

## **SA Montessori Pre-schools Policies**

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Respect and Reconciliation Policy**

#### **Statement**

SA Montessori Pre-schools acknowledges and appreciates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the traditional owners of our country, and particularly the Kurna people as the custodians of the land upon which our centres are built. We respect the importance of their history, culture, languages, ways of knowing and learning, and spiritual connection to the land. We are committed to reflecting this respect through our actions by participating in reconciliation as an active and ongoing process.

#### **Rationale**

Aboriginal and ZENADTH KES (Torres Strait Islander) people are a group with incredible insights into caring for country, maintaining meaningful kinship systems, learning holistically, and countless other socio-cultural concepts. SA Montessori staff members and families are encouraged to not only learn *about* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, but to also learn *from* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It is essential for SA Montessori staff to value and learn about the culture and childrearing practices of Aboriginal and ZENADTH KES communities, their family structures (kinship systems), their affiliation with the land and beliefs about learning. It is also important to provide other children and their families with a positive appreciation of Aboriginal and ZENADTH KES culture. It is equally valuable to take the inspiration from the wisdom and experience of Aboriginal and ZENADTH KES people to enhance our own practices in relation to teaching, learning, well-being, communities and sustainability.

SA Montessori also recognises the enormous resilience shown by first nations people as a community, having endured discrimination and disadvantage. We are committed to learning from the serious mistakes of the past, acknowledging that these have contributed to significant negative impacts for Aboriginal and ZENADTH KES people, particularly in the areas of health, education and life expectancy. We view education as one of the tools that can help to address injustice, restore equity and promote inclusion. We believe it is our responsibility and our privilege to influence the next generation to build positive, respectful and informed attitudes towards the value, contributions and rights of Aboriginal and ZENADTH KES people as a group and as individuals. We aim to use the power of education in our ongoing reconciliation journey.

#### **Procedures**

- Staff members should consciously and critically reflect on their own personal attitudes to Aboriginal and ZENADTH KES culture in order to identify and undermine potential bias, assumptions or stereotypes
- Staff members will be encouraged and supported to engage in a professional learning journey exploring Aboriginal and ZENADTH KES culture, knowing that it is rich, deep and multi-faceted and therefore requires ongoing exploration to move towards authentic understanding
- Staff members will be empowered to bring their developing understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and ZENADTH KES culture into the classroom as part of the educational program, with an emphasis on growth and progress rather than perfection

- Staff members will be encouraged to actively seek out and welcome the voices and presence of Aboriginal and ZENADTH KES people within our educational program and community events
- The centre will avoid a tokenistic approach by embedding cultural exploration into the program and routines, and by engaging with Aboriginal and ZENADTH KES organisations, resources and people to improve the authenticity of our learning programs
- Staff members will recognise, use and celebrate language as a vehicle for cultural connection, and seek out opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal and ZENADTH KES languages, especially Kurna language, into the learning programs and daily routines
- Staff, children and families will be encouraged to embody the principles of 'caring for country'
- Staff members will seek out opportunities to include Acknowledgements of Country in their routines and events
- Children will be valued and respected for their cultural background, as will their family
- Children will be encouraged to explore and have pride in their own culture
- Children will be encouraged to explore and respect the cultures of others
- Children will be provided with positive experiences to explore similarities and differences
- The centres will incorporate resources and equipment that reflect Aboriginal and ZENADTH KES culture
- Families will be invited and encouraged to contribute aspects of their culture to the program
- Consultation will occur with families to resolve any issues between family values and the centre practices
- Outside services and visitors will be accessed to enhance children's understanding and appreciation for Aboriginal and ZENADTH KES culture
- Reconciliation events will be recognised and respected by the centre
- ARMSU resources and staff will be accessed to support the inclusion of Indigenous children and their families as required
- Staff will participate in training opportunities when possible to increase their understanding of Aboriginal and ZENADTH KES culture and their participation in children's services
- Each centre will be responsible for developing and maintaining their Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), supported by a RAP Working Group of SA Montessori leaders, educators, parents and other community members.
- SA Montessori centres and personnel are encouraged to include an acknowledgement of country and/or 'Know your country' banner in their email signatures.

### **Training and awareness**

This Policy will be accessible through the SA Montessori staff Onboarding and Ongoing Development course to ensure staff are knowledgeable about its principles, contents and requirements.

### **Linkage to other policies**

Curriculum Policy

Grievance Policy

Inclusion and Bias Policy

Multicultural Policy

Special Needs Policy

### **Sourcing**

Narragunnawali

**Development date**

11/07/08

**'SA Montessori' Definition:**

For the purposes of these Policy documents the term 'SA Montessori' refers to a collective of centres functioning as a professional network with shared management through 'MMM'. These documents have been developed by MMM with intellectual property rights retained. By accepting these Policy documents, the company directors, approved providers and/or persons with management or control (PMCs) of each entity acknowledge that these policies do not release them from their responsibilities, obligations, or liabilities.

**SA Montessori Pre-school centres include:**

Cedars Montessori Pre-school  
 Chancery Lane Montessori Pre-school  
 Echoes Montessori  
 Jescott Montessori Pre-school  
 Lilliput Village Montessori  
 Little Oxford Montessori  
 Rosemont House Montessori

**Review date**

All SA Montessori Policies will be reviewed at least annually by MMM. In addition to the annual review, individual policies may be adjusted at any time in the event of community feedback, changes to guiding documents or legislative updates.

**Review history:**

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Policy satisfactory</b> | <b>Policy amended</b> | <b>Comments</b>   | <b>Next review due:</b> |
|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|---|-------------------------|
| 28/6/10     | √                          |                       |   | 2011                    |
| 26/5/11     | √                          |                       |   | 2012                    |
| 04/04/2012  |                            | √                     | Reviewed and changed from JSC Montessori Pre-schools to SA Montessori Pre-schools   | 2013                    |
| 02/04/2013  | √                          |                       |   | 4/14                    |
| 3/14/14     | √                          |                       |   | 3/15                    |
| 12/3/15     |                            | √                     | Add new centres to SA Montessori listing  | 3/16                    |
| 19/4/16     |                            | √                     | Amended new centre name. Removed Montessori On The Park & Montessori From The Start. Changed to Rosemont House Montessori | 4/17                    |
| 18/4/17     | √                          |                       |   | 4/18                    |
| 26/4/18     |                            | √                     | Amended the name Babthorpe Montessori Preschool to reflect the new centre's name being Lilliput Village Montessori.       | 4/19                    |
| 5/4/19      |                            | √                     | Added new centre, Little Oxford Montessori, to SA Montessori listing  | 4/20                    |
| 28/2/20     | √                          |                       |   | 4/21                    |
| 15/7/21     |                            | √                     | Added new centre, Echoes Montessori, to SA Montessori listing   | 4/22                    |
| 10/5/22     | √                          |                       |   | 4/23                    |
| 22/12/22    |                            | √                     | Reworded Statement and Rationale based on feedback from RAP Working Group   | 4/23                    |

|         |   |   |  |      |
|---------|---|---|--|------|
|         |   |   | Added procedures relating to staff learning and attitudes, the presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and the Reconciliation Action Plan.        |      |
| 30/4/23 | √ |   |  | 4/24 |
| 2/6/24  |   | √ | Changed the use of 'Torres Strait Islander' to ZENADTH KES within document in response to guidance from Uncle Tamaru<br>Included specific mention to Kaurna people | 6/25 |
| 6/7/24  |   | √ | Addition of Training and Awareness, SA Montessori Definition & Review Date   | 7/25 |