



Sunflower Montessori Kindergarten

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A happy child is a confident child

Introduction

Welcome to Sunflower Montessori Kindergarten, We provide quality full and sessional day care for children aged 2 to 5 years old. The nursery is open for 38 weeks a year. Our Kindergarten follows the Montessori approach to education, as well as incorporating the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Following the EYFS enables us to provide Nursery Educational Funding for 3&4 year olds. This funding entitles children to free nursery education for a maximum of 15 hours weekly (please see our Terms & Conditions for further information), from the term after their 3rd birthday. We also offer funding for children aged 2 years, subject to the conditions set by Essex County Council. Claiming funding also means that we are OFSTED inspected and work towards a universal set of standards to provide the very best care and education for all children.

Our setting aims to:

- Provide high quality care and education for children below statutory school age (2-5 years of age);
- Work in partnership with parents to help children learn and develop
- Offer the children and their parents a service that promotes equality and values diversity.

Parents

Parents are regarded as members of our setting who have full participatory rights. These include the right to be:

- Valued and respected;
- Kept informed;
- Consulted;
- Involved; and
- Included at all levels

We aim to ensure that each child:

- Is in a safe and stimulating environment;
- Is given generous care and attention, because of our ratio of qualified staff to children;
- Has the chance to join with other children and adults to live, work and learn together;
- Is helped to take forward her/his learning and development by being helped to build on what she/he already knows and can do;
- Has a personal key person who makes sure each child makes satisfactory progress;
- Is in a setting that sees parents as partners in helping each child to learn and develop; and
- Is in a setting in which parents help to shape the service it offers

Children's Learning and Development

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the statutory framework that sets the standards that all Early Years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children are ready for school and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The revised, simpler framework for the EYFS was published on 31 March 2014, for implementation from 1 September 2014. For more details, please see www.education.gov.uk

How we provide for development and learning

Children start to learn about the world around them the moment they are born. The care and education offered by Sunflowers helps children to continue this by providing all the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape the educational programmes in early year's settings. All areas are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. These three areas, the *prime* areas, are

- physical development;
- communication and language; and
- personal, social and emotional development

We also support children in four *specific* areas

- literacy;
- mathematics
- understanding of the world; and

- expressive arts and design

Our setting follows these guidelines when we assess children and plan for their learning.

Alongside the EYFS, Sunflowers also implements the Montessori approach to education.

About Montessori Education

Education is a natural process spontaneously carried out by the human individual, and is acquired not by listening to words but by experiences upon the environment. The task of the Montessori teacher becomes that of preparing a series of specially designed activities, spread over a specially prepared environment, and then refraining from obtrusive interference.

A Beginner's Guide to the Montessori Classroom

In a true Montessori classroom the child's freedom, dignity and independence are of paramount importance. The general atmosphere of a Montessori classroom is of children doing things for themselves carefully and competently - carrying furniture, setting tables, pouring drinks and washing their hands - and engaging in activities which absorb and interest them.

The prepared environment encourages the child of 2 to 5 years of age to absorb information as a natural and joyful activity. The Montessori materials help to stimulate and develop a number skills encouraging learning through our senses. Age appropriate exercises assist the child in developing mastery of coordination and movement, learning about social relationships, and caring of self. The Montessori curriculum areas include:

Practical Life

The very first activities children take part in develop their ability to look after themselves and their surroundings. They can practice dressing skills on specially made frames. They use little jugs filled with beans or rice and then water to practice pouring; they spoon, scoop, or use droppers, tweezers and even chopsticks to transfer from one bowl to another.

Other activities use scaled down versions of real equipment: brushes and brooms, washing-up bowls and clothes. There are also varied opportunities for pairing socks, polishing shoes and mirrors, plaiting and sewing.

Sensorial

Sensorial shelves include specially designed materials to encourage development of the senses, such as the pink tower; sets of cylinders graduated in size; cylinders with knobs which have to be fitted into the right holes in a block; rough and smooth tablets in boxes; smelling bottles; fabrics to sort by touch; sound boxes to discriminate different sounds and puzzle blocks . Each of these is used to stimulate and refine one of the five sensory areas and each will be presented to the child to be used in an exact way to aid his or her development. The sensorial materials also prepare the child for reading and writing and mathematical concepts. They also refine and develop hand eye co-ordination and fine motor skills.

Cultural Subjects

The Montessori curriculum also provides a sound introduction to science, botany, zoology, geography, French and history. The cultural studies are approached through time lines, maps, and project work.

On festival days we may celebrate with tastes of exotic foods, learn songs from other countries or invite a guest or parent to show and tell about special costumes and celebrations. Nature walks encourage the children to become aware of their natural environment.

Mathematics

Children gain a physical impression of size and quantity long before they begin to manipulate numbers by handling number rods, counting out beads, counting spindles into boxes and arranging coloured counters in patterns - odd and even numbers. Numbers are built up using glass or wooden beads and their sandpaper symbols traced with the fingers.

Language

Writing often comes before reading in a Montessori classroom with children building up their first words phonetically using cardboard letters. Inside a small pink box a child finds a tiny toy dog. She takes it out, says the word, listens to the sounds in it and then seeks out the letters, which make those sounds to build the word. Colouring intricate shapes drawn with insets learns writing skills, and sandpaper letters are experienced by touch as well as by sight and sound. A wide range of story and reference picture books are always available in the classroom.

Social Skills

Children aren't born with an innate knowledge of why we shake hands, or kiss, or rub noses depending on our culture and in the Montessori classroom they learn appropriate greetings. As they become aware of other cultures they are encouraged to celebrate differences and value them equally. During circle time children are shown how to move quietly and carefully around the classroom, push in chairs, wait patiently and politely to gain someone's attention and are reminded how important it is to allow others to work undisturbed. These ground rules in the classroom give every child total security. Children also learn to notice if somebody needs help and that nobody is too small to be useful. Other activities we provide like music and art, develop the child's aesthetic sense.

Our approach to learning, development and assessment

Learning through play and a structured environment

Play helps young children learn and develop through doing and talking. At Sunflowers we offer a completely equipped Montessori environment as well as a range of other play activities, for example, role play area and craft activities which help your child make progress in each area of learning and development. In some of these activities children freely choose and will decide how they will use the activity and, in others the adults takes the lead in helping children take part in the activity

Assessment

We assess how young children are learning and developing through frequent observation. We use the information we gain from observations, as well as photographs and samples of work to document their progress and where this may be leading them. We believe that parents know their child best and we ask them to contribute to assessment by sharing what their children like to do at home and how they as parents are supporting development.

We make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievements based on our on-going developmental records. These form part of your children's records of achievement. We undertake these assessments regularly, including times of transition, such as when a child goes to school.

Learning Journeys

The setting keeps a Learning Journey for each child. Staff and parents work together on their children's records and this is one of the ways in which they key person and parents work in partnership. Your child's key person keeps this record up to date and she/he will collect information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will enable the key person to identify your child's stage of progress and development and to determine the next steps in their learning. The Learning Journey is shared with parents at regular parent/teacher meetings and available to look at throughout the year.

The Setting's Timetables and Routines

Our setting believes that care and education are equally important in the experience we offer children. The routines and activities that make up the day in the setting are provided in ways that:

- Help each child feel that he/she is a valued member of the setting;
- Ensure the safety of each child;
- Help children to gain from the social experience of being part of a group; and
- Provide children with opportunities to learn and help them to value learning.

The Kindergarten Session

The day is organised so the children can take part in a variety of self-chosen activities. During this free flow activity time the key persons will work with individual children introducing new Montessori materials and moving them on in their learning. At certain times in the day children have the opportunity to engage in adult lead activities, for example, carpet sessions, P.E, cookery, arts and crafts, and music.

Outdoor activities contribute to children's health, their physical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Opportunities for outdoor play are scheduled at the end of the session.

Times and Sessions

We offer the following sessions for children aged 2-5 years of age (from 1 January 2015)

Morning session: Monday to Friday 0900 - 1230

Lunch : Monday to Friday 1230-1315

Afternoon session (including lunch) Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 1230 - 1500

The kindergarten provides a minimum staff/child ratio of 1:4 for 2-3 years and 1:8 for 3-5 years old children, as stipulated under Part X of the Children's Act 1989.

A minimum attendance of 2 daily sessions is stipulated to enable the children to gain maximum benefit from the kindergarten

We provide

- Morning snack.
- Bedding

Please Provide

- A bag with spare clothes - clearly named
- Nappies, nappy cream, nappy bags and wipes
- Outside clothing such as gloves, scarf, wellies etc.
- Sunhat, sun cream (including parental permission for staff to apply)

Clothing

We provide protective clothing for the children when playing with messy activities. We encourage children to gain the skills that help them to be independent and look after themselves. These include taking themselves to the toilet and taking off, and putting on outdoor coats. Clothing that is easy for them to manage will help them do this.

Other Important Information

Snacks & Meals

We offer and promote a well-balanced and nutritious diet. A healthy snack is available from mid- morning .The children are free to help themselves throughout the day to water.

Daily menus are displayed on the Parent's notice board. Packed lunches should be brought in by children who attend lunch club and should include a nutritious, well-balanced selection of food. This could include food such as a healthy sandwich, fruit, yogurt and a drink. Because Sunflowers promotes a healthy eating policy, please try to minimise items in your child's packed lunch such as sweets, chocolates, crisps, biscuits and cakes.

Do tell us about your child's dietary requirements and we will make sure these are met.

A full price schedule of our daily rates can be found at the back of this prospectus.

Sunflower Policies

Copies of the Nursery's policies are always available for you to see at the setting; just ask a member of staff. These help us to make sure the service we provide is a high quality one and that being a member of the setting is an enjoyable and beneficial experience for each child and her/his parents. Our policies are reviewed annually by staff and parents to help us make sure that they are enabling the setting to provide a quality service for its members and the local community.

Safeguarding Children

Our setting has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual 'significant harm'. Our employment practices ensure children against the likelihood of abuse in our setting and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff. Our way of working with children and their parents ensures we are aware of any problems that may emerge and can offer support, including referral to appropriate agencies when necessary, to help families in difficulties.

Special Needs

As part of the settings policy to make sure that its provision meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special needs a child may have. Please see our SEND Local Offer at www.sunflowermontessorikinder.co.uk for more information. Our Special Needs Co-ordinator is Sue Nicholas.

Joining in

Parents are invited to participate with practical activities such as art and craft, cookery, computer and topic work and to assist with outings and nature walks etc. Parents are welcome to spend a session with us, this need to be pre-arranged with the Nursery staff.

Starting at our Setting

The first days

We want your child to feel safe and happy with us. To make sure this is the case, the staff will work with you to decide on how to help your child to settle into the nursery. The setting has a policy about helping settle into the setting. A copy is available from the nursery.

We hope that you and your child enjoy being members of Sunflower Montessori Kindergarten and that you both find taking part in our activities interesting and stimulating. We are always ready and willing to talk to you about your ideas, views or questions

TERMS OF ATTENDANCE

The minimum attendance is 2 sessions per week

To maintain the high standards of the Nursery it is necessary to stipulate the following regulations:-

1. Sunflower Montessori Kindergarten is registered to care for children between the ages of 2 and 5 years of age.
2. The nursery is open from 9am to 3 pm Monday to Wednesday and from 9am to 1.15 pm Thursday and Friday.
3. The staff will not release any child to any person other than the parent unless that person is first introduced to the staff by the parent/guardian and is confirmed in writing or has the family password.
4. It is important that the Principal/manager is notified if any child cannot attend due to illness.
5. We cannot accept responsibility, including the repayment of fees for any child removed from the kindergarten for the purpose of holidays, illness etc.
6. Any child suffering from any of the following should be kept at home for 48 hours or until a doctor has certified that the symptoms are non-contagious - rash, sore throat, discharge from eyes or nose, diarrhoea or sickness. Should the child become sick whilst attending the kindergarten every effort will be made to contact the parents. There is a medicine book in the kindergarten; the parent or guardian must give a written permission to staff to administer medicine.
7. In the event of an accident or illness requiring immediate medical treatment the kindergarten staff will administer basic first aid. In an emergency we reserve the right to remove the child to hospital and in such circumstances every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian immediately.

8. There is a **compulsory** uniform for those children attending the kindergarten (this should be worn at all times). An order form is available from the nursery.
9. Please supply a bag (which is available as part of the uniform), outdoor clothing for wet weather (including wellington boots), an apron suitable for cookery and a pair of slip on plimsolls for indoor use. Please supply a sun hat in summer. A change of clothes is also required. **(All the above should be clearly labelled with the child's name, as the Nursery cannot be held responsible for lost items).**
10. Children should not bring jewellery, money or valuables into the nursery together with sweets, chocolates, chewing gum, or toys although a comforter is allowed.
11. Please use extreme caution when parking and manoeuvring within the car park. The principal cannot accept responsibility for injury, damage or loss to persons or vehicles whilst on the property.
12. The Principal/manager will be more than happy to discuss any problems a parent may have at any time.
13. The aim of the nursery is for your child to be happy. If after a reasonable period your child has not settled, the Principal may advise a break with re-admittance at a later date. The main concern of the Principal is that the child is happy whilst in the kindergarten; a happy child is a confident child.
14. Fees are to be paid termly in advance and must be received in full on or before the first week of term. Invoices for fees will be sent out during school holidays prior to commencement of the new term. **Fees and childcare vouchers received after the first week of term will incur a 10%interest charge.**
15. Fees may be paid in cash or by cheque made payable to **Sunflower Montessori Kindergarten.**
16. Fees are inclusive of mid-morning refreshments, teaching, art/craft materials, French and cookery.

17. If a place is to be reserved, a non-refundable registration fee of £60.00 will be required, as places are limited. Upon acceptance of a place at the kindergarten a further £150.00 security deposit will become payable this will be refunded when your child leaves the kindergarten provided that the required written terms notice is given.
18. Please note that fees will not be refunded in the event of sickness, holidays and Acts of God (e.g. school closure on snowy days), unless in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Principal.
19. One term's notice or alternatively one term's fees are payable in the event a place is no longer required at the kindergarten. If the statutory notice period of one term is not received and acknowledged by the kindergarten any monies held by the kindergarten by way of a security deposit will be forfeited.
20. The Principal reserves the right to remove a child from the kindergarten for any breach of regulations and her decision on all kindergarten matters is final.
21. We occasionally make visits to places of interest. These will be charged for separately. The kindergarten may be closed on these occasions. This will ensure that enough staff is available to attend the visits so that our regular safety standards are maintained.
22. A Nursery Grant is available for eligible 3 and 4 year-olds. Application forms will be provided by the Principal/manager for the term after the child turns three. We are also registered to receive funding for 2 year olds subject to Essex County Council rules. The nursery will apply for any of the above funding on your behalf.
23. **Childcare Vouchers:** The nursery currently accepts payments from schemes by Care-4, Computershare, Busy Bees and Accor. We would be happy to look into setting up accounts with other companies.
24. There is an annual review of fees every April

Updated Fees from January 2015

Morning session (9am-12.30pm)	£20.50
Morning session and lunch club (9am-1pm)	£23.40
Lunch (12.30pm-1.15pm)	£4.40
Afternoon session and lunch club (12.30pm-3 pm)	£14.65
Afternoon session (1.00pm-3pm)	£11.70
Whole day (9am-3 pm)	£35.10

**APPLICATION FOR ENROLMENT TO SUNFLOWER
MONTESSORI KINDERGARTEN**

Child's details

Child's first name(s):	Child's Surname:
Date of birth:	Gender:
Ethnic origin:	Languages spoken:

Parent / carer details

<u>Mother's details:</u>	<u>Father's details:</u>
Full name:	Full name:
Home address:	Home address:
Postcode:	Postcode:
Home phone number:	Home phone number:
Mobile phone number:	Mobile phone number:
Occupation:	Occupation:
Work address:	Work address:
Office phone number:	Office phone number:
Email address:	Email address:

Carer details

Full name:

Home address:

Postcode:

Mobile phone number:

Emergency Contacts

Details of any person other than a parent or carer who is authorised to collect the child . This must not be a person under the age of 18 years

Emergency contact (1):

Name:

Contact number:

Relationship to child:

Emergency contact (2)

Name:

Contact number:

Relationship to child:

Password

If the child is to be collected by somebody who is not known to the nursery staff, please supply the nursery with name, relationship and telephone numbers of any such people together with a photograph. This is to protect your child. Please assist us as much as

you can.

- (Unless this information is received a child will not be allowed into the nursery. This is a stipulation of Ofsted.

- Collection password: -----

Health information

Allergies and dietary requirements

Does your child suffer from any kind of allergy? Yes / No

If yes, please give full details:

Does your child have any dietary requirements? Yes / No

If yes, please give full detail:

Does your child require any regular medication: Yes / No

If yes, please give full details:

Any other relevant information that the nursery should be aware of:

SESSIONS REQUIRED:

(Please tick)

	Morning sessions	Afternoon session	Extended morning*
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			

*Extended morning (Thursday and Friday), please indicate if you are interested

START TERM AUTUMN / SPRING / SUMMER 20

DATE /...../.....

FINAL TERM AUTUMN / SPRING / SUMMER 20

DATE /...../.....

- I/we will give consent for my child to leave the kindergarten and its grounds for nature walks and outings. I understand my child will be supervised at all times.
- I/we give consent for my child to be photographed while in the kindergarten on the understanding that these photographs will not be used for any other purpose without your written permission or will not be shared with others.
- I understand that during special occasions eg. School concerts, sports day that other parents will be photographing their child.
- I will inform the nursery as soon as possible if I decide not to take up the place otherwise fees will be payable in full.

Terms and Conditions

Fee payment terms

- Nursery fees are payable termly in advance and must be paid in full by the first week of the term.
- We accept vouchers from all childcare voucher providers, but we must receive either a paper voucher or cleared funds in our account by the first week of the term.

Please note that it is very time consuming and disruptive for the nursery staff to be engaged in pursuing unpaid fees. If fees are not paid in full by the due date, we will unfortunately have no option by to withdraw your child's nursery place until the arrears have been cleared.

We charge a £10 administration fee for each cheque that is returned unpaid by your bank.

Notice requirement

- A full term's notice is required in writing if you wish to withdraw your child from the nursery. A term's fee will be payable if notice given is less than full term.

Early Years Education Entitlement (Funding for 3 and 4 years old (EYEE))

- Funded childcare sessions are available for 3 and 4 year olds the term after their 3rd birthday as follows:

1 January -31st March - Summer Term

1 April - 31st August - Autumn Term

1 September -31st December - Spring Term

All eligible children can receive up to 15 hours free entitlement per week for up to 38 weeks per year. These can be accessed either for 5 mornings per week (0900 - 1200) Or 3 days (0900 - 1400). The extra 30 minutes in the morning session and 1 hour for the full day session are payable.

Holidays and absences

- Absences from the nursery, including sickness and family holidays, must be paid for in full.

Illnesses and medication

- Certain infectious childhood ailments (e.g. chicken pox, conjunctivitis) will require your child to be excluded from the nursery for an appropriate period to prevent the spread of infection. We take advice from NHS Direct and follow guidance issued by the Department of Health to determine the most appropriate course of action in each case. If your child becomes ill whilst at the nursery, we may ask you to collect him or her.
- Any medication that your child requires must be clearly labeled and handed to a member of staff. You will be asked to sign a medicine form each time a medicine is administered.

Dropping off and collecting your child

- Children must always be collected on time at the end of each session and must not arrive at the nursery before the beginning of their session. This is very important as we may otherwise exceed the maximum child numbers permitted by our Ofsted registration. Persistent late collection will result in additional fees being charged of £5.00 per 5 minute period or part thereof.
- Please ensure that you notify the nursery if your child is to be collected by someone other than the parents / carers listed on Page 1 of this application form. We have a password system in place to maximise security.

By signing below, you are confirming that:

- 1- This application form has been correctly completed to the best of your knowledge.
- 2- You have read and agree to abide by the terms and conditions detailed in this application form and terms of attendance in Sunflower prospectus.
- 3- You agree that you are jointly and severally liable to pay the nursery's fees in accordance with the payment terms detailed above.
- 4- You agree to comply with them at all times. I enclose a non-refundable registration fee of £60.00 together with a security deposit of £150.00.

Parent or carer (1):

_____ Signature
Date

Parent or carer (2):

_____ Signature
Date

_____ Full name

**(PLEASE RETURN TO; *SUNFLOWER MONTESSORI KINDERGARTEN,*
24 Hall Green Lane, Hutton, Brentwood, CM13 2QX
Please include a copy of your child's birth certificate**

Details of how you became aware of the kindergarten

.....
.....

Confirmation of a place

I confirm a place has been reserved for-----
-----from ----- to-----
-----for sessions-----

Name:

Date:

How it began, why it works

By Helen Wheatley

Maria Montessori began her work with children by simply observing how they learned best and went on to base her teaching methods on her observations.

In this way she avoided a search for patterns of child development that would conform to adults' ideals of what they wished children to be, and paradoxically discovered that, given the right environment and stimulation, a child could develop behaviour and achievements beyond all expectations.

She found that children are better learners in the years up to the age of six than they will ever be again and that they can learn almost anything provided special techniques are used.

There must be a wide variety of activities available, with each piece of equipment serving a useful purpose. Each activity must be attractively presented, spotlessly clean and in perfect repair, and should be at the right size for small hands to use.

In a Montessori classroom children are encouraged to choose every activity they wish to work with, and to complete it in their own time. If children work without interruption they can develop great powers of concentration.

A child in a Montessori school will be given the opportunity to learn the simple practical tasks busy parents cannot always teach; at the age of two and a half or three it is important to provide familiar activities which give a link with home. Children who learn to care for themselves and their environment develop the greatest confidence as, perhaps for the first time in their lives, they find an adult who will show them how to do the things they really want to learn.

Many visitors to Montessori schools comment on the calm, relaxed way children go about their business. This inner harmony springs from self-respect gained from learning to take care of their own needs, and from the concentration they have acquired from being allowed to work without interruption at a chosen task.

These children are ready for the next stage in their education - the laying of the foundations for academic learning by developing and refining their senses

with special materials, which enhance their perceptions and increase concentration. This sensorial equipment is also attractive and fun to use.

Reading and number work are also taught with specially designed materials which enable the child to grasp the basics without stress or strain at an early age. What makes this possible is the special combination of circumstances in the Montessori environment:

- The child's freedom to choose which develops in the child of three or four a capacity for self-discipline.
- The Montessori apparatus, most of which contains an inbuilt factor, which allows a child to discover and correct his or her own mistakes without asking a teacher. .

One of her early observations was that children learn best when hand and mind work together and 'learning by doing' is now a recognised mainstream educational concept; like many of Montessori's ideas it has gradually found its way into accepted wisdom and is now taken for granted.

Maria Montessori was the first person to use child-sized furniture in classrooms. Her first school, the *Casa dei Bambini* or 'House for Children' was designed so that all the educational materials would be accessible to the children. In Montessori classrooms today, children take their own work from low shelves and cupboards; brooms, brushes, jugs and basins are of a size which children find easy to use and they become responsible for maintaining the environment spontaneously, noticing and picking up even tiny pieces of litter, caring for plants, doing their washing up and sometimes preparing their own food. Order is one of the most important features of such an environment; each person, child or teacher, is responsible for returning anything he or she has used to its correct place. This helps to develop a sense of personal responsibility as well as making sure that all children can find exactly what they need.

Montessori teachers are trained to be consistent but not to ask for behaviour, which is beyond the child capability. No child is allowed to behave dangerously, but the teacher exercises control by focusing on the problem, not the child. If a child is jumping on a chair seat, the teacher would probably remove the chair without comment and lead the child to a place where he or she could jump in safety - the problem is solved practically and simply with the minimum attention on the unacceptable behaviour, which might have reinforced it, or on the child personally.

Now, more than 100 years after the founding of the first Montessori school, the approach is spreading rapidly, as parents seek a middle way between old-fashioned rigid teaching methods and undue permissiveness. If its popularity continues to increase as it has done during the past decade, our children may be better placed to build the safe, peaceful world Maria Montessori envisaged.