

Prospectus 2024



 casa montessori  
+ forest kindergarten

"The child is endowed with unknown powers, which can guide us to a radiant future. If what we really want is a new world, then education must take as its aim the development of these hidden possibilities."

Maria Montessori, *'The Absorbent Mind'*



## Our environment

Responding to the distinct characteristics of the child under three, we offer a Nido (nest) for babies from 6 months and a Casa (children's house) for children from around 3 to school starting age. Both are mixed-age groups to allow peer learning, empathy and kindness to grow. Carefully designed playrooms and our wonderful, natural garden present abundant opportunities for children to discover and create.

## A day at Casa...

Relaxed arrivals between 8 and 9am, with healthy breakfast choices as children arrive and settle in.

Uninterrupted play time (indoors/outdoors) from 9am until 12pm in Casa, including independently chosen snack time. Nido children have a group snack mid-morning. Young babies may have a short nap. Preschoolers may go to Forest Kindergarten on certain days.

Children participate in setting the table for lunch, serving themselves and clearing up as far as they are able. Guides eat with them and serve as role models.

Sleep, rest or quiet play for as long as children need to, either in the Quiet Room or the classroom, or a play in the garden for children who would like to be outdoors.

Afternoon indoor/outdoor playtime, including group activities like music or dance/yoga, language circle, cooking, or outings. Children always have a choice of joining in or not. Preschoolers may be offered an outing such as a library trip or ArtBuds.

Children have tea together followed by outdoor play and calm activities until they go home.



## Why Montessori?

Dr Maria Montessori, physician and psychologist (1870-1952) promoted an educational method based on child development and scientific observation. Montessori environments are suited to children's stages, providing a wide ranging and evolving set of opportunities to appeal to their individual interests. As a pedagogy refined over a century it is a proven approach that accords with psychology and neuroscience over a century later. Today, there are more than 20,000 Montessori schools around the world.



## What about parents?

You play a vital role in creating consistency and security for your child when your home and our classroom are in alignment. This is a process we are here to support you with. All new parents are invited to a free introductory seminars, parent newsletters, and the Family app where you can keep track of what your child is enjoying at nursery and upload your observations of your child at home.



## Our Guides

Guides form a trusting bond with your child as a basis for all his/her learning and our communication with you. All our guides are either Montessori-trained or in-training and come from a wide range of professional and cultural backgrounds. The team is supported by the principals, who spend time in each classroom and lead professional development. Our practice is backed by membership in the Montessori Society AMI and the NDNA. We are also a Montessori teacher education hub offering our own training courses as well as placements for trainees.

## A green setting

Casa is a three-storey period townhouse and large enclosed garden with mature trees, covered areas and natural elements to encourage physical play and creative fun. Children spend a significant portion of their day in the garden enjoying gross motor play, loose parts, socio-dramatic play, and taking care of the garden and plants.

Our Montessori ethos emphasises learning about the natural world and the universe, other cultures and places around the planet and preparing children to be world citizens. Embedded in this curriculum is our sustainable practice including growing food, composting, looking after animals, re-using, repurposing and learning how to recycle materials and conserve resources such as water and energy. Our forest schools approach to outdoor education raises children's confidence and reinforces their scientific learning about the planet.

We encourage parents to use eco-friendly nappies, reduce plastic waste by using a waterproof kit bag instead of disposable bags, and to support your child's learning about sustainability at home.

## Who we are

Casa was founded by Sorour Malaekch and Rosita Niknafs Foster, both Montessori educators. From 2015 we have been supporting the Montessori parent community in Edinburgh through our parent and child classroom, through workshops and seminars, and through parent engagement with the nursery.

We are motivated first and foremost by the promise of a bright future that is carried within each child and thus have high expectations of ourselves as early childhood professionals; as well as of parents, who are the child's first educators. Our team is composed of educators who share in our ethos and bring a diverse set of skills and capacities to our setting.

We see ourselves as building a community and this means working with partners within our local community to provide diverse opportunities for children. We are very grateful to have the support of families in the community who appreciate our work and ethos.

## Our healthy menu

We believe that children should learn where food comes from and how it gets to their plate. Through the practical activities of everyday living, such as weeding, planting, watering, then peeling, cutting, and cooking, children will be participants in all stages of food growing and preparation. They will be encouraged to prepare and serve their own fruit and cereal snacks, according to their age. Our sustainable, vegetarian and vegan catered menu will ensure they eat healthy and varied meals.





Potential, present and future.



Your child is born with innate potential, and the first few years are the time to unlock it. Our Montessori ethos means we meet your child in the present - where they are as an individual in this moment - seeding their interests and enabling their present potential to drive their learning. Over time, our gentle approach will nurture their enthusiasm, powers of observation, senses, mental order and love of learning into future potential - giving them tools and skills for success in school and in life.



Find Casa:

75 Viewforth, Edinburgh EH10 4LL  
[www.casamontessorinursery.com](http://www.casamontessorinursery.com)  
0131 466 4413

There is ample cycle and pram storage and families are encouraged to walk, cycle or take advantage of the excellent transport links to the area. Please note that there is no parent parking at the nursery.

## Definitions:

"Enrolment" means applying and accepting an offer of a place at Casa.

"Casa" or "Casa Montessori Nursery" or "We/us" refers to Montessori Methods Ltd.

"Service" the services of a day care nursery during the sessions indicated in the Application form or Offer letter.

"You" or "Parent" means the adult over 18 years who is purchasing the service from us.

"Child" means the person named in the application form.

"Booking form" means the electronic form available on the website or the paper equivalent.

"Application" means submitting an Application/Waiting Pool form, paying the administration fee and supplying any additional information required.

"Offer" means the email and draft Parent Contract that we send you after scheduling your child based on your requirements.

"Parent Contract" is the document that constitutes the core of our service agreement and fee agreement.

"Amendment" is any change to the Booking start date or sessions that occurs after the signed contract has been submitted.

Early Learning and Childcare funding is available for eligible children subject to separate terms and conditions. When enrolling a child who is eligible for funded ELC, the terms stated herewith will be subject to the rules of the ELC partnership scheme.

By filling out a form, you are entering an agreement based on the following Terms and Conditions. To proceed, certain minimum criteria will apply, as below:

- Enrolment must be for a specified child and number of sessions.
- For under-2s, you must apply a maximum of 12 months before the desired start date.
- For children over 2, you must apply a maximum of 6 months before the desired start date.
- Your child should be at least 6 months old by the start date.
- The sessions chosen should meet the minimum booking criteria as stated on the Fees page of the website.
- A minimum immunisation rate of 95% is required for the safety of vulnerable individuals. We will fill spaces in a manner that maintains the immunisation rate.

If your Application does not meet the above criteria we will let you know and you can either rectify or withdraw it and you will not pay the admin fee. Before it can be processed a non-refundable administration fee is payable.

Newborn/unborn siblings of children already at Casa; children who have attended Montessori settings prior to Casa, and children of key workers will have priority. If and when there is the possibility of a place that meets your stated requirements we may arrange a virtual tour or in-person visit to determine if the nursery can meet your child's developmental needs and which class is most appropriate for them. **Applying, paying the administration fee, and attending a tour or visit do not guarantee an offer will be made.**

We are an inclusive setting and will, by law, accommodate the needs of children who have additional needs for which, after reasonable adjustments, we can cater adequately. When allocating places we will, to the extent possible, ensure that all the children's needs can be met and that any extra resources are in place to ensure their wellbeing.

As a parent, you must, at the time of Application, provide to us such

information as we may reasonably require about the child, eg. any known medical condition, health problem, allergy, or diagnosed dietary requirement; any prescribed medication; any lack of any vaccination which the child would ordinarily have by their age; any family circumstances or court orders affecting the child; any concerns about the child's safety or development; or any other information that would reasonably be considered important for a day care of children setting to know. If it becomes apparent to us that such information has been omitted, withheld or misrepresented, your Application/Offer/ Parent Contract will be void.

Fees are as published at the time of accepting a place and are subject to annual rises, with a month's notice. Fees include all food and drink but not formula milk nor nappies. Fees are calculated based on 50 weeks per year divided into twelve equal monthly payments which are due 14 days in advance of the first of each month. A deposit, equivalent to two months' fees, is required upon acceptance of a place in order to complete the Enrolment. Two months' notice of withdrawal is required, whether before or after the child's start date as indicated on the contract, during which period the normal monthly fee is due. A portion of the deposit is returned when they begin receiving funded early learning and childcare with the rest returned at the close of the withdrawal notice period or when the child moves on to school.

To allocate your space we will send you an Offer letter and deposit invoice by email. To accept the Offer, please return the signed parent contract and two months' deposit by the due date. Your Offer will expire on the date indicated in the cover email.

Offers will always be made based on the requirements you indicated in the application fee and subsequent communications with us. If, before accepting the Offer, you wish to make changes to the start date or weekly booking, we will try to accommodate you depending on the circumstances, but we cannot guarantee we will be able to honour the Offer.

Enrolment is complete when the signed Parent Contract is returned and the deposit invoice is paid in full. The first month's nursery fee will be due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month before your start date. If, once Enrolled, you wish to Amend (defer) your child's start date by more than 2 weeks, we will not be able to hold their place, therefore we will treat the notice as two months' notice of withdrawal.

Settling-in information will be sent approximately 4-6 weeks before their start date. Child Registration forms, including medical information, must be submitted one month before your child's start date, to avoid delaying your child's start at Casa.

We shall not be liable to you for any loss you incur as a result of not being offered a place, as a result of your Offer being withdrawn due to changes or requirements we cannot accommodate or as a result of circumstances beyond our control.

Data Protection and Confidentiality: Any personal data related to You or your Child will be dealt with in accordance with our Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy.

We may change these terms and conditions where such a change arises from changes in regulations or legislation affecting us. We may materially change any other terms in these terms and conditions with written notice.

## Fees

All age groups            £70\* per day  
*\*Fees indicated may change at any time, with notice.*

Fees include all meals, snacks, drinks and any activities run by specialists except Forest Kindergarten. Formula and nappies are not included. Please use the most sustainable option that is practicable, eg. cloth or biodegradable nappies.

Application fee            £35 per family  
Sibling discount            10% off the non-funded fees of the eldest child.  
Deposit                      Equiv to 2 months' fees  
Notice period              Two calendar months

ELC funding is available for children over 3 starting from the term after their third birthday. A deferred start to P1 is assumed for children who are eligible for deferral.

## Sessions

Morning session\*            8:00am – 12:45pm  
Afternoon session\*        12:45pm – 5:30pm

\*All ongoing bookings are for full days only. Additional mornings and afternoons may be booked on an ad-hoc basis if available.

## Notes

The minimum booking is two full days per week.

The nursery is open 50 weeks per year with fees divided equally over 12 months and payable monthly.

Fees do not include any 1:1 support that might be required for children with additional needs.

## Nursery Kit

We ask that parents follow the guide to appropriate dressing to ensure their child has all the items they need every day. We will be encouraging even the youngest children to take part in their dressing and toileting and we will ensure they are comfortable, warm and dry in all conditions.

Full details of the nursery kit will be issued to you in the Parent's Handbook.

## FAQs

**Which days are the nursery closed?** Please check the website for exact dates, which occur throughout the year.

**Early years partnership funding and Tax-Free Childcare?** Yes. For vouchers and TFCC, please tick the option on your Parent Contract. Partnership funding is available for eligible children subject to the terms and conditions of the funding agreement.

**Where will my child sleep?** Babies will sleep when they need to in the Quiet Room. Most children nap for one to two hours after lunch. Please bring a clean set of bedding weekly.

**What about settling-in?** Settling-in visits are in the garden, the first one being with a parent present. Children are typically offered 4 single sessions, however we go at the child's pace and they stay at nursery only as long as they are happy.

**How to toilet train?** The Montessori approach is to allow gradual familiarisation with using the toilet from 12-18 months on. Teachers will encourage toileting independence at the child's individual pace.

**How do we learn more about Montessori?** We recommend you attend the Parent Seminar within 3 months of your child starting. These are designed to help us provide consistency between home and nursery approaches and are organised throughout the year.

**How do we communicate with the nursery?** Please use email for important communication. Day to day messaging is through the Family app, which you will need to add to your devices.

## How to apply

1. Fill in the online forms.
2. We will ask you to update your application twice a year. An invoice you for the admin fee will be sent once per family.
3. Once the admin fee is paid, your booking will be processed, though minimum criteria will apply.
4. Once we have identified a possible place, we will offer you a tour or a visit of the nursery.
5. We may then send you an Offer.
6. Enrollment is complete when the signed contract is returned, and the deposit is paid.

**Please read the full Terms and Conditions overleaf.**