



SA Montessori Flying Start SAMPLE 3-Year-Old Preschool Program

Broad Goal: To ensure that every child has the opportunity to engage in a high-quality early learning program that nurtures their development and supports a positive start to their preschool journey.

At SA Montessori, we are dedicated to providing 3-year-old children with a warm, nurturing, and engaging early learning environment that supports their growth during these important early years. Our program is guided by the National Quality Framework and the Early Years Learning Framework and is delivered within our carefully prepared Montessori setting. Our 3-year-old Preschool program focuses on encouraging curiosity, building independence, and developing early social, emotional, physical, and language skills through play-based, hands-on Montessori learning experiences. A qualified Early Childhood Teacher guides the program, ensuring each child's unique developmental needs and interests are supported as they begin their preschool journey.

Montessori Learning Opportunities:	Curriculum Connections
Social and Emotional Social and emotional development in the early years is essential for helping children feel safe, connected, and confident as they explore the world around them. At age three, children are beginning to express their feelings, understand the emotions of others, and build early friendships. Within the Montessori environment, social and emotional growth is gently nurtured through consistent routines, respectful interactions, and opportunities for independence. Our program supports children to begin developing: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Awareness of their own emotions• Strategies to express needs and feelings appropriately• Emerging empathy and turn-taking	Links to our Philosophy Statement At our SA Montessori centre, 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. The key components of our Philosophy are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respect• Community• Creativity• Curiosity• Integrity• Positivity• Collaboration

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence to try new experiences and make choices • Cooperative play • Gentle conflict resolution with support <p>By fostering a secure sense of self and belonging, children begin to build the social confidence and emotional resilience that will support their development in the years ahead.</p> <p>What does this look like?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parallel and cooperative play opportunities • Roleplay and puppet play focused on feelings and friendships • Picture books about emotions, friendships, and family • Guided language to name and express emotions (e.g., “I feel sad” or “Can I have a turn?”) • Educator support in turn-taking and sharing • Encouraging children to ask for help or express preferences • Modelling kind interactions and simple problem-solving language (e.g. “I would like to do this by myself” or “You can use it when I’m finished”) <p>Cognitive</p> <p>In a Montessori classroom, cognitive development is supported through hands-on, concrete experiences that foster curiosity, exploration, and independent thinking. Each activity is thoughtfully prepared to match the child’s developmental stage and current interests, respecting their emerging abilities and natural desire to learn. Montessori educators observe each child closely to identify their <i>Sensitive Periods of Development</i> – times when they show a strong interest in acquiring a particular skill – and respond with developmentally appropriate Montessori activities and materials. For our 3-year-olds, learning is largely exploratory and experiential, with individual and small group experiences designed to support foundational skills across early numeracy and literacy.</p>	<p>Early Years Learning Framework</p> <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, strategies, and relationships.</p> <p>Principles</p> <p>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. <u>These Principles are:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>Practices</p> <p>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, these <i>Practices</i> shape every aspect of our teaching, learning environment, and interactions with children and families. These <i>Practices</i> are essential for supporting children's learning and development across all areas and ensuring that programs are inclusive, engaging, and meaningful. <u>The Practices are:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
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Numeracy activities may include:

- Sorting and matching by colour, shape, or size
- Exploring quantity through concrete materials (e.g., counting objects 1–5)
- Early number recognition (e.g., recognising numerals 1–5)
- Early patterning through visual and tactile materials
- Exploring 2D and 3D shapes
- Practical life experiences that build mathematical thinking (e.g. pouring, measuring)

Literacy activities may include:

- Listening to and engaging with books and stories
- Recognising their own name in print
- Exploring sounds in the environment (early phonemic awareness)
- Singing songs, rhymes, and fingerplays to develop rhythm and sound awareness
- Learning to handle books correctly and turning pages independently
- Matching objects to pictures and early vocabulary development
- Pre-writing experiences

Our goal is to foster a love of learning by providing rich, hands-on experiences that help children make sense of the world around them, while gently building the cognitive foundations needed for future learning.

Practical Life and Building Independence

In a Montessori classroom, Practical Life activities are the foundation of all future learning. For 3-year-olds, these activities are designed to build concentration, coordination, and independence through purposeful, hands-on experiences that reflect everyday life. These tasks foster a sense of capability and confidence, empowering children to care for themselves, their environment, and their community.

Learning Outcomes

At SA Montessori, 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.

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.

At this age, children are naturally drawn to imitation and repetition. Practical Life work supports this developmental stage by offering meaningful opportunities for movement, order, and mastery of simple routines. As children learn to do things independently, they also develop important cognitive and fine motor skills that support future academic learning.

Through Practical Life activities, children are supported to develop:

- Fine motor control and hand–eye coordination
- Concentration and persistence
- Personal responsibility and self-care skills
- Respect for their environment and others
- Confidence in their ability to complete tasks independently
- A sense of order and routine
- Early numeracy and pre-writing skills

What does this look like?

- Pouring, spooning, and transferring activities using dry and wet materials
- Washing hands, putting on shoes, zipping coats, and dressing frames
- Table washing, window cleaning, sweeping, and other care-of-environment activities
- Food preparation such as cutting fruit, spreading, or pouring drinks
- Learning to unpack and pack bags and lunchboxes independently
- Practising grace and courtesy (e.g., using polite words, waiting turns, saying "excuse me")
- Returning materials to shelves and caring for shared spaces
- Offering help to peers and taking pride in caring for the classroom

- 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
- 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?”).
- Positive 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

By nurturing independence in small, everyday tasks, children build the foundation for self-confidence, self-discipline, and a positive attitude toward learning and responsibility.

Physical Development

Physical development is a key focus in the Montessori environment for 3-year-olds, where movement is seen as an essential part of learning. At this stage, children are developing control over their bodies, refining both gross and fine motor skills through active exploration and purposeful work.

The Montessori classroom and outdoor environments are carefully prepared to allow freedom of movement, enabling children to strengthen their coordination, balance, and spatial awareness. Through movement-rich experiences, children build confidence in their physical abilities while also supporting concentration and self-regulation.

Our program facilitates the development of:

- Gross motor skills such as balance, climbing, running, jumping, and coordination
- Fine motor skills through precise hand movements in Practical Life and Sensorial activities
- Body awareness and spatial orientation
- Core strength and postural control to support sitting and working at a table
- Confidence in physical abilities and willingness to try new challenges
- Healthy habits through daily movement and self-care routines

What does this look like?

- Climbing, balancing, crawling, and jumping in outdoor play and obstacle courses
- Carrying, lifting, and transporting materials with care and control

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 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

National Quality Standard

The National Quality Standard sets a national benchmark for the quality of education and care services in Australia. At SA Montessori, 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

- Threading, pegging, tweezing, and using tongs to build hand strength and coordination
- Scrubbing, pouring, spooning, and transferring in Practical Life activities
- Movement games, music and movement sessions, and group movement activities
- Learning to manage personal belongings (e.g., opening lunchboxes, zipping bags, changing shoes)
- Opportunities for quiet, focused movement and large, expressive movement

By supporting physical development in a purposeful and joyful way, children build the confidence and control they need to fully participate in their learning and daily life.



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.

- **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.

