

# The Principles of the EYFS

## A Unique Child

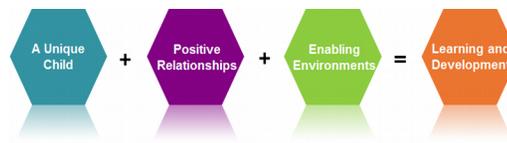
*“The greatest triumph of our system of education will always be to obtain [the] spontaneous progress of a child” (Montessori, 2007a, p169)*

The Montessori ethos of “following the child”, allows each child to learn at their own pace and through sensitive observation. Our practitioners ensure that every learning opportunity is tailored to the individual child’s interests and developmental needs.

## Positive Relationships

*“The adult, the child and the environment are a trinity. They have to be considered as one.” (Montessori, 2012, p121)*

Unity Montessori aims to provide an atmosphere in which all children can blossom. The Montessori principle of observation allows us to get to know each and every child as an individual, and we use this precious knowledge to form secure and significant relationships with our pupils. By helping the children to “help themselves” our practitioners sensitively support each child’s journey towards independence and autonomy. Our key person approach ensures that there is meaningful communication between the school and the home, enabling children to enjoy consistency, which is key to fostering their sense of belonging.



## Enabling Environments

*“We must give children freedom and relaxation from continuous intervention by adults. Give them the right environment. Give them relaxation and freedom from orders. This is an indirect treatment: it is not the correction of an individual, but a preparation for a new life.” (Montessori, 2012, p215)*

Within our Montessori “Favorable Environment”, we provide every child with essential freedoms within agreed boundaries. Each child has the freedom to choose activities, which appeal to their inner urge to learn. The nature of our open-ended, attractive materials is to allow every child to be the leader of their own learning journey. The three hour ‘work-cycle’ provides opportunity for children to engage in activities either alone, with friends, or with a teacher with the assurance that their play will not be disturbed as long as they are being respectful of themselves, others, and their environment.

## Learning & Development

As we look at every child as an individual, we ensure that our environment is inclusive for all. We know that all children develop at their own pace, and through careful observation and sensitive scaffolding our practitioners are able to support all children on their personal learning journey. By adhering to the Montessori method of vertically grouping classes, we guarantee that the activities available are able to be used on many levels by all pupils.



Here at Unity Montessori Nursery School we define our curriculum as the sum of “the interaction of teachers, pupils, knowledge and the environment.”

*“This is education, understood as a help to life; an education from birth, which feeds a peaceful revolution and unites all in a common aim... This is the bright new hope for mankind.’ (Montessori, 2007, p15)*

The philosophy of Maria Montessori underpins and interweaves through our curriculum in perfect harmony with UK Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (DfE, 2017)

Smith, M. K. (1996, 2000) Curriculum Theory and Practice, *The encyclopedia of informal education* ([www.infed.org/biblio/b-curric.htm](http://www.infed.org/biblio/b-curric.htm)). (Accessed 20/02/17)

# The Characteristics of Effective Learning

*"In order to form and maintain our intelligence, we must use our hands"*  
(Montessori, 2012, p152)

All of the materials in our classroom, particularly within the SENSORIAL area, are designed to be a multi-sensory experience for the children who are actively encouraged to play & explore.



Once an activity has been presented to the children, they are supported to find out how else they can use what they know, and discover what else

they can do with the materials.

*"It is activity, activity alone, which can produce this phenomenon (concentration)"*  
(Montessori, 2012, p153)

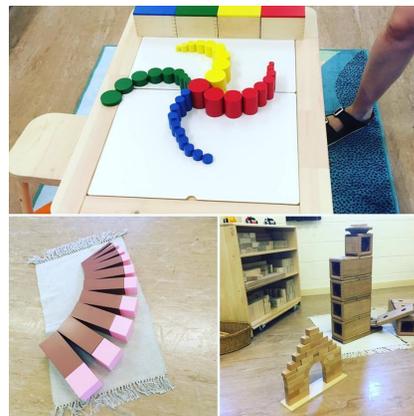
In everything we do the children are supported to be active learners and engage in hands-on experience with the materials.



When children first join Unity Montessori our ACTIVITIES OF EVERYDAY LIVING inspire our pupils to develop the skill of concentration, through promoting use of self-chosen activities and being allowed to freely repeat an activity, until they have satisfied their inner urge towards developing a particular skill.



- Finding out & exploring, playing with what they know, being willing to have a go.
- Being involved and concentrating, keeping trying, enjoying achieving what they set out to do.
- Having their own ideas, making links, choosing ways to do things.



*"The child creates his own mental muscles, using for this what he finds in the world about him"* (Montessori, 2007b, p24)



In agreement with Montessori herself, here at Unity Montessori we believe that every child is born with a vast creative energy, and their creativity develops through knowledge of reality, and through sensorial experiences.

By providing real concrete experiences for the children, within our ACTIVITIES OF EVERYDAY LIVING and SENSORIAL curriculum areas, our children are encouraged to follow their creative urges and to think critically. The freedom of exploration promoted within the environment inspires children to make links between the different materials and choose their own way to do things.

# Bibliography

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