



**“Education in Harmony with Life”**

## Parent Handbook

Welcome to Lindfield Montessori Preschool. We are delighted to have your family in our community!

Lindfield Montessori Preschool is a parent run preschool. The contributions and dedication of countless families have made it what it is today. We depend upon your involvement and practical support.

This booklet has been compiled to provide practical information to assist you on a daily basis. Please keep it for reference and ensure that all carers who may drop off or pick up your child are also familiar with the relevant sections.

**This Handbook provides important information about our preschool. It's yours to keep and is a valuable resource to refer to during the time you are part of the Lindfield Montessori Preschool.**

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Preschool location: Moore Ave West Lindfield (behind All Saints Memorial Church)  
Tel/Fax: (02) 9416 3780  
Email: [info@lindfieldmontessori.nsw.edu.au](mailto:info@lindfieldmontessori.nsw.edu.au)  
Website: [www.lindfieldmontessori.nsw.edu.au](http://www.lindfieldmontessori.nsw.edu.au)

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# About Lindfield Montessori Preschool

Lindfield Montessori Preschool, established in 1975, is one of the oldest Montessori schools in NSW. Set in the leafy surrounds of West Lindfield, it offers a Montessori environment for 20-30 children between the ages of 3 and 6.

## Vision Statement

“Education in Harmony with Life”

Our mission is to prepare children for life by providing them with a love for lifelong learning. In our educational community we respect children and empower them to reach their full potential by respecting themselves, their environment and the community as a whole. Our practices are based on the developmental needs of individual children and the pedagogy and work of Dr Maria Montessori. We aim to build a community of children, staff and families that actively support our vision.

## Mission

Lindfield Montessori School strives to provide an educational program which

- Use The New South Wales Board of Studies Early Stage One accredited program to provide educational program based on the practice, principles and methodologies of Dr Maria Montessori.
- Employs high quality staff who are conversant with the Montessori philosophy and who hold formal qualification in Early Childhood Education. We strive to achieve best practice principles from The Association Montessori Internationale
- Acknowledge the importance of early years learning and aims to provide environments, which encourage self-directed learning.
- Value parents, educators, children and community involvement and participation based on mutual respect, open communication and sound partnerships.
- Provide a prepared environment to cater for the holistic needs of the child.
- Creates connections and continual learning for each child by linking the home environment into the classroom environment enabling children to reach their fulfill potential.

## Lindfield Montessori School Aims to

- Support the work of Dr Maria Montessori’s and her belief in “Follow the Child.”
- Foster the development of independence and adaptability of children.
- Empower children to be active participants in their learning by providing opportunities for natural curiosity and a love for acquisition of knowledge to be recognised and respected.
- Provide stimulating educational experiences that value the process of learning.
- Recognise the important role of the family in the education of young children
- Acknowledge the child’s innate capacity and desire to learn.

## Preparing for the first day

**Orientation:** We ask you to attend the preschool at 12.00 pm prior to commencing a brief orientation visit (15 minutes) for you and your child. This will assist you to talk to your child about what will happen at preschool and to meet with the directress.

**Starting Time:** Your child may start at **10 am** each day for the first week to ease the transition to preschool. After your child is confident and comfortable separating from you, s/he should arrive each day at 8.30am.

**Attendance Sheet:** Children must be signed **in** daily on arrival, and **out** upon departure, by a responsible **adult**. You **must** make note on the **authorisation to collect** board provided of any variation in adult who is to collect the child.

**Communications** are made via a notice board and via family communication pockets. Please check both daily. **\*\*You should convey the above information to others who collect your child for you.\*\***

**Staff** members are Jo-Ann Fernandes (Principal/Nominated Supervisor), Kat Leonard (Teacher), Sun Mi Sim (Assistant). Please call the school by 8:30am to inform staff of any foreseeable absence. Other convenient times to phone the directress are before 8.30 am or after 2.45pm.

**Daily Schedule:** Children attend 5 days per week from 8.30am to 12.00pm. Children participating in the optional 3/4 Year Old Afternoon Program may attend from 2 to 5 full days (booked on a term to term basis). "Extended Day" children attend 8.30am to 2.30pm, 5 days a week.

### **What to Bring to the orientation:**

- **Confidential Information** forms (attached) fully completed – a legal requirement.
- **Birth Certificate or copy of passport to verify child birth date.**
- **Child's immunisation Statement.**
- **A sun hat, marked with your child's name** (with a loop or a small ring for hanging) is required every day and remains at school. We recommend the Legionnaires' type with flaps over the ears and back of the neck. Sunscreen, if desired, should be applied at home.
- **A small labelled water bottle.**
- **A backpack** (preferably plain – please avoid superhero logos), marked with your child's name, that can easily be opened by the child and is large enough to contain:
  - A complete, seasonal **change of clothes** every day, including shoes and socks.
  - No rain-boots, umbrellas, toys, jewellery or money are to be brought to preschool please.

Each day one piece of fresh or dried **fruit or vegetable** is brought for shared snack. A block of cheese or packet of gluten free plain cracker biscuits (not artificially flavoured) can be brought in addition to the fruits as required. Avocados are also welcome for children to

spread on bread. Please do not leave other snacks or treats in children's bags in case other children have allergies to the food. **We have a nut free food policy.**

**Parting:** Each child is personally welcomed upon arrival. To assist in the development of independence children should wear their own backpacks and remove their own fruit from their bags.

Please help by saying goodbye well before the door and never calling your child back to say goodbye once s/he has moved into the room. Separation is aided if you do not enter the room, once you have said goodbye, walk purposefully toward the gate without delay. Reading stories and making preschool part of your conversation and being excited about the event before starting also assists the transition.

Call us if you are concerned about leaving an unsettled child but rest assured we would stay with any child who is upset and will contact you if the need arises.

### **Dropping Off / Picking Up**

These processes are in place for the safety and well being of the children. They also ensure an efficient and harmonious environment

- We ask that children be accompanied to the door where a staff member will greet and receive them.
- Please ensure that your child is dropped off at 8:30am and promptly collected at 12.00pm (or 2.30pm as applicable).
- In the event that you are unexpectedly late at pick-up time, if possible please inform the preschool of any alternative arrangements that have been made.
- Please leave the school grounds promptly when dropping off or collecting, as parking is limited.

Please note that the following are legal requirements.

- If you are not collecting your child, you must authorise another person to do so in writing. Only parents can authorise someone else to collect their child/children.
- A daily "Signing in/out" sheet is located near the classroom door or on the gate and must be signed by the person dropping off or collecting a child.
- If any other person is to collect your child give all details in the register provided on the wall outside the entry door. For permanent pick-up arrangements this will not be necessary each time, if staff have been informed in writing

### **Contacting the School**

Messages can be left throughout the day with a staff member by phoning the school. Otherwise, all educational matters must be addressed in a

meeting as described or in writing. Prior appointment with the principal /directress is required.

The school is closed during school holidays. Very brief messages only can be received, so give name and number first, and the query will be answered once school resumes. Urgent inquiries can be addressed to a member of the school committee.

### Car Park

The church's circular driveway is exclusively for the use of parents with younger children. Parents using the circular driveway must not block other parents. At no time must the minister's access to or from his residence be blocked. Please consider our neighbours by not parking across driveways.

### School Gate

Please ensure that both the gates on the driveway and the gates near our entrance are **CLOSED FIRMLY** when arriving and departing. This is for the safety and security of the children. Ours is a very busy street.

### Notice Boards

Important and relevant information including observation times and meeting times is placed on the notice boards located near the classroom entrance. Please check daily.

### Mail Pouches

Each family is allocated a named pouch. Check your pouch daily, as important notices are placed in it by staff.

### Newsletter

Newsletters are published each term. The newsletter contains information related to the classroom, Montessori philosophy, committee activities, fundraising, maintenance and information evenings, plus various items of interest and a schedule of events. Please make an effort to read each issue. Your contributions and suggestions are welcome.

### Observations of the Classroom

Parents are welcome to observe at any times throughout the year. Please arrange a time by contacting the school to make an appointment. An observation chair is provided and you will be asked not to interact with the children. It is usually

unsettling for newly enrolled children to have one of their own parents come in so we ask that you wait a term.

### **Parent-Teacher Meetings**

Feel free to ask often how things are going, especially in the first weeks. Formal parent-teacher interviews are scheduled later. Times available will be posted on the noticeboard. Once your child is settled it is beneficial to observe the class before the interview. If at any other stage during the year you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to tell the Principal/Directress. A mutually convenient time can also be arranged so that any concerns or queries can be addressed more fully. Children and their siblings do not attend these meetings.

### **Parent Information**

Parent Information Evenings are held each term. Topics and times are advised well in advance. Please make every effort to attend. A well-stocked Parent/Staff Library is also available for your use. It contains titles on Montessori, parenting, child development and other relevant topics.

### **Maintenance Obligations**

Lindfield Montessori has an ongoing tradition of family support in the maintenance and improvement of our facilities. Each family is required to take part in maintenance duties twice a year. These can be either outdoor or indoor or a combination of both. Maintenance rosters are scheduled towards the end of each term for the following term. The maintenance officer will contact you regarding your preference for indoor or outdoor maintenance and a schedule will be placed on the notice board.

### **Toys**

Please do not allow children to bring watches, money, treasured articles, including jewellery or toys to school.

### **Birthdays**

It is customary for each child to bring a fruit platter, small muffins, simple cupcakes or similar, to help celebrate his or her birthday. If you have something special from another culture that you would like to share, that would also be most welcome. Remember our "No Nuts Policy" as some children have an allergic reaction.

You may also wish to send selected photos – one for each year of the child's life – for use in the ceremony.

It is a tradition that the child presents the class with a gift of a book. This gives the child the opportunity to experience the joy of giving as well as receiving. The school keeps a selection of suitable books to purchase, for you to choose from to avoid duplication. If you choose to present a book from the classroom reserve

please handover \$15.00 to the principal. The day before a child's birthday, they will have the opportunity to choose a book for the school. It helps if you co-ordinate your child's celebration with the staff ahead of time. A birthday letter with the birthday celebration date will be sent out.

### Snack

Each child is asked to bring one portion of fruit or vegetable each morning. These are pooled and children take turns helping the Assistants to prepare them for morning snack. Alternatively avocados, bread, a block of cheddar cheese or a packet of plain cracker biscuits (gluten Free) every now and then would be very much appreciated.

### Lunch

3 and 4 Year Old Afternoon Program and Extended Day children are required to bring their lunch in a cold pack style lunch box labelled with their name. This will be stored in the fridge until lunch. Lunches supplied must meet the requirements of our nutrition policy e.g. no chips, chocolate and sweets. Please respect our "No Nuts" policy when selecting children's lunch snacks.

### School Bag

Please provide a full change of clothes (weather appropriate), including shoes and socks, in your child's school bag each day. All items must be labelled. It is important that your child can manage the clothes supplied and the school bag. INDEPENDENCE is a guiding principle of the Montessori approach.

### School Hat

A sun hat is compulsory all year for your child to be allowed to play in the playground. The legionnaire style that protects ears and neck is the most satisfactory. It must bear the child's name. A ring or loop attached for hanging is very helpful.

### Sun Block

Please apply sunscreen to your child before coming to school if required. Extended day children will apply sunscreen again before they go to lunch.

### Absence

You should inform the school early of any absence and keep in touch during prolonged absence that is health related. Absence notes should give the reason for the absence, are legally required once children reach five years of age but are always appreciated.

## Sickness

A sick child must be kept at home. Illnesses spread quickly among children of this age. Parents need to make this decision regardless of the child's own expectations. If a sick child is sent to school staff will use their discretion in determining whether the child should be sent home. Please inform the school of any infectious disease so that other parents may be notified if necessary.

## Medication

If a child requires medication at school, the school needs to have written permission to administer it. There is a legal requirement that all medication is handed to staff in its original container with the child's name, prescribing doctor, dosage and expiry date of the medication. Non-prescription medication will not be administered. In the case of long-term medication please advise the school.

## Confidential Information

Each child has a file in secure storage. It contains the confidential information sheets you supply, notes and developmental records shared with you at parent teacher conferences and correspondence, such as absence notes, relating to the child.

## Staff In-service

The NSW Montessori Association provides 4 in-service days per year for staff professional development. The school is closed on these days. Advanced notice is given via the calendar in the school newsletter so parents may make alternative arrangements for their children.

## Emergency Evacuation Practice

The Education and Care Services Act 2010 regulations require us to carry out an "emergency evacuation practice" each term. This includes walking to a designated off-site assembly point. For simplicity, these practices are referred to as an evacuation. A day is chosen when all children are present and notification is posted on the gate at the end of the session. The off-site assembly point, which we would use in case of an evacuation, is the church car-park at the end of our playground. Please familiarise yourself with it by driving around the block.

## Children and cars

Leaving children in parked vehicles is a criminal offence in NSW. The committee and staff members in any early childhood service are mandatory reporters. That means they are liable to be heavily penalised if they fail to report an instance of a child being left in a car, even for few minutes.

Please make proper arrangements for the safety of children in your care.



## Grievance Procedure

The aim of Lindfield Montessori Preschool is to provide the best service possible. In any organisation misunderstandings occur. For your child's sake please assist by speaking to the Principal. The procedure to follow is shown on the notice board.

## Contact Details

### Nominated Supervisor

- **Jo-Ann Fernandes**

In the absence of the Nominated Supervisor our Certified Supervisors are:

- **Kat Leonard**
- **Sun Mi Sim**

## Feedback, Comments and Complaint Handling

Address to:

**Jo-Ann Fernandes/Kat Leonard** (All educational and day to day concerns)

**Scott Juda (President-LMP Committee)** (for all other concerns and matters)

**PHONE: 94163780**

**EMAIL : [teacher@lindfieldmontessori.nsw.edu.au](mailto:teacher@lindfieldmontessori.nsw.edu.au)**

**POSTAL ADDRESS : PO box 3013 West Lindfield NSW 2070**

## Contact Details of Our Regulatory Bodies

- **NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate**

**[www.det.nsw.edu.au](http://www.det.nsw.edu.au)**

**PHONE: 1800 619 113**

**EMAIL: [ececd@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ececd@det.nsw.edu.au)**

**POSTAL ADDRESS: Locked Bag 5107 Parramatta NSW 2124**

- **BOARD OF STUDIES, NSW**

**PHONE: 93678111**

**WEBSITE: [www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au)**

**POSTAL ADDRESS: GPO box 5300, Sydney NSW 2001**

*Welcome again, we sincerely hope that your child and you make lots of wonderful memories being a part of this community. If you have any questions that have not been answered in this handbook, please do not hesitate to call the Jo-Ann or Kat.*