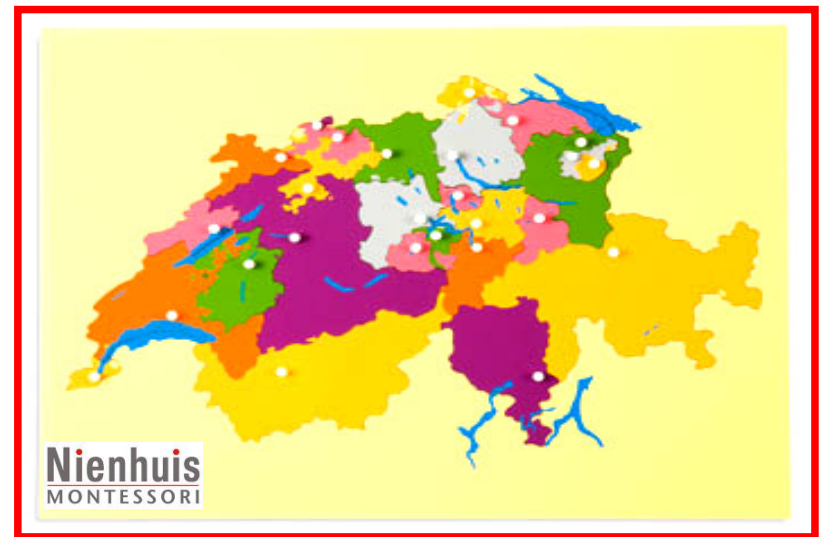


# *Swiss Montessori Centre*



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In 1894, Maria Montessori (1870-1952) became one of the first female physicians in Italy. Subsequently in 1907, her interest in children and education led her to open a Children's house in the slums outside Rome. Dr. Montessori put into practice her theory stating that children have a natural tendency towards self-education and self-realization. Nowadays, the Montessori Method is well known all over the world.



*Sensorial- and Cultural education Van Gogh-Halloween 2002*



**Centenary of the Montessori Movement 2007**



## Swiss Montessori Centre – Neuchâtel

*I would like to order the following Montessori materials/items*

.....  
.....  
.....

The order/s is/are urgent/not urgent (please strike as appropriate)

Family- & Christian names .....

.....

Address & tel. number .....

.....

E-mail address (& website).....

.....

Country and business .....

.....

Nationality.....Female/Male

Total (CHF) .....

Place and date .....

2010-04-20

## 1. Introduction to the Montessori Method

### 1.1 Deep concentration

Dr. Montessori developed a set of materials and a system of education in which the learning process is individualized to every child. She believed that deep concentration was essential for intellectual development. According to her this was best achieved through the use of materials.

### 1.2 Movement and cognition

At a young age, children learn through movement and cognition. Based on this insight Montessori developed a method of education in which a great deal of object manipulation occurs.

### 1.3 Free choice

Montessori noted that children's intellectual development was enhanced when having free choice and control. Montessori programs impose limits on these freedoms. Nevertheless, Montessori children have the ability to control their learning process more so than children in traditional classrooms. In addition, children can choose to work alone or in self formed groups.



Rome, 1907

## 1.4 Organization

Research in psychology suggests that order is very helpful for children's learning and development. Therefore, in a Montessori classroom, everything is in its place and children work quietly. Montessori classrooms do not have tightly ordered daily schedules, but are very orderly in terms of how each task is performed by the children.

## 1.5 Internal rewards

Montessori considered material rewards to be disruptive for a child's concentration. Self-achievement is likely to be the most important reward for a child. When adults provide clear limits but set children free, and respond to their needs while keeping high expectations, children show high levels of maturity, achievement, empathy, and other desirable characteristics (Lillard, 2007, pp. 18-22).



*Writing*

## *Swiss Montessori Centre – Neuchâtel*

***Please inform me of a Montessori and/or education  
tutorials/lectures***

**Family- & Christian names .....**

.....

**Nationality .....Female/Male**

**Address, tel. number .....**

.....

**E-mail address (& website).....**

.....

**Country and business.....**

**Name of other interested person .....**

.....

**Place and date .....**

**2010-04-20**

### 9.1.5 Fees for the Children's house

Classes (three mornings a week) will cost CHF 360.- for each month. Tuition must be paid on three occasions during the school year: CHF 1440.- at the beginning of July, November and March. You will receive a deduction of CHF 200.- if the entire tuition is paid at once (CHF 4320.-). Registration fees are CHF 200.- (for each year the child is enrolled). This amount is non-refundable. Please notify the SMC 2 months in advance of any permanent departure. In addition, in the event of departure during the school year, a charge of CHF 720.- will be billed (equivalent of 2 months of tuition) .

## 10. References

- o Delors, J. (1998). *Learning: the treasure within*, Paris: Unesco Publishing
- o Montessori, M. (1984). *The absorbent mind*, New York: Laurel
- o Montessori, M. (1989). *The child, society and the world*, Oxford: Clio Press
- o Montessori, M. (1989). *The formation of man*, Oxford: Clio Press
- o Stoll Lillard, A. (2007). *Montessori, The science behind the genius*, Oxford: University press

2010-04-20

## 2. Aims and objectives

### 2.1 Aims

The main aim of the SMC is to promote the educational Montessori Method at regional, national and international level. In doing so the SMC would like to educate and inform a wide variety of interested parties, such as pupils, parents, associations and any other educational institution. The SMC will host a number of lectures and conferences concerning educational and Montessori topics. Individuals and institutions will also have the opportunity of purchasing Montessori materials directly through the SMC. Furthermore, the SMC will offer coaching sessions for parents and/or children from ages 3 to 18 concerning any issue that may be of concern. Finally, the SMC will provide Montessori education to children from 3 to 6.

### 2.2 Objectives

#### 2.2.1 Promotion of the Montessori Philosophy and education in general

This will be performed in a number of ways. Firstly, the SMC will host talks and conferences presented by the owner or guest speakers. Secondly, the SMC will organize workshops for parents or other individuals. Lastly, the SMC will promote the Montessori Method outside of its premises by attending conferences and contacting other stakeholders directly.



### 2.2.2 Montessori materials

The SMC is an official distributor of Nienhuis Montessori International B.V., The Netherlands. Nienhuis is one of the largest and most prestigious suppliers of Montessori materials in the world. Therefore, Montessori materials can be purchased directly through the SMC. This is **unique** in French-speaking Switzerland and thus in the canton of Neuchâtel.

### 2.2.3 Coaching sessions

These sessions will enable parents and/or students to discuss with the owner privately any problems or issues that they may have concerning their education at school or at home.

### 2.2.4 English classes 3-6

English Montessori classes will be offered three times a week (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) to children from ages 3 to 6. Classes will be composed of no more than 18 pupils and, thus, the teacher will have the opportunity to focus on the individual needs of each child. From August 2011, Neuchâtel will require 16 weekly periods of 45 minutes of formal teaching for children aged 4 and 5 (Convention Scolaire Romande HarmoS n° 2, November 5 2009). This is equivalent to 12 full hours of teaching a week. Consequently, the SMC will offer 3 x 4 hours of classroom hours a week.

### 9.1.4 Rules of the Children's house

- English classes will be held Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 08 – 12H
- Children are only allowed to attend once they are toilet-trained
- A confirmation of your child's enrolment is given after a trial period of one month
- Records will be kept of the pupil's progress
- Each child will bring his own small plant to school which he will care for himself
- Children will wear a pair of slippers or indoor shoes with good support in the classroom. They are kept at school, but can be taken home during holidays
- The children will bring their snack and drink to school. Instead of chocolate-based snacks, healthy food is suggested
- Parents must inform the school of any absences or change of address
- For sickness and/or other absences the SMC will not provide any reduction in fees



*Practical Life*



*Preparation for writing*

### 9.1.1 Individual activities requiring Montessori materials

- Practical life exercises
- Sensorial education
- Development of language
- Early preparation of the mathematical mind
- Cultural education

### 9.1.2 Small group activities

These are as follows: reading corner, cultural corner, topic centre and art- & painting corner.

### 9.1.3 Classroom activities

These are as follows: stories, poems, songs, musical games, cultural development, puppet theatre, gymnastics, line-walking. Outdoor activities will be held in a small park behind the SMC.



*Rake - Spade - Flower press*

### 2.3 Summary of the four SMC main activities

- Promote the Montessori Method and education in general
- Inform and sell Montessori items to clients
- Instruct parents and children who seek educational advice
- Provide Montessori education to children ages 3 to 6

## 3. Location

**3.1 An audience room:** This is a 100 square metre room on the ground floor that can host approximately 100 people. A collection of Montessori materials will be exhibited in this space. In addition, this facility will be used for physical exercise classes.

**3.2 A kitchen:** The kitchen will serve for refreshments and snacks during lectures and conferences. The kitchen can also be used for and by pupils.

**3.3 A classroom:** Classes will be held in this space. Moreover, the Montessori materials for children aged 3 to 6 will be exposed in this room.

**3.4 Outdoor playground:** An outdoor playground can be used for outdoor activities (e.g. children, presentations, exhibitions).

## 4. Management

**Elisabeth Houweling** is the director and owner of the Swiss Montessori Centre (SMC). She was brought up in Holland, however has lived in many countries since then. Ms. Houweling holds a Dutch Kindergarten Teacher Diploma (1964) as well as a Montessori Diploma for children ages 3 to 6 from the Municipality Training-College (1965), The Netherlands. Whilst travelling through the world and teaching in Children's houses in Amsterdam (Netherlands), Mozambique (Africa) and in Tegucigalpa (Central America), Ms. Houweling has had the opportunity to acquire invaluable teaching experience. In addition to Dutch, Ms. Houweling speaks English, French and German fluently. In 1986, she founded the International Montessori School (IMS) of Neuchâtel, Switzerland, which she sold after 17 successful years in 2003. The IMS was a busy bilingual Montessori institution (English and French) offering pre-elementary and elementary education to children of ages 3 to 12. In parallel to her managerial duties at the IMS, Ms. Houweling taught on a daily basis in the English Children's house (3-6). While directing the IMS, Elisabeth Houweling attended a number of continuing education workshops, as well as international congresses concerning the Montessori Method. Ms. Houweling has lived with her husband for 25 years in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. She has two sons and one daughter who are now all pursuing their own paths in Switzerland



## 8. Coaching sessions

Coaching sessions are intended for children and adolescents (age 3 to 18) who experience difficulties with their education at school or at home. These sessions enable parents and/or children to meet privately with the owner to discuss a topic of their choice. If necessary, referrals will be made to local specialists and/or psychologists. The charges for the coaching sessions will be CHF 100.- per hour.

## 9. English Montessori classes 3 to 6

### Faith in the child

The Montessori teacher is constantly viewing a child in progress of development. The teacher, when she begins to work in our schools, must have a kind of faith that the child will reveal himself through work. The teacher must believe that this child before her will show his true nature when he finds a piece of work that attracts him. This way she looks for a child that will begin to concentrate (Montessori, 1984, p. 270).

### 9.1 Children's house program



*Sandpaper Letters*



**7.1.1 Enrichment materials:** This is a special collection of materials such as biologic puzzles, measurement materials, mathematical & language charts and scales etc.

**7.1.2 Curriculum support materials:**

Activity sets, geography maps, nomenclature cards for biology, geography, language etc.

**7.1.3 Paper products:**

These are used for mathematics, biology, music, language, cultural education. Plus language & arithmetic exercise books, writing booklets & paper for language

**7.1.4 Miscellaneous products:**

Paper boxes, coloured pencils & holders, top pads, scissors, pencil sharpener etc.

**7.1.5 Furniture for the classroom:**

Farm table, carpet stands, board stands etc.

**7.1.6 English Montessori books, publications, CDs**

## **7.2 Purchase of Montessori materials**

Montessori materials can be purchased directly from the SMC. A collection of Montessori materials will be permanently exhibited at the SMC. The cost of all Montessori materials and books will be determined by Nienhuis Montessori International B.V., Netherlands. Customers will take care of customs and taxes. Once ordered, the products will be delivered to the SMC in Neuchâtel. Items will be collected from the SMC at the customers' own expense.

and abroad. Ms. Houweling has always had a passion for education and psychology, and thus, in 2004, decided to undertake a Psychology and Education Certificate (Certificat Formation Permanente) at the University of Neuchâtel which she completed in 2009.

## **5. Opening hours of Swiss Montessori Centre**

The SMC will be open mornings from 09.00 – 12.00H and afternoons from 14.00 – 16.00H (except Wednesday afternoon). These times may vary; it is therefore recommended to call before visiting the SMC. Classes will be taught on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 08.00 to 12.00H. During classes Montessori materials cannot be purchased. The SMC will be closed on weekends and during major school holidays.

## **6. Lectures and conferences**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The SMC's main interest is the development and education of the child. Anyone who shares the same interest will be welcomed at the SMC. Lectures and tutorials will be organised on a regular basis. Fees thereof will be adapted to the demands of national- and international speakers and trainers.

## 6.2 Interest in education

Education is at the heart of both personal and community development. Its mission is to enable each of us, without exception, to develop all our talents to the full and to realize our creative potential, including responsibility for our own lives and achievement of our personal aims. Its achievement, though long and difficult, will be an essential contribution to the search for a more just world, a better world to live in (Delors, 1998, p. 19).

A democratic school community is a community of children, a community of future men and women. Once reached maturity they are going to live in the world. Therefore they must be in touch with it before entering it. Children must experience social life through living (Montessori, 1989, pp. 104-105).



## 7. Scientific Montessori materials

Culture can be transmitted by means of the spoken word. Above all however, it has to be taken in through activity with the help of apparatus which permit the child to acquire culture by himself, urged onwards by the nature of his mind which seeks and is guided by the laws of his development (Montessori, 1989, p. 99).

*Geometric Cabinet*



*Pink Tower*



## 7.1 Materials 0 - 12 years

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>0 - 3</b>  | <b>Infant Toddler:</b> variety of series of <i>imbucare</i> boxes (letterboxes) and -boards, puzzle sets, <i>infilare</i> (threading) exercises, dressing frames etc. |
| <b>3 - 6</b>  | <b>Children's house materials for</b> practical life, sensorial education, language, mathematics & geometry, biology and geography                                    |
| <b>6 - 12</b> | <b>Elementary school materials</b> for language, mathematics & geometry, biology, geography & cosmic education (evolution time line)                                  |