

Welcome to our regular update on our new school on the Costa-del-Sol, Spain

Montessori Today

There has been a great deal written about the need to change how we educate children for today's world and whilst it remains the hope that the pandemic will be the catalyst for this to happen, with the exception of increased technology, there is currently little sign this is the case. As we see it, there are three major road blocks that need to be overcome before this can be achieved; politicians, teachers and parents.

In every country around the world there is a national curriculum designed to educate its citizens on the basis of obtaining academic qualifications. Although there is no doubt this was essential 100 plus years ago in developing and industrialising the nations, this prescriptive paradigm is no longer relevant and despite increasing pressure for this to change, there is a reluctance of governments to do so from fear of harming their political fortunes.

As teacher training is closely tied into the delivery of these national curriculums, there is not the freedom to study or to acquire the acceptance of educational pedagogies more adept for today. Whilst many entering the profession are now questioning why it remains necessary to deliver a curriculum which so heavily relies on the memorising of content, the opportunity to broaden their expertise is severely limited if they wish to obtain qualified teacher status needed to work in a mainstream school.

Parents are by nature, risk adverse when it comes to their children and so will normally prefer to give them a similar education that they themselves 'enjoyed' at school. Although it is fully appreciated the majority of parents do not have the luxury to choose a school which provides a more progressive type of education, there are some who are fortunate to do so but who remain convinced that by obtaining the very best academic qualifications, this will ensure the greatest chance of happiness and success for their child which only perpetuates traditional education.

Whilst we fully realise there is no silver bullet to overcome these obstacles, it is our view that Montessori pedagogy is an established way of changing how we educate children.

It is astonishing that although Montessori pedagogy was developed over 100 years ago, it is even more relevant today. Maria Montessori through her studies, established that learning was a natural process that only required a minimum of direct interference by adults. Through autonomy and high levels of mutual respect, this enables children to develop at their own pace leading to independence, confidence, to acquire a love of learning as well as the ability to think critically, be collaborative, creative, adaptable and resilient.

It is through this foundation that Montessori continues to evolve to provide education which develops the whole child, not solely academically but personally, emotionally and socially, to provide an understanding of enterprise, sustainability, global awareness and foster the importance of community to become happy and successful citizens of the 21st century.



PROGRESS OVERVIEW

- Land identified for new development
- Architects commissioned
- Feasibility study completed
- Topographical survey completed
- Concept designs approved
- Basic project approved
- Structural timber design approved
- Technical design in progress

Mental Health and Wellbeing



An essential part of daily life will be the mental health and wellbeing of our community.

As a Montessori school, we do not believe that children should suffer the stress and worry of frequent testing and assessment against pre-determined targets and grades. It is not until the secondary years that homework is set with the exception of reading, spellings and maybe something which they are particularly personally interested in; this time being spent instead either playing or socialising with their friends and family. There are frequent brain breaks, mindful minutes and time taken out of the day for both students and staff to practice yoga and mindfulness in our outdoor studio.

The Adolescent Years

We are frequently asked how Montessori can be extended to the secondary years when there is a need to follow a recognised programme of study that will provide an academic qualification on leaving school at age 16/18.

It is not so commonly known that Maria Montessori extended her pedagogy to children aged 11 to 15 in what she referred to as the 'adolescent years'.

Although this was at a time of a very different world when education as we know today was in its infancy, it nonetheless provides the ground rules of how this can be achieved for the 21st century.



At mont21, our students will enjoy a level of autonomy not found in traditional mainstream education. It is in the early and primary years that each individual child benefits from a foundation of freedom of choice, responsibility and ownership of their learning, time management and a level of respect not ordinarily found in mainstream schools. It is in the secondary years this is further extended into a University type approach.

The students will follow a personalised study plan that provides a daily schedule of small group lessons, independent and collaborative sessions, online tutorials, real life learning, art, sport and all the other different activities they would enjoy at any other school. This is discussed and agreed as part of the weekly conferencing session with their mentor who is always available to help and support whether in person or virtually.

This blended learning approach between attending a physical place and being online will replicate that which is becoming rapidly the 'normal' of today's work place and one which our students will need to be accustomed. It will also enable students to continue their studies where ever they might find themselves in the world.

In addition to their chosen subjects, the students will participate in all the activities of a Montessori community including health and wellbeing, enterprise, horticulture, service learning and helping those less fortunate than themselves.

We are pleased to advise that although our new premises will not be opening until September 2022 due to the pandemic, we are accepting applications for our current school for the next academic year. This will provide preferential admission to mont21. For further details email: info@mont21school.org or call (0034) 677 846 509