

Rocks Lane Montessori Newsletter



Spring 2022 Newsletter Issue No. 4

A special message:

Dear parents, we wish you a very Happy New Year and hope that you had an enjoyable time over Christmas! We would like to express our appreciation once again for all for the wonderful cards and gifts we received at Christmas time, we were truly spoilt! A warm welcome to the children and parents who have joined our school this term. We look forward to have an exciting term ahead with you.

With love, the Rocks Lane Montessori team



Announcements:

Happiest birthday to...

- Ethan (21st January)
- Elodie (27th January)
- Albert (1st February)
- Adam (19th February)
- Oliver C (2nd March)
- Felicity (23rd March)
- Caspar (29th March)

We also welcome the families of:

- Oliver G
- Jasper

A special note of thanks...

A big thanks to Jack's mum, Natasha, for spending the morning with us on Halloween telling us a story about Pumpkin Jack as well as organizing a pumpkin craft session with the children. We had a spookily good time!



A term in review....What have we been up to over the Autumn term?

With venues opening and visits to the local community spaces permitted, we had lots of fun organizing trips out of school as well as welcoming visitors into our lovely classroom for visits! Check out our term in review below:

1. Library visit



A visit to the library brought much fascination and wonder to the world of books as children wandered the shelves, selecting books of all genres for our parent volunteers to read with them!

2. Halloween



"Knock knock, trick or treat?" The children were thrilled to celebrate Halloween before the half term with spooky tales and orange pumpkin crafts. Look at the children's incredible creations!



3. Diwali

We celebrated the Festival of Lights by making tea-light holders using dry-clay and then practicing our fine motor skills by decorating them with pretty sequins. Happy Diwali!



4. Remembrance Day



The children learnt the significance of Remembrance Day by creating poppies using paper plates and red and black paint. The children showed their respect for our fallen heroes with a minutes of silence during circle time. They learnt that red poppies were to commemorate the fallen soldiers whilst purple poppies commemorated fallen war animals, such as horses and dogs.

5. Cookie and Pizza-making



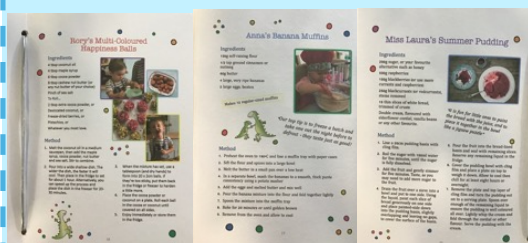
We practiced our practical life skills of transferring, kneading, pinching and pouring whilst following simple recipes to make pizza and cookies. We loved getting our hands gooey and sticky because we know the yumminess is worth the dirt!

Welcoming contributions for Home-Made Recipes:

It is a Rocks Lane tradition to create our very own recipe book, filled with contributions from our families who use them to make simple, delicious and healthy foods for children.

From this term onwards, we are welcoming your contributions for recipes that are easy-to-make and family friendly to be compiled into a book for us to take home!

Attached below is a sample of a recipe which you may use to send us your creations and we will bind them into a book. We can't wait to see all your lovely home-made recipes!



Introducing our parent representative for the academic year 2021/2022

We are really delighted and grateful to announce our Parent Representative for this year, Miranda, who is Mum to Felicity and baby Annabel. Miranda is not only a parent at school, but she is also a qualified, experienced and passionate Montessori teacher herself, so we are lucky for the perspective she has about school and parent life.

This role provides another point of contact to help ensure that parents are an active part of shaping our school over time. Parents can come to any of the team, and now also Miranda, if there are any questions you have, or any way that we can support you, and we are very grateful for the incredible role that parents play in partnering with us.

Thank you so much again Miranda, we look forward to working with you.



Our favourite songs:

- Jolly Phonics:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvRKcch4DyE&t=8s>
- Knock Knock, Trick or Treat:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jxcWlq3CBq>
- I am a Music Man:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22kqia2ibVU>
- Freeze Dance:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2UcZWxvqMZE>

Montessori Focus: Language and Literacy

How is language taught in Montessori?

The Montessori language approach is a very specific, structured approach to language learning that varies from many traditional methods. While the ultimate goals of writing and reading literacy remain the same, the Montessori approach differs from others we may be familiar with. Language is approached in a very methodical manner, beginning from birth and continuing throughout a child's education.

Broadly, language is introduced in the following sequence:

1. Spoken Language

The first phase of the Montessori language curriculum is spoken language. Characterised from birth until 6, children are described as having an absorbent mind. This means that children are absorbing and learning from everything that is around them. Discriminating one environmental sound from another is a good starting point in the development of language.

2. Phonetic Awareness

Children continue to learn and absorb spoken language around them. This time of phonetic awareness is when most parents and educators begin to introduce letters. In the Montessori approach, letters are introduced phonetically, based on their sounds. Rather than learning the names of the letters, children learn to identify the sounds that they make.

3. Writing

In contrast to the traditional method, children learn writing first in a Montessori setting. Montessori language methods introduce writing earlier than most – prior to reading. Parents and educators wait to introduce writing until the child shows interest and signs of readiness. In a Montessori setting, this is most often done by scaffolding in the practical life area and using specific writing materials including the insets and sandpaper letters. Children first put letters together based on their sounds, creating words using their phonetic observations. This means that in the beginning, children are not expected to spell correctly.

4. Reading

In a Montessori setting, language skills build upon each other as activities continue to be used in more advanced ways while children grow. Reading is often not taught in a formal setting, but rather, is introduced and practiced while children are learning other subjects.

Once children have begun to form words with the moveable alphabet, their learning can be enhanced using language cards with vowels, symbols, matching and more. Parents and teachers continue to focus on the specific sounds throughout the Montessori Language Curriculum rather than letter names.



Ideas to reinforce language and literacy learning at home:

1. I-Spy box

Using a box of small objects and letters, lay out sandpaper letters and sound them out as they are laid on a table in full view for children to see. Play a game of i-spy by saying “i-spy something beginning with /h/. Encourage your child to match the small object with the sandpaper letter with the correct initial sound.

2. Spotting initial sounds in the environment

Go for a walk in your neighborhood. Pick a letter sound e.g., /r/ and look for items, objects and scenarios where the sound /r/ can be heard. Switch to a different letter sound along the way home or whilst heading to school the next day.

3. Jolly Phonics

At Rocks Lane Montessori, children are introduced to initial sounds using Jolly Phonics. Easy and catchy songs introduce the initial sounds of /a/-/z/ by associating them with commonly found items in the environment along with actions to help children remember the names more easily. The songs can easily be found on YouTube.

Read more about Montessori Language learning here: <https://themonessorisite.com/montessori-language/#:~:text=The%20Montessori%20language%20approach%20is%20a%20very%20specific%2C,likely%20differs%20from%20that%20which%20most%20are%20familiar>

A few notes, requests and reminders....

The beginning of this year seems like a great time to send home some reminders:

- We have been helping the children to put their school coats independently and would like for you to help us at home. Please allow for your child to take extra time at home to practice putting on their coat using the Reverse Coat Flip
- Do ensure that your child has their smocks on before they enter school each morning when they arrive. Being a school environment, our smock is a special part of reinforcing our identity belonging within the Rocks Lane family. Children are encouraged to come ready for school and prepared for the day's learning hence having their smocks on before arrival at school ensures a smooth transition at the door as children take their first step into the classroom.

Important dates to know:

- Start of Spring Term: 5th January
- Half term: 14th- 18th February
- End of term: 31st March 2022
- Martin Luther King Day 17th January
- Australia Day 26th January
- National storytelling week 29th January to 5th February
- Chinese New Year 1st February
- Winter Olympics 4th-20th February
- Valentine's Day 14th Feb
- Fairtrade Fortnight 27th Feb- 13th March
- International Polar Bear Day 27th February
- Pancakes day 1st March
- World Book Day 3rd March
- International Women's Day 8th March
- St Patrick's Day 17th March
- Recycling Day 18th March
- Red Nose Day 18th March
- Mother's Day 27th March

We're so excited about the curriculum for the new term:

Curriculum Focus Topics, Spring 2022						
Week	Project	Numeracy	Language and Literacy focus	Shape/solid of the week	Book of the week	Person of the week
5 th January	Planet Earth	Weight	Initial sounds- s, m	Circles	Big and bulky- who am I? (Moir Butterfield and Wayne Ford)	Neil Armstrong
10 th January	Me on the Planet Earth	1, 11 2, 12	Rhymes	Spheres	Chicken Licken (Mandy Ross)	Galileo Galilei
17 th January	Landforms	Length	Initial sounds- c, a	Triangles	Thank you, Mr. Panda (Steve Anthony)	Alexander Von Humboldt
24 th January	Water forms	3, 13 4, 14	Environmental sounds	Pyramids	Elmer in the snow (David McKee)	Robert E Horton
31 st January	Rocks and minerals	Height	Initial sounds- r, t	Rectangles	Giant Hiccups (Jacqui Farley)	Stuart Olof Agrell
7 th February	Volcanoes	5, 15 6, 16	Story-telling	Cones	Pop-up Volcano (Fleur Daugey)	Katia Krafft
Half term: 14 th -18 th February						

Week	Project	Number of the week	Letter/Sound of the week	Shape/solid of the week	Book of the week	Person of the week
21 st February	Cities and urban areas	7, 8/ 17, 18	Initial sounds- h, w	Square	One Ted fall out of Bed (Julia Donaldson)	Gordon Cullen
28 th February	Safari	Width	Initial sounds- p, l	Cube	Safari- a photic book (Carol Kaufmann and Dan Kainen)	René-Auguste Caillie
7 th March	Under the sea	9, 10/ 19, 20	Initial sounds- q, v	Oval	The Selfish Crocodile (Faustin Charles)	Stephen Hillenburg
14 th March	Tropical rainforest	Volume	Initial sounds- n, x	Ellipsoid	Fast, strong and stripped, what am I? (Moir Butterfield and Wayne Ford)	Thomas Lovejoy
21 st march	Tundra	Revision of 1-10	Initial sounds- y, z	Trapezium	The Snow Lambs (Debi Glori)	Sir James Clark Ross
28 th March	Hot desert	Revision 11-20	Review of initial sounds	Triangular prism	The Everywhere Bear (Julia Donaldson)	Eva Dickson
Spring break: 1 st to 19 th April 2022						



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