

NEWSLETTER - January 2017

What is TMET?

The Tauranga Montessori Education Trust was established in 2001 to promote and support education based on the Montessori philosophy. TMET currently oversees the operation of the Montessori@Bellevue (M@B) and Montessori@Arataki (M@A) units that provide Montessori-based primary education within Bellevue and Arataki Primary Schools.

Coming up

Term Dates

Term 1 ends Thursday 13 April
Term 2 begins Monday 1 May

Parent Evenings

Parent Information Evening
(PIE): 7pm Wednesday 15
February at Bellevue School

Parent Education Evening
(PEE): 7pm Wednesday 1
March at Bellevue School

Contact us

Contact TMET by email at:
trustadmin@tmet.org.nz



Happy New Year

Happy New Year and a warm welcome to our new children and whanau.

Interest in Montessori primary education continues to grow in the Bay of Plenty and we have all been busy preparing for the new school year. M@B will have three new classrooms for the 6-9 children and work is being done on the existing 9-12 classrooms; including the addition of a 'quiet room' and the repainting of both rooms. TMET and the teaching team have been busy making sure everything is running to schedule and so far so good... Keep an eye on our Facebook page for updates.

Staffing

In December we said farewell to Kristen, lead teacher at M@A, as she is returning to Vienna to be closer to her family. We wish her well and know she will be missed by those who came in contact with her. TMET is delighted to welcome Crystal Jones to M@A. Crystal is Canadian and currently working in India. Crystal will be with us in week 6 of T1; immigration always takes longer than planned. In the interim the classroom at M@A will be looked after by Jane Lusher, an experienced Montessorian. Jane will be fully supported by Arataki School and TMET.

2016 Highlights

2016 was a hive of activity and one of the highlights was the celebration of Maria Montessori's Birthday with a community garden event at Arataki School.

The build up to this involved children from M@B travelling over to Arataki School to meet with the Gangsta Gardeners gardening group so they could observe and learn from them.

Together we came up with activities that would be fitting with the day. The children, under the guidance of Rhairne (TA), practiced lots of different ways to make and do things to see what would work best. We were all very mindful of the fact that there would be upwards of 200 children present on the day. A huge and heartfelt thank you from TMET for all the support in making this day the success it was. We were humbled by the generosity of our community, by both the time and objects donated. Thank you again. The ultimate gift - the gift that just keeps on giving - is the gift of a garden. Gardens build communities, bring us together and give us purpose.

The Bellevue School Art Exhibition was a fabulous way to showcase all the creativity that goes on in our M@B classrooms. What a treat to see our children's art exhibited in such a professional manner. Thank you to all those families who sponsored the event and/or helped in some way to make it happen.

Thank you to those who attended our Parent Education Evenings. These are held twice yearly. If you are keen to learn more about Montessori, learn more about what your child does in their classroom, ask questions, meet other parents or be more involved in our community then these evenings are not to be missed. Being more informed about Montessori education and your child's learning environment is incredibly beneficial to you as a parent, to your child and to our teaching team, as you as you will be more familiar with your child's work and learning journey. By watching our teachers present you can understand, see and feel their passion for what they do and why they do it. As a team we have an expectation that everyone attends and this also demonstrates our support for our teachers who put a huge amount of time into preparing for these evenings.

Our last Parent Education Evening was titled "The Great Lessons" and the feedback was extremely positive. For those parents who would like to learn more, watch this space for 2017. Thank you to everyone who has attended these evenings and for your commitment to your child and to Montessori.

Fees

TMET relies on fees to keep the Montessori classrooms running and to remain a going concern. Unfortunately, we spend unnecessary administration and Trust hours chasing outstanding invoices. This is not a good use of time, energy or money. Please continue to respect and support the Trust's work and pay your fees on time.

Please note, as per previous correspondence, fees are increasing in 2017. The term fee will rise to \$450.

Classrooms

M@B welcomes three new classrooms and we look forward to being in our new space. The senior classroom has also had a revamp; pop in for a look!

M@A will remain in its current classroom and as the roll increases a second classroom will be added and a second teacher will join the team. We will keep you notified of any up and coming changes.

Website

TMET has launched its new website: tmet.org.nz. Thank you to Melissa Cooke for all the help, effort and time she has put into getting this off the ground. Remember to like and follow us on Facebook too.

On behalf of TMET and the teaching team we wish you all a very happy school year.

Leanna Mitchell
Executive Officer TMET

Parent Information Evenings

TMET will host its next PIE at 7pm on Wednesday 15 February at Bellevue School. PIEs are used to provide information for new families considering Montessori-based primary education and attendance is an enrolment prerequisite. The evenings provide an insight into what happens in the Montessori classroom, with teachers and students on hand to share their experiences and answer questions.

Parent Education Evenings (PEEs), by contrast, are targeted at parents of enrolled children. They provide teachers with the opportunity to speak about more specific Montessori topics.

Montessori Education for all the Family

Congratulations, you have made the decision to explore Montessori education for your child. Montessori education is for all the children in your family.

Choosing Montessori is more than an education philosophy, it is a way of life. Something important to consider is that Montessori is for all members of your family, not just the 'chosen' child. Give every member of your family the option of this journey. If you are considering Montessori for one particular child now is the time to change your mind. Montessori becomes a way of life, not only a way of education. Imagine the impact of choosing one child to attend Montessori and the other in mainstream - their journey and life experience will be so incredibly different. The Montessori child will be given the gift of becoming who they were always meant to be, their inner drive and interests will be nurtured, they will become collaborative learners, they will be self directed learners, they will find joy in their work, they will be respected by their peers and teachers, they will build strong self esteem and be prepared for a world that does not exist yet. To give the gift of Montessori education to only certain children seems incredibly unfair and may have a lasting impact on your family. If you are unsure or have any questions please talk to any member of our teaching team and do some of your own research.

We have an expectation that all members of your family will attend Montessori primary school.



Understanding the 9-12 Classroom and why the Final Year is the Icing on the Cake

As parents you have made the commitment to step outside the box. You have been brave in your decision and weathered the storm of questions; Why is your child staying at pre school until they are 6 years old? Won't your child be left behind starting school so late? What will they do when they get to high school? As we all know the questions are endless.

You have given your child the gift of a well rounded education that has been around for over 100 years and one that serves the specific needs of the child at each stage of development. This education is based on scientific fact. It allows children to achieve the full potential that lies within each and every one of them.

Rewind back ... to the 5-6 year old. The final year of the first phase of development. During this final year at pre school the child consolidates all previous learning. They experience huge growth in confidence, a sense of where they fit into their environment, what their strengths are and what they enjoy doing. They become proficient in their command of the English language, they are true leaders in their environment, they handle responsibility - and they do all this with ease. This is all designed to happen in the final plane of development. We can all look back in hindsight and truly acknowledge this year and what it has given to the child.

Primary school as we know it here in NZ ends at the end of year 6. From here the child moves to intermediate for year 7 and 8. A couple of important facts to remember; intermediate is primary school and the teachers are primary school teachers. It may look like intermediate offers the child more opportunities but in fact the final year at Montessori offers so much more. The planes of development are based on science. The educational approach is based on science. This final year of the second phase of development is the key year, the consolidation year, the year that everything comes together, the year that the child becomes a true leader, the year that social, emotional, physical and academics all come together. In the words of Steven Arnold, "Why take the cake out of the oven before it is fully cooked?" The Montessori teachers know your child so well, they are knowledgeable in the needs of your child at each stage and the final year is carefully designed by them to meet the specific needs of each child in their group.

Changing hearts and minds, changing cultures, making the best decisions for our children. As a team everyone believes in your child and is committed to them graduating from Montessori in the final year.



Natural Consequences

We do not use punishment as a means of discipline. Instead we believe in natural and logical consequences.

Natural consequence is the natural follow-up of any event that has no external interference. When you stand in the rain, you get wet. Experience becomes the teacher and adult interference is not required.

Logical consequences refer to the actions or responses that are implemented following a child's inappropriate behaviour that serve to discourage the child from engaging in that behaviour again. Logical consequences teach children to accept responsibility for their mistakes and misbehaviour. Logical consequences are not punishment and they need to be related to the behaviour, respectful to the child and reasonable (no matter how cross you may be).

For example: if you forget about the food in the oven it burns. This is the natural consequence of forgetting the timer. The logical consequence will be that another casserole needs to be baked or that something else needs to be made for dinner.

This discipline is real, in contrast to the artificial discipline of reward and punishment common to other methods.

It is one of our ultimate goals that our students do the right thing, not because they will be punished if they don't but because they don't want to adversely affect the people and world around them.

Q&A: The New Classrooms at M@B

TMET and the junior teaching team are looking forward to moving into the new classrooms in T1 2017.

- **What is a key teacher?**

Each child has a key teacher. This is someone that you and your child can identify with, a go to person. The teaching team are collaborative and work together and your child will benefit from all the teachers in their environment.

- **Why has my child's key teacher changed?**

The teacher/child ratio has dropped with the introduction of JayJay as a junior teacher. The classroom was divided up into three groups with a mix of age groups in each group.

- **Will my child be separated from their friends in the new classroom?**

No. The three new classrooms are in an open block. It is an open plan learning space so all children will be together much as they are now.

Concerns?

TMET is responsible for the oversight of the Montessori units at Bellevue and Arataki primary schools. Its board members are focused on issues around governance, administration and providing support to the teaching staff. Please direct any enquiries regarding these governance matters to TMET.

Teaching staff are responsible for educating your child. Please direct all feedback or questions on learning experiences directly to your child's teacher, lead teacher or school principal.