

TMET TERM 3 NEWSLETTER

A very warm welcome to our new families and of course our current families. Thank you for choosing Montessori education for your whanau. TMET wishes to thank our two host schools for supporting the choice of a Montessori education at primary level. A passion and belief in Montessori is what started the Montessori units within Arataki and Bellevue schools and that passion continues to this day. We thank you all for your support.

One of the most common questions that we hear from parents is "What can I do at home to help my child read?" The urge to help your child is understandable since literacy is a fundamental skill in life; when your child has mastered it you can breathe a little easier as a parent. You may also breathe easier knowing that all children experience a sensitive period for learning language in the first six years of life; children's brains are hardwired to absorb and learn language from their surroundings. This natural phenomenon explains why children learn to speak their language so quickly compared with non-native adults who attempt the same feat. Adults attend classes for hours each week with professional educators and cannot achieve the fluency of a five-year-old with talkative parents. You can breathe easier knowing nature is supporting your child's ability to learn language, and that the Montessori method acts in harmony with nature's developmental blueprint to aid literacy.

To find out more, please read the following article:

<https://www.montessori.org.nz/supporting-young-childs-pathway-literacy-home/>





LET'S GO OUT!

WHAT IS GOING OUT?

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

HOW DOES IT CONNECT TO A STUDENT'S LEARNING?

Maria Montessori said, "When the child goes out, it is the world itself that offers itself to him. Let us take the child out to show him real things instead of making objects which represent ideas and closing them in cupboards."


So, what did she mean by that? We've all learned about recycling, and perhaps we made a bird feeder out of an old milk carton that we could hang in the tree. But, imagine, instead, that we go to the garden at our school, weed it, create a compost bin, and use that compost to fertilise our garden. We then plant the garden, harvest and create a feast from the produce. Which activity creates greater learning with us?

One of the advantage of the Montessori classroom is the building of independence. The ability to take ownership of learning, plan what to do, then the completion of that plan. Opportunities for going out are the perfect chance for students to do just that.

Exploring and utilising the world outside the classroom are integral components of the Montessori experience. We endeavour that our children participate in an array of field trips each year. As our students mature and display appropriate levels of responsibility, they are expected to "go out" to complete their work.

Maria Montessori's ideal for the primary experience was a purposefully limited environment where key lessons provide jumping-off points for additional exploration outside the classroom. Going out, as it is known in Montessori terms, is designed to foster independence and resourcefulness, and give children important real-life experiences. As students pursue greater depth in their work, they find the need to enter the "real world" to gather additional information. Perhaps they visit a museum, interview a specialist, or investigate a rock outcropping firsthand. Trips are typically planned by a small group of students engaged in a specific type of work or research. Through the teacher's assistance, but ultimately on their own, students must plan their own trip, arrange transportation, and make necessary appointments. These Practical Life experiences place the responsibility on the students and allow them to develop vital communication and organisational skills.

We hope students also take part in a range of class-wide outings and explorations. Teachers lead trips to the library, theatres, museums, and parks. We are well supported by experts in our community and we love to learn from them. We may need whanau support to drive/chaperone children on various excursions.



“Our care of the child should be governed, not by the desire to make him learn things, but by the endeavor always to keep burning within him that light which is called intelligence.”



Fractions with Claire Gribbin:

How it began ... a discussion around wanting a 'maths lesson' ... Naturally, as I teacher I had to delve further to find out what they wanted a maths lesson on in particular, as it is such a vast realm. They said fractions. And here's how it went. We discussed fractions to find out what they already knew. They had some knowledge to form a foundation. They explored the Fraction Circle materials with the question “what do you notice?” To name a few; “they are all different sizes; two halves are the same size as one whole; one half and one third are different; as the bottom number (denominator) gets larger the size of the piece gets smaller.” With fractions we have to think of parts of numbers, which can be a tricky concept to grasp. So what did we do ... we made it relatable, and what is more relatable than fresh food? (It was my morning cup of tea time). I happened to have an apple and a banana with me and we ended up having a shared morning tea. “A good way to have a longer snack time” according to Malina. This cutting of the apple and the banana (and eating it) helped the girls make connections to halves, quarters and eighths. Then they wanted to learn about thirds as it didn't quite fit with cutting in halves. So, we used a banana too to explore thirds and sixths (so we got an equal amount of banana each, of course). It was a delicious lesson!



A Visit to Berhampore, Wellington

By Janine O'Connor July 2022

It is always very exciting to visit schools in other areas. Although we all strive to provide quality education for the children in our care, it is fascinating to notice how each environment does this in a way that reflects their local community. Berhampore is nestled within a pocket of diverse cultures, including many refugee families. It was quite refreshing to hear and see children of so many different nations in such a small area. Meeting Principal Mark Potter helped me to understand the rich history behind Montessori@Berhampore. His own pathway as a country school teacher in the Taranaki District was unconsciously aligned to many of the Montessori methods. Head teacher Dimitra Pantazis speaks of the great deal of trust the school and principal have for the work of the Montessori classes, which is quite possibly linked to this foundation and of course, her own extensive training and 20 years of Montessori experience at Berhampore.

Visiting a school at the end of term is not ideal but I was warmly welcomed and experienced a calm and inviting learning space with students still keenly engaged as if it were the middle of the term. The Montessori learning spaces are large! They have huge amounts of space and a kitchen in an attached room that has glass walls to keep it connected to the other learning areas. Respect for the environment and the equipment is demonstrated by all stakeholders. The teachers have taken considerable time and effort to prepare the environment, most recently the morning tea area and routine. The benefits of this are wide reaching into both curriculum learning from the cooking of scones each day for morning tea, to the Practical Life skills used in kitchen duties, and of course the use of courtesy when eating politely. Helena, the full time Montessori Assistant, has helped to guide these changes by bringing a cultural lens to decision making and the prepared environment. Lois, part time Montessori ECE guide and music expert is also a wealth of knowledge and assists each morning in the classroom.

It was reassuring to be in a Montessori environment that has stood the test of time. In the past there have been times of extreme growth maxing out at 3 junior and 2 senior classes. Now they are experiencing a smaller group of 36 students in total. At all times the school has ensured that the rooms are connected and students are able to flow between the open plan learning spaces. This concept is embedded in the MOU and one that I would like to see implemented for us here at Arataki. It allows for the unit to grow and 'bulge' at different age groups, allowing for a flexible approach to children learning at their own pace, whilst still connecting to their own peer growth.

My key takeaways from this visit

- The WELL prepared environment plays a major role in Montessori
- Connected spaces provide opportunity for different roll growths and are a must have
- The AMI manuals are extensive (Dimitra travelled to train in America)
- These ladies really know their stuff, especially the different stages of child development as researched by Maria Montessori
- Scones at morning tea are delicious!



MANZ Conference in Wellington

By Karina Fry July 2022

On the first weekend of the school holidays (July 9 and 10th) all the teachers from M@B and M@A attended the annual MANZ Conference. This year it was held at Te Papa Museum in Wellington. The theme for the conference was “Leaving no one behind: He waka eke noa”. And whilst there were some dramas at the airport (us all having forgot how to travel as it has been such a long time), we all got there in the end.

For Amy, Darniel and Donna, this was their first conference. It is always good to be a part of the bigger picture. Sometimes, we forget how many Montessori schools there are in New Zealand, and it was lovely to connect with familiar faces, and make new connections.

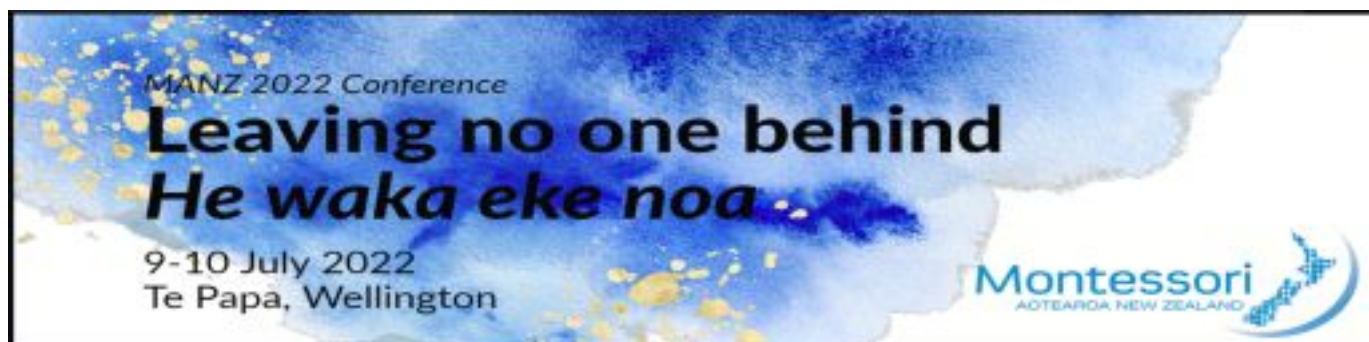
The main themes from the keynote speakers on the first day were around inclusivity and knowing where you come from, and where your learners and colleagues come from. Lesley Rameka used the term “Koi ora” - meaning the diversity of life. Pauline Hartnet provided us with some ukulele waiata and Stephen Arnold got us thinking about our learning environment and whether it catered for the needs of our students.

The following day we attended workshops. Some key takeaways from these were:

- Who is steering the waka? Is it teachers or students? This was a reminder of grounding us in Montessori.
- The importance of big work and how to facilitate/stimulate this in the classroom. Helen Ralmsay's workshop also talked about competition as resilience building and participating in the competition.
- The importance of Te Reo and tikanga for our students. This is something we feel we need to work on.
- The Montessori Journey to Excellence document is an important and aspirational guide for Montessori schools and we are using it well to set goals and align our teaching practices.

Listening, learning, collaborating, and bonding with matching pyjamas! Leaving no one behind.

Thank you to TMET for providing us with this opportunity to learn from our fellow Montessorians and to connect with each other outside of the classroom.



Montessori professional learning at Meraki School

By Donna Eckhart July 2022

I was very lucky to spend two days at Meraki School in Orewa. My first day was eye opening and gave me real insight into how the thoughtfully prepared environment impacts the child and their learning.

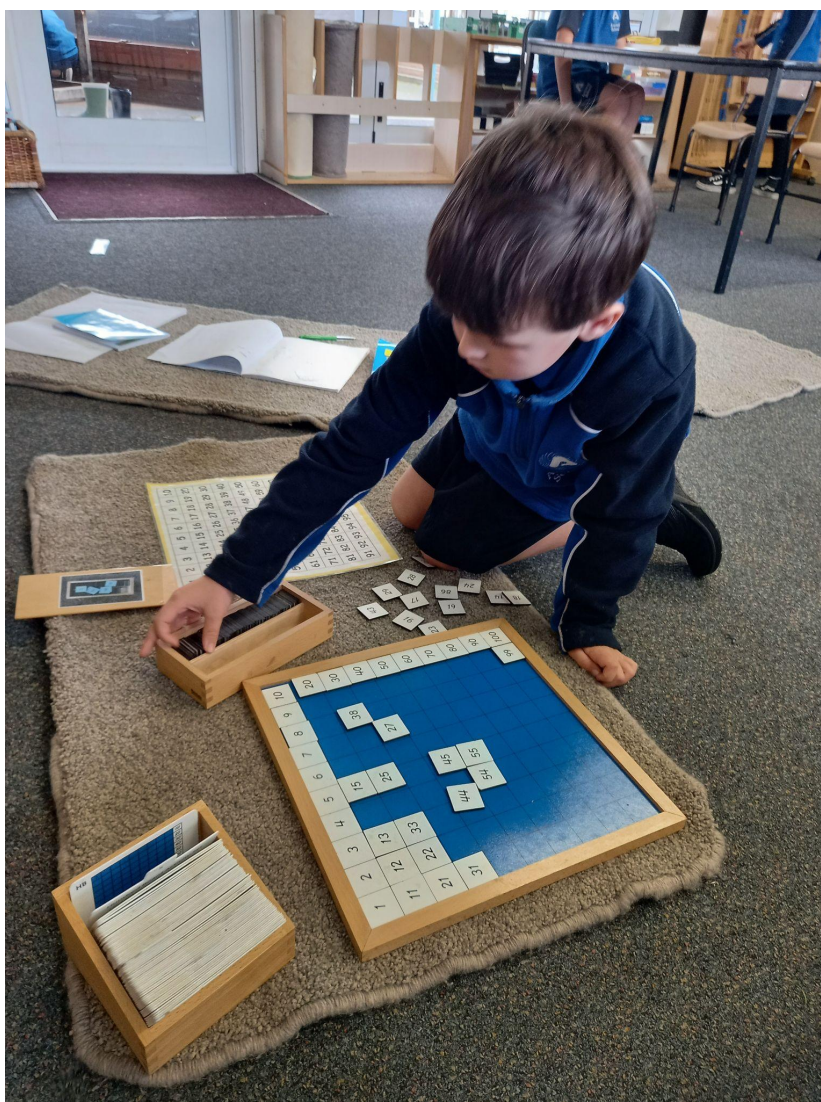
It was evident that when the environment and the teacher are prepared the students will direct their own learning supported and guided by them. These self-directed learners designed and made board games testing them out by playing each other, cooked bread, unassisted and sewed clothing for an upcoming Matariki festival. Other students were investigating topics such as the timeline of the dinosaur egg to the chicken egg and then presenting this research to the other akonga.

The staff at Meraki shared their wisdom and experience with me openly answering all my questions fully and without reserve. I left Meraki much richer and with a clear sense of direction. My passion and love for Montessori has grown. This is truly 'my jam.'



“Establishing lasting peace is the work of education; all politics can do is keep us out of war”

Maria Montessori



“This system in which a child is constantly moving objects with his hands and actively exercising his senses, also takes into account a child's special aptitude for mathematics. When they leave the material, the children very easily reach the point where they wish to write out the operation. They can thus carryout an abstract mental operation and acquire a kind of natural and spontaneous inclination for mental calculations”

Maria Montessori

“We have to go from what is essentially an industrial model of education, a manufacturing model, which is based on linearity and conformity and batching people. We have to move to a model that is based more on principles of agriculture. We have to recognize that human flourishing is not a mechanical process; it's an organic process. And you cannot predict the outcome of human development. All you can do, like a farmer, is create the conditions under which they will begin to flourish.” **Ken Robinson**



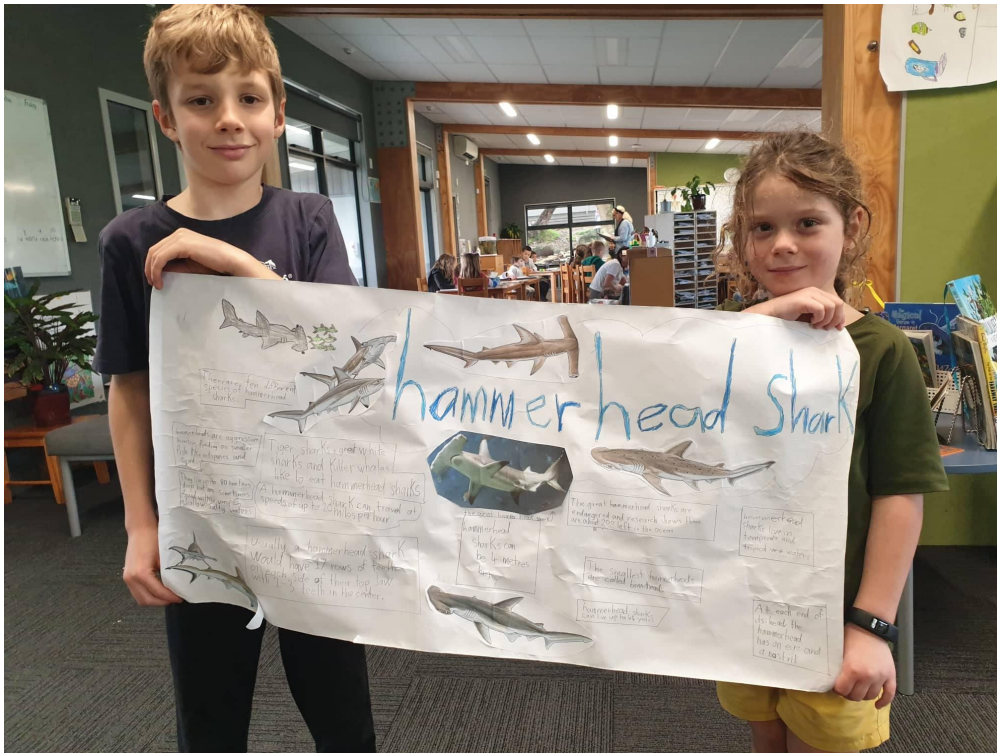
A Viking came to school. The children were in suspended disbelief for the duration of his visit.

Two of our senior M@B students fully immersed in the Montessori Grammar materials.



Thank you Jac for coming in to support two of our children to compose music. They loved learning from you.

If you are keen to learn more about Hammerhead sharks, just ask
Jeremy and Georgia.



Helping create the mural with Martine and Donna.



Dates to Remember

Event:

M@B: Maria Montessori Birthday Celebration
31 August at 9.30am in Bellevue School Hall

M@A: Maria Montessori Birthday market celebration
Please keep an eye on FB for date and time

M@B: Maria Montessori Birthday Celebration
7 September - after open classroom at M@B
Join the community for afternoon tea

<https://www.facebook.com/montetssoriatarataki>
<https://www.facebook.com/montessoriabellevue>

'The children were so excited to have Chanchal visit and make ladoos (an Indian delicacy) together!' We will miss Vinayak and Toyesh and wish them a wonderful trip back to India.



The maths bug continues at M@A.



"Tapping into our interests, from books about fictional bears, to talks about predators and prey, culminating in a study on the Egg-eating snake. Oh how our learning takes us on a journey!" Amy

