

SCHOOL POLICIES MANUAL

THE DISCOVERY MONTESSORI PROGRAM STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Ontario Regulation 137/15 to the *Child Care and Early Years Act* (the “Regulation”), this document is **The Discovery Montessori’s** Program Statement. This Program Statement is intended to provide an overview of The Discovery Montessori’s procedures and practices, which are in place to ensure that the child care and early years programming that is provided by the staff is of the highest quality and supports, in all facets of the program, the foundational skills that are necessary for children to achieve their fullest potential in early childhood education and beyond. This program statement also takes guidance from the Ontario’s Pedagogy for Early Years 2014 “**How Does Learning Happen?**”

All existing and new staff, students and volunteers shall review and retain this Program Statement prior to interacting with children, and shall promptly be informed of any modifications or amendments to this Program Statement, and any resultant procedural changes to The Discovery Montessori’s program.

The Program Statement is divided into sections, with corresponding sections from the Regulation provided for ease of reference.

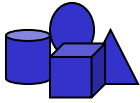
Encouraging Children’s Exploration, Experiential Learning and Positive Learning Experiences

A. Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate; Foster the children’s exploration, play and inquiry

The Discovery Montessori School provides an environment of positive learning and mutual interaction both inside the classrooms as well as outdoors. The core principle of our program philosophy is the belief that all children are competent and intelligent human beings, who are inquisitive and capable of learning through their own individual interactions and experiences. The Montessori material is self-correcting and it helps the children to regulate their own ability to learn thorough their own understandings. The teachers are supportive of their positive energy as a role model and their knowledge of their belief that the children learn and develop through their own play, exploration and inquiry. The vast range of Montessori material, through practical life to culture, allows the child to engage in self-expression. Once the activity is presented by a teacher the child has the independence and freedom to choose and work with the material for as long as the child has the desire and need to explore it.

What Goals do we seek?	How will we achieve this goal?	Success measure	By when?
A review of all the school play and learning material to be held every year for upgrade and /or replacement with new material to ensure new equipment is available for the children to foster enhanced inquiry and learning experiences.	- Review all classrooms for the suitability, replacement or upgrade of existing equipment to ensure continuous and enhanced learning for children. -	Material and equipment review completed for all school classrooms.	First Review 30/06/2017 2nd Review 30/06/2018 3rd Review to be done 30/06/2019

(Section 46(3)I-(d)]



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B. Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences; and plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported

The classroom environment is prepared every day to be ready for the next day. The environment is conducive in providing opportunities for a child to initiate his/her own activities according to his/her own readiness. The teachers are supportive of these experiences and further encourage the child to be more independent and explore. The classroom experiences are further enriched by exploring the world of nature. E.g. the Montessori color tablets and the geometric cabinets can lead to the outdoor study of colours and signs of nature all around us.

Each child has an observation log that is maintained on a daily and weekly basis. The observations further assist the teacher to maintain a positive environment of challenges that would help the child to develop socially and academically. Each child is seen as an individual with his or her own specific needs and readiness. This allows and creates an all-inclusive and creative environment for children and help them to learn and explore at their own pace.

What Goals do we seek?	How will we achieve this goal?	Success measure	By when?
Encourage all children to initiate his/her own activities in the class room according to his /her own readiness .	Each child has an observation log that is maintained on a daily and weekly basis. The observations further assist the teacher to maintain a positive environment of challenges that would help the child to develop socially and academically.	A formal log of the progress of the children is maintained to monitor and assist each child to initiate his/her own activities according to his/her own readiness.	Completed June 30, 2017 2019 Ongoing

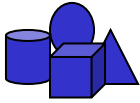
[Section 46(3)l-(f)]

Health, Safety, Nutrition and Well-Being

The school is dedicated to promoting and implementing robust health and safety practices. The school environment is kept meticulously clean and the staff maintain daily cleaning logs of all "critical areas". Critical areas are identified to the staff as areas that have a direct bearing on the health and well-being of the children e.g. kitchen/ eating area, washrooms etc. The health and safety of each child is monitored at all times. Staff are trained on CPR and First Aid training and maintain regular communication with parents as to the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children.

All parents are informed, before the enrollment of their children, about the school policies regarding sickness, special requirements and notifications regarding dietary restrictions, sleep, exercise/activities, and administration of medication, allergies and other details that are essential to the children's health. The health related requirements of each child are communicated to the staff and appropriately recorded and/or implemented, as necessary, by the school prior to children's participation in the school program.

All snacks and lunches are prepared from the basic ingredients on the premises at the school. These meals are prepared according to Health Canada food guide by a qualified staff with food handlers training and certification. The school provides mostly organic and whole wheat products. Any special dietary requirement of children (allergies etc.) are noted and carefully monitored and maintained.



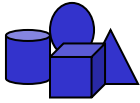
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A written log is maintained in the school eating area, which specifies all the special dietary requirements of children. All children are encouraged to help themselves during lunch and snack time. The pouring skill in practical life area in the classroom is further enhanced when children pour their own milk or water in their cups to drink.

All the fire alarms and other safety equipment are monitored and checked as per schedule by qualified and authorised personnel. Fire drills are carried out monthly and a log of these drills is maintained.

What Goals do we seek?	How will we achieve this goal?	Success measure	By when?
Ensure open dialogue between staff and parents regarding health related requirements or restrictions for children;	Discuss and review health related requirements or restrictions for children during parent teacher meetings as a standard agenda item.	Minimum twice a year parent teacher meeting are held to discuss health related requirements or restrictions. Action items from these meetings are implemented.	Completed June 2017 Ongoing 2019
All staff members to attend professional development workshops related to first aid, CPR and food handlers training.	Enroll each Staff member in Training for min 8 hrs in 2016. Training subjects to include first aid, CPR and food handlers training.	All staff members training for min 8 hrs completed in 2016-2017 school term.	Completed June 2017 Ongoing 2019
For children's health needs, such as anaphylaxis and asthma, Individual response plans must be kept up to date at the school and the notice boards	Review all children's enrolment forms and ensure their individual special health response and management plans are available and up to date.	All individual action plans and special dietary requirements are up to date and posted in the kitchen and the classrooms.	Completed June 2017 Ongoing 2019
Ongoing monitoring and maintenance of school premises (alarms, sensors, etc.) to ensure institutional-level safety and protection.	Conduct annual inspection of Fire and Safety systems by a certified fire and safety inspector Conduct monthly Fire drill	Annual Maintenance inspection of Fire & safety systems completed Monthly Fire drills are conducted and log maintained.	Completed June 2017 Ongoing 2019
Encouragement of children to 'help themselves' in the process of eating food, as a means of promoting self-discipline and independence.	During Lunch and snack time the teachers will encourage the children to help themselves from the prepared plate.	Monitor and encourage children who still resist helping themselves to the prepared meal.	Completed June 2017 Ongoing 2019

[Section 46(3)(a)]



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Encouraging Positive Engagement among Children, Parents, Staff and Community Partners

A. Support of positive and responsive interactions among children, parents, child care provider and staff:

The school believes in maintaining a healthy relationship with the families and partners of the community. Communicating together involves two ways of sharing information and helps to build a common understanding. Our staff and parents are encouraged to maintain an open and receptive dialogue regarding the Montessori program, and we strive to ensure that both staff and parents are able to speak with one another on a frequent basis regarding each child’s progress and development. Further, when staff are notified by parents about any particular concerns or inquiries, they strive to act as promptly as possible to achieve a beneficial resolution of the matter, and keep parents informed throughout the process.

What Goals do we seek?	How will we achieve this goal?	Success measure	By when?
Ensure that parents are encouraged to approach staff with any questions or concerns they may have regarding the Montessori program at any time	A log will be maintained for any issues or concerns that the parents may have regarding the school program and resolution of the issues will be tracked on this log.	Initiate the log book and note all minor or major concerns on this log	Completed June 2017 Ongoing 2019

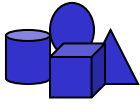
[Section 46(3)(b)]

B. Foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children

The school promotes an honest and respectful relationship with the families. The open dialog with parents allow the teachers to understand what is happening at home and how this may affect the child at school. The parents also have the choice to call or e-mail the school to find about what is happening during their child’s day at school and how they are progressing. There is an information night at the school to introduce the parents about the Montessori curriculum and answer any questions. Parent-Teacher meetings are scheduled twice a school year. Additional meetings can be arranged anytime in between to address any concerns as they arise.

What Goals do we seek?	How will we achieve this goal?	Success measure	By when?
Regular scheduled parent-teacher meeting are held twice a year to review children’s performance in the class, agree on performance expectations/goals for each child and address any concerns that the parents may have.	Arrange twice a year meetings with parents and staff members	Meeting with parents and teachers are held twice a year. Performance expectations and goals for each child are discussed. Any issues or concerns raised by the parents are logged for resolution.	Completed June 2017 Ongoing 2019

[Section 46(3)(h)]



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C. Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff

School concerts, observation week and field trips are effective platforms to build parent –teacher relationships. Families feel more involved with their child’s experience at the Montessori school. The school is also actively involved with the regional government to benefit from their available programs and support services and is currently a partner with the PIRS program to provide support and all the available services to children with special needs. The school has also recently signed the agreement the Region of Peel to allow families with fee subsidy agreements to enroll their children at the school.

We develop positive relationships with neighboring schools to promote seamless, effective transitions for children and families as they begin their JK programs at other schools.

What Goals do we seek?	How will we achieve this goal?	Success measure	By when?
Strong collaborative relationships continue to be fostered with all community partners, CDRCP, PIRS and Operators Networking groups.	Meet regularly with partnership leaders Work collaboratively with partnership groups/organizations to establish networks	Collaborative practices continue to be developed across the partnership Networks – by attending meetings an participation in orientation sessions with CCMA, CDRCP, Region of Peel, Operators Networks etc.	Completed June 2017 Ongoing 2019
Maintain on-going communications with neighboring schools to promote seamless, effective transitions for children and families as they begin their JK programs at other schools	Ensure that any requests for information for former school students from their new schools are adequately and promptly addressed as per school policy.	All queries from external schools regarding former students answered within three business days	Completed June 2017 Ongoing 2019

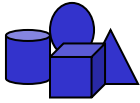
[Section 46(3)(i)]

C. Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving care.

Discovery Montessori allows the rest, quiet time and the playtime to have the same level of positive energy. The naptime provides the rest the children need after a busy productive day. It helps them to rejuvenate for the afternoon session. The outdoor playtime is an excellent opportunity to play games and master emerging physical skills. The children can fully and freely exercise their motor skills like running and jumping. Outdoor playtime in Discovery Montessori promotes cognitive and social / emotional development in children. The teachers encourage them to invent their own games and allow them to make their own decisions by taking control of their own movements.

The outdoor playtime is also an opportunity to promote the understanding of why rules are important. It fosters communication skills as children invent/modify rules. The games children play in the school help them to relate the numbers as they count (Mr. Wolf). Discovery Montessori understands and promotes the social custom of playing together and cooperation during play time.

Although the sensorial material in the classroom is a great source of connection to the world outside. A nature walk in the school backyard further enriches their experiences of aesthetics. They learn through their senses. The sound of the birds, the squirrels and rabbits running around, the leaves changing color, are all experiences



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that are enriching and profound.

What Goals do we seek?	How will we achieve this goal?	Success measure	By when?
All staff members to attend professional development workshops related to reporting abuse and children with special needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enroll staff members in training related to children with “special need” topics as well as Duty to report requirements. - 2018 Teachers will attend workshops related to Montessori areas of curriculum and relate it to “ How Does Learning Happen”. 	All staff members training for special needs and reporting abuse completed in 2016-2017 school term.	<p>Completed June 2017</p> <p>Ongoing 2019</p>
Provide improved access to all areas of the outdoor environment for children by expanding the existing play area.	Subject to availability of funds from Region of Peel, enlarge the size of the play area by removing the inner fenced structure and creating a more open and wider space for children to explore and enjoy the natural environment, -	School play area expanded by removing the inner fenced structure.	Subject to Approval by Program Advisor June 30, 2019
Promote more healthy eating habits by enhancing the proportion of organic and whole wheat products including fruits and vegetables as well as dairy products in the school menu.	- Increase the organic and whole wheat proportion from the current 65 % to 85%	2017 : 80 % of the food items in the school menu are organic and whole wheat. 2018 : 85 %	June 30 2019.

[Section 46(3)(g)]

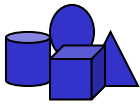
5. Ongoing Professional Development of the Staff

The school employs qualified early childhood staff to maintain the highest quality of excellence in childcare. Training and continuous skills enhancement of the staff is an essential requirement to be maintained for the staff at Discovery Montessori. Through on-going staff training and continuously exploring and reviewing available workshops, the school management is striving to evolve and enrich the school environment with new ideas and materials. A majority of our staff members have the requisite and up-to-date CPR and level C First Aid training and the rest of the staff members are enrolled in courses to complete this requirement within the next six months. This will greatly help the teachers to feel confident in handling any classroom crisis.

The teachers are also required to attend the “Duty to Report” workshop so as to better recognise and report any child abuse or neglect and endangerment case.

Training has been very beneficial to The Discovery Montessori as the teachers bring new ideas , trends and discipline to the school, The staff feels very motivated and engaged and are happy to bring new energy to the class rooms.

The school holds regular monthly staff meetings to share experiences, discuss issues and concerns and provide suggestions for improvement.



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What Goals do we seek?	How will we achieve this goal?	Success measure	By when?
All staff members to attend at least eight hours of professional development workshops during the school year. Each workshop has to be not less than two hours. Teachers will also attend workshop related to children with “special need” topics as well as Duty to report requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enroll each Staff Training for min 8 hrs in 2016. - Training subjects to include “special need” topics as well as Duty to report requirements. - 2018 Teachers will attend workshops related to Montessori areas of curriculum and relate it to “ How Does Learning Happen”. 	All staff members training for min 8 hrs completed in 2016-2017 school term.	<p>Completed June 2017</p> <p>Ongoing 2019</p>
A folder is developed to review available new literature and record learning from professional development sessions that can be shared amongst staff members. [Section 46(3)(j)]	Establish folder All staff to contribute to contents (as well as sharing learning through discussions at staff meetings)	Folder is used by all staff to share learning from professional development opportunities	<p>Completed June 2017</p> <p>Ongoing 2019</p>

Program Statement Implementation Policy

1. The Discovery Montessori is committed to supporting children to grow to their fullest potential in a safe, caring and nurturing environment. The program statement describes Discovery Montessori’s specific goals for children’s learning and development, and the approaches that will be implemented.
2. All staff, students and volunteers will carefully read the Discovery Montessori Program Statement and sign off in the Policy and Procedures Sign off sheet prior to employment or prior to interacting with children, and when the statement has been modified, and on an annual basis.
3. The school supervisor will review all sign offs by staff, students and volunteers and sign the review sheet to indicate that the review process has been completed. The School supervisor must be confident that the staff, volunteer or student is fully aware, and understands the Program statement and its implementation timeline.
4. The school supervisor will meet on a regular basis with each staff member to establish a clear understanding of the program statement, to support staff in their delivery of the Program Statement and to aid the staff in self-reflection, to be recorded, and added to the sign off sheet on a regular basis.
5. The school supervisor will discuss curriculum, Ministry of Education licensing, and quality assessments, and parent feedback results with the school staff during staff meetings.
6. The school supervisor will provide staff with opportunities to attend all mandatory and supplemental training. Track all training completed by each staff.
7. The school supervisor will monitor all staff, students and volunteers for compliance with the approaches set out in the program statement and the commission of any prohibited practices through a combination of observation; reports from colleagues, parents, and community partners; and program plans and documentation.