

“Our curriculum is custom tailored to the individual needs of the children.”

- John Page
Founder & Executive Director



I founded our School in September 1972 in the Altadena Community Church at 943 East Altadena Drive, Altadena CA 91001. I was finishing my Montessori Teacher Training, which I had begun the previous fall at the Montessori Institute of Los Angeles. Unlike some of my fellow trainees, I didn't have a job to look forward to upon graduation. All the good Montessori Schools already had their teachers lined up for the fall. So, what was I to do? I had a wife and two small daughters, so finding employment was crucial. Consequently, I did what entrepreneurial sorts have always done – I made a job for myself by starting my own school!

I researched what the State, county and city requirements were for establishing a school. I then sent out a letter to all the local churches and inquired if any one would be interested in having a school use their facility.



It can be a beneficial symbiotic relationship to have a school and church cooperatively use the church's building. The church probably does not want to use those Sunday school or multipurpose rooms weekdays during

regular school hours when the school needs them, and the school doesn't want to use the rooms on the weekends when the church wants them. It's a true win-win!

I got back a couple of positive responses from scores of churches I sent my letter to. I met with a number of pastors, ministers, committees, etc., and finally worked out an arrangement with A.C.C.



They very graciously allowed me to make some alterations, take down drapes, build a playground and more!

So, at the same time that I was taking my finals for my teacher training, I was also contacting the city, applying for and getting a conditional use permit to establish a school in the church's zoning. Very fortunately, I came in contact with some people who had planned to start a Montessori school but were then unable to complete their

project. They had a good supply of brand new Nienhuis Montessori teaching materials for a single classroom.

I bought their materials, ordered some more from Nienhuis's world headquarters in Holland, and was set to go – insofar as classroom materials were concerned.



A friend of mine who was in the construction business, helped me make the wooden cabinet shelving we needed for the classroom. His father was a contractor and had a table saw, radial arm saw and other power tools we needed to rip the 4 by 8 foot sheets of double A birch plywood into the right size pieces ready to screw together. That was quite a project!

After they were assembled, we had to sand, varnish, sand and varnish again and again to get a perfect, smooth and durable finish. I became quite adept at getting a crystal clear smooth finish coat on the cabinets.

OK – so we've got shelving and classroom materials...but what about the tables?

Luckily a friend of mine who lived in South Carolina had a cabinet-making business and was able to make the tables to order. So all we had to do was paint them.



Next we made a playground and were ready to go! To be continued.....