

Playgroup Orientation Information

SESSION FORMAT

Time	Activity
9:30am – 11:00am	Individual Jobs - Practical Life, Sensorial, Language & Movement, Snack
11:00am – 11:15am	Pack-away time (<i>when you hear the music play, it is time to pack away!</i>)
11:15am – 11:30am	Story, Song and Dance time

Whether you are brand new, or returning after many terms with us, we are excited that you are joining us! We are here to support your Montessori journey with your child, and hope that your time with us is rewarding. To make the most of your playgroup session, here is the list of essentials!

You will notice that we communicate primarily by email, as we all have busy lives these days and are not always available for phone calls. Please be sure to check your emails regularly, and take the time to read things carefully.

A Sense of Order

Our session routine is a simple one. Start by signing in and greeting the Director as soon as you arrive.

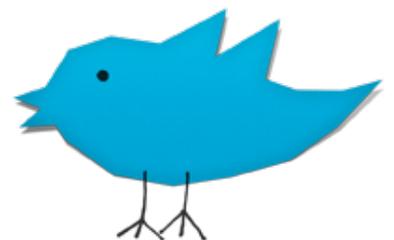
- ★ Between 9:30 and 11am your child has many available options. Your child may choose to work individually by choosing a job from the work shelves. Or they may choose to join our shared working spaces (the 2 large covered tables) where we can practice taking turns with our 1 stapler and our 1 sticky tape dispenser whilst creating beautiful mini crafts. We also have a kitchen where 2 older children are welcome to help prepare our morning snack. **Children must practise sitting at the table while eating their food and not wander around the classroom.** At 11am, when

you hear the music, it is time to pack away our things, and practice different cleaning tasks. When the music is finished, we sit together on a mat and have a group story, followed by some singing and dancing. After our goodbye song, children are encouraged to give the Director a handshake goodbye.

- ★ Please insist that your child selects an activity that no-one else is doing. **Children like to be able to complete their work uninterrupted by others, and it is your place as their adult to ensure this.**
- ★ For activities the children are unfamiliar with, it is customary to show them how to do it. This involves quietly and slowly demonstrating the steps when you have their attention. It is important to avoid verbal descriptions during these demonstrations because they are distracting for the children.
- ★ **When your child has finished with an activity, show them how to put it away ready for the next person.** Often, their attentions move onto the next thing, but please bring back their focus, in a positive manner, and complete this last step together.
- ★ Pay attention to the details. You may have noticed that the children are very particular about everything at this age.

Developing Movement, Language, and Music

- ★ Our inside area is set up as a classroom, and has 3 developmental stages, as indicated by different large mats. Start at the first mat, and as they master these jobs, you can encourage them to move to the next stage. **Children are naturally drawn to select jobs based on what they need developmentally, so be prepared to have a lot of outside time too!**
- ★ Story time is a wonderful way to practice being attentive for a length of time, and it involves a lot of effort from the children. They are expected to remain seated for the duration of the story and not to distract the others by



- ★ moving about. Also, as tempting as it may be to catch up with the people around you, please don't - our young children find it difficult to focus if there are conversations going on around them.

Practical Life

- ★ As adults, it is assumed that you have already mastered the skills needed to look after yourself, therefore please use this time to instruct your child. The children want to do as much as they can for themselves, and just need you to show them how to first. **Practical life skills are a vital part of Montessori, so enjoy the opportunity for them to give it a go!**
- ★ Slow down while you are here. Children at different ages work at different speeds and it is amazing the tasks they can complete for themselves when they have the time to do so.

Preparing for School

- ★ In playgroup, we practice waiting our turn. **It is the first step in mastering effective sharing, so once children are confident to wait their turn, they can be shown how to take turns.** Peaceful collaboration is what we are ultimately aiming for.

If your child is a bit worn out and has reached their limits, it is okay to leave before the session finishes. Playgroup is designed to be engaging for the children, so they can quite often tire earlier than usual.

CLOTHING FOR PLAYGROUP

Perth Montessori School has a 'no hat, no play' policy. This extends to playgroup. Please ensure that your child wears a broad brim hat for outdoor play.

Playgroup a great opportunity for children to experiment with different types of media, so consider dressing them in play clothes so that they survive paint, glue, clay and water! You may also like to bring a spare set of clothes each week.

PARENT EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY

Being part of the Perth Montessori School community brings with it a host of benefits. For example Pre3Montes parents can access free parenting education classes which are conducted every school term and attend parent

education evenings which occur once a semester and cover a variety of interesting and engaging topics. Pre3Montes parents are also actively encouraged to engage in the social events that happen every term.

PARENT LIBRARY

All members of playgroup are welcome to borrow books from the Perth Montessori School's Parent Library. If you would like to find out more about how to do this please ask your coordinator.

PLAYGROUP COMMITTEE

The Pre3Montes program is supported by a parent committee. If you are interested in contributing, please speak to your coordinator for more information.

DR MARIA MONTESSORI

Dr. Maria Montessori was a pioneer of childhood education. She believed that each child is born with a unique potential to be revealed, rather than a 'blank slate' on which to be written. Dr Montessori developed educational materials and methods that aim to assist children in their understanding of the world. To learn more the following sites may be useful: www.montessori.edu / www.amshq.org / www.eqj.org/maria.htm

For a more modern take on Montessori you might also like to spend some time watching Dr Steven Hughes the Head of the American Academy of Pediatric Neuropsychology as he describes how Maria Montessori's brain-based approach to education provides an unparalleled foundation for the development of academic, social, and executive functions critical for advanced problem solving and lifetime success. See <http://vimeo.com/15722448>

Lastly, if you need anything, please ask! Montessori principles implemented at home provide a wonderful environment for children to develop their full potential, laying the foundations for the rest of their lives. Our email contact is playgroup@pi.wa.edu.au.