EXTENDED DAY POLICY (CYCLE 1)

Date
12 December 2019

Review Date
Annually

Policy Statement

Values
The following process has been put in place as a guideline for teachers and parents to ease the transition of children starting extended days.

Extended day is the third and final stage of the Montessori three-year cycle. In many ways it is the most rewarding. It offers the child opportunities to:

- Build on and consolidate skills in an intimate social environment;
- Realise the potential of the Montessori materials while exploring the transition from concrete materials to abstract concepts; and
- Take on leadership roles that foster self-esteem and social confidence.

At Montessori Early Education Centre, we understand the importance of extended days, therefore we offer it to children, as they become ready, from the middle of their second year in the cycle 1 program. By offering it to the children in their second year, we are building upon and supporting the children’s learning as well as acknowledging each child’s uniqueness in a positive way. The Montessori Directress determines when the child is ready to do Extended Days. The Directress promotes the children’s sense of belonging, connectedness and wellbeing; therefore, the onset of extended days, will be different for each child.

The Montessori Directress will, when children become ready for extended days approach parents to discuss the Settling-In Schedule and extended day hours as defined below.

Purpose
This policy is applicable to all the children who are enrolled in the Cycle 1 program at Montessori Early Education Centre.

- It is based on the Montessori Philosophy as well as the approved learning framework;
- It is underpinned by critical reflection and careful planning for each individual child;
- It is aimed at stimulating, engaging and enhancing children’s learning and development;
- It will prepare children for the longer days in the prep year in Cycle 1.

Its purpose is to set a clear set of guidelines and to manage parent expectations in relation to when extended days will be offered to children in the second year of the Cycle 1 program.
Background
At Montessori Early Education Centre, we are always striving to provide the best Montessori program possible. The main aim for extended days is to further extend and support the learning that has taken place in the previous years. Your child will be challenged to reach his/her potential by his/her Montessori teacher who knows your child incredibly well. Because of this, the teacher can provide exactly what is needed next during the extended day.

Children build upon what they have learned, experience immense academic and social growth and their skill level dramatically increases when they are given the opportunity to reinforce their knowledge within the Montessori classroom.

Students ready to join in the extended day program, are ready to explode into more complex learning and discovery. They are given the opportunity to work with a wealth of new and interesting materials. They are guided to take on more complex work, begin to learn time management skills and have increased set expectations and privileges in the classroom.

Your child will be invited to join in on extended day/s once the Directress feels your child is ready. Some indicators of readiness for extended day are the ability to initiate, extend, organise, self-direct and control and complete tasks.

Extended day hours help the second year child to become familiar with longer days, as it is an indirect preparation for their final Year in the Cycle 1 program. Our aim is to introduce extended days to the second year children in Term 3 and Term 4. Refer to Appendix 1 for a sample assessment sheet the Montessori Directress will use to determine readiness for Extended Days.

Definitions
- **Extended day**: the journey for an individual child to extend their hours of attendance in a cycle one classroom. The child will attend MEEC from 8:45am - 3pm, normally on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and/or Thursdays.
- **Settling-In Schedule**: An introduction to extended days, by slowly introducing them to the longer school days.
- **Settling in to extended day hours**: This means a gradual extension of their days as follows:
  - 8:45am - 1:15pm
  - 8:45am - 2pm
  - 8:45am - 3pm
- **The maximum number of extended days** your child will be offered is 2 days (upon readiness)
- **Cycle 1 program**: Fern Room children and Rose Room children.

Procedures
*The committee is responsible for:*
- Reviewing this policy, in consultation with the parents/guardians and staff.
The parents/guardians are responsible for:
- Reading this policy;
- Being guided by the Montessori Directress to determine readiness for extended days.

The Montessori Directress is responsible for:
- Assessing children’s readiness for extended days;
- Approaching parents when a child is ready for extending days and communicating settling in schedules and hours to parents in readiness for the transition;
- Implementing this policy.

Related Documents
- Centre policies
  - Complaints
  - Privacy

Review date
This policy will be reviewed annually, or varied earlier if necessary, and the committee will within 28 days of making any change, notify the parents/guardians of the children attending, of that change.

Evaluation
In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes the committee will:
- Assess the effectiveness of the process for extended days.
- If appropriate, conduct a survey in relation to this policy or incorporate relevant questions within the general parents/guardians survey.
- Take into account feedback from all staff regarding the policy.
- Monitor complaints and incidents regarding the policy.
**APPENDIX 1:**
**KEY INDICATORS FOR READINESS (EXTENDED DAYS)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to use words rather than aggression</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening skills</td>
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<td>Participation skills</td>
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<td>Ability to work on own</td>
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<td>Concentration</td>
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<td>Socialisation</td>
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<td>Focus</td>
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<td>Completes cycle of work</td>
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<td>Chooses own jobs</td>
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<td>Follows rules</td>
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<td>Separates easily from parent</td>
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<td>Answers questions</td>
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<td>Maintains conversation</td>
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<td>Manages own emotions</td>
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<td>Communicates needs to teachers</td>
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