

# Nova Montessori School



## TERM ONE

### TERM ONE DATES

Monday 2nd February -  
Thursday 9th April

### HOURS

The school gates are opened at 8:30 AM and children will commence their work cycle from this time onwards.

*A great social mission that will ensure the child justice, harmony and love remains to be accomplished. And this great task is the work of education; for this is the only way to build a new world and to bring peace to the human community.*

Maria Montessori

*Welcome to Term 1, 2009*

## **New Beginnings**

Dear Nova Parents

We welcome you to the 2009 school year.

Looking back, Nova experienced exponential growth in 2008 with the opening of new facilities and the concurrent expansion of the roll.

Looking forward, we see 2009 as a year of internal stabilisation and renewal of many of the hallmarks that has made Nova a unique Montessori experience for children and adults over the last twenty years.

To begin with, we, Pauline and Shubha, have been appointed by the Trust as Co-Heads of School. The Trust itself now includes Matt Rogers as Treasurer. Matt has been around Nova from its early beginning: as an accountant in the early days, and more recently, as the father of Claudia who is now in Kauri Room. He has extensive experience in the world of finance and will be a strong support between the Trust and our accountants, Canterbury Education Services, (CES). Matt is replacing Phil Gang on the Trust with Phil staying very close to the community as Pedagogical and Administrative Advisor.

We are delighted to introduce our third Children's House guide, Doreen Pearey. Marsha and Pauline have known Doreen for over twenty years. She has extensive experience working at this level and we feel very fortunate that she has chosen to work with us.

Kylee Vink has been appointed to the role of Office Assistant and she will continue on as a Classroom Aide. Angela Nolan will remain in the office as Enrolment Co-ordinator.

Cath King and Shubha Narayan continue in their roles as teacher/guides for the three to six year old children in the Children's House.

Nicola Gresson continues in her teaching role as teacher/guide with the six to nine year old children, along with Pauline Matsis, in Kauri Room and Judith Sivasubramaniam continues in her teaching role as teacher/guide with the nine to twelve year old children in Pohutukawa Room.

We all look forward to working with you during the coming year...individually as well as collectively through the PTA. The PTA is an essential part of our community and if you are not already a participant, we urge you to attend the first meeting this year.

Nova Montessori Parents and Teachers Association

DATE: Tuesday 10th February

TIME: 7:30 pm

VENUE: Our cosy Library

You have chosen a Montessori education for your children and that shows your foresight and depth of commitment to building a new culture of awareness.

Warm regards

Shubha Narayan and Pauline Matsis

for Nova Montessori Trust

Chair, Marsha Morgan

Vice-Chair, Pauline Matsis

Treasurer, Matt Rogers

Secretary, Shubha Narayan

## School Calendar 2009

### Hours

School Hours Open from 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM Monday – Friday

### Term Dates

#### **Nova Children's House and Nova Primary School - Whole School**

**Term 1** Monday 2nd February – Thursday 9th April

**Term 2** Monday 27th April - Friday 3rd July

**Term 3** Monday 20th July - Friday 25th September

**Term 4** Monday 12th October - Friday 11th December

#### **2009 Whole School Public Statutory Holidays**

School will be closed on the following days:

**Term 1** Friday 6th February - Waitangi Day  
Friday 10th April - Good Friday  
Monday 13th April - Easter Monday

**Term 2** Saturday - 25th April - Anzac Day

**Term 3** Monday - 1st June - Queen's Birthday

**Term 4** Monday - 26th October - Labour Day  
Friday - 13th November - Canterbury Show Day

**Term One 2010** school start date Tuesday 2nd February

#### **School Holidays/Teacher Only Days for NOVA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

- Tuesday 2nd June
- Friday 26th June
- Friday 7th August
- Monday 10th August
- Friday 4th September

## Important Dates for 2009 - NOVA PRIMARY SCHOOL

### WHOLE SCHOOL Parent-Teacher Montessori Dialogue Evenings

**Term One:** Tuesday 3rd March 7.30 pm

Topic: **Overview of Montessori Maths** presented by Marsha Morgan and Philip Gang

**Term Two: Over View of Montessori Primary** (of particular interest to the Children's House Parents) Details of evenings to follow

### Gymnastics for Term 1:

- Beginning 2nd week of term
- Friday afternoons from 1:45 pm to 2:45 pm
- Bus will drop the children back at school at 3:00 pm

### • Netball and Kiwisports

Girl's Netball continues and will be held on a Thursday afternoon (Thanks to Toni Coey)

The boys will participate in a KiwiSport programme on the nearby field on a Thursday afternoon. Please ensure that children have suitable footwear on these days.

### Swim Week Dates:

Term 1 March 9th to 13th

Term 2

May 25th to 29th

Term 3 August 17th to 21st

Term 4

November 23rd to 27th (To be confirmed)

### Parent - Teacher Conferences - PRIMARY SCHOOL

To be held throughout Term 2 ... available times will be posted at the beginning of Term 2

### Discovery Journey/Children and Parents

To be held in Term 3 - (dates to be announced)

### EVENTS TO COME - notices to follow

- **KiwiSports Day Challenge** - Term 2
- **School Photos** - Term 4

### Kauri Room Sleepover

Friday 4th December - notices will be sent in Term 4

### Pohutukawa School Camp Term 4

Monday 23rd to 27th November

**“Will My Child Fit Into, And Survive In The Real World After Montessori?”**  
**Pauline Matsis, 2008**

**“Will My Child Fit Into And Survive In The Real World After Montessori?”**

**This is a question which parents frequently ask me in my role as a Montessori guide in our 6 to 9 primary classroom.**

The posing of the question itself contains some problems. One of course is the term “real world.”

Which “real world” do we mean? Is it the world of middle class New Zealand education, competition and achievement? Is it the professional “real world” that to most of us represents security, order and meaning?

Or maybe it is the real - some might say realer – world of poverty, deprivation and suffering that affects most of humanity today. Or we might mean the “real world” of our own emotions, hopes, dreams and desires for our children.

With regard to the “real world” of professional achievement. It is clear that this represents a very small fraction of human experience and expectation. To get caught in fulfilling the dreams and visions of this reality seems, ultimately, somewhat self indulgent. Our children need to acquire skills and an education appropriate to their interests and abilities, and no doubt these are conditioned by social background and expectations, but is it wise to enter and feed this loop of achievement and success? Would we not want our children to be skeptical about the imperatives of this drive and the glittering careers and security it seems to promise?

Is it perhaps more meaningful to engage in the “real world” where we acknowledge physical and social suffering. Where we look at the nature of the human crisis in a compassionate, clear and indeed, practical way while at the same time questioning their, and our, lifestyles and assumptions about the material world, consumption, social and political structure, and the environment?

**Dr Montessori and her son Mario left us a legacy, an approach to learning and to life that demands that we bring our attention to this very question.**

**In Education and Peace, Dr Montessori comments,**

*It is obvious that the sudden and amazing changes that have taken place in the organization of man’s material environment in the last fifty years as a result of scientific discoveries have brought such radically altered conditions in men’s lives that it is now absolutely imperative to give serious thought to the human side of things, in order to help men themselves change for the better.*

*This is the task of education*

It seems to me that we carry a primal instinct for survival. We bring this from our evolutionary past and from this a phrase has been coined called, ‘survival of the fittest’.

This ongoing impulse is taken by the human mind and turned into a fear.

This fear is the motivating factor for the underlying culture that we reside in with the consequence being a system based on achievement, and competition.

Often we are given the impression that to achieve wealth, status and power will bring paralleled happiness.

Our education system mirrors this paradigm.

I'm not questioning the value in learning skills or putting aside food for the winter. But the amplification of this fear can become quite neurotic and shows itself as taking my neighbours resources, war, greed, empire building, and extreme wealth and poverty.

In fact it can be seen that to give, unquestioning, to this first impulse of survival and its underlying fear, ends up becoming our greatest insecurity.

I would imagine most people reading this article can see the limitations of our culture and balance this impulse in various ways.

It is clear that the paradigm we have been given, does not take into account the wellbeing of all the people it encompasses, and I would like us to see this from a global perspective, as we live within a global society.

We are also aware of its impact on our environment.

So when I ask the question, "will my child survive in the "real world," I am asking in the first instance, from my own fear. And do I really want to impose my fear on the children of the future?

I know the reader is looking for some certainty, but the fact is we live in a universe of uncertainty, with the ability to look backwards, and base our predictions on a world past.

One thing I am clear about, is that our planet and its inhabitants requires us to take some risks. The risk, as I see it, is to see our fear of survival, and balance it with a wider view of community, society, and sustainability.

Someone once asked me, what are the qualities I would like to find within a peaceful society? I thought of a few qualities I liked, like tolerance, and, 'do unto others...' They then challenged me to live by those very values. To me, change doesn't happen in systems but in individuals, in ourselves, for the very fact that our human tendencies reside within us. I find that a daily challenge, but an appropriate response to an uncertain situation.

Thomas Berry, historical theologian and author of, *The Great Work*, rightly states, that we are now living in the terminal phase of the Cenozoic, an event largely engineered by human devastation of the earth. He goes on to say, *Our Great Work* is to transform our way of thinking and acting and learn how to create "a mutually enhancing mode of human dwelling on the planet."

Such a time is poetically called by Berry, “a moment of grace.” Such moments of opportunity and crisis have always existed in the history of the Universe. They are typically brief periods of possibility for creative transformation. The great danger for the human species in the present moment of grace, Berry says is that,

*“If the outer world is diminished in its grandeur then the emotional, imaginative and spiritual life of the human is diminished or extinguished. Without the soaring birds, the great forests, the sound and coloration of the insects, the free-flowing streams, the flowering fields, the sight of clouds by day and the stars at night, we become impoverished in all that makes us human.”*

So next time we ask the question, will my child fit into the real world, could we ponder that what we call the ‘real world’ might not be real, connected, or sustainable, and that within our Montessori environment we allow the child a freedom of expression and creativity that can respond to a future that will require our adaptability.

*Pauline Matsis*

## Welcome to our Children's House families

**Tena Koutou and Haere mai.** It seems just like last week that we were fare-welling you all, before the holidays. Now our classroom is clean and prepared for the start of a new school year as we await greeting the children and welcoming them back into their "Children's House."

We arrive back to the classroom refreshed and ready to serve the child in the Montessori way and hope that all our children feel similarly refreshed and ready for the work they give themselves to so wholeheartedly.

The first few weeks will be busy, as we settle eleven new children into the class. We are fortunate to now have a third teacher, Doreen Pearey, joining us in the class and our whole community will benefit from her wisdom earned by many years experience in Montessori classrooms.

**Settling a new child:** To help children separate more easily at the beginning of their day at a new school, we recommend occasionally mentioning school and that Mum or Dad won't be staying like they did during the orientation visits but that Shubha, Doreen and Cath will look after them until you're back to pick them up after lunch.

Ensure they are familiar with their bag and lunch box and know how to open and close them.

If you feel the need to come into the classroom to settle your child during those first few days, that is absolutely fine. Prepare your child for how you plan to settle and farewell them. For example "I'm going to stay while you do one activity (or read one book) and then we can have a big hug goodbye." Then stick to your plan. If your child needs support from a teacher to say goodbye and we are not close by, please ask. We are happy to help.

Even with the best plans some children will still cry. If there are tears, it is in the best interest to state what is going to happen and say goodbye. (Your child may never 'give you permission' to go). Children usually stop crying and become engaged in activities within a few minutes of parents leaving. If your child continues to be upset, rest assured, we will call you. If you need reassurance, you are most welcome to phone the office, Angela or Kylee will report on your child.

**Routines:** The beginning of the year is a really good time for us to focus on reinforcing familiar routines for those returning and teach new routines to those just starting.

Children are shown how to: - complete a cycle of activity – choose, complete, tidy up, and return to the shelf.

- attend a demonstration, by observing carefully how the teacher does the activity and waiting for their turn to do it themselves.
- organise themselves for morning tea or lunch
- join and participate in group meetings

The older children are supportive role models and are happy to help or guide the new children through their school day.

**Becoming part of a community of children:** Becoming a contributing member of a complex social structure like a classroom is not an easy task for a small child. It takes time and many mistakes are made along the way. We provide them with order in their environment, new skills for independence and consistent rules and routines they can rely on to orient themselves in their new community.

While our first few weeks may be rather busy, in a few months we will see the success Montessori talks of in the following quote.

*“The greatest sign of success for a teacher is to be able to say, “The children are now working as if I did not exist.””* Maria Montessori

Ka kite

Shubha, Cath and Doreen.

## Arrival and Dismissal for Primary School

Please make arrangements for the punctual drop off and pick up of your child. The school gate is open from 8:30 AM.

All primary children are to be dropped off and picked up at the **Hardy Street entrance**.

Please ensure that children get in and out of the car from the **footpath side** to avoid the possibility of stepping out into on-coming traffic. The yellow lined area at the gate is only to be used for drop-off stops, if the driver is leaving the vehicle then please park further down the street.

## Absences, lateness and pick-ups for Primary School & Children's House

For safety reasons it is essential that the school has accurate information regarding children's absences, lateness and pick-ups. We request that such messages are not given to teachers or to other children to pass on, as such information can easily be misheard or forgotten.

**Instead, if your child is going to be away from school, late or you have organised someone else to pick up your child, please ring the office on (03) 382-0503 to inform either Kylee or Angela, or to leave a message.**

Absences, lateness and pick-up information can also be advised by sending an email to: [admin@novamontessori.school.nz](mailto:admin@novamontessori.school.nz).

## Arrival and Dismissal for Children's House

Parents are to park on Hardy Street and enter the school through the main school gate. Children need to be dropped off at the Children's House gate from 8.30 am. We would like to remind parents of the importance of signing children both in and out end of every week. To minimise disturbance in the classroom at dismissal times, parents and siblings are invited to either wait outside or in the cloakroom and your child(ren) will be brought to you.

If your child is going to be absent, late or is to be picked up by someone else, please phone **(03) 382-0503** or email [admin@novamontessori.school.nz](mailto:admin@novamontessori.school.nz)

## Safety / Security

**No child will be released to anyone other than their parent / caregiver or a person whose name appears on the emergency form, unless the After-School Pick-up Permission form has been completed (those filled in last year are still relevant for 2009).**

**For one-off changes, parents must either phone or email the school office.**

## Arrival and Farewell Routines - Children's House

**Independence** is a quality Montessori teachers work hard to support and develop in the children they teach.

Independence encompasses both physical independence – being able to hang up one's own bag, take off shoes and coat; and psychological independence – being able to separate from Mum or Dad and remain confident and emotionally secure throughout one's day at school.

Starting school is a big step for most young children to take along the road to independence. It is a step that can be equally difficult for parents. It requires a huge amount of trust to hand over your child to the care of teachers, especially when there are tears and a reluctance to attend.

Most children, however, gradually come to love school – enjoying and reveling in their new-found independence and inner confidence. As teachers and parents our role is that of an observer so as to ascertain when they are ready to develop their independence even further.

As a part of this journey together, children are being dropped off at the Children's House gate between 8.30 and 9. A teacher is available at the gate to welcome the children into the Children's House. Children then have the opportunity to organise their own bags, shoes and jackets in the cloakroom before entering the prepared environment, where a teacher is available to help them settle to their work.

In addition to growing the children's independence, it also allows for a quieter, calmer start to the day with not as much busy-ness and movement occurring, as children are trying to settle and begin to concentrate.

We work along similar lines at the end of the session with parents waiting outside the gate (weather dependent) for their child to be farewelled by one teacher, independently getting their shoes, bag and jacket, and then coming out to the parents at the gate guided by another teacher.

Teachers continue to work with the children on the physical skills necessary to independently complete this process, and they discuss these routines with the children during group meetings.

Thank you parents, for considering your child's level of independence and your confidence in this process. The children have been managing this very well. May we also suggest children are provided with shoes they can successfully and independently operate.

## Information for all Nova Families

### Email Addresses

Nova's administration email address is: [admin@novamontessori.school.nz](mailto:admin@novamontessori.school.nz)

This is the address to use for most enquiries, including the notification of absences and lateness.

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For queries about invoices and the payment of fees the address is:

[shubha@novamontessori.school.nz](mailto:shubha@novamontessori.school.nz)

or

[pauline@novamontessori.school.nz](mailto:pauline@novamontessori.school.nz)

Nova continues to maintain and update the school's web site. You are invited to visit us on [www.novamontessori.school.nz](http://www.novamontessori.school.nz)

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### Telephone

If you need to contact the school by phone please ring the school office number, which is (03) 382 0503.

### Parent Teacher Association

The Nova P.T.A. (Parent Teacher Association) is a vital part of the school, providing an essential element that enables parents to contribute to the school in a purposeful and necessary way.

The P.T.A. is run by parents in conjunction with teachers. The Chairperson is Natalie Collins, the Treasurer is Judith Sivasubramaniam, and Toni Coey is the Secretary. Natalie Collins, Jane McLauchlan and Graeme Coey will continue to support the school by overseeing the funding grants.

### P.T.A Meeting

The next P.T.A meeting will be held on **Tuesday 10th February at 7.30 PM** in the **Library**. All of the Nova parents are encouraged to come along - the more the merrier!

## Birthdays

At Nova, we celebrate children's birthdays in a "Montessori" way. The moment of birth is the beginning of your child's personal timeline. Let the teacher know what day your child will celebrate his or her birthday at school. It seems that in our rushed and hurried world we spend less and less time on moments of celebration. It is important to share joyful moments with one another.

### Items to bring for a birthday celebration:

- **A special snack.** You may wish to send something with your child. Please speak with your child's teacher first.
- **Photographs.** The celebration involves sharing photographs of each year in your child's life.

One way of honouring your child's birthday would be by way of a book voucher that would go towards purchasing a new book for the library.

*Please do not bring birthday invitations to school for the teachers or child to hand out. All birthday invitations are to be dealt with outside of school time.*

## Television, Movie viewing and Computer Games

Research has shown that excessive viewing of particular visual media has a detrimental and negative influence on children's lives.

Repetition of violent acts in visual media - cartoons, movies, computer games, and advertising all have a daily impact on our children who are in the sensitive process of ordering their external impressions.

We invite you to observe how much of your child's play displays an awareness of television shows and computer games. You might compare the time spent watching television or playing computer games with time devoted to developing physical skills and promoting an ability to entertain oneself.

When your child is watching television, it needs to be supervised. And parents can offer spoken, value-based commentary, e.g., "That person seems really cruel, that is mean behaviour, do friends do that?" "I don't like...". "It is not ok with me for you to see such fighting." or "I like seeing animal stories with you!" Children really need you to help interpret the images they are seeing.

One primary role of the Montessori guide is that of observer. In the teachers' experiences there have been many instances when behaviour of a child seems out of the ordinary. Quiet dialogue with the child often reveals that the child is responding in some way to something they have recently seen on television or a movie. Perhaps the question is not if our children are being effected by visual media, but how. *We would like to encourage you to regulate your children's television viewing and computer use, and particularly request that the children not view television or play electronic games prior to coming to school in the morning.*

## Sun Screen and Sun Hats

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in New Zealand. Over 300 people die from melanoma and other skin cancers each year, and our skin cancer rates are amongst the highest in the world. Yet, skin cancer can be prevented in most cases.

The major cause of skin cancer is over exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from the sun over many years, particularly during childhood and adolescence. **Even if exposure does not cause obvious sunburn, damage still occurs and accumulates over the years so we should start protecting our children's skin now.**

### Why hats?

Common sites of skin damage and skin cancer are the **neck, ears, temples, lips, face and nose**. These areas are constantly exposed to the elements and therefore, generally receive more UVR than other parts of the body. Wearing a hat is one of four **Sun Smart Behaviours** recommended by **The Cancer Society of New Zealand** to protect these areas.

### How to be Sun Smart - slip, slop, slap and wrap

**SLIP** into a shirt - and slip into some shade, especially between 11am and 4 pm when the ultraviolet rays are most fierce.

**SLOP** on some sunscreen before going outdoors.

\* Put sunscreen on any skin not covered by clothes.

\* Choose a sunscreen that meets the Australian and New Zealand Standard AS/NZS2604.

\* Use an SPF30+ broad-spectrum sunscreen. Wipe it on thickly at least 15 minutes before going outdoors.

\* Reapply; do this 15 minutes after the first application to ensure complete coverage, and also after physical activity, swimming or towel drying.

**SLAP** on a hat with a brim or a cap with flaps. More people get burned on the face and neck than any other part of the body, so a good hat is important.

**WRAP** on a pair of sunglasses. Choose close fitting, wrap-around glasses that meet the Australian Standard AS1067.

During the first and fourth terms sunscreen needs to be applied on your child **before** they come to school. The teachers will support children to apply their own sunscreens again before going outdoors in the afternoon. Please remember to name your child's/ children's sunscreen.

It is essential that your child brings a **suitable wide brimmed sun hat** to school with their name affixed. **This sun hat must stay at school, and be worn daily** – even when the sun is not bright. If children do not have a sun hat they will be asked to remain indoors (Children's House) and to sit under the umbrellas during lunchtime and play time (Primary).