



International Montessori School of Albania
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NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2009

Dear Parents,

The new school year has started and we are happy to be with your children and contribute in their growth and in their happiness. We thank you for your wonderful cooperation and participation at school activities in September. I am convinced that you will help us in developing our school's mission: Peace Education.

Dr. Montessori reflected on many issues with regards to Peace education and her idea on Peace is the one of building ways for interdependence cooperation in everybody's work. So, we can say that it is a positive way to build Peace. Our children are destined to become world citizens, so we are very happy to contribute to this holy cause.

The 21st September was the International Peace Day and Ms Daniella's class celebrated it at school by making a Peace Pole and Ms Annie's class by singing the song *This Pretty Planet*.

Sharing with you:

This pretty planet spinning through space,

Your garden, your harbor, your holy place.

Golden Sun going down, gentle blue giant spin us around,

All through the night safe into the morning light.

This pretty planet spinning through space,

Your garden, your harbor, your holy place.

Eva Gugu
Head of School



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Infant Community

I started the Infant class this year with more great ideas and experiences for the children. As some of you might already know I was away this summer attending the A.M.I. Montessori Course in Colorado (USA) and came back in August. We have nine children in the infant class now. Most of them are at school half day and the rest will stay full day. So as you see, this year we have the full day program for the toddlers too.

Children who joined the toddler class this year are: Maia, Maximilian, Nicol and Xinbei. Sara and Aidan who were in our group, have moved up to the Casa class. The classroom has also extended and there is more space for the whole group and to have a beautiful prepared environment using their materials nicely.

The classroom is prepared in such a way to meet all the development needs of the child. Starting with links to home toys activities, practical life activities, steps to freedom activities, language (including books, rhymes, poems) and also the manipulating activities for the eye - hand coordination. We encourage the children to be as independent as they can.

For September as it was the beginning of the school, we did the introduction of the basic tasks of the class with the children. Then we moved on to more detailed and challenging materials and activities such as pouring, washing clothes, using the scissors, opening a key and many more. Also, yesterday we celebrated Maximilian's second birthday. For outing activity we have planned to go to the zoo next Friday.

Ms Nertila Hoxha
Infant Community Teacher



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Primary news – Class I

We are off to a wonderful start. The children have adjusted to the changes I have made in their classroom beautifully and they are feeling more at home. They are exploring the familiar activities from last year and the new ones I have introduced. Having the same name as their teacher last year was a bit confusing at first but they quickly moved on to more interesting things like polishing a mirror and having a fun conversation with a classmate. While focusing on developing a rapport with the children and finding out

where their interests lie, I also am observing which skills they possess and how to develop those skills with new challenges. We are singing songs, making stories, learning and growing. I am honored to be with these children and I am very happy to be living in Albania! I am looking forward to a year of many exciting opportunities to share in the children's love of learning. I am impressed with all of the staff and consider myself lucky to be a part of this dedicated group of people.

Ms Annie Odean
Primary Teacher

Primary news – Class II

Time certainly does fly when you are having fun. My first month at the International Montessori School of Albania has been fantastic. Getting to know the dedicated staff and committed families that compose this great Montessori community, has given me the first taste of what a great year we will have. Coming from a large and established Montessori community in Toronto, Canada, it was a pleasure to see such dedication and understanding from the new and growing community in Tirana. The help provided by Susan Stephenson at the beginning of the year especially helped to create a great foundation of communication and learning that, hopefully, will flourish throughout the year. I look forward to getting to know everyone much better throughout the year. Together, the children and I have started on the road to freedom and independence. Each day they remind me of their limitless potential as they master one activity and embrace the new challenges I present them with. Their inquisitive nature makes each day vary and full of new challenges. We are all steadily working our way through Practical Life; mastering pouring, sweeping, setting up before snack and lunch, then tidying up after, just to name a few. Everyone is having a great time learning and improving their English with all the new and fun songs that we sing together throughout the day. Music has been ringing through the classroom as the children enthusiastically embrace the bells which have recently been introduced as well. We are all off to a great start and I look forward to the future and the great work to come.

Ms Daniella Marie Ortega
Primary Teacher



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Montessori Readings

From *The secret of Childhood*, Orient Longman Private Ltd, Chennai, 2006, pg. 124-126
“What They Showed Me”

I should like to summarise just the principal events of this period, though to do so is to speak of such infinitesimal things that they would belong better to those children’s stories that begin “Once upon a time...” than to a solemn treatise. My own actions in the matter were so simple, so truly puerile, that no one wish to take them seriously from a scientific point of view. None the less a methodical description would mean a volume of psychological observations, or better, discoveries.

Repetition of the Exercise

The first phenomenon that awoke my attention was that of a little girl of about three who was practicing slipping our series of solid cylinders in and out of the block (they go in and out of the holes like the corks of bottles, but they are cylinders of graduated size and each one has its own special place). I was surprised to see so small a child repeating an exercise over and over again with the keenest interest. She showed no progress in speed or skill; it was a kind of perpetual motion. My habit of measuring things led me to begin to count the number of times she repeated the exercise. Then I thought I would see how far the strange concentration she showed could withstand disturbance, and I told the teacher to make the other children sing and move about. They did so, but the little girl did not stop her work for an instant. Then I gently picked up the armchair in which she sat, with her in it, and put it on a little table. She had quickly clutched her cylinders to her, and, putting them on her knees, continued her work. From the time when I had begun to count, she had repeated the exercise forty-two times. She stopped, as though coming out of a dream, and smiled as if she were very happy. Her eyes shone, and she looked about her. It seemed that she had not even noticed our various manoeuvres, which had not succeeded in disturbing her. And now, for no visible reason, her task was finished. What was finished, and why? Here was a first peep into the unexplored depths of the child mind. Here was a very small child, at an age when attention flits from one thing to another and cannot be held down. Yet she had been absorbed in concentration such that her ego had withdrawn itself from reach of any external stimulus. That concentration was accompanied by a rhythmic movement of the hands, evoked by an accurately made, scientifically graduated object. Similar facts occurred on various occasions. And every time the children emerged as if rested, full of life, with the look of those who have experienced some great joy. Though such instances of a concentration reaching insensibility to the outer world were not usual, I noticed a peculiar behavior that was common to all, and practically the rule in all they did – the special characteristic of child work, which I later called “**repetition of the exercise**”. Watching those dirty little hand at work I thought one day that I would teach the children something really useful, how to wash their hands. I noticed that the children, once their hands were clean, went on washing them. They came out of school and went to wash their hands. Some of the mothers told me that in the morning their children had run out of the house and had been found at the washing tanks, washing their hands. They were proud to show everyone their clean hands, so much that they were once mistaken for beggars. They repeated the performance again and again without having any longer an external aim in doing so. It was by an inner need that they went on washing hands that were clean. The same thing happened on many other occasions: the more accurately an exercise was taught in all its details, the more it seemed to become a stimulus to endless repetition of the same exercise.