



The Maria Montessori Training Organisation
trading as
The Maria Montessori Institute

Assessment Policy

Introduction

At the School the progress of children is regularly assessed to ensure that the children's individual needs are being met across the curriculum.

The purpose of assessment and record keeping:

Formative – to decide how a child's development and learning can be taken forward

Summative – to provide evidence of the achievements of a child (knowledge, skills, attitudes, concepts).

Evaluative – should be used to indicate where there needs to be further effort, resources, changes in curriculum, etc.

Informative – should help to inform parents, receiving teacher, head and support staff as to how the child is doing (in addition to outside agencies such as inspection teams).

Planning child progress

This is achieved through adherence to school curriculum policies, the use of the Montessori curriculum for the whole development of the child and also reference to previous assessment and records held on each individual child.

Assessment

The careful planning of work for the child requires us to facilitate the management of continuous assessment. It is achieved by various means:

Observation

Recording

Questioning

Active listening

Discussion with other members of staff

In accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance, we provide a written summary of the child's development in the prime areas identifying the child's strengths and any areas where the child's development is less than expected. This



comprises the progress check between the ages of 2 and 3 years or baseline on entry if a child is older than 3 when they join the School and then in the final term of the year when the child reaches age 5 we assess the level of a child's development against the Early Learning Goals.

An annual end of year report is provided for children in our Elementary classes.

Class records

Class teachers will collectively prepare a termly plan showing the range of work to be covered. The work will be broken down into curriculum areas and also encompass the Foundation Stage outcomes where appropriate.

There is a mapping to indicate the various interconnections between the curriculum areas for particular topics/concepts/outcomes.

Monitoring of the plan and children's progress will take place through staff meetings held weekly.

Class teachers will keep a daily observation of the activities undertaken by all the children and note whether the work was independently chosen, teacher chosen, teacher suggested, independently chosen as a result of a limited choice. Any other items of note will be recorded such as perseverance, length of time engaged with activity, concentration.

Individual Child Records

Profile

An initial profile of the child has been built up through discussion with the parents and a questionnaire which has been filled in by the parent and is kept in the child's file.

Observation

Our primary pedagogical tool is observation. We observe children acting in freedom, within an environment specially prepared for their developmental needs.

In each community, our observations are captured on a daily observation sheet. The observations are detailed and reflect how individual children are using their time that morning. We analyse these observations at different points – at the end of the day, at the end of the week, every 2 weeks and every 6 weeks. This analysis of observations helps inform our plans for the next day, the next week, the next fortnight, and the next 6 weeks.

Children's House (ages 3-6)

- Every 6 weeks a "work curve" is prepared and analysed. This is a highly detailed series of observations around which the child's subsequent presentations (lessons) are planned. These plans identify where the child is, what lessons they have had, how they have worked with the lessons, and what lessons they would benefit from in the subsequent 6-week period
- An Early Years Foundation Profile is provided for reception age children.



Elementary (ages 6-12)

- Children record their work choices and use of time in a planner.
- The Lead Teacher meets with each child on a biweekly basis to discuss their work. The Lead Teacher brings their observations to the conversation, and the child brings their work journal. Together they plan lessons and work expectations for the forthcoming week.
- A comprehensive written report is completed at the end of the academic year for each child by the Lead Teacher, noting the child's development, achievements, and areas for improvement.

Adolescent (ages 12-16)

- The student's work is monitored and reviewed by the Lead Teacher, with feedback provided while work is in progress and at the completion of projects. Progress and skill development are discussed in the weekly advisory meetings held by the Lead Teacher for each student.
- Students play an active role in the evaluation process, building and developing self-evaluation and self-reflection skills with regards to their academic progress and achievement. Students lead parent teacher conferences twice per year, sharing details about their work and progress each semester.
- The students engage in regular presentation evenings, educating their peers, parents, and the community on various topics of study.
- A comprehensive written report is completed at the end of the academic year for each student by the Lead Teacher, noting the child's development, achievements, and areas for improvement.

Assessment Tools

My Montessori Child

"My Montessori Child" software was introduced in summer term 2021. This educational software enables Children's House teachers to record live observations of children's activities and integrates those observations with statutory reporting frameworks and teaching plans. The system also provides parent access so that they can view photos and approved observation

Dimensions of Observable Growth Assessment

Observation is the primary tool through which we carry out the broad developmental assessment. Human growth takes place in more dimensions than we can count and therefore our assessment – any assessment – will always be incomplete. Despite the impossibility of covering all aspects of growth, we can name and describe a limited number of observable human attributes, the development of which are of significant interest to us. The Maria Montessori School uses a behavioural assessment by proxy, identifying certain observable behaviours that can be accepted as valid stand-ins for the trait under consideration. The format we use, Dimensions of Observable Growth (DOG) identifies five dimensions that collectively are proxies for whole-person growth:

- Concentration & Work
- Purpose & Will
- Self Planning



- Social Integration
- Spiritual Integration

The first three *dimensions* refer to the child's work. The last two *dimensions* refer to the child's relations with society. Within each of these *dimensions* we have identified *attributes* that are proxies for each *dimension*. Finally, we have identified four *stages of growth* that are proxies for the stages of the maturation of that *attribute*.

At each stage of this process we have necessarily made value judgements. When the Teacher makes the judgement as to which stage of growth for a particular *attribute* best describes the person at that time, the aspiration is that this judgement is guided by the Teacher's knowledge of that child.

Stage 4 of each attribute expresses behaviours that lead to full independence at each plane of development. For example, below are the statements for Stage 1 and Stage 4 under the heading of 'Challenge':

Stage 1

I am most comfortable choosing work that I know I can easily succeed with. I feel a little intimidated by difficult work.

Stage 4

I consistently take myself into work that is challenging to me. I enjoy the feeling of working at the limits of my capabilities. I encourage and motivate others towards challenging goals.

Because these statements refer to the child's work or relation to society – rather than subject knowledge – they are comparable across all ages, whether 6, 16 or 60. It is possible that a child's 'score' may go down for a period, instead of up. Such a change may come when they transition from being the oldest in one community to the youngest in another, or it may reflect a difficulty elsewhere in their life. Through their time at The Maria Montessori School our hope and goal for every child is that they move towards ever-greater maturity and growing independence, which really means freedom.

As well as being completed annually by your child's Teacher, older children will also complete their own copy of the document and compare their assessment with that of their Teacher. This comparison adds a further insight into their developing self-awareness.

Evidence of Work

Photographs and samples of the children's work are documented and stored in My Montessori Child. Completed work is kept in the children's folders and reviewed by the child's teacher prior to the children taking their work home.