

# Family Handbook

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## Our Philosophy

Similar to the way Indigenous Dream-Time stories are passed down through generations, at Montessori By The Bay, we honour the unique stories of each child and family. We recognize that every child's narrative spans past, present, and future, leaving a lasting impact on the world. We acknowledge our centre's connections with the community, past, present, and future, and we pay respect to the Gadigal Lan of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of the land on which we learn and play.

Montessori By-the-Bay was established with the aim of providing children with an individualized education program addressing the heart, mind, and body, guided by the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori. We believe in the uniqueness of each child's journey, encouraging them to grow and develop at their own pace. Our approach aligns with the Early Years Learning Framework: Belonging, Being, and Becoming, offering children opportunities to explore, learn, and extend their interests in ways that support their individual personalities, needs, and learning styles.

We provide freedom within limits, allowing children to interact and respond to their environment and others spontaneously. Emphasising the importance of play in learning and development, we celebrate children's play, learning, and discoveries through reflection, documentation, and opportunities for extended learning.

As an inclusion-ready service, we adopt a whole-centre approach to inclusion and implement practices that consider the diverse needs, abilities, interests, and backgrounds of children and families. Equity, diversity, and inclusiveness are core values, and we treat children, families, and educators with equal respect, regardless of age, gender, religion, or ethnic background.

Our commitment to partnerships with families is evident in our efforts to work collaboratively and develop trusting relationships based on mutual respect, support, and open communication. We respect the diversity of family beliefs and provide ongoing guidance and support to parents in their role. We encourage families to actively participate in their children's lives, seeking their engagement to inform our programs, daily routines, excursions, special events, and practices.

In embracing the Montessori philosophy, we extend our ethos to Montessori enthusiasts who visit our centre. We welcome them to witness and engage with our unique approach, fostering a broader understanding of the principles that guide our educational practices. We strive to create an environment that not only nurtures the children but also provides a valuable learning experience for Montessori enthusiasts and practitioners alike. This shared commitment to education enriches the tapestry of our community, creating a collaborative space for continuous learning and growth. We believe in the professional practice of our educators that adheres to the Code of Ethics for Early Childhood and Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. Our educators are encouraged to immerse themselves into their role and contribute their diverse skills, interests, knowledge and experience to the centre and the programs. We also believe that regular professional development opportunities should be provided to all educators to promote critical thinking and develop a deep knowledge of the industry with relevant skills and practices.

Date Reviewed: November 2024

Revise Date: November 2025

Reference: The Early Years Learning Framework, National Quality Framework, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991), Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL, 2014) ECA Code of Ethics – Early Childhood Australia, KU Inclusion Support and communication between educators and families.



We would love to hear your feedback! If you have feedback after reading our philosophy, please kindly send it to [admin@montereymbb.com](mailto:admin@montereymbb.com)

### Introduction

Welcome to Montessori By The Bay (MBB) thank you for choosing us to be a part of your Child's Early Education.

At Montessori By The Bay we are committed to providing quality care and education for your Children in a safe, stimulating and nurturing learning environment.

Montessori By The Bay (Pre School) is a family owned and operated, purpose built educational facility providing education and care catering for Children from 2 – 6 years.

The service operates Monday-Friday from 7:30am-5:30pm, 50 weeks of the year and is licenced for 25 Children per day. Montessori By The Bay will be closed on NSW public holidays.

The service operates at 2 locations;

### **Montessori Babies (0-3)**

Monday-Friday from 7:30am-6:00pm, 50 weeks of the year and is licenced for 20 Children per day. Montessori By The Bay will be closed on NSW public holidays.

### **MONTESSORI BY THE BAY CONTACT INFORMATION**

A: 26 Culver St,

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### **Montessori Pre School (3-6)**

Monday-Friday from 7:30am-5:30pm, 50 weeks of the year and is licenced for 25 Children per day. Montessori By The Bay will be closed on NSW public holidays.

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### **Our Learning Environments**

0-2 year old room-(Child: Educator Ratio = 1:4)

2-3 year old room-(Child: Educator Ratio = 1:5)

3-6 year old room – (Child: Educator Ratio= 1:10)

### Enrolment Information

It is essential that we have up-to-date information in case of an emergency. It is important that you notify the office staff and your child's Educator of any changes to enrolment information including:

- Address
- Health
- Telephone/mobile numbers
- Contact details
- Family changes
- Emergency contact information details etc.
- Birth Certificate
- Up to date immunisation records

Ask the educator at any time if you would like to check any details on the enrolment form. It is essential that we have copies of your child's birth certificate and immunisation status. We are also required to have certified copies of any court orders relating to the child.

Our Educational Program:

**Montessori By The Bay** (MBB) is a family owned and run centre. We specialise in providing a Montessori run program. The Montessori classroom for 2 to 6 year olds, often referred to as the "Children's House" or "Casa dei Bambini" in Italian, is a carefully designed environment that fosters independence, curiosity, and a love for learning. Here's an overview of what you might find in a Montessori classroom catering to this age group:

**Mixed-Age Grouping**

In a Montessori classroom, children aged 2 to 6 years old learn together in a mixed-age environment. This setup encourages cooperation, collaboration, and peer learning. Older children often serve as role models and mentors for the younger ones, while younger children are inspired by the achievements of their older peers.

**Montessori Materials**

The classroom is equipped with a wide range of Montessori materials specifically designed to meet the developmental needs of children in this age group. These materials are carefully selected to be attractive and engaging, encouraging hands-on exploration and discovery. Examples include the Pink Tower, the Cylinder Blocks, the Sensorial Materials, the Practical Life materials (such as pouring, spooning, and buttoning), and the Montessori Math materials (such as the Number Rods and the Sandpaper Numerals).

**Freedom within Limits**

Montessori classrooms emphasise the concept of freedom within limits. Children have the freedom to choose their activities and work at their own pace, but within a structured and orderly environment. This approach promotes independence, responsibility, and self-discipline.

**Prepared Environment**

The classroom is thoughtfully arranged to promote independence and facilitate learning. Everything is child-sized and easily accessible, allowing children to move around freely and choose their activities independently. The environment is calm, orderly, and aesthetically pleasing, with natural materials and soft lighting to create a warm and inviting atmosphere.

**Role of the Montessori Guide**

In the Montessori classroom, the teacher is known as a "Montessori guide" or "directress." Rather than being the center of attention, the guide observes the children closely, identifies their interests and developmental needs, and offers guidance and support as needed. The guide acts as a facilitator, creating a nurturing and respectful atmosphere where children feel empowered to explore, discover, and learn.

**Focus on Practical Life Skills**

Practical life activities form an integral part of the Montessori curriculum for 2 to 6 year olds. These activities, such as pouring, washing dishes, sweeping, and dressing themselves, not only help children develop important life skills but also promote concentration, coordination, and independence.

**Emphasis on Social and Emotional Development**

Montessori education places a strong emphasis on the social and emotional development of children. Through activities such as group work, conflict resolution, and grace and courtesy lessons, children learn important social skills such as cooperation, empathy, and respect for others.

Overall, the Montessori classroom for 2 to 6 year olds provides a rich and stimulating environment where children are free to explore, learn, and grow at their own pace, laying a solid foundation for a lifetime of joyful learning.

### Policies and Procedures

The MBB Policies and Procedures are on the OWNA app and are available for families to view at any time. Policies and Procedures are reviewed on a 12 monthly basis. Families will be notified when Policies and Procedures are being reviewed and your input or suggestions are welcome. Policies may sometimes be reviewed more regularly depending on changes to the National Regulations or changes, improvements within the service; families will still be notified if this is the case. All staff and educators are familiar with the Service Policies and Procedures and it is important that they adhere to these policies and procedures to a high quality standard through their day to day practices. Families are encouraged to provide feedback on our Policies and Procedures.

Our Medical Condition Policy, Sleep and Rest Policy and Administration of Medication Policy can be found here <https://www.montessoribythebay.com/handbook>

### National Quality Standard and Service Ratings

The National Quality Standard (NQS) is a key aspect of the NQF and sets a national benchmark for early childhood education and care, and outside school hours care services in Australia.

Every service in Australia will be assessed to make sure it meets the quality standard. Health and safety is paramount all day and every day within Early Childhood environments therefore every service must comply with rigorous health and safety requirements.

To ensure children enjoy the best possible conditions in their early educational and developmental years, the NQS promotes continuous improvement in quality.

The National Quality Standard is linked to the Early Years Learning Framework which recognises that children learn from birth and outlines practices that support and promote children's learning. This can be viewed at:

[http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/belonging\\_being\\_and\\_becoming\\_the\\_early\\_years\\_learning\\_framework\\_for\\_australia.pdf](http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/belonging_being_and_becoming_the_early_years_learning_framework_for_australia.pdf)

### **Seven quality areas:**

The NQS consists of seven quality areas, each containing standards and elements, that children's education and care services are assessed and rated against. The seven quality areas covered by the National Quality Standard are:

- Educational program and practice
- Children's health and safety
- Physical environment
- Staffing arrangements
- Relationships with children
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- Leadership and service management

See more at: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/Quality-Areas>

### **Service ratings:**

Every service receives a rating for each quality area and an overall rating. These ratings must be displayed by each service and are published on the ACECQA and the MyChild websites.

There are five rating levels within the national quality rating and assessment process:

- Excellent rating, awarded by ACECQA
- Exceeding National Quality Standard
- Meeting National Quality Standard
- Working Towards National Quality Standard
- Significant Improvement Required

See more at: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/assessments-and-ratings>

### Family Communication:

Families may communicate with Educators, Staff or Management via email or telephone. Should you require a discussion with an Educator in regards to your child please arrange a time for them to meet with you or contact you via telephone- this way management will be able to cover them to keep within the educator: child ratios.

### Open Door Policy:

MBB; Open Door Policy means that our families and parents are welcome to visit the service at any time of any day. There is no need to notify us that you are popping in, families and parents are welcome at any time. Your participation, suggestions and input into our routines and programs are always welcome.

### Meals & Nutrition:

Here at MBB we provide Morning Tea Afternoon Tea and a late afternoon tea snack for your Children.

We encourage the children's involvement in planting and growing our very own vegetables in our veggie patch which are used within the cooking and preparation of meals.

The importance of healthy eating and physical activity is embedded within our Educational Programs and Daily Routines.

We ask that families provide one piece of fruit on each day of your child's attendance. There will be a fruit bowl located in the sign in/out area for families and children to place their fruit. Fruit will be cut up and shared with the children for morning and afternoon tea.

Allergies:

MBB is STRICTLY a NUT FREE service

Families will be notified of any other Allergies of Children enrolled at MBB –

We ask that there is no food other than a piece of fruit be brought into the service. All meals, snacks and milk are provided

What to bring:

- Bag or Backpack

For independence, we work towards all children being able to recognise and open their own bag. Let them be involved in selecting the bag and taking ownership of it. Please ensure it is large enough to hold all their belongings.

- A Water bottle
- Sheets (cot size to fit centre beds & cots) Fitted & Flat
- A spare change of clothes-: Every now and then accidents occur or clothes become dirty for different reasons (craft time, meal times etc.) and it may be necessary for your child to get changed into a fresh set. Please include a complete change of clothes every day which can stay in your child's bag...just in case!
- Milk bottles & Formula (if required)
- A piece of fruit for the fruit bowl

What we provide:

- Morning Tea, Afternoon Tea and a Late afternoon tea snack
- Nappies
- Wipes
- Full Cream Milk
- Sunscreen
- High quality educational programs

Dressing your child for kindy:

It is helpful to your child if they are dressed in non- restrictive, serviceable, easy to wash clothes so that they feel free to join in all the activities and to develop independence. Shoes also, need to allow children freedom to run, climb, hop & jump as well as being easy for the child to take off and put on by him/her. Unsuitable shoes are thongs and gumboots and we prefer that these are NOT worn to the Service. Lace up joggers or sandals are appropriate. Also, please consider clothing that enables the child to move around easily and allows children to be independent in dressing. Clothing such as long dresses, overalls, braces, belts and stiff buttons can prove a problem for children who need to go to the toilet. We require all t-shirts to have sleeves, no mid-drift tops and hats that are broad brimmed are essential for effective sun safety.

Please try not to dress your children in their best clothing, although we encourage the children to use art aprons to protect their clothing, sometimes a little bit of paint or glue etc can still get onto their clothes. To prevent ruining good clothing please send your child in something that it won't be a problem if they become a little dirty.

Accounts and Fees:

Security Bond and Administration Fee:

An annual fee is collected at the beginning of every year. The \$220 levy payment will be taken at the beginning of the year. A \$60 enrolment fee is a one off payment made at enrolment. This is not refundable.

Ending Enrolment at MBB:

Should you decide to end your Child's enrolment with us, we will require FOUR weeks' notice to be submitted in writing. Between the months of November and February, there will be a requirement of SIX weeks written notice to be submitted.

If the correct notice is not provided, full fees will be charged until your anticipated notice period is complete.

Daily Fees:

2-3 Years Room – \$157.00 per day

3-6 Years Room – \$147.00 per day

Fees are payable on a FORNIGHTLY basis in advance and can be paid using Direct Debit. No cash can be accepted by our service.

- Fees are still payable when your child is absent from the service on a day which they are enrolled as well staff development days.
- We ask that your account is kept up to date at all times. Late fees do apply.
- Fees collected and any account credits can be used for session of care and other operational costs associated with providing care for your child.
- There is a charge for staff development days and preparation. This usually occurs at the end of the year.

Payment Options:

*By EFT*

Account Name: Anba Wanis Pty Ltd  
Bank: National Australia Bank (NAB)  
BSB: 082-342  
Account Number: 320229672

Viewing Invoices and Statements:

Invoices and statements can be viewed via our OWNA app. Instructions can be found in the cheat sheet located at - [www.montessoribythebay.com/handbook](http://www.montessoribythebay.com/handbook)

### What is Child Care Subsidy?

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is a payment from the Australian Government that helps families with the cost of child care. The Child Care Benefit is income tested and is usually paid directly to approved Child Care Services to reduce the fees that eligible families pay.

### Service Closing Time and Late Fees:

Please be aware that MBB closes at 5:30pm. A late fee is incurred for children collected after 5:30pm. The fee is \$25 per child for the first 10 minutes or part thereof and \$2 per minute for anything over 10 minutes. This fee will be added to your next account. The late fee is strictly adhered to, as two staff members are required to remain at the service until all children are collected. If we are unable to contact either the parent or a person nominated by the parent on the enrolment form to arrange collection of the child/children within an hour of the Service closing, then we will contact Department of Education and Communities and the Police to take responsibility of your child

### Two Day Policy:

At MBB we recommend that each child's enrolment is for a minimum of two days per week. This policy has been put into place to ensure that each child settles into the environment comfortably as well as gets the most out of our high quality educational programs.

### Sign in/ Sign out:

As it is a legislative requirement, it is important that each child is signed in on arrival each day of attendance and is signed out on departure of the service. Signing in and out will require the time of arrival and departure and a signature of the person dropping off and picking up. Your CCS can be affected should you not sign your child in or out of the service. Most importantly, all children must be signed in and out as in an emergency all children's attendance will be accounted for.

Children will not be permitted to leave the service with someone who is not authorised to pick them up. A list of authorised people must be filled out on each child's enrolment form. Should someone that is not on the authorised pick up list need to pick up your child, you must notify us as soon as you can. We will require the full name and address of the person you would like to pick up your child and photo identification will be checked when they arrive to pick up your child.

### Absences:

If you know that your child will be unable to attend on any day in which they are enrolled at MBB, we ask that you let us know via email or telephone as soon as you can.

Please keep in mind: You will get CCS and CCR for 42 absence days per child each financial year. These can be for any reason and will not require proof. You can also get CCS for additional absence days (above the 42 days) for specific reasons only. There is no limit on these days but you may be required to provide documentation to support the absence.

You can also access your child's absence record on your online statement along with your child care attendance, CCS amounts paid statements. This is available on the Department of Human Services website.

Please be advised that full fees are still payable on days which your child is enrolled at the service and does not attend.

### Confidentiality:

At MBB we are committed to protecting your privacy. We support and are bound by privacy laws and strict confidentiality is maintained at all times. In order to plan programs with you we need to collect information from you.

This information helps us to assess and plan programs in partnership with you. We do not disclose personal information about you or your child to other people or organisations without your consent, unless we are required to do so by law. We do not ask for personal information about you or your child from other professionals or organisations without your consent. You can look at the information in your child's file at any time, or request a copy of information in the file

Birthdays:

It is very exciting for a child to be having a birthday. This celebration is used as to share the joy with the whole class. At MBB our class come together to make a cake for every child birthday that is shared for afternoon tea. We welcome families to come and join us for their child's birthday celebration.

Sick and unwell children:

Attending an Early Childhood Education and Care Service can be busy and demanding day for the bodies and minds of our children. Our Service is not equipped to care for sick children; however we will do everything we can to comfort a child who has become sick whilst in our care. To try and prevent the spread of disease, please monitor your child's health and watch for:

- A runny, green nose
- High temperature
- Diarrhoea
- Red, swollen or discharging eyes
- Vomiting
- Rashes
- Irritability, unusually tired or lethargic

Please do not bring your child to the Service if they display any of the above symptoms. If a child becomes ill whilst at the Service the child's parents or person responsible for the child will be contacted to organise collection of the child. If the child is unable to be collected, that child will be kept away from other children and given the opportunity to rest or play with a quiet washable activity whilst remaining within adult supervision.

When the child is collected, the family will have the following information made available to them to present to their doctor: symptoms, date of onset, general behaviour of the child leading up to the illness and any action taken. Your child should not attend the Service if they have had Panadol or Nurofen within 24 hours prior to attending the service. It is extremely important that staff members are aware if a child has had either medication so we do not re-administer and potentially overdose. The other consideration is that medication of any type should not be added to a child's bottle. Children who are on antibiotics are to be kept away from the Service for the first 24 hours to allow the child to rest and the risk of spreading the infection to decrease.

A Doctors certificate may be required prior to returning to the Service. If your child has been away due to illness, please check with the Service as to whether or not you will need a certificate before your child returns.

Infectious Diseases

The following information has been supplied by the National Health and Medical Research Council re: exclusion from the Service of a child suffering with the following diseases/ailments. Please inform staff if your child has any of the following so that we can let families know if something is going around and avoid an epidemic. (Confidentiality maintained of course).

Condition	Exclusion
Hand, foot and mouth Disease	Until all blisters have dried.
Corona Virus	Must isolate for 2 weeks
Hib	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received.
Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness.
Herpes – cold sores	Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible.
Influenza and flu-like illnesses	Exclude until well.
Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash.
Meningitis (bacterial)	Exclude until well.
Meningococcal infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed.
Mumps	Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner).
Poliomyelitis	Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Readmit after receiving medical certificate of recovery.
Rubella (German measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least 4 days after the onset of rash.
Salmonella, Shigella	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.
Streptococcal infection (including Scarlet Fever)	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well.
Tuberculosis	Exclude until a medical certificate from an appropriate health authority is received.
Whooping Cough	Exclude the child for 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment.
Worms (intestinal)	Exclude if diarrhoea present.

Medication

Educators can only administer medication prescribed by a doctor. They cannot administer non-prescription drugs or dietary supplements unless the service is provided with written authorisation by a doctor. Medication can only be administered to a child by Educators from its original packaging. (Complete with pharmacy instruction sticker).

On arrival at the Service families must give medication to Educators for safe storage and complete a medication authorisation form. Under no circumstances should medication be left in children’s bags. Panadol will only be administered to your child if the consent has been signed on their enrolment form and if their temperature reaches 38 degrees or above. If this is the case, you or someone else who is nominated on the children list of authorised people to pick them up will be contacted and pick up will be required as soon as possible.

Allergies or Asthma

Please submit any allergies or asthma on the Enrolment Form and also bring it to the notice of our Director on enrolment or as it is diagnosed by your Doctor. The Service has a procedure the staff follow to minimise allergic reactions.

The Service requires an Action Plan filled in by your Doctor to assist in managing your child’s needs. The Action Plan is to be updated every 6 months.

Partnerships between Educators and Families:

At MBB believe in the importance of collaborative partnerships with families and that the Early Years Learning Framework outcomes are most likely to be achieved when early childhood educators work in partnership with families.

Our staff and Educators will strive to develop respectful and supportive relationships with families

The relationship with each family will be unique in many ways, but all partnerships between our Staff and Families will share some features, these include Mutual trust, Open & respectful communication, Empathy, Openness to others' views, values and perspectives, Shared decision making, Clarity about roles and responsibilities, Appreciation of each other's knowledge and experience, Willingness to negotiate and compromise, Commitment to resolve tensions and conflicts, Shared aims or goals—what is best for the child.

Our Educators will ensure that our Families are supported in their parenting role and that their values and beliefs are respected. Our MBB Families will have opportunities to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.