



Don Titus Montessori School
WHERE KIDS LEARN TO SHINE!

Parent & Student Handbook 2022-2023

ACTION ITEM: Sign and return the last page only!

Above all, Montessori classrooms at all levels nurture each child's individual strengths and interests. Montessori education encourages children to explore their world, and to understand and respect the life forms, systems and forces of which it consists.ⁱ



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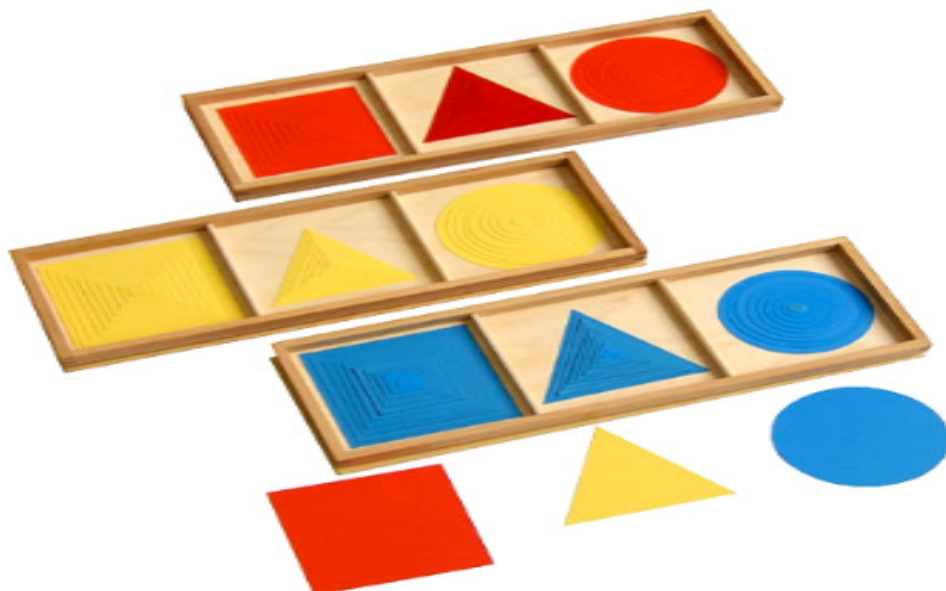
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WHAT IS MONTESSORI EDUCATION?

Montessori is a method of education that is based on self-directed activity, hands-on learning and collaborative play. In Montessori classrooms children make creative choices in their learning, while the classroom and the teacher offer age-appropriate activities to guide the process. Children work in groups and individually to discover and explore knowledge of the world and to develop their maximum potential.

Five basic principles drive Montessori educators when implementing the Montessori method in any of a variety of programs. These principles include:

1. **Respect for the child:** Instruction is based on the needs of the individual child, not on presupposed curriculum expectations.
2. **The absorbent mind:** Children want to learn if given a robust environment in which to do it. They must be an active agent of their own learning.
3. **Sensitive periods:** All children go through predictable stages of development that underpins their needs as learners. Any effective educational program needs to respect these stages.
4. **The prepared environment:** A prepared environment is a place in which children can do things for themselves. The prepared environment makes learning materials and experiences available to children in an orderly format.
5. **Auto education:** Children are capable of educating themselves (also known as self-education). Children who are actively involved in a prepared environment and who exercise freedom of choice literally educate themselves. Montessori teachers prepare classrooms so that this can happen.ⁱⁱ



MONTESSORI AT A GLANCE

Montessori classrooms are beautifully crafted environments designed to meet the needs of children in a specific age range. [Dr. Maria Montessori](#) discovered that experiential learning in this type of classroom led to a deeper understanding of language, mathematics, science, music, social interactions and much more. Most Montessori classrooms are secular in nature, although the Montessori educational method can be integrated successfully into a faith-based program.

Every material in a Montessori classroom supports an aspect of child development, creating a match between the child's natural interests and the available activities. Children can learn through their own experience and at their own pace. They can respond at any moment to the natural curiosities that exist in all humans and build a solid foundation for life-long learning.

All teachers, Montessori included, draw from a common source: the child and our "best practices" for teaching and learning. There are, however, unique aspects to a Montessori environment.

- **Multi-year age span** - (3-6 years, 6-9 years, 9-12 years)
- **Individually prepared lessons** - small group lessons (2-6 children)
- **Uninterrupted work periods (2-3 hours)** during which the child schedules work Hands on materials for self-teaching
- **'Cosmic Education'** - describes the unique Montessori curriculum which gives the child a foundational sense of perspective of the interconnectedness of the universe.
- **Student Assessment** - assessment based on observation, student work journals, portfolios, and meetings with teacherⁱⁱⁱ



The “Whole Child” Approach

The primary goal of a Montessori program is to help each child reach full potential in all areas of life. Activities promote the development of social skills, emotional growth, and physical coordination as well as cognitive skills. Under the direction of specially trained teacher, the holistic curriculum allows the child to experience the joy of learning, gives the child time to enjoy the process, ensures the development of self-esteem and provides the experiences from which children create their knowledge.

Mixed Age Groupings

The multi-age grouping in each class provides a family-like setting where learning can take place naturally. More experienced children share what they have learned while reinforcing their own knowledge and skills. The multi-age community interaction is intrinsic to Montessori. This encourages rich language experiences, and opportunities for the development of empathy and social learning.

In order to respond to the diversity of individual children’s developmental needs, classes in the Casa and Elementary programs group children across a three-year age span. Toddler programs may have a one-year age span in order to comply with Ministry guidelines and/or the individual school’s programming.

Learning with and from each other to develop the social skills that form a class community. The social setting is like that of an extended family. The emergent skills of the individual children come together to form the class community.

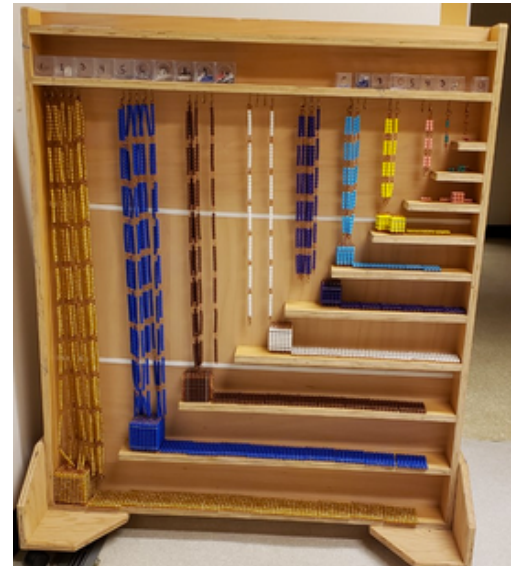
The Montessori Materials

Dr. Montessori's scientific observations of the children led her to design a number of multisensory, sequential, and self-correcting materials. These facilitate learning which builds from the concrete to the abstract in constructing their knowledge.^{iv}



THE EMPHASIS OF MONTESSORI

- Respect for the child
- Self-correcting learning materials and activities
- Self-motivation
- Individualized learning and instruction
- Cooperation, not competition
- Fostering independence in the child
- Responsible freedom
- Processes of learning, fostering life-long learning behaviours
- Fostering competencies based on success
- Peer assistance and teaching
- Sensory – motor preparation for intellectual development
- Stages of developmental growth (sensitive periods) and the needs of the child
- Integrated rather than compartmentalized curriculum
- Teaching conflict resolution skills
- Careful observation of the children to assess and evaluate progress and plan individualized instruction^v Below^{vi}



Growth Expectations Of Children In Montessori

Enjoyment of Learning	Learning through Discovery	Leadership
Love of Order	Confidence/Competence	Responsibility
Enjoyment of Quiet	Social Responsibility	Independence
Self-discipline	Global Awareness	Cooperation
Ability to Choose	Communication	Self-direction



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General Information

The Don Titus Montessori Program is for children aged five through twelve, Kindergarten through Grade seven. Don Titus Montessori combines three outcomes; social, personal, and work habits along with the curricular outcomes as set out by the province of British Columbia Ministry of Education. For more information visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/ministries/education>.^{vii}

In addition to the BC Curriculum Montessori programs includes the following subject:

Advanced Practical Life

Music Education

Outdoor Education

Peace & Cosmic Education

Botany

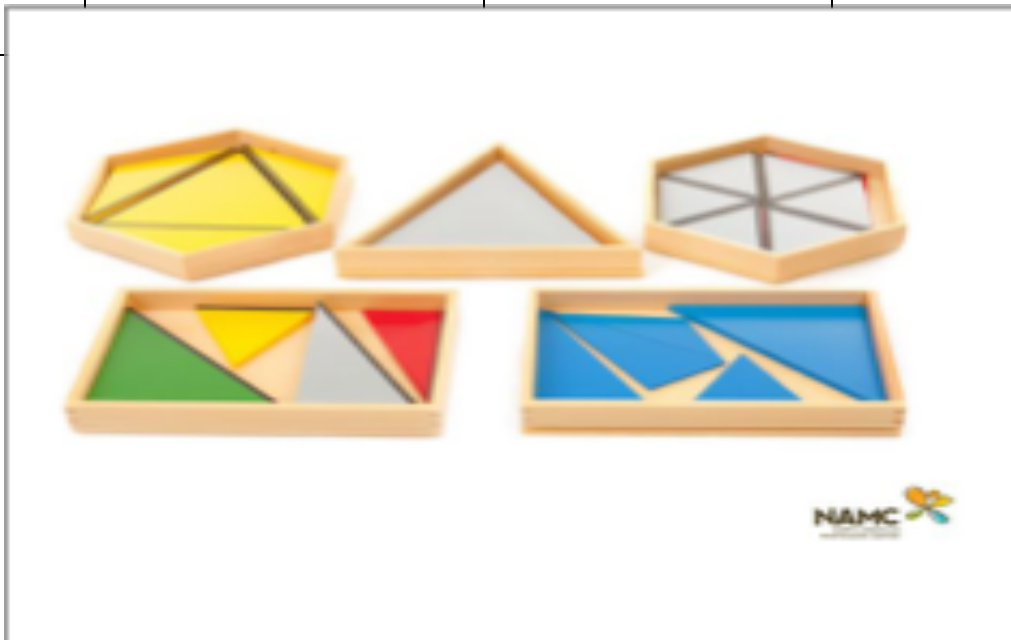
Zoology



DON TITUS MONTESSORI SCHOOL STAFF

Ph: 250-788-2531

PRINCIPAL	Ms. Bougerolle		
SECRETARY	Ms. Movold	Hours: Mon – Fri., 9am – 12 Noon	
TEACHERS	COUNSELLING	SUPPORT STAFF	STRONG START
Ms. Keutzer Ms. Newman Ms. Pohl Ms. VanHorn Ms. Laursen Ms. Buckley Ms. Larsen Ms. Fontaine		Ms. Gayse Ms. McIntyre Ms. Armstrong Ms. Drouin Ms. Mohamed Ms. Nelson Ms. A Collins Ms. J Collins Ms. Mosher	





Don Titus Montessori School
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IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW

SCHOOL SCHEDULE

The front doors to the school are open at 8:00 am each morning.

The supervisor is outside with the children at 8:20 (when the first bus comes)

FIRST BELL	8:55 am	
SECOND BELL	8:59 am	
LUNCH	12:00 pm	Lunch Break– Students eat lunch
	12:20 pm	Students go outside
	12:45 pm	Students come inside
DISMISSAL BELL	2:40 pm	
BUSES DEPART	2:45 pm	

OFFICE HOURS

9:00 am to 3:00 pm Monday through Friday

Secretary hours: Mon through Friday, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Phone messages are checked daily at 2:30 pm

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

Don Titus Office:	250-788-2531
Bus Garage:	250-788-2415
District Board Office:	1-250-782-8571

DOORS

The inside doors to the school are kept locked during the day as part of Safe Schools. We ask that all parents and/or visitors sign in at the office using our “Sign In” book. Should an emergency arise, we have the names of all guests at the school in the booklet.

INSIDE DAYS

Students will be inside if it is -20, or if there is a wind-chill, or if it is raining/snowing heavily. At lunch play break, we expect all students to be out on outside days. Students who are not well enough to go outside for a short while generally should not be at school.



ATTENDANCE/LATES/CHECK IN FOR SAFETY

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for a child's progress in school. If your child has to be absent, please phone the school. *As a safety check all unconfirmed absences are checked daily. If you know that your child is going to be absent or late, or if you wish to leave a message for your child, or if there are changes to the pickup of your child, please call the school directly at 250-788-2531. If the phone is not answered in person, please leave a message on our answering machine. The answering machine is checked at 2:30pm. This is more direct and more helpful to the office than sending that type of information over social media especially during school hours. It will be the student's responsibility to complete assignments given during his/her absence.

IF YOU ARE TAKING YOUR CHILD OUT OF THE SCHOOL

During the school day, please fill in your information in our *Student Sign Out* book, kept in the office. This is part of the District's safety protocols so that we know where all of our students are during school hours.

STUDENT SUPPLIES

Grades K-3

Kindergarten, Grades 1, 2, 3 students are provided with their supplies for a charge of **\$40** payable by *September 30 each year*. Parents will only need to provide inside shoes, a backpack and lunch kit.

Grades 4 – 7

Like the Primary students, Intermediate students will be provided with their supplies for a fee of **\$60**, payable by *September 30 each year*. We will provide all necessary equipment such as pens, pencils, paper, duo-tangs, glue sticks. This way there is no need for parents to worry about replenishing these items as they become used up. And because we can buy in bulk, we can pass the saving on to you.

Parents will need to provide:

- 1 Gym strip - t-shirt & shorts. A gym bag is desirable eg: drawstring
- 1 Pair of inside shoes (white soled or non-marking – not black-soled shoes)
- 1 Lunch kit
- 1 Deodorant

HEALTH AND EMERGENCY CONTACTS

From time to time emergencies arise during school hours and we need to contact you. Please make sure we have your home number, employer's number (if applicable) and an alternative emergency number. Also, if your child's health status changes (allergies, asthma, special needs) please let us know right away so a Safety Plan can be put in place.



LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS

The only generally acceptable reason for students leaving the school grounds during school hours (8:59-2:40) is for students to go to their own homes or to join their parents who pick them up for lunch.

BUSSING

Please contact the Bus Garage at 250-788-2415 to arrange pick-up of your child or any changes to your child's regular schedule. The bus garage will provide you with a copy of the Bus Rules.

GUEST PARKING

When you come to pick up your children after school **do not drive or park in the bus loop (circular driveway)** as we have buses pulling in to pick up students. Park away from the entrances. There is parking on the side of the street or on the asphalt in the marked lanes in the school area backing into a parking spot. If visiting the school during school hours, please park in the staff parking lot or parent parking lot if room is available.

TELEPHONE USE BY STUDENTS

We discourage use of our school phone in all but **EMERGENCY** situations because it is important that the lines be left clear for school business.

PARENTS' ADVISORY COUNCIL

Don Titus has been fortunate to have enthusiastic, supportive parents. Parents bring their suggestions on school plans, policies & practices to monthly PAC meetings. All parents are entitled and encouraged to attend all meetings. Please read our Monthly Newsletter for dates and times. Our Parent Advisory Council may run a hot lunch program for students on Fridays.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Parents of pupils are encouraged to participate in school activities in a number of capacities. Parents can help the school by assisting with lunchtime supervision, volunteering to sponsor extra-curricular activities, volunteering to help tutor pupils in the classrooms. Parents can also be of assistance in fundraising, trips, etc., that will occur during the year. To volunteer your time, contact your child's teacher or Mrs. Bougerolle.

Criminal Record Check must be on file with the School District Office for any parents and/or guardians who volunteer. Criminal record checks must be updated every three years. Volunteer drivers must also have a current driver's abstract on file at the school. Driver's abstracts must be updated every 12 months. There is currently no fee for either the criminal record check or the driver's abstract.



GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

There is a Volunteer Package and Application that must be completed before volunteering for any school event or activity. Please see the office for a package. It contains information regarding School District Policies.

TOYS AND VALUABLES

Kids love their toys, but they are a distraction in the classroom. If students choose to bring toys to school, the toys are to be stowed out of sight in backpacks during the school day and can be taken outside at lunch. We encourage students not to bring items of value to school because there is always the chance of loss or damage and the school will not be held responsible for such loss or damage. Toys seen during instructional time will be safely stored by the teacher until after school.

LOST AND FOUND

If your child is missing any items, please have them check the LOST AND FOUND which is located just outside the office door. *Please mark all your child's possessions with his/her name.

LITTER IN SCHOOL AND ON THE GROUNDS

We do not allow students to take food wrappings outside onto the playground. Our students can feel proud of the way they keep our school clean.

COMMUNICATIONS: PARENT TO SCHOOL

If you have any concerns about your child, you are urged to contact your child's teacher right away to discuss your concern. If you need further support, please contact Mrs. Bougerolle (Principal).



REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS TO PARENTS

In accordance with the School Act, parents receive five reports a year, three formal and two informal.

We plan the following:

November.....	Parent/Teacher Interviews
December.....	1st Formal Report
February.....	Parent/Teacher Interviews
March.....	2nd Formal Report
June.....	3rd Formal Report

The teaching staff carefully uses a fair assessment policy to document learning. Students and parents have the opportunity to appeal assignment marks and course grades firstly through the classroom teacher and secondly, if necessary, to the school principal.

WEEKLY MEMO

A weekly memo is emailed every Sunday to each family in the school. Please ensure the school has an updated email address for your family.

SAFETY PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS WITH ANAPHYLACTIC NEEDS (A PHYSICIAN DIAGNOSED ALLERGY OR MEDICAL CONDITION).

Process and monitoring:

- At the beginning of each new year and when a new student registers, the pictures of the children with anaphylactic needs are viewed by the staff and individual needs and protocols are discussed.
- Public Health Nurse is accessed if training of staff is needed to address specific needs.
- Protocol for each child is identified and shared with staff.
- Medicine if required, is kept in a safe place in the office and administered, as directed by physician.
- Crisis management and emergency response phone numbers, including the school's address, are placed by each phone in the school.
- The school endeavors to make the school environment safe for children with specific needs.



PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Welcome, or welcome back, to Don Titus Montessori School!

I was so excited that we were able to begin our school year with our Annual Community Building Day. I hope this is the first of many events and activities where we can gather as a community.

As in previous years, commitment to the students remains the top priority. Their safety, academic achievement, mental well-being and sense of belonging will always guide our practices.

Students are expected to do their personal best in their daily work. Also, as good behaviour is a condition for learning, students are expected to behave in ways that are safe, courteous and considerate of others. Please read the Code of Conduct for more information on expectations. When you have read and discussed it with your child/children please sign and return the last page of the Code of Conduct.

Parent participation has a positive impact on student success and can take various forms. Our PAC is always ready to welcome new members. Please contact your child's teacher to discuss other ways in which you can support your child's learning outside of the school day.

The staff and I look forward to an exciting new year of learning at Don Titus.

Sincerely,

Jody Bougerolle
Principal



"The greatest gifts we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence."

_____*Maria Montessori*_____



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PARENT & STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

ACTION: Signature Required

Return this signed page only to the school.

Parents, please review this document and discuss it with your child(ren).

I, _____ (print your name), the legal parent/guardian of,
_____ (print student name)

_____ (Student Signature)

I have read this CODE OF CONDUCT and have discussed the contents with the above-named student(s).

Parent Signature

Date





RESOURCES CITED

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- ⁱ Montessori Northwest Resources tab – What is Montessori Education? Bottom Quote <https://montessori-nw.org/what-is-montessori-education> Visited June 6, 2019
- ⁱⁱ Principles of the Montessori Method <https://www.education.com/download-pdf/reference/26190/> Visited June 6, 2019.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Parkside (Grande Prairie AB) Montessori Family Handbook 2018-2019
- ^{iv} CCMA (The Canadian Council of Montessori Administrators, <http://www.ccma.ca/what-makes-it-unique>, Visited June 6, 2019.
- ^v PGMES_Brochure_SM_fnl.pdf (Prince George Montessori Education Society Brochure <https://pgmontessori.ca/montessori-materials/>
- ^{vi} PGMES Brochure, https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B_aM8FQx83XINl9EVXBVUFVpN3c Visited June 6, 2019
<http://www.ccma.ca/how-does-it-work> Visited June 6, 2019
- ^{vii} Parkside (Grande Prairie AB) Montessori Family Handbook 2018-2019
- Photos:* NAMC, <https://www.montessoritraining.net/>, Prince George Montessori Education Society, <https://pgmontessori.ca/montessori-materials/>, Visited June 6, 2019.