

1 POLICY: COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

Aim

The Board and staff of Montessori Children's House Wanaka are committed to working in close partnership with each other and with parents/whānau and the wider community. Montessori Children's House Wanaka is committed to continually reviewing and improving our service and facilities and will actively consult with, and seek feedback from, all members of our community. Partnership and communication with parents is key to ensuring that the best interests of each individual child are served. Montessori Children's House Wanaka recognises that effective and open communication is vital to achieving these aims and will strive to respect individuals' values, needs and aspirations at all times.

1.1 Guidelines

- 1.1.1 Monthly Board of Trustees meetings are held to discuss governance issues and review policies and practices as required. The meetings are attended by the Trustees with reports being provided by the Managing Teacher and a staff report.
- 1.1.2 Staff meetings are held fortnightly and staff are encouraged to share any feedback received from parents and exchange ideas on improvements to teaching practices, facilities or the centre's service. Minutes are taken and actions points are made as necessary. When possible, changes will be implemented straight away. In some situations, more feedback may be sought from parents or approval sought via relevant committees. Board members are welcome to attend staff meetings.
- 1.1.3 We are committed to internal evaluation and actively seek feedback from staff, parents, whānau and the wider community as required.
- 1.1.4 The centre's Annual Plan includes scheduled formal, and informal communication, with parents/caregivers and the wider community.

1.2 Information for Parents

- 1.2.1 Enquiry packs, the website and social media are available for prospective parents or community members who wish to find out more about the Montessori philosophy and our general facilities and services, including fees.
- 1.2.2 Upon enrolment, parents receive a parent handbook with further information on the centre's routines, operations and the Montessori philosophy.
- 1.2.3 The early childhood regulations, relevant policies, and the latest Education Review Office (ERO) report are available for reference on the foyer notice board. Parents are asked to make themselves familiar with the policies on enrolment and comment on policies or any aspect of the school's management both at that time and on an ongoing basis through the regular process of policy review.
- 1.2.4 Newsletters are emailed to parents regularly.
- 1.2.5 Information on school trips is given through a variety of avenues including individual notices, email, reminders via the newsletter, fortnightly notices and on the day sheets.
- 1.2.6 Messages and reminders are emailed throughout the term.

- 1.2.7 Children's profile books are available online and available to take home and share with their child.
- 1.2.9 Daily communication / notes are recorded on the day sheets.
- 1.2.10 Parent / Teacher conferences are held twice a year.
- 1.2.11 Teachers will endeavour to individually welcome all parents and children to the centre at the beginning of each day where possible. At the end of the day teachers will, where possible, inform parents of any significant happenings in their child's day.
- 1.2.12 Parents are encouraged to share with a teacher any information they feel is appropriate to, or any concerns they have relating to the management or development of their child while at the centre. When required, parents are welcome to make an appointment to talk with a teacher out of class hours or the Managing Teacher.
- 1.2.13 The children's family, whānau and community are an important part of the centre's early childhood curriculum. Parents, extended family and community members are welcome to liaise with the teacher's regarding sharing some of their knowledge and expertise, their experiences or aspects of their culture, with the class.
- 1.2.14 Where necessary, the Managing Teacher and staff will consult with the local Maori community regarding practices and policies to ensure cultural sensitivity at all times.
- 1.2.15 Social events are arranged to encourage informal communication between all members of the centre's community.
- 1.2.16 Where it is considered important that the wider community be informed of a particular issue or event, the information will be communicated through advertising or a press release to the local press and/or radio stations.

1.3 Contacting Staff

- 1.3.1 The centre endeavours to operate an open door policy with regard to enquiries from parents and the community, accordingly:
 - 1.3.1.1 The Administrator will usually be available on a daily basis during office hours.
 - 1.3.1.2 Teachers are usually available between 8.30 and 9.00am and again after 3.15pm.
 - 1.3.1.3 If staff are teaching or not available during a session, parents are welcome to leave a message advising who they wish to talk with and they will be contacted by that person as soon as possible. In order to minimise class disruption and ensure that ratios are adhered to, teachers should only be contacted during a session in an emergency.
 - 1.3.1.4 Parents are welcome to write, phone or email the school at any time (NB: the phone will generally only be answered during office hours but an answer phone is available for messages).
 - 1.3.1.5 Board members are available to meet with parents should they feel a matter needs addressed.