



# Boundary Bay Montessori House

Operated by MIND

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## Message from the Academic Director

Recently we have had two special words in the primary classroom – volunteerism and love. It seems appropriate as one goes hand in hand with the other. What is interesting to note is that the act of volunteering at our school is considered a major aspect in the administration of the Prepared Environment of a Montessori school. Within the Montessori classroom there are three major components. These are, the prepared environment, the adult/directress as a link and freedom based upon choice and reflection. They are central to the vision of education that Dr. Montessori investigated in her study of human development. These components, at the classroom level, are the essentials and provide the framework for students to discover and mature to their potential. In the larger system of the entire school the same elements are required. At this level, our prepared environment includes three elements – the physical space, a Montessori-trained administrator who is the link between school, family and board, and the freedom of the adults of the community to make decisions in order to act with a keen sense of accountability balanced with responsibility, on behalf of our school

This last element requires and understanding of the nature of volunteering and love. These two virtues combine to create the impetus to give freely of our time to BBMH. Our love for our children provide the motivation for us to volunteer in order to create a wonderful, prepared environment. I emphasize this as there have been significant improvements this year as a result of volunteering acts of love. The preschool move, our new library,

and the elementary playground are evidence of the many hours spent by parents this year to provide an excellent prepared environment for our students. The latest and most significant item that we now turn to is fundraising. Within the next few weeks our annual fundraiser will be occurring. Fundraising is a volunteer activity and most certainly an act of love! You are able to give in three ways, with your time, your talent and very importantly with your purse! As an independent school run by a non-profit society we are obligated to support fundraising for our program. Please take the time to consider your approach to fundraising – is it fun-raising or fund-raising? It is known that a Montessori education is the development of human potential. Your relationship with the school is a significant factor in developing the school's potential. Have you a skill, a talent or friends who might be willing to support the fundraising efforts of our school? Every penny that we raise goes directly into the educational environment that nurtures your child. In my experience working as a fundraiser for other schools and organizations, when planning an event the team will often set a 'target' of what we would like to raise at the event. This creates a 'cosmic will' and surprisingly the targets are usually met! Would you consider setting a personal goal for fundraising for your child's educational environment? Would you contribute to the planning stages in order to successfully raise funds for our program? One of our parents placed a 'call for volunteers' for planning this year's Gala. If you have any interest or ideas that would increase your participation or enthusiasm for the event please

use me as a 'link' to connect you to others like you who are committed to this process. Remember acts of volunteering and acts of love are one of those things that in the process of doing you reap the benefits and the end result is a deeper sense of commitment and value for both your families and our community.

"Our deepest need is for the joy that comes with knowing we are of genuine use to others."



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## REMINDERS

- April 14 Animal Hospital Field Trip for Preschool
- April 18 Start of primary swimming lessons, from 2:30 to 3:00
- April 22 Earth Day
- April 29 Pro-D day
- May 9 Sign up for conferences



Message from the Academic Director - *continued*

**VIRTUES IN THE PRIMARY CLASS**

We returned to school with so much exuberance in a positive, joyful, and productive fashion! The children had interesting highlights to report on the way they enjoyed our two-week spring break. There were so many stories to tell and we had to be gracious and take turns having 'our say.' As members of a class of twenty-six children and two teachers, one cannot hope to be the centre of attention as one might be at home. The children are living proof that they are developing the virtues that comprise their character in their willingness to be patient, to wait and to listen attentively to others. This is hard to do when you are bursting with enthusiasm over your own story.

During our first week back, the virtue that was drawn from the Virtues Bag was *volunteering*. Almost everyone knew what this word means but one very brave and humble child admitted she didn't know what the word meant. This was a teachable moment to be seized! Her parents both contribute to the school on a weekly basis and with significant offers on certain occasions. The marvel about this service is that it is *offered*, not requested. This explanation ignited the entire group with a rush of inspiration as each child raised a hand to say what his or her parents do, have done or keep offering to do to help our school to be the wonderful place it is. If only you could have been there to see how proud your children are of you and to know how grateful we are for your contributions! The child who was at first unfamiliar with the word 'volunteering' now realized that she knew all along what the word is by sheer demonstration and now she is articulate because she has a name for it. For the directress, this was an episode of joy that makes teaching the thrilling job that it is. Just imagine how long a list of tasks that the children composed and how clearly they know just what you do to be a volunteer.

This week our virtue is *love*. Again the children were highly motivated in telling the definition - a word that often challenges wordsmiths, philosophers, theologians, and the common Joe or Jane! There was no challenge at all for the children. They know full well how loved they are. They also recognize themselves to be loving human beings with the ability to be warm and reach out. This sort of kindness occurs over and over again daily in our classroom which is why it is such an inviting place to be (and why it is so hard to stay away from school when one is sick). These are the words the children said define love: Love is caring, sharing, helpful, honest, thoughtful, kind-hearted, tender-hearted, sensitive, inclusive, friendly, considerate, forgiving, co-operative, respectful, treating people, animals and the earth well and loving hearts. That just about sums it up...do you think they missed anything? Let's rejoice and count our blessings!

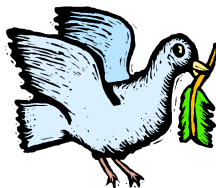
As you may know, we have three rituals that contribute to self-esteem that we do each week. A custom we have been practicing for twelve years is the exploration of virtues. We also get to know our peers and celebrate them through each person's display in The Me Museum. Once that is done, we brainstorm ideas about the ways we know a certain classmate is special and we write our original ideas onto a page that will become a booklet given to each child at the end of the year. Most children, who are in the role of 'the Special Person' for a given week, sit at Circle and hear twenty-five others make complimentary statements about them. They are usually relaxed and comfortable hearing these truths stated with sincerity by their classmates. It is an art to give a compliment and an ever greater art to accept a compliment. At their young age, our children are becoming adept in affirming themselves and each other. Have we accomplished this ability ourselves? Let it suffice it to say, "Life is all about learning!"



**Primary Class Update**

We had a visit to the Aquarium on Monday. In the morning we observed the many presentations – beluga whales, dolphins and the harp seal – and looked at the marine animals in each of the ecosystems. In the afternoon the older students participated in the program called "Spineless Wonders" prepared for Grade 4 students and I toured the remainder of the Aquarium with the Year One children. Here is an excerpt from one of our parent volunteers.... Sea stars and urchins and crabs - oh my! While at the Aquarium our Year 2 and 3 students visited the wet lab where Aquarium volunteers lead them through the Spineless Wonders program. The student's definitely got their hands wet (actually pinkies only!) while investigating the adaptations of live marine invertebrates from local waters, like the Strait of Georgia, in this interactive lab program. We were divided into small groups for hands on exploration of the marine phyla. During the big finale students and parents observed a predator versus prey demonstration where a sea cucumber, urchin and scallops, all using different techniques, escaped unharmed from a sea star. Whew! The students themselves demonstrated good listening skills and were eager to share what they already knew about invertebrates. The kids in my group really knew a lot about everything. Some couldn't get the answers out quickly enough (hands up vs. blurting) but all were participating. I was very impressed.

Reminder that the swimming lessons begin on Monday, April 18 at 2:30. We need drivers to meet at the school at 2:00 pm and all other parents pick up at 3:00 pm. Please come and help your child get ready after the lessons!



**Intermediate Class Update**

The Intermediate students have just experienced an unforgettable week at Stathcona Park Lodge. It started out very wet and dreary but, in spite of the weather, everyone had a memorable experience. That last-minute purchase of raingear was well worth the effort! It was well tested and well used. Students were jumping and splashing in every puddle they saw and the weather did not hinder them in the least. The highlights were many and varied from challenges met and surmounted to delightful and unexpected social interactions. The students who were experiencing the camp for the second year had as much fun as those experiencing it for the first time. The students received many compliments from the camp staff and group leaders, who said they couldn't believe how positive the students were about every activity, to the camp administrator, who said she was amazed at how polite and calm the students were in the dining hall. The joy for us was in experiencing your children in an entirely different venue than the classroom. We delighted in the many opportunities to view whole new aspects of their personalities as we shared the week together.

Now that we are back in the classroom we will be launching into many new lessons over the next month. We will be starting our studies of Canadian History and of Ecology in Culture. In Math and Language there will be some time devoted to preparing for the Foundation Skills Assessment exams in May, as well as continuing with our Montessori lessons. Our next outdoor field trip will be on Earth Day on Friday, April 22 at Diefenbaker Park in Tsawwassen.

**Preschool Class Update**

**News from the Kindergarten/Preschool class**

**What's new?**

We have returned from spring break and are back in the rhythm of daily routine. Thank you to the Malhi family for caring for our rabbits while we were away from school.

We are pleased to officially announce that Willow and Ash are both male rabbits!!

**What's been happening?**

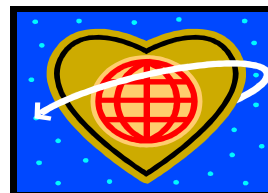
Thank you to Vickie Buttery for a very special presentation about horses on April 6<sup>th</sup>. The children were able to try on and handle tack and sit in a saddle, as well as learn that horses need food, water, shelter, love, respect, grooming and friends just as we all do. Our recent field trip to the Tsawwassen Animal Hospital was a terrific success!! We were all pleased by the respect and composure the children demonstrated during the visit.

**What's coming up?**

We will be celebrating Earth Day on Friday April 22<sup>nd</sup> by planting in our preschool garden. Please keep in mind there will be dirt involved, so have your children dressed appropriately for digging and hands-on fun. Please feel free to donate any cut flowers from your garden to our class for flower arranging and botany study from now until the end of school. Our field trips for this term include the Vancouver Aquarium and OWL. More details will be provided closer to the excursion dates. We are all looking forward to a productive and fun-filled last term of the year!

Calendar	
March	11 Newsletter
	14 Observations
	15 Observations
	18 Reports Distributed
	21 Spring Break
April	4 Return to School
	5 Intermediate Camp
	15 Newsletter
	22 Earth Day
May	29 PDDay 5
	8 Mothers Day
	9 Sign up for conferences
	13 Newsletter
	18 SL Conference
June	23 Victoria Day
	10 Newsletter
	15 Sports Day
	19 Father's Day
	23 Concert
	24 Picnic

To live happily with other people one should ask of them only what they can give. *Tristan Bernard*





Operated by  
MIND

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## BBMH MISSION STATEMENT

*Boundary Bay Montessori House will offer a quality educational program for children that remains true to the spirit of Dr. Montessori's philosophy of education to help equip them with the tools necessary to become independent adults while allowing their unique personalities to unfold.*

### MESSAGES FROM THE FAMILY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Bottle Returns** - Both the Tsawwassen and Ladner bottle depots accept returns directed to BBMH.

**Organics** - Look for organics fresh sheet orders Monday morning. Written orders need to be at the school by 3pm Tuesday and Leslie Kanerva needs to receive online orders by 7pm Tuesday for Friday pickup at the school. 20% of the purchase price goes to the school.

**Thrifty gift cards** - Everyone needs groceries, so ask your friends, family and neighbours about buying Thrifty Foods gift cards. They are available in any denomination and 5% of the value of the card comes back to the school.

**Year-end fundraiser** - In past years, we have had a "gala" event which included dinner,

entertainment as well as silent and live auctions. This year, we are changing things by separating the silent auction component of the event in favour of going with an online auction on [www.gobid.ca](http://www.gobid.ca). We are also holding an evening of jazz, wine, and art that will include a live auction of the ceramics made by the different classes and a small number of silent auction items. If you are able to donate items for our auctions (or need volunteer hours), please contact Diana Nesbitt or Christina Davey. We are hoping that a wine and cheese format will allow all of our parents to attend. Date and venue details are being worked out but will be posted soon.



**Wine raffle** - We will be holding a wine raffle at the end of year concert on June 23. We will be using the same format as at December's concert. A request for wine donations will come in May.

**Volunteer hours** - Please remember to record volunteer hours in the red binder on the library shelves.

**Board meetings** - Our next MIND board meeting is on Monday, April 18 at 7:30 at the school. Please feel welcome to attend. If you would like an item to be on the agenda, please forward details to Wayne Davey at [wcdavey@dccnet.com](mailto:wcdavey@dccnet.com)

### Blueprint Update

**1.2.12.** Freedom with limitations: We interpret the general principal of Montessori Education, "follow the child" as a student being free to choose areas of spontaneous interest and work free from distraction. However, if a student needs direction it is our responsibility to provide it.

**1.2.13.** As educators, our primary focus will always be the well being and best interests of our students

**1.2.14.** As educators, we nurture curiosity, creativity, and imagination by:

**1.2.14.1.** consciously working to encourage students to think creatively in their writing, problem solving and research.

**1.2.14.2.** placing great emphasis on the Fine Arts, both in the classroom environment and through the contributions of any specialists in the visual and performing arts.

**1.2.14.3.** encouraging students at an appropriate age, to become aware of the major social, political, economic environmental and ethical issues of our day, and having carefully considered all sides, to take a responsible stand for themselves and to explore ways of making a positive personal contribution to society.

**1.2.14.4.** modeling and encouraging communication amongst the students. We encourage students to be versed in skills of active listening, problem-solving (including restitution) using "I-messages", accepting responsibility for their actions, developing assertiveness, building empathy and acceptance of others point of view.