

**Term 2**  
**Week 6 – 25 May 2017**

*Beechworth Montessori is a Child Safe School*

*The newsletter will be distributed fortnightly with room reports appearing in alternate editions.*

**2017 Term Dates:** Term 1 - 1<sup>st</sup> February to 31<sup>st</sup> March (9 weeks)  
Term 2 - 18<sup>th</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> June (11 weeks)  
Term 3 - 17<sup>th</sup> July – 22<sup>nd</sup> September (10 weeks)  
Term 4 - 9<sup>th</sup> October – 20<sup>th</sup> December (11 weeks)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
22 <sup>nd</sup> May	23 <sup>rd</sup> May	24 <sup>th</sup> May	25 <sup>th</sup> May	26 <sup>th</sup> May  Coffee Morning P&F Meeting  Cycle 1 activities at Mayday Hills Oval  Upper Hume Cross Country (Wodonga) Selected Students
29 <sup>th</sup> May  Cycle 3 Camp	30 <sup>th</sup> May  Cycle 3 Camp	31 <sup>st</sup> May  Cycle 3 Camp	1 <sup>st</sup> June  Cycle 3 Camp	2 <sup>nd</sup> June  Cycle 3 Camp
5 <sup>th</sup> June	6 <sup>th</sup> June	7 <sup>th</sup> June  Italian Day	8 <sup>th</sup> June	9 <sup>th</sup> June  Pupil Free Day Report Writing
12 <sup>th</sup> June  Queen's Birthday Public Holiday	13 <sup>th</sup> June	14 <sup>th</sup> June	15 <sup>th</sup> June	16 <sup>th</sup> June  Cycle 3 (nominated students) Meals on Wheels 11.15am-1.15pm
19 <sup>th</sup> June	20 <sup>th</sup> June	21 <sup>st</sup> June	22 <sup>nd</sup> June	23 <sup>rd</sup> June  Cycle 1 Nature Walk 1.30pm
26 <sup>th</sup> June  Reports Distributed Prep to grade 6	27 <sup>th</sup> June	28 <sup>th</sup> June	29 <sup>th</sup> June	30 <sup>th</sup> June  Last Day of Term 2 2.15pm finish

For any further dates, the **School Stream** App on your smart phone currently shows the next 90 days of events.  
For the rest of the year please see the calendar on our website.

## A note from Susi

Over the past two weeks I have led a number of school tours for interested families. As we make our journey through the school from Tiny Tots to Cycle 3 I am often asked, "Are the classrooms always this peaceful?"

Inside each classroom, we witness Montessori in action: children moving purposefully, choosing workspaces on the floor or at tables, selecting activities from the shelves, working in small groups and individually, speaking respectfully and all within an exceptionally beautiful environment.

Each day, as educators we present a diverse curriculum, never knowing what the child may choose but knowing that the environment is prepared to suit their development needs. We closely observe the child, honouring where they are at, note their ability to concentrate and organise themselves, their social and emotional needs and the nature of their relationships with others.

This is what is unique about a Montessori school.

Maria Montessori said, "The role of education is to interest the child profoundly in an external activity to which he will give all his potential." (From Childhood to Adolescence).

A question to consider, "What kind of life skills do you think your child is going to need to be healthy, happy and successful when they become an adult?"

It's a great conversation to have with family, friends and with all of us at the school if you choose.

### A visit from the Department of Education

This week I invited, Jo Bruce and Lauren Richardson, Early Childhood Performance and Planning Advisors from the Department of Education, to tour the school and meet with us. For myself, coming from a Primary School background, the Early Years is a new area for me. It was great to receive their input and advice about the delivery of our service which is rated overall at Exceeding National Quality Standards.

### Child safety standards: Cybersafety

We are in the process of establishing a Cyber Safety Committee whose role is to have designated responsibilities for overseeing all areas of digital safeguarding within the school. The Committee will include a parent, student, staff and Committee of Management representative. Would you like to be that parent? (No previous skills necessary) If so call in or send an email and I'll be in touch.

Regards, Susi

## General News

### Thank you...

- To Samadhi's family for the kind donation of \$20 from sales of chestnuts at the school
- To the McLachlan Family's grandfather in Batlow who donated half a crate of apples to the school. We raised a grand total of \$370 through the sales of the apples.
- Imogen Thomas for her help with the Cycle 3 cooking program last week.

### Meeting for Community Connection

Meet with other parents at 9am this Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May in the foyer to discuss a revamp of the P& F Association. Cycle 3 students will be selling coffee to raise money for Syrian refugees.

### Momentum Energy Junior Landcare Powerful Youth Project Grants 2017

This week we received the wonderful news that the Early Years team were successful in their application for a grant to develop the Early Years outside area. The project is called 'The Outdoor Classroom' and the amount was for \$1000. We are looking forward to watching the project develop.

### Update your details

Have you changed jobs recently, started a new job or stopped working? Please make sure your details with us are up to date as this can affect the amount of funding we receive.

### Did you know?

Did you know that if you have a Health Care Card you could be eligible for approximately \$1400 a year discount on your family's school fees at Beechworth Montessori? In addition there is \$125 per year available to cover your child's excursion fees AND the school receives extra funding. So it's a win-win for everyone!

See us in the office if you would like to know more!

# Montessori Matters

## Why Multi-age Classes? *By Lorna McGrath*

Have you ever wondered why Montessori classrooms have multi-age groupings? Have you ever thought, “Won't the oldest children in the class regress socially?” Did you ever want to ask, “I get how the multi-ages would intellectually motivate and stimulate the youngest children but what happens to the oldest ones academically? Many parents have those same thoughts and questions. So let's take a look at the many advantages to multi-age groupings and the philosophy behind it.

- Minimal Yearly Adjustment Period - Returning to the same classroom with many of the same peers as well as teachers, students are more comfortable and relaxed so they tend to settle in quickly after a long break from school. In one-age programs, each year children must adjust to a new classroom, a new teacher, and new peers. This adjustment can take from a week for some children to several months for others.
- Teachers Know Their Students - Having new students each year, does not allow the teacher to spend much time on getting to know the students. There is little time to understand where their students are academically or what their personality is and how they learn. In multi-age classrooms teachers develop a strong relationship with their students. This bond allows teachers to build academic skills by picking up on previous learning and to continue to develop community living skills
- Work Habits and a Love of Learning - Older students model organization, concentration, and a thirst for new learning challenges. It quickly becomes obvious to the other students that learning is interesting and fun. Children always want to do what the “big kids” do. It doesn't take long for the classroom to begin to buzz with activity and collaboration
- Opportunity to Observation – Younger students observe older students working on more advanced or complex learning activities and are motivated to do what they are doing. The teacher doesn't have to be the sole motivator in the classroom. Instead, the younger ones get excited about the learning possibilities that lie ahead. In a one-age program, all the students have basically the same skills and knowledge and are being taught the same thing at the same time
- Students Motivate Each Other - Students at all ages have the opportunity to demonstrate and teach other students a skill that they have mastered. By teaching others, students deepen and reinforce their own learning. The environment, being one of collaboration and sharing, invites students to share ideas and experiences. As a result all students feel empowered and capable. This leads to greater self-confidence and openness to new ideas. The students motivate each other.

***"The education of even a small child, therefore, does not aim at preparing him for school, but for life."***

***Maria Montessori***

- Preparation for Life – Where in life, other than in school, does a person experience being put into a group of people all the same age with basically the same experience level and information? The answer is not anywhere - not in families, not in the work place, not in neighborhoods. In multi-age classrooms children experience a sense of community that is much more like adult-life and learn from and with each other.
- Building Community – Creating a community of children who can live and work in harmony is an integral part of Montessori education. The teachers learn through their training how to support children in being empathetic and accepting, and at the same time how to express and take care of their own needs. In this day and time when many parents are concerned about bullying, competition, and taunting, we see older and younger children who have the opportunity to work through social situations under the guidance and modeling of caring adults. It doesn't seem to matter if the classroom is multi-age or one-age. It really boils down to whether the community is one of respect and kindness.
- Supporting Each Other - Through her observations Dr. Montessori, like Piaget, discovered that children go through very specific stages of development which she called “planes of development.” Today we still see evidence that within each plane the children demonstrate similar characteristics in the area of social and emotional development. By grouping children together this way, they are able to practice, through day-day interactions, skills like working in a group, solving conflicts peacefully, learning to be leaders, and supporting each other – intellectually and emotionally.

- Provides for Flexibility – Multi-age classrooms allow for flexibility with regard to interests, skill levels, and challenge. The teacher spends a great deal of the school day teaching individual or small group lessons. In small groups there may be a mix of ages with children of similar skill level and ability. This aspect of the multi-age approach allows students to work at their own pace and to follow their interests. They can advance in a subject area when they are ready or take more time if they need to. It is a child-centered approach rather than group centered.

The Montessori method is based on the careful observations of Maria Montessori. She saw that during childhood there were periods of time (planes of development) within which children were very focused on specific relationships or concepts. She recognized that for optimum learning to take place it was best to use those common periods as a basis for the make-up of the classes. In classrooms each plane is divided into two subgroups. The classroom model usually has a three-year age span - three-six years old, six to nine years old, etc.

- **Birth to Six Years Old** – Children at this stage of life are very focused on the adults in their lives. They watch and listen all the time from the moment of birth. The adults are their model for how to live and learn. In the beginning the youngest one doesn't even recognize that she is a separate individual from her primary care giver. As this young child grows, she becomes more and more independent. She recognizes that other individuals exist as well. But even then, even as she is learning to interact with others, she depends on the guidance and modeling of the adult. She imitates what she sees and hears. She develops her character and values. In a multi-age classroom she has the opportunity to develop, through practice with others who are older and younger, how to speak kindly, how resolve conflicts peacefully, how to care for others and herself.
- **Six to Twelve Years Old** – This is a period of great imagination and thinking of great possibilities. They want to know the how and why of the world. It is also a period within which children become much more focused on their peers. They become very concerned about justice, rules, fairness. Much of their social interaction has to do with figuring these concepts out and putting them into practice.
- **Twelve to Eighteen Years Old** – During the adolescent years, young people need to have an environment where they can safely explore relationships, they can become involved in projects that make a difference in their towns, their country, and the world, they can discover their values, and they can think deeply about society and their role in it.

Multi-age classrooms, grouped as Montessori described above, along with well-equipped adults provide students with the guidance and opportunities for growth in both social and academic areas that are essential to support the development of healthy individuals who will create a healthy world.

## Community Notices



**Community Walk**  
**Yackandandah**

**Friday 2nd June 2017**  
**10am**  
**Yackandandah Sports Park**

---

Active and well connected communities are vital to our mental and physical health.

We would like to invite our community to join with us for a morning walk followed by a healthy snack. We will go ahead with this rain hail or shine - if it is wet put on your coat and come for a walk!

Meet at the Yackandandah Sports Park for a guided short walk (500m-1.3km) or a longer walk (4km).

**BYO: Footwear for walking, water bottle, sun protection**

**Dancers of the North East**  
**(Beechworth)**

Dance classes for dancers of the north east and new members are back on. Hip hop classes with technique, modern hip hop and fun combined.

**Mondays**

4pm – 4.45pm: 5 to 7 year olds  
4.45pm 5.30pm: 8 to 10 year olds  
5.30pm - 6.15pm: 11 to 13 year olds  
6.15pm – 7pm: 14+ year olds  
7pm – 7.45/8pm: Adult open class

(dance mix of African, contemporary hip hop, ballet - lead according to class interest and needs)

**Venue:** Youth Centre, 8 Harper Avenue (opposite the pool), Beechworth

**Cost:** \$12.50 per person per class (family discount available)

**Contact:** Franya Bailey 0421 024 998  
15 years of experience, qualified primary and secondary teacher



**Sunday 28 May – FOOTSTEPS WITH FATHERS**

Meet at **Lake Sambell BBQ and playground area 10am onwards**

Come to a lakeside BBQ Breakfast – this one timed so the whole family can come!

**Wednesday 31 May – FOOTSTEPS INTO THE FUTURE**

Meet at **Dow's Historic Pharmacy Chiltern at 1pm**

Learn how they managed womens' and children's ailments in the 1850's

Then take a walk around the historic buildings of the town and look at where we go to from here

For Enquiries phone Mandy on 0429 977 515 or Carlene 1300 365 003



Beechworth Secondary College, Beechworth Health Service & Indigo Shire Council present

THE

# RESILIENCE PROJECT™

## Parent, Family & Community Session

**DEVELOPING RESILIENCE IN OUR YOUNG PEOPLE**  
Learn how to practice mindfulness, gratitude and empathy

- 1 in 7 primary school children have a mental illness
- 1 in 4 adolescents have a mental illness



Join Martin Heppell - Education Manager The Resilience Project

Martin grew up in Borneo and he was educated in South East Asia. After finishing high school in Melbourne, Martin spent three years in the AFL system, playing for St Kilda and Melbourne.

Martin is a qualified school teacher and has worked as an Assistant Principal. He is passionate about children being given the best start in life and building resilience.



**When:**

Thursday  
15 June 2017  
at  
7.00pm



**Cost:**

Gold coin  
donation



**Where:**

Beechworth Secondary  
College  
Library

85 Balaclava Rd  
Beechworth



**Tickets:**

RSVP to BSC on  
03 5728 1264  
or register online at:

<https://bsctheresilienceproject.eventbrite.com.au>

*"I've been teaching for 40 years and this is the best program I've seen in a school. An amazing experience for our whole school community"*  
Andrew Turvey, Principal at Karabar High School

