



Teaching & Learning Policy

Statement of Intent

The Oak Montessori is committed to offering pupils a high quality nursery education. Our curriculum follows the guidelines and foundation set out by the Early Years Foundation Stage. We have a Montessori teaching core, focused on making the most of indoor and outdoor learning opportunities within our vicinity in Wimbledon Park.

Planned activities are organised in order to promote children's learning, and their personal and social development. We want our pupils to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and cooperate with others while at the same time developing their knowledge and skills, in order to achieve their full potential. We value the breadth and range of our curriculum to develop creative independent learners. We believe that our curriculum ensures that each child is well prepared, not only for school, but for life beyond.

Our Montessori Approach

Looking around our classroom you will notice our Montessori shelved areas; practical life, sensorial, numeracy, literacy, science & cultural, including an array of resources, materials and activities which support the Early Years Foundation Stage in the UK. The seven areas of learning within the EYFS are: communication & language, physical development, personal, social & emotional development, literacy, mathematics, understanding the world, expressive arts & design.

We cater for each child's individual interests and development needs. Montessori children use hands-on learning materials that make abstract concepts clear and concrete. This approach to learning offers a clear and logical strategy that helps your child to develop a sound foundation, working towards the Early Years Outcomes and Early Learning Goals. Every day your child will work in small groups and have the opportunity for individual 1:1 time with their key worker. Our teachers will spend quality time working on literacy and numeracy activities, scaffolding their learning. This enables each child to solve problems, carry out tasks and achieve goals which challenge them, just beyond their abilities.

A Sneak Peak into our Classroom:



- In the **Practical Life** area you will find objects and materials that are normally encountered in the everyday living experiences. These activities work on each child's grace and courtesy, care of self, control of movement and care of the environment. They help to develop self-confidence, control and concentration, essential for mastery of the other more advanced areas of a Montessori classroom.
- The **Sensorial** materials support each child's awareness of detail. Each of the activities can isolate a defining quality, such as colour, weight, shape, texture, size, sound and smell. It is in this area that mathematical concepts are first introduced and internalised. These materials will provide each child with the skills needed for a solid foundation in mathematics. It is here that each child will first explore and learn to identify shapes; by pairing sound cylinders, sorting natural materials (such as acorns and conkers) according to size, weight or texture. They develop grading skills when using activities like the colour tablets and they are introduced to 1:1 correspondence when matching cylinders with appropriate sockets in the cylinder block to explore length, weight and size through their play.
- In the **Numeracy** area children will work at their own pace from the concrete to abstract. They will be introduced to counting with the help of number rods and sandpaper numerals. They will move on to learn about both cardinal and ordinal numbers, exploring their relationships with the written symbol. The carefully structured sequence of Montessori materials means each child will first work with quantities, focusing on sequence, as well as patterns of numbers such as odd and even, moving onto the names of the symbols. At all times each child will have objects to manipulate and organise to enhance their own mathematical understanding. Our mathematics activities are organised into five groups: introduction to numbers, introduction to the decimal system, introduction to tens, teens and counting, arithmetic tables, and abstraction.
- The **Literacy** area is supported by a number of activities that stimulate communication skills and vocabulary development. Here you will find a broad range of materials for reading readiness, phonetic analysis as well as fine motor control. Materials such as our sandpaper letters and large moveable alphabet help to prepare each child for writing first, before they learn to read. Maria Montessori believed this approach to be organic, as children are able to put the letters for the sounds they know together into a word before they are ready to interpret and string together the sounds of a word on a page. Children take pride in their learning development and will often come back the following day to learn the next stage of the process.



- Our **Science & Cultural** areas, in addition to the **outdoor learning experiences** on offer, provide the opportunity for each child to gain a lifelong interest in observing nature and discovering more about the world in which we live. It is here that they come across activities of magnetism, weights, growing plants and the classification of plants and animals. Each child will learn about Geography, Zoology, Botany, Science, Art, Music & Languages. These resources will provide them with the opportunity to indulge their curiosity of different and worldly ideas. We will look at the world, study land and water forms, continents, world maps, customs and rituals; looking at our own cultures and many others.

Eg 1. Within the study of Botany, a child will learn about plants, from what they look like to how to take care of them, how they grow and how they may appreciate nature in a more organic way. We will go out into the park and have first-hand experiences which become a fundamental part of their learning development.

Eg 2. Within the study of Zoology, a child will look at different animals from all around the world - where they live, their unique ecosystems, what they eat and how they grow.

- In our classroom **Library, Art, Roleplay & Music** areas are also important. These allow each child a unique opportunity to express themselves. Children have an expressive and uninhibited experience of moving, dancing and singing among their school peers. These areas allow children to gain a literary understanding of language and develop their cognitive and emotional skills in a constructive way.
- We support the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of each child, through both our British Values teaching and across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Key Workers

We recognise every child's individuality, efforts and achievements. We believe that strong and secure relationships between our children and their teachers are crucial for their development. This is why we operate a Key Person system. Each child will have a key teacher who will observe their progress and development. This offers them security and consistency making them feel safe and confident within their environment.



Our Curriculum Values

We believe that the following areas allow for a child to thrive and learn with ease and joy. They underpin the dynamic thinking of our learners, cultivating independent, confident thinkers who have a voice and know how to use it.

1. **The Unique Child:** We offer an inclusive, child-centred approach to learning which allows for every child to advance at their own pace, developing their individual potential fully . We are focused on unearthing and supporting the inner wisdom of each child.
2. **The Prepared Environment:** Our learning environment is specifically prepared with Montessori materials to support all seven areas of the Early Years Foundation stage, cultivating 'hands on' experience and allowing for movement where children can progress. All areas of learning support each other seamlessly and our teachers act as guides when needed.
3. **Independence:** We encourage freedom of choice and movement between activities, allowing for each learner to develop independently at their own pace from the simple to the complex, challenging them to take risks with independent investigation and multi-sensory learning.
4. **Empowerment:** We have a Montessori mixed-age classroom structure called Vertical Grouping, designed for children to interact and engage with all ages. Older children act as role models, giving them a sense of empowerment, whilst younger children gain self-confidence and inquisitiveness.
5. **Respect:** We have a culture of respect; for our teacher-child relationships, our families, our local communities, our natural environment and our global communities. A child's personal dignity lies at the centre of our culture, dictating how we interact with each other through opportunities and challenges.
6. **Wellbeing:** We support the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of each child. We offer a positive learning journey with a focus on cultural, social, moral and spiritual development, fostering emotional intelligence and empathy. A focus on the understanding of self and others acts as a strong foundation for us all.



Curriculum Aims & Objectives

The aims of The Oak Montessori curriculum are:

- to enable all children to learn, and develop their skills, to the best of their ability
- to promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to nursery, and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning;
- to teach children the basic skills of literacy and numeracy;
- to enable children to be innovative, to use 'thinking' and problem-solving skills;
- to develop children's skills of teamwork and collaboration with others;
- to enable children to understand and appreciate the arts, giving them opportunities to develop their own artistic and creative abilities;
- to teach children about the developing world, including how their environment and society have changed over time;
- to help children understand Britain's cultural heritage and British values;
- to enable children to appreciate and understand the importance of scientific and technological discoveries and development;
- to give children an awareness of and experience of speaking and understanding other languages than English;
- to teach children ICT skills and to apply these skills across the curriculum to support their learning;
- to appreciate and value the contribution made by all ethnic groups in our multi-cultural society;
- to enable children to be positive citizens, contributing to the society in which they live;
- to fulfil all the requirements of the EYFS National Curriculum;
- to teach children to have an awareness of their own spiritual development, and to distinguish right from wrong;
- to help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all;
- to enable children to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem, and to live and work cooperatively with others

Differentiation

We recognise that children learn at different rates with differing learning needs. These are supported each day as we work with our children.



English as a Foreign Language

If you have a concern that you would like to raise with regards to a child's level of English, please direct it in the first instance to Miss Natasha.

Our EAL Aims & Objectives

- to ensure the correct pronunciation and spelling of the child's name
- to get to know the child as an individual: their background, experiences, interests, skills, approaches to learning
- to create an environment where each child feels valued and safe
- to give clear learning objectives in lessons and use appropriate materials to support the child's participation
- to actively model and encourage an atmosphere of risk taking in an environment where errors are seen as a natural and important part of learning
- to consciously interact with children, supporting them to make connections to and build on previous learning and experiences
- to encourage and seek opportunities to use first language at appropriate stages of learning
- to strategically use a variety of grouping techniques
- to provide extended waiting time to allow children time to process the question and their response
- to monitor each child's understanding, providing opportunity for individual explanations and support where needed
- to build up shared 'class' experiences to draw upon
- to clarify key words, rephrase key content in a variety of ways
- to offer additional visual support eg. posters, pictures, photographs, objects, use of gesture
- to offer additional verbal support eg. repetition, modelling, peer support
- to use scaffolding for language and learning
- to assess EAL learners against the same criteria as their monolingual peers, enabling accurate comparison of their relative progress and attainment with ongoing assessment throughout the EYFS



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Assistance for Children with SEN

The Oak Montessori aims to provide a setting which, to the best of its ability, meets the needs of children with SEN including:

- ensuring that each child with identified SEN receives a tailored, Individual Learning Plan (ILP) which is drawn up by the SENCO, in collaboration with their key worker and parents.
- providing individualised learning support and one-on-one time, where appropriate, and working with external agencies for support

Our Aims and Objectives

- to create a learning environment that meets the special educational needs of each child;
- to ensure that the special educational needs of children are identified, assessed and provided for from the earliest possible age;
- to ensure that all partners in the process of meeting a child's individual needs understand and fulfil their responsibilities;
- to ensure, in particular, that all nursery staff understand and fulfil their roles and responsibilities in providing for children's special educational needs;
- to have the highest expectations of the progress in learning which can be achieved by all individual pupils, regardless of their individual needs;
- to enable all children, including those with SEN, to maximise their learning and achievement;
- to ensure that parents or carers are able to play their part in supporting their child's education;
- to ensure that our children have a voice in deciding how their individual needs might best be met;
- to ensure that all necessary resources are made available to meet each child's individual needs.

Rewards

We do not explicitly use a daily reward system, but rather adopt a culture of positive daily reinforcement and recognition of the processes and activities completed by your child. They will receive verbal praise for answers, questions, helpfulness, good manners, initiative and any other actions encouraged within the nursery environment. At certain times during the year a child's work will be displayed and we may highlight particular achievements to parents on an adhoc basis to ensure we are working together as a team.



Curriculum & Timetable

The Oak Montessori						
Time		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM Sessions	9:00 AM	Montessori Workcycle & Forest School *Free Flow snack area				
	10:00 AM					
	11:00 AM					
	11:40 - 12:00	Storytelling: children who are going home at lunchtime will start to get ready for pick up and join us for circle time once ready.				
PM Sessions	LUNCH TIME: The children who are staying with us for the day will actively participate in laying the tables and making sure everything is ready for lunch. Your child will have brought in a healthy packed lunch and we will all sit to eat together. Afternoon children will join us as they arrive at lunch.					
	1:00 PM	Montessori Workcycle & Forest School				
	1:30 PM	Dance	Sport	Languages	Music & Drama	Yoga
	2:00 PM	Montessori Workcycle & Forest School *Free Flow snack area				
	2:40 - 3:00	Storytelling: all children will get ready for pick up and join us us for circle time once ready.				

Specialist Teachers

If parents choose to pay additional charges to the 3 year old 15hr funding, pupils are taught by specialist teachers across Forest School, Dance, Sport, Languages, Music & Drama and Yoga.



Reading

Reading and story-telling is a focal point of nursery life every day and we promote a culture of reading at home as well as school. We will share our story-telling journey each term and if you ever need inspiration do not hesitate to speak with Miss Natasha or Miss Charlotte.

Next Steps

Parents are encouraged to speak to Miss Charlotte & Natasha about next steps for their child, whether they are interested in public or independent schools.

Assessment & Reporting

We will invite parents termly for a 10-minute meeting to discuss the development of their child. We strive to work together as a team throughout the year, to ensure that all children are well-supported, happy, learning and growing every day.

Policy Written in June 2019
Natasha Rawdon-Rego

Review Date: July 2020
Charlotte Wheeler