

# SA Montessori SAMPLE

## 4-Year-Old Preschool Program

**Broad Goal:** To ensure that every child has the opportunity to participate in a high-quality preschool program prior to commencing fulltime school.

At SA Montessori, we are committed to ensuring that each child has the opportunity to participate in a high-quality preschool program prior to commencing fulltime school. The program is delivered in accordance with the *National Quality Framework* and the *Early Years Learning Framework* and is implemented within the Montessori classroom environment. With a strong focus on school readiness, the program is designed to foster the development of fundamental skills across cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and language domains, preparing children for a smooth and confident transition into formal schooling. The government facilitates attendance through the Universal Access funding scheme and a degree qualified Early Childhood Teacher designs and implements our Universal Access program.

Montessori Learning Opportunities:	Curriculum Connections
<p><b>Social and Emotional</b></p> <p>Social and emotional development provides the foundation for effective learning, positive wellbeing, and the ability to form meaningful interpersonal relationships. The Montessori approach acknowledges the direct and dynamic interconnectedness between a child's social, emotional, and academic growth. Through a carefully prepared environment and respectful relationships, children are supported to develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional awareness and self-regulation</li> <li>• Empathy and respect for others</li> <li>• Confidence and independence</li> <li>• Collaboration and problem-solving skills</li> </ul> <p>By building a strong sense of self and belonging, children are empowered to engage more deeply with learning and thrive both in school and in life.</p> <p><b>What does this look like?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social games and roleplay</li> <li>- Social stories</li> <li>- Books and activities surrounding making new friends, diversity, respecting each other</li> </ul>	Links to our Philosophy Statement
	<p>Our <i>Service Philosophy</i> underpins all aspects of our programming and daily practices. It reflects our commitment to providing a nurturing, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate learning environment that respects each child as unique and capable individuals.</p> <p>The key components of our Philosophy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Creativity</li> <li>• Curiosity</li> <li>• Integrity</li> <li>• Positivity</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> </ul>
	Early Years Learning Framework
	<p>The Principles, Practices and Learning Outcomes of the <i>Early Years Learning Framework</i> guide all aspects of our practice. It forms the foundation for our curriculum decision-making, teaching strategies, and relationships with children and families.</p>

- Appropriate strategies for working through challenging situations with peer
- Asking for help
- Positive play with peers
- Sharing and/or respectfully declining invitations to play (ie. I would like to do this on my own but you may have it when I'm finished OR I am still your friend but I'm just working with ....., I'll come and find you when I'm done.)

## Cognitive

In a Montessori classroom, careful consideration is given to each activity that is presented on the shelves, ensuring they cater for each child's current interests and level of development. Some of the more advanced activities are kept in the cupboard and brought out as required. Sensitive Periods of Development relate to a moment in time when a child shows particular interest in acquiring a specific skill.

Teachers observe these Sensitive Periods of Development and program accordingly. The Universal Access Program caters for individual and small group work to occur within the classroom, specifically with our 4-year old children, and provides flexibility to ensure positive outcomes are met for all children, whilst ensuring the experiences align with each child's Sensitive Period of development.

The activities planned will depend on each child's current understanding, however in Numeracy this may incorporate:

- Number recognition and quantity
- Basic patterning
- Simple addition
- Collecting data and representing in written form ie. simple graphs
- 2D and 3D shapes
- Classification (by colour, shape, size etc)

The activities planned will depend on each child's current understanding, however in Literacy this may incorporate:

- Name recognition
- Writing name

## Principles

The Early Years Learning Principles guide our educators to create inclusive, engaging, and meaningful learning experiences that support children to become confident, connected, and capable learners.

The Early Years Learning Principles are:

- Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships
- Partnerships
- Respect for diversity
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives
- Equity, inclusion and high expectations
- Sustainability
- Critical reflection and ongoing professional learning
- Collaborative leadership and teamwork

## Practices

The Early Years Learning Framework outlines a set of key practices that guide our educators in implementing a high-quality early childhood program. At SA Montessori, the *Practices* shape every aspect of our teaching, learning environment, and interactions with children and families. These *Practices* are essential for supporting children's learning and development across all areas and ensuring that programs are inclusive, engaging, and meaningful.

The Practices are:

- Holistic, integrated and interconnected approaches
- Responsiveness to children
- Play-based learning and intentionality
- Learning environments
- Cultural responsiveness
- Continuity of learning and traditions
- Assessment and evaluation for learning, development and wellbeing

## Learning Outcomes

The five *Learning Outcomes* of the *Early Years Learning Framework* are deeply embedded in our preschool program. Each outcome is reflected in our curriculum, daily routines, educator interactions, and classroom environment. The outcomes support children's holistic development and readiness for school.

- Letter recognition
- Phonics
- Initial, middle and end sounds
- Blending words
- Rhyming words
- Developing appreciations for books, correct handling and sharing

## School Readiness

The development of school readiness skills is interwoven throughout the Program, however during the term prior to a child transitioning to the school environment they will be involved in activities that focus on specific tasks and expectations they will encounter at school. These include, yet are not limited to :

- Group expectations at 'group times' (ie. sitting with legs crossed, practicing appropriate listening, putting hand up to share etc)
- Working at tables, sharing pencil pots etc
- Listening to instructions and then moving off to a table to work
- Working on small group tasks cooperatively
- Working on the same tasks as their peers at a table or on the floor
- Discussing what recess and lunchtimes might look like and the 'bell'
- Making new friends
- How to move around the school (ie. lining up, walking with partners, notifying your teacher before going to the bathroom)

### What does this look like?

Group games and activities similar to a small school classroom, individual and small group lessons, access to more challenging materials, social situations similar to the school environment, scaffolded lessons throughout the day.

## Outcome 1: Children Have a Strong Sense of Identity

We foster children's confidence, independence, and belonging through respectful relationships and a nurturing environment.

- Children choose their own work from the Montessori shelves, developing independence, agency and a sense of ownership over their learning.
- Children engage in and contribute to shared play experiences
- Children develop confident self-identities and positive sense of self-worth
- Teachers encourage an awareness of and respect for others' perspectives, reflecting on their actions and consider consequences for others
- Children participate in group time, sharing stories about their families and cultures.

## Outcome 2: Children Are Connected With and Contribute to Their World

We support children in developing empathy, social responsibility, and an understanding of the world around them.

- Children develop a sense of connectedness to groups and communities and an understanding of their reciprocal rights and responsibilities as active and informed citizenship
- Children respond to diversity with respect
- Children become aware of fairness
- Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment
- Children care for classroom plants and take part in sustainability practices, such as recycling and composting.
- They collaborate during group projects, learning to share, take turns, and work as a team.
- Cultural events, such as Harmony Day or NAIDOC Week, are celebrated with stories, songs, and discussions to build awareness and respect for diversity.

## Outcome 3: Children Have a Strong Sense of Wellbeing

We promote physical and emotional wellbeing through healthy routines, emotional support, and active play.

- Children become strong in their social, emotional and mental wellbeing
- Children become strong in their physical learning and wellbeing

## National Quality Standard

The National Quality Standard sets a national benchmark for the quality of education and care services in Australia. The National Quality Standard plays a vital role in shaping our philosophy, programs, and everyday practices. It provides a clear and consistent framework that guides us in delivering the highest quality education and care for all children.

The below Standards are applied throughout our 4-year old Preschool Program. The NQS informs our practice in the following ways:

- **Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice**

We use the Early Years Learning Framework and Montessori philosophy to design intentional, responsive, and developmentally appropriate learning experiences that reflect each child's interests, needs, and identity.

- **Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety**

We prioritise children's physical and emotional wellbeing through safe environments, healthy routines, and proactive risk management. Our policies and practices promote a culture of safety and care.

- **Quality Area 3: Physical Environment**

Our Montessori classrooms and outdoor spaces are carefully prepared to encourage independence, exploration, and purposeful play. We provide natural, sustainable, and aesthetically pleasing environments that inspire learning.

- **Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements**

Our team consists of qualified, dedicated educators who work collaboratively and reflectively. We ensure adequate supervision, meaningful engagement, and consistency in care through effective staffing practices.

- **Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children**

Positive, respectful relationships are at the heart of our practice. We support children to feel secure, valued, and connected through consistent, nurturing interactions that promote self-esteem and belonging.

- Children are aware of and develop strategies to support their own mental and physical health and personal safety.
- Educators use emotional language to help children recognise and manage their feelings (e.g., "I can see you're feeling frustrated—can we take a deep breath together?").
- Healthy eating habits are promoted during mealtimes

### Outcome 4: Children Are Confident and Involved Learners

We encourage curiosity, creativity, problem-solving, and persistence through open-ended learning experiences and hands-on exploration.

- Children engage in long periods of uninterrupted work, allowing them to concentrate, persist, and complete tasks at their own pace.
- Educators ask open-ended questions to extend children's thinking: "What do you think will happen if we add more water to the soil?"
- Children develop growth mindset learning disposition such a curiosity, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, and persistence
- Children develop a range of skills, such as problem solving, enquiry, experimentation, hypothesizing, researching, and investigating
- Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another
- Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies, and natural and processed materials
- Children apply a wide variety of thinking strategies to engage with situations and solve problems, and adapt these strategies to new situations
- manipulate objects and experiment with cause and effect, trial and error, and motion
- create and use representation to organise, record and communicate mathematical ideas and concepts

### Outcome 5: Children Are Effective Communicators

We provide a language-rich environment where children develop communication skills through conversation, storytelling, reading, and symbolic play.

- Children use Montessori language materials like the Sandpaper Letters and Moveable Alphabet to build phonetic awareness and early literacy.
- Storytelling and group discussions support vocabulary development and

- **Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities**

We actively engage families as partners in their child's learning and wellbeing. Our open communication, cultural responsiveness, and community connections enrich our program and strengthen support networks.

- **Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership**

Our leadership team is committed to continuous improvement and reflective practice. We maintain strong governance structures, clear policies, and a shared commitment to excellence in early childhood education.



listening skills.

- Visual aids, AUSLAN signs, and multi-language labels are used to support diverse communication needs.
- Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
- Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts
- Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
- Children use digital technologies and media to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

