

MEAB Newsletter

Montessori Evaluation and Accreditation Board

Issue 6 October 2011

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Dear MEAB accredited schools and nurseries,

Rather than sitting on our laurels after reaching the milestone of the 100th accredited school, we have a busy year ahead planned!

We are delighted to welcome Kristine Largo to the MEAB administrative team. She will be working with us one day per week, helping to organise the re-accreditation visits.

MEAB intends now to both broaden and strengthen its ability to help raise the quality of Montessori provision. As we begin another academic year we are supporting more than 18 new settings that are working towards their accreditation and preparing to re-assess those settings that were in the initial pilot of the scheme. We are in the process of contacting schools to affirm a time frame for these re-accreditation visits to take place:

If your school is one of the original MEAB schools you will need to:

- prepare an S1 form: If you have stored your original S1 electronically it will be useful if you can indicate any changes since you submitted it for your first accreditation
If you have not stored your original S1 you can download a blank copy to complete from the website http://www.montessori.org.uk/msa/accreditation/documents_and_guidance The website has recently been updated and has links to all appropriate documentation
- look again at any recommendations that your original assessor put forward, thinking about how you have progressed with these and how you have moved forward in other areas of your Montessori practice
- inform your assessor of any CPD and development plans you have at your setting
- liaise with Kristine Largo about the timescale of your re-accreditation. Kristine will make initial contact.

It is important to keep in mind the progress that has been made in the way that MEAB supports schools since the scheme's inception in 2008. Each school now has two visits by an assessor (two assessors for very large settings), with an action plan drawn up after the first visit and an interval between visits agreed by the assessor and school, so that there is time to implement any recommendations.

Other significant changes that have taken place since 2008 are:

- The recognition that MEAB accredited schools now have from parents, Montessori students and increasingly with local authorities and Ofsted inspectors.
- The expertise that the assessor team now brings to the process, having gained significant experience over the past three years and undergone CPD as well as training to become Chartered Educational Assessors and, for some, ISI inspectors.
- The support that accredited settings receive, such as additional discount levels with NES Arnold (Exclusive 15% discount for all accredited nurseries and schools quote NA1151) and MEAB school promotion at MSA conferences.

In future, the Montessori St Nicholas Charity will be looking to focus its support on MEAB accredited settings, a focus that will be shared by MCI and the MSA. This support begins with the first bespoke MEAB school leader conference on Monday 11 June 2012. This conference is free, being paid for by the charity. Please put this date in your diary and let us know what you would like from this day. We will cover the EYFS changes and give a briefing about the re-accreditations, but would welcome any other ideas to discuss in this focused forum. Please email Barbara Isaacs with your ideas at Barbara@montessori.org.uk

We will continue to raise awareness of good Montessori practice amongst parent groups and the education sector in general, using parenting sites, like Netmums and NCT, and the educational press.

Throughout the next twelve months, amidst this increase in activity, the MEAB team will retain its focus on the most important aspect of its work – to promote continued reflective practice and CPD within settings in order that standards in high quality Montessori schools are perpetuated and recognised.

We very much look forward to continuing our partnership with you and wish you a fruitful autumn.

Academic Matters

Free-flow and how to manage it during the cold months

The EYFS consultation document addressed the issue of access to the outside in inclement weather. During the past three years many Montessori settings have created wonderful outdoor classrooms with financial help from Local Authorities. All early years practitioners, including Montessorians, have been able to witness children's enjoyment and pleasure in being outside. The recent spell of Indian summer reminded us all of the benefits of the outdoor learning environments. These benefits are further endorsed by those settings that have participated in Forest School training and have been able to take children to wooded areas for their Forest School days during the whole year. Therefore, we need to consider how to facilitate outdoor learning once the winter sets in and cold days begin. Having spoken to several Montessori heads their advice is as follows:

In the winter they CLOSE the doors but inform the children that they can still go out should they want to do so. All they need to do is inform an adult verbally or by giving them a picture of a garden. The garden image is used in the same way the SILENCE card is used by children who wish to request a quieter learning environment. The garden picture is usually hung near the door to the garden. This is a sign for the adult of the child's intentions. The adult then reminds the child to get ready to go to the garden and to accompany the first child into the garden to ensure appropriate supervision. Ratios are checked regularly and children are monitored closely to make sure they are not getting too cold, in which case it is suggested that they go inside for a short period of time. Parents are informed of the procedures and children continue to enjoy their time outdoors in the winter.

Do be sure to explore with your staff how this approach could be implemented in your setting and let us know how you get on.

OTHER NEWS

MSA National Conference 2012

The MSA National Conference 2012, *'The hand is the pathway to the brain'*, will be held at the Institute of Education on the 24th March 2011. The conference is centered on neuroscience today. We have renowned experts in their fields: Sally Goddard-Blythe, Charles Fernyhough and Susie Pearl speak about *'Neuro-developmental factors and their contribution to education'*, *'How little minds lead to big ideas'* and *'Creating our world through frames of happiness – new roads for empowerment and success in learning and development'* respectively.

Read more on the speakers and programme in the booking leaflet sent together with the *Montessori International* magazine (issue 101). Visit the conference pages at <http://www.montessori.org.uk/msa/msa/conference>.

Celebrating the Unique Child in Montessori settings

Thank you for coming to the 2011 National Conference held at the Church House Conference Centre on the 18th June. Most delegates found the day extremely helpful with very interesting topics, *"Best conference yet! Love the reflections too."* We would like to thank our exhibitors <http://www.montessori.org.uk/msa/msa/sponsors> for making the day a huge success.

Visit the conference blog at <http://blog.montessori.org.uk/montessori-schools-association-national-confe>. You can also order your photos from the conference by visiting <http://www.montessori.org.uk/msa/msa/photos>. To access your photos follow the instructions on the page using the user ID and password as noted.

Funding Reform Consultation

We have recently sent an email with the consultation response on School Funding Reform: Proposals for a Fairer System. While much of the funding consultation is about primary education, there is a section on the Single Funding Formula for nurseries which is relevant to all of us (please see page 40 onwards). Deadline is **11th October 2011**. Email your response to schoolfunding.consultation@education.gsi.gov.uk or post to Consultation Unit, Area 1C, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GJ.

Healthy Eating Publication

You still have time to send your articles for the MSA Healthy Eating publication. Send your photos, articles, policies and recipes to acknowledge the good eating practices followed in your settings. Email kristine@montessori.org.uk before 30th November.

Parenting Book

The Montessori St Nicholas Charity (MSN) is funding a new book, to be published in Spring 2012, to raise awareness and understanding of the Montessori approach and benefits for parents and children here in the UK and abroad. MSN is currently in talks with a number of leading parenting charities to extend distribution of the book beyond the Montessori community. To find out more about the book, please email: book@montessori.org.uk

118 MEAB Accredited Schools

Congratulations to our newly Accredited Schools:

Barnes Montessori Nursery, London
Five Oak Green Montessori School, Kent
Hopes and Dreams Montessori School, Islington
Ladbroke Square Montessori School, London
Leeds Montessori School and Day Nursery, Leeds
Little Sponges Montessori, Greenwich
Milkshake Montessori Nursery School, Twickenham
Moseley Montessori Nursery, Birmingham
New Park Nursery and Montessori School, London
New World Montessori Nursery School, Ealing
Nightingale Montessori Nursery School, London
Pippins Montessori, Colchester
Rectory Garden Montessori School, Suffolk
Seedlings Montessori Nursery, Wantage

International

Head Start Montessori House of Children, Bangalore, India
The Montessori Children's House, West Des Moines, USA
The Woodland Montessori Pre-school, Tai Tam, Hong Kong
The Woodland Montessori Pre-School, Repulse Bay, Hong Kong
The Woodland Montessori Pre-School, Mid-Levels, Hong Kong

We are growing at a rapid pace as more and more schools and nurseries are being accredited. Watch this space for more news.

Summary

- 3 Region 1 - Scotland
- 7 Region 3 - Middlesex
- 6 Region 4 - North England
- 6 Region 5 - West Midlands
- 1 Region 6 - East Midlands
- 9 Region 7 -Southwest and Wales
- 10 Region 8 – Kent and Sussex
- 19 Region 9 - Eastern England
- 33 Region 10 - London
- 7 Region 11 - East Anglia
- 9 Region 12 – Hampshire, Berkshire, Surrey
- 8 International



118 MEAB Accredited Schools

OTHER NEWS

Montessorian of the Year 2011

Congratulations to Anne Marie True for attaining the prestigious Montessorian of the Year award. We applaud her dedication, conscientiousness, diligence and leadership in upholding Montessori principles and keeping the Montessori profile high on the political agenda.

Read more about her in the 101st issue of the *Montessori International* magazine. Past and present winners can be found at http://www.montessori.org.uk/msa/msa/montessorian_of_the_year/previous_winners

Contact your MP

Thanks to all of you who have been in touch with your MPs and have put forward our collective cause. For others who want to further support Montessori's cause you can continue your efforts by letting your voice be heard and asking your MPs to visit your settings.

Please update us with your contacts; we'd love to hear from you.

Parents Week

Montessori is supporting the Family and Parenting Institute with National Parents' Week and would encourage as many MSA schools as possible to take part in the week by running a Montessori event at their school to raise awareness for the approach to parents and help promote their school to the local community.

To find out more, access resources and keep in touch with Parents' Week plans across the country, register at www.parentsweek.org.uk

USEFUL LINKS

MEAB Accredited Schools

We now have a total of 118 accredited schools. Spread the word and share the benefits of accreditation to your neighbouring settings. Visit http://www.montessori.org.uk/msa/accreditation/accreditation_reports for a list of accredited schools. This is also a regular feature of *Montessori International*.

Training

We have different courses to suit your needs, from distance learning courses to the full time foundation degree course. Access the 2011-2012 MCI Training Directory at http://www.montessori.org.uk/mci_training

NES

Montessori's Preferred
Schools Resources Supplier 2011

15% discount all year

for all accredited schools & nurseries - quote NA1151*

10% discount all year

for all non-accredited schools & nurseries - quote NA1152*

EXCLUSIVE
DISCOUNTS

NEW 2011 catalogue out now

CALL **0845 120 4525** VISIT www.nesarnold.co.uk

*Offers valid until 31/12/2011 and cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Can only be used on full-priced items in the 2011 catalogue or on www.nesarnold.co.uk



Upcoming Events

8 th October	R3 – Exploring Science with Chris Manville
14 th to 15 th October	Montessori Europe Congress, Bratislava
15 th October	R11 – Autism with Ros Blackburn
17 th to 23 rd October	12 th National Parents Week 2011
12 th November	R10 – Special Needs at Frederick Hugh House
12 th November	R7 - The World of Stuff and Possibilities with Gail Alder and Jenni Dutton
19 th November	R5/6 - Dyspraxia with Wendy Fidler
24 th March	MSA National Conference at the IOE
14 th April	R3 - Music in the Early Years
11 th June	MEAB School Leader Conference

Browse http://www.montessori.org.uk/msa/msa/events_msa for the full list of events and for more information on the Montessori Europe Congress, visit <https://www.montessori-europe.com/congress-bratislava-2011>.

Get contact details of your regional chairs and read more information about Regional Events at http://www.montessori.org.uk/msa/msa/msa_regions

Preferred partners

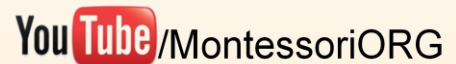
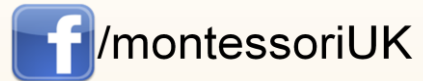
For more information on our preferred partners, click on the logos:



Connect with Montessori

Visit our new distance learning microsite distancelearning.montessori.org.uk

We have reached 1000 fans on our MontessoriUK facebook page ... if you haven't registered click the 'Like' button to become a Montessori fan.



Stay in touch with Montessori by signing up on our above websites or contributing with your news, films and photos. Contact Amanda at a.gilchrist@montessori.org.uk with your interesting stories.

USEFUL LINKS

Recruiting Staff

Looking for a vacancy or want to advertise vacancies in your nursery? You can place job adverts with us to go online, in the magazine, or on notice boards at MCI. Email Stephanie at stephanie@montessori.org.uk to place your vacancy.

Browse Montessori job vacancies at <http://www.montessori.org.uk/magazine-and-jobs/jobs>

Montessori Books

Check out <http://shop.montessori.org.uk/> for new Montessori books available.

You can also purchase a magazine subscription or order REACH brochures at our webshop.

MEAB

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