind, Madras, India – 1946

