



Reflecting on Montessori: *Lessons Across Generations*



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As we start a new year and celebrate the anniversary of the first Casa Dei Bambini, it is a natural moment to pause and reflect on why the Montessori approach continues to thrive across generations.

Its endurance seems to stem from the deep respect it gives to the child as an active participant in learning, shaping not only knowledge but also character, autonomy, and curiosity.

In many ways, Dr Montessori invited us to observe, wonder, and consider the potential each child brings to the world. She reminds us that:

"...the child is the builder of man. There is no man existing who has not been formed by the child he once was."

(The Absorbent Mind, Chapter 2, Section "The Child Builder of Man")

This powerful idea suggests that every child carries within them the seeds of the future, quietly influencing the world through their growth, experiences, and interactions. Reflecting on this, helps us see why our mission of supporting and empowering settings, educators, and learners remains so vital: by nurturing children's innate capacities, we contribute to shaping a world where their potential can flourish.

Research supports these observations. Studies (Rathunde & Csikszentmihalyi, 2005a; Rathunde & Csikszentmihalyi, 2005b) show that this approach *fosters strong peer relationships, high energy and engagement, and emotional wellbeing*, highlighting the benefits of environments that truly support children's growth.

These findings give concrete evidence of the ways in which the Montessori and Montessori-inspired environments support both learning and holistic development.

Another remarkable aspect of this approach is its alignment with the skills most needed in today's world.

Global businesses report that creative and analytical thinking are now more necessary than technological literacy (World Economic Forum, Future of Jobs Survey 2023).



THE VIEW



Within these environments, learners often show higher intrinsic motivation, purposeful engagement, advanced reasoning, confidence, initiative, and collaboration (Rathunde & Csikszentmihalyi, 2005a,b; Angeline Lillard, 2006).

This suggests that the approach is also **forward-looking, equipping children with the mindset and skills to navigate a rapidly changing world.**

Dr Montessori's perspective encourages us to observe children closely and appreciate the subtlety of their growth.

As she wrote,

“Adults admire their environment; they can remember it and think about it; but the child absorbs it. The things he sees are not just remembered; they form part of his soul. He incarnates in himself all in the world about him that his eyes see and ears hear.”

(The Absorbent Mind, Chapter 7 "Man's Universality", Section "The Child Instrument of Adaptation").

This absorption shapes their thinking, values, and abilities in ways that resonate far beyond the classroom, gently reminding us that the experiences children encounter today form the foundation for who they will become tomorrow.



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As we start this new year and reflect on the legacy of Dr Montessori, we invite our community to take a moment and consider a few questions:

How do the children you engage with absorb their environment, and how might that influence the year ahead?

In what ways does the environment you create encourage autonomy, curiosity, and meaningful engagement?

What small shifts could help children feel more empowered to explore, create, and collaborate in their daily learning?



By pondering these questions, we acknowledge the lasting impact of this approach, while continuing to nurture spaces where children can grow into thoughtful, capable, and creative individuals.

As we embark on this new year, these reflections encourage us to stay mindful of the profound role children play not only in their own development but in shaping the future of our shared world.



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Share your reflections with us!
We'd love to hear from you - connect with us at
connect@montessori.org.uk

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that underpin this timeless child-centred approach, take a
look at our
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