



St Johns Montessori

Parent Handbook

St Johns Montessori
75 Merton Road, St Johns, Auckland

Phone 09 521 3040

Nau Mai & Welcome

Nau mai & welcome to St Johns Montessori. We are privileged to be located within the parklands and sports grounds of Colin Maiden Park. Our mountain, Maungarei (Mt Wellington) and our river, the Tāmaki river also define our sense of place.

Our Centre is a Montessori early learning environment, catering for the development, educational needs, and best interests of young tamariki (children) from 0 to 6 years. We are highly committed to providing quality Montessori early childhood education and care.

Inspired by our waiata (song):

Te Aroha (Love)

Te Whakapono (Faith)

Me te Rangimarie (Peace)

Tātou, tātou e

Our rooms have been named,

Te Rima Aroha – Infants

Te Rima Whakapono – Toddlers

Te Rima Rangimarie – Three to six years

We believe that at St Johns Montessori we present a prepared environment where our Kaiako (teacher) offer love to all our whānau and community. They guide and support our tamariki having faith and trust in their ability to develop and practice the skills, dispositions, and knowledge that they need. Our kaiako provide a peaceful space for tamariki to work comfortably and purposefully.

This information handbook contains the general guidelines of our Centre. If there are any further questions, please do not hesitate to speak to the Centre Manager.

After Enrolment

Parent and Tamariki Visit

This is a time for your tamariki (child) to meet the kaiako, to be introduced to the environment and a time for you to join us for a handbook session with our lead kaiako. This visit is held by appointment to ensure ample time for a complete overview of our daily routines, procedures, and policies, and for your questions to be answered.

Orientation

We can schedule the orientation visits according to the needs of your tamariki and generally the week before your tamariki starts, to familiarise them with the environment and the kaiako before their first day.

For the Rangimarie environment, this is generally the first opportunity for your tamariki to experience you saying farewell as they stay independently for short visits.

Attendance

Starting at St Johns Montessori

Many young tamariki and their parents may feel a little anxious when they leave one another in a new environment — there may even be a few tears – this is perfectly natural. You can assist however, by having reassuring conversations about his or her new environment as their first day approaches. For our tamariki in Whakapono and Rangimarie on their first day, help them to pack their bag, give them the responsibility of carrying their own bag, take their hand and in you come – we'll be waiting for you!

On the first day for your tamariki at St Johns Montessori, you may like to come in for a short while. We'll find you a place to sit and give you something to read as the kaiako engage your tamariki in an activity. Between us we'll assess the right time for you to say goodbye. At this point we'd recommend that you make your farewell 'short and sweet' and reassure your tamariki that you'll pick up him or her later. During the early days, we may suggest you come a little earlier to collect your tamariki until we feel he or she is ready to be with us for the entire day.

Please rest assured that empathy and reassurance will almost always alleviate tamariki's anxiety. The kaiako are well versed at helping tamariki to make the transition from home to a new nurturing environment. We will discuss the orientation procedure with you in person too.

Depending on the age of your tamariki, you will need to bring a bag with the following each day:

- Formula and bottles (Aroha & Whakapono)
- Nappies (Aroha & Whakapono)
- Pull-ups or trainers (Aroha & Whakapono)
- Multiple pairs of undies (Whakapono & Rangimarie)
- Coat (ideally a waterproof jacket too)
- Sweater or jumper
- Hat (sunhat for Summertime and beanie for wintertime)
- Indoor shoes (as the tamariki remove their shoes on entry to the class - a simple slip on shoes are ideal)
- Gumboots (seasonal)
- Change of clothes (multiple sets)

Please label everything that comes to the environment with your tamariki's name (even underwear and socks) to avoid lost items.

Arrival

Arrival at St Johns Montessori is an essential part of your tamariki feeling welcomed each day. One of the kaiako will be at the glass gate each morning to greet your tamariki for the first hour of the day. After this time the lively flow of the morning is underway, and the kaiako will be involved in the environment with the tamariki.

On arrival, please sign-in your tamariki at the sign-in table. After saying goodbye to you, your tamariki will be supported to remove their outside footwear and hang up their coat and bag as independently as possible. This is very important work for you tamariki.

Departure

When you arrive to pick up your tamariki, one of the kaiako will inform him/her, we will bring them to the glass door and say a fond 'ka kite ano' (see you again).

Please sign your tamariki out before leaving.

Unless we receive specific permission from you to do otherwise, we can only release your tamariki to the people that you have specifically indicated on your enrolment form. Please let us know who is collecting your tamariki if it's not a parent or regular carer. Please call and let us know if someone who is not the enrolment form is collecting your tamariki so that we can release your tamariki to someone else.

Lunch Time

Lunch time in the Montessori environment is an opportunity for social interactions, grace and courtesy and the development of independence.

Plentiful supplies of water and food are always available to the tamariki so there is no need to send drinks/ drink bottles/ extra food to school unless we are guided to do so by the ministry of health.

Health and Wellbeing – *Mana Tangata*

In case of injury or illness during centre hours, tamariki will be brought to the office. Parents will be notified immediately if there are sickness or injury. It is the parents' responsibility to collect tamariki as soon as possible, ideally within 45 minutes of contact from us. If a parent cannot be reached, the office will call the alternative contacts on the enrolment form. Parents are responsible for keeping all emergency information current by making any changes in addresses, telephone numbers, or emergency contact information at the office.

How do I Contact the Centre in an Emergency?

If you ring the landline during the centre's session time, we may not be able to answer, so feel free to leave a message and we will come back to you as required. If, however, you do need to make more urgent contact with us, then please ring the emergency mobile number **0210707733 (Jamie)** and ring a few times in quick succession, until we answer the phone.

Absences

If your tamariki is unwell and is unable to attend, please call and leave a message on the centre landline (09 521 3040) or email admin@stjohnsmontessori.co.nz

Toilet Learning

We work closely with whanau to assist our tamariki with toilet learning. Our kaiārahi will talk to you about suitable clothing that is needed for this time and the need to make plenty of changes of clothing available. We will send home soiled clothing for washing in a wet bag. Our kaiārahi will talk to you about how to best support toilet learning at the centre with toilet learning at home.

Medical Emergencies

In the event that tamariki needs emergency medical attention, 111 will be called. The parent or person responsible will be notified. If it is necessary to transport your tamariki to the hospital, a staff member will accompany your tamariki and remain with them until one of the parents or whānau (or someone designated by the parent) arrives at the hospital. Staff

members with current First Aid training are always present and will administer aid whenever necessary.

Emergency Contact Details

If there is an emergency of any sort, it is important that we are able to get in touch with you as quickly as possible. Please ensure that the contact information we have for you and alternative contacts are up to date.

Allergies

Make sure that you note all allergies on your tamariki's enrolment form. If required, we will ask you to fill in an allergy action plan.

Medication

Should your tamariki require medicine to be administered during their time with us, we will require you to sign the "Medication Register". This is to be signed by a parent/whānau member before medicine can be administered. All medicine must be in its original bottle.

Illness

You will all be aware how easily germs like colds, flu and other illnesses spread among tamariki with alarming speed. Please refrain from sending your tamariki to the centre if unwell. Please also allow 24 hours after having a fever or sickness, and allow 48 hours from their last bout of vomiting or diarrhoea before returning to the centre. This is for the well-being of all tamariki and staff. We ask you also to refrain from using Pamol to mask a fever just before bringing your tamariki to the centre, as a fever can be the start of many contagious illnesses.

Sun Protection

Please ensure that your tamariki has a named hat to keep at the centre. During summer months, please help your tamariki to apply sunscreen to exposed areas before arriving at the centre. We will also assist them to reapply sunscreen during the day.

Environmentally Friendly

St Johns Montessori aims to behave in an environmentally friendly manner. We try to limit printing and will mostly correspond with parents electronically.

We aim to recycle and re-use items within the environment and we have an active worm farm for composting food scraps.

Communication – *Mana Reo*

So, What Did You Do Today?

When you ask this question to your tamariki at the end of the day, you may hear the same response time and time and again? Generally, your tamariki may say "nothing" or "painting" or "polishing"? Please don't be alarmed.

We can assure you that we offer tamariki a rich variety of choices according to their interests with the aim of supporting their natural development.

Young tamariki sometimes do not have the language for what they've experienced, or they've had such a marvellous time it is sometimes just too tiresome to recount it again.

This is a reminder of how tamariki live very much in the present and we can learn a lot from them in this regard.

Instead you may like to:

Come to one of the parent information evenings and discover the joys of Montessori for yourself.

Arrange a time to come and observe your tamariki in the environment.

Have a chat to us at the end of the day; we're always here to talk to you.

Be patient and observe your tamariki as they develop in their own unique and joyful way.

"Joy is the indication of internal growth." Maria Montessori

Talking to the Kaiako

Each morning and each afternoon the staff will be available to share a few words with you, and if you wish more time to share any thoughts, ideas or concerns with us then please feel free to make an appointment to come in at the end of the day. In addition, we invite all parents to come in twice a year and discuss their tamariki progress on an individual basis.

Parent/Whanāu Meetings

It is very important for us to establish and maintain close communication with parents and whānau. Please feel free to ask questions or discuss anything related to the progress of your tamariki. We ask, however, that you understand that the responsibility of kaiako during centre hours is to the tamariki. Morning arrival in particular is a very important time when we greet each tamariki and establish a calm, peaceful start to the day.

Parent Portal – Educa

During the time your tamariki is with us, in an attempt to share with you some of the priceless learning we observe, recognise and respond to - we prepare Learning Stories to share your tamariki's learning journey. We share these stories and snippets of news on an online communication portal called 'Educa'. Each tamariki has their own profile listed on Educa.

We encourage you to add your own comments, ideas, and reflections. For example, you may also have noticed something linked to what we've commented on, or following a whanāu

holiday, outing or event you may like to share something of interest with us. We'd really like these to be meaningful for your tamariki and your whanau. We always welcome your comments.

General

Cultural Celebrations

We value the cultural and religious traditions of all tamariki at St Johns Montessori. Please speak with us about ways we can recognise your cultural celebrations authentically within our environment.

Parent Help

We encourage your participation in the centre and there are many ways for you to contribute. If you have any [hidden] talents, hobbies, interests, or work experience that you would like to share with our tamariki please talk to us so we can arrange a visit.

Happy Birthday to You – Rā Whānau Ki a Koe

We always recognise the special day of each tamariki — their birthday! We welcome you to be part of this celebration, simply join us on the actual birthday of your tamariki (if this is their Montessori day, if not we'll arrange an alternative date). Bring with you a photo of your tamariki at each year e.g. newborn, one, two, three years etc. and we'll sing a special song. The rest is a secret until you come and join us! No need to bring a cake, please save this treat for your own family gathering.

Magpies

Occasionally tamariki may take home small pieces of equipment. This is a common trait with this age group as they explore the boundaries of what belongs to them and others (plus they often simply want to share with you one of the special materials they've been exploring). We ask that parents regularly look through centre bags and pockets and support their tamariki in returning any equipment promptly as the Montessori materials are expensive to replace.

Toys

There can be heartbreak and tears when the favourite toy of your tamariki ends up in the wrong bag, or even worse it gets mislaid; therefore, we would appreciate if all toys could be left at home.

However, your tamariki is most welcome to bring in something from nature, a special souvenir from a trip, something they have made, or one of their favourite books to share at news time with the other tamariki.

Lost Property

Don't panic! All discarded and unidentified clothing items that are inadvertently left at St Johns Montessori are placed in a basket in the foyer, we do advise you to check it regularly.

Montessori Information

How Do I Find Out More About the Montessori Philosophy?

Parent Information Evenings are held throughout the year. These evenings provide an ideal way for you to get more information on the 'whys' and 'hows' of the Montessori approach to tamariki development, and an opportunity for parents to get together socially.

If you find that your thirst for learning extends beyond what is offered at these parent evenings, then feel free to make use of the selection of books available from the parent library in our office.

How Can You Help at Home?

You will have already noticed how much tamariki love to do things for themselves, how often do we hear – around the age of two – "me do it"!

With this in mind – which will certainly help your tamariki to settle into their new environment – do enable your tamariki to be involved in daily tasks around the home.

Before we even realise it – tamariki can dress themselves, pour themselves a drink, wash themselves and even feed the cat! And so, the very best help we can offer tamariki on their own individual path to independence is to let them to do things for themselves. Don't worry, we'll be giving you lots of wee tips in this area.

The Montessori Alphabet

In the Montessori environment tamariki learn the phonetic sounds of letters first, so instead of the traditional A B C e.g. the names of the letters of the alphabet, instead we introduce: 'a' as in apple, 'b' as in baby and 'c' as in candle. Once the phonetic sounds are well and truly established then we can introduce the names of the letters.

It would really assist your tamariki if you could also use the phonetic sounds of the letters at home rather than the names. So for example - if your tamariki is showing an interest in saying his name, please assist by saying the sounds in his name e.g. for Fin, you could sound out, 'f' as in frog, 'i' as in insect and 'n' as in nut. We appreciate it can be hard if you did not learn this way yourselves (many of us didn't!), but we can give you a sample sheet with the phonetic pronunciation of each letter.

Montessori Links

The following are links to Montessori related websites and useful information.

MANZ, (Montessori Association of New Zealand): <http://www.montessori.org.nz/>

MMEF (Maria Montessori Education Foundation): <https://www.mmef.org.nz/>

AMI (Association Montessori Internationale): <https://montessori-ami.org/>

Montessori Association of Australia: <https://montessori.org.au/>

The Science Behind the Genius: <http://www.montessori-science.org/>

Montessori Foundation & International Montessori Council: <https://www.montessori.org/>

Montessori Parenting tips: <http://aidtolife.org/>

Staying until Six

Parents have a lot to consider when deciding 'where to from here' when their tamariki approach six years of age.

Most people appreciate the special way in which Montessori education supports the growth of the tamariki with its unique individualised and non-competitive approach. What is perhaps less well known is the way in which the Montessori approach is designed to respond to all of the developmental needs of tamariki from birth to six years. Step by step the tamariki grows in awareness, understanding, self-confidence and social responsibility. This carefully integrated approach to the development of tamariki is, therefore, only completed when the tamariki have come to the end of this fundamental period in their development at the age of six.

The 20 hours funding continues when your tamariki is five!

Additional Information

Should anyone wish to view St Johns Montessori's operational documents they can be found in the following places:

- Philosophy – parents communication board at entrance

- Policies – policy folder on sign-in table at entrance
- Procedures – in the policy folder and also posted on walls throughout the centre
- ERO report - <http://www.ero.govt.nz/>
- Financial audit – available on request

Policy Review

We regularly review our policies and procedures and welcome parent and whānau participation in this process. Policies and procedures under current review will be posted on the Parent Communication board at the entrance.

Internal Evaluation

In order to ensure we are constantly improving our routines, environment and practice, we undertake regular internal evaluation. We value parent and whanau ideas and opinions and encourage your participation in these review processes. Please read our newsletters and watch for postings on Educa.

Excursions

We are fortunate to be positioned withing Colin Maiden Park. Our tamariki frequently visit and use our beautiful surroundings. Please make sure you read our excursion policy which details how we manager our visits to the park.



St Johns Montessori

Take care of
our children.
Take care of
what they
hear, take care
of what they
see, take care
of what they
feel. For how
the children
grow, so will be
the shape of
Aotearoa.

*Dame Whina Cooper
Photographer: Michael
Tubberty*



**He aha te mea nui o te ao
What is the most important thing in the world?
He tangata, he tangata, he tangata
It is the people, it is the people, it is the people**

St Johns Montessori

We look forward to welcoming you, your tamariki and your whānua to
St Johns Montessori.



St Johns Montessori Fee schedule

U3's			
Programme	Montessori Session 8:30-12:30	Montessori Day 8:30-15:30	Full Day 7:30– 17:00
2days	\$80	\$150	\$180
3days	\$120	\$220	\$250
4days	\$160	\$280	\$320
5days	\$200	\$340	\$390

O3's			
Programme	Montessori Session 7:30-12:30	Montessori Day 8:30-15:30	Full Day 7:30– 17:00
2days	\$20 (Optional)	\$110	\$140
3days	\$30 (Optional)	\$160	\$190
4days	\$40 (Optional)	\$200	\$240
5days	\$50 (Optional)	\$240	\$290

Enrolment Fee: \$50, Not refundable

Optional Charge: \$10 per day for tea and lunch