

International Montessori School (IMS) Berlin

School Concept

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1. School profile

Our vision: "A place for kids to grow"

The International Montessori School (IMS) Berlin offers children a place where they can develop themselves and their potential. It is our goal that our students learn in a self-determined way, according to their level of development and at their own pace, with joy and interest. In this way, we promote the achievement and well-being of all the young people entrusted to us.

In doing so, we pay attention to the holistic development of the child. We assume that every child wants to learn. We trust in their natural development. We accompany and support this in our prepared environment. In this way, we design our state-approved primary school as a "place for kids to grow" and offer the best conditions for the start of school.

The three foundations of the IMS

Our work rests on three foundations:

We live Montessori education. IMS is *the* primary school in Berlin where not only individual elements of Montessori education are taken up, but where the principles of Maria Montessori are the most important working basis. Our rooms are equipped with materials according to Montessori quality standards. Our pedagogues have a corresponding training or acquire the Montessori diploma in parallel to their work. They stand for work according to the values and principles of Montessori education. An understanding within the team on how to apply these principles in a contemporary way is encouraged and supports the daily work routine.

We are international. Many of the teachers, children and families at IMS know life in other countries or cultures from their own experience. These experiences enrich our pedagogy and our school life. We encourage openness to other countries and cultures. We accompany our children in finding and shaping their own place in this world. English, the world language, has a special significance for this and is particularly cultivated at IMS: With German and English-speaking educators in all learning groups, with extended subject lessons in English and offers for children with English as their language of origin, as well as with a bilingual language path, also called the principle of bilingual immersion. This means that each child experiences situations in the course of a week in which they communicate only in English or only in German.

We offer all-day good education. The IMS is open as an all-day school from 7:30 to 18:00. We are organised as a recognised whole-day primary school (VHG) with after-school care. Classes are held daily from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. until the third grade, and from the fourth grade until 3:00 p.m. (on Fridays also until 2:00 p.m.). In the afternoon, there are educational offers, remedial or support classes and work groups, e.g. sailing, forest or yoga. The principles of Montessori pedagogy and bilingualism characterize the IMS offerings throughout the day.

Special framework conditions and special offers

The unique selling points of IMS Berlin include:

- historical school building in the country house Oppenheim
- small learning groups with 16 to 24 students each
- as a rule, two teachers accompany a learning group at the same time
- inter-grade learning (learning groups 1-3 and 4-6)
- Equipment with Montessori development material according to the quality criteria of the Association Montessori International
- English-speaking teachers who work according to the bilingual immersion method, as well as an offer to the learning group 4-6, which prepares them for the official Cambridge language examination.

- Forest and nature education with trained educators in the countryside and at Wannsee lake
- family atmosphere with a total of up to 125 students

Target group

IMS provides full-day education for children from a large catchment area. This includes the southwest of Berlin and the surrounding area. When allocating places, we give preference to children from Montessori & Friends' Montessori Children's Houses.

We are open to all children. At our inclusive school, children with special needs also learn in all learning groups. As an international school, we offer children with English as their language of origin particularly suitable conditions.

Before an admission, we get to know the children during observation days. We would like to assess whether the children feel comfortable with the work according to the principles of Montessori education and can develop well with us. We give the parents appropriate feedback.

Authorised alternative school

IMS is a state-approved alternative school. The school supervisory authority has examined and determined that our school is not inferior to the public schools in its teaching goals and facilities. At the end of the primary school years, our pupils receive a promotion prognosis with which they can apply for a place at a secondary school on an equal footing with pupils from state schools.

The state of Berlin supports alternative schools with a proportional subsidy for staff costs. All other costs of teaching (e.g. buildings and furniture, technical equipment, pedagogical material, non-state-funded share of personnel costs, administration) are financed by the parents with a monthly school fee, which is graded according to income. The supplementary support and care of primary school children (after-school care) is financed at IMS in the same way as at state schools, i.e. through so-called care vouchers and after-school care fees paid by the parents (from the 3rd grade).

2. Pedagogical model

The following pedagogical mission statement was developed by the IMS team in several workshops and pedagogical days starting in February 2020 and finalized during the preparatory week in August 2020. It forms the binding common basis of our pedagogical work in the classroom and in extracurricular activities.

Our image of the child

From the framework curriculum:

- "It is the task of school education to recognise the valuable assets of children and young people and to promote them to the best of their ability so that they can bring their individual abilities and skills to full fruition."
- "Diversity [of students] is an enrichment and resource. The school incorporates this diversity purposefully and constructively into lessons and school life".

From Montessori Education:

- "Every child possesses an inherent need to learn."
- "We should adapt the environment to the child, not the child to the environment."
- "There is only one ideal form of learning: deepest interest and lively and persevering attention"
- 2nd developmental phase (6-12 years) as a "stable phase".
- "Help me think it for myself."



Our guiding principles:

1. Every child is unique, with their own needs, interests and requirements, which we see and acknowledge.
2. Our students have a natural desire to learn and are intrinsically motivated.
3. Development is the work of the child, according to Maria Montessori he is the "master builder of himself".



That means specifically:

- The children feel acknowledged in their diversity and socially included. They feel comfortable and can thrive.
- From self-activity to independence: Pupils play an active role in shaping lessons and school life as a whole.
- The selection of offers and materials for a learning group correspond to the diversity of the children.
- The children in a learning group work on different topics or tasks, with different materials and levels of difficulty - according to their individual starting points and interests.
- In inter-grade learning groups, we encourage students to learn from and with each other, including peer teaching.
- In the weekly class council there is room for all topics that concern the togetherness in the class and the well-being of the individuals.

Our pedagogical actions

From the framework curriculum:

- "[The standards of the framework curriculum] form the prerequisite for individualized instructional design in heterogeneous learning groups that does justice to the different personalities and learning speeds of the students on the basis of diagnostics, counseling and support that accompany the learning process."
- "All learners are increasingly given the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning and to play an active part in shaping lessons."



From Montessori Education:

- "The most important task of education is to spark life, to set it free so that it can develop."
- "The educator must be able to give individual, group, or class presentations at any time."
- "In order to discipline, freedom must be granted. Granting freedom to the child must not mean that we leave him to himself or even neglect him."
- "The educator must set structures and rules so that each individual child can grow."
- "Children become like what they love. Always remember that children learn everything from those around them. So be their biggest role model."



Our guiding principles:

4. Our care of the child should not be determined by the desire to make him learn, but by the desire to develop his mind.
5. We accompany the children with respect and understanding so that they can develop their personality and their potential.
6. Based on our close observation of the child, we tirelessly offer the appropriate developmental material - according to Maria Montessori, the "keys to the world".



That means specifically:

- We observe the children intensively in order to identify their needs.
- After analyzing the children's needs, we rethink the range of materials and set points of interest.
- Each teacher gives regular individual, group or class presentations in which development material is introduced.
- In a weekly team meeting, the teachers of a learning group exchange their observations and plan the material offer and the next impulses.
- We encourage students to work independently and autonomously with the material. Material is introduced and later used independently.

The learning environment we create

From the framework curriculum:

- "School as a common place of learning and living has - especially in its all-day form of organisation - great significance as a social space in which children and young people learn to take increasingly independent control of their own lives and to play an active part in shaping their environment."
- "It is of central importance to design the school as a living space in which social values are taught and lived. A good school climate enables students to engage with the values of democracy and sustainable development and to develop action skills for them."



From Montessori Education:

- Only through freedom and the experience in the environment can man develop.
- The freedom of our children has as its limit the community.
- An environment in which the child feels welcome, safe and secure supports learning readiness and development.
- The prepared environment includes space, materials and educators.
- The material is "helpers" and is intended to support the child in his self-education and self-education. It is arranged according to the areas of sensory material, exercises of daily/practical life, language, mathematics and cosmic education.



Our guiding principles:

7. Our learning environment allows free work: that means free choice of the work object / material, the workplace (open doors) and the time (when and how long within the given framework).
8. Freedom includes boundaries: With uniform and transparent rules for all, we enable an atmosphere in which children and teachers feel comfortable and support respectful interaction with other people and the material.
9. We guarantee a prepared environment: this includes inviting rooms, comprehensive pedagogical development material and we as prepared, specially trained pedagogues.



That means specifically:

- One teacher is responsible for each room.
- The material is arranged according to learning areas and gives the room a structure.
- The material covers the contents of the framework curriculum, is child-friendly, structured in stages and largely bilingual German/English.
- The students move freely, purposefully and respectfully.
- Common rules are formulated and adhered to. Violations have reliable, transparent consequences.
- The social interaction is continuously reflected, especially in the weekly class council.

3. Learning at the IMS

Learning content: The stages

Our students learn according to the framework curriculum Berlin-Brandenburg, which also applies to public schools. There, the competencies that the students should acquire are described for all subjects and grades. They are also the learning goals of our work.

How is it possible to combine free work according to Maria Montessori with the learning objectives of the framework curriculum? The central instrument is the so-called "Pensenbücher"¹. At the IMS there is a Pensenbuch for grades 1-3 as well as a second one for grades 4-6. In the Pensenbuch the central learning objectives according to the framework curriculum are compiled for all subjects. They are listed as a competence description, which can be supplemented by a self-assessment "I can already do that" / "I need practice". The corresponding Montessori material can be assigned and it can be recorded whether the child has received an introduction to the material.

The Pensenbuch serves as an orientation for teachers and students for the planning of activities and free work as well as for the assessment of the learning level:

- Our teachers draw up their annual and weekly plans for free work or subject lessons on the basis of the Pensenbuch: When will which material be offered in the room, which presentations will be made?
- Teachers and students use the Pensenbuch for joint reflection on the current learning status. At least twice a year, the subject teacher and the student discuss the child's self-assessment based on the competencies described in the Pensenbuch. The teacher gives feedback. The Pensenbuch facilitates orientation as to where the child stands in relation to the framework curriculum and supports the child's own planning of the next learning goals and steps.

In addition, the free work is structured thematically:

- In grades 1-3, the six cosmic stories according to Maria Montessori are central anchors in each school year. Every year, two cosmic stories are presented in depth and serve as starting points for a project week. The four other cosmic stories are presented during the school year in free work and can lead to smaller projects. The two in-depth topics rotate each year. Those who have gone through grades 1-3 over three years have dealt with each of the cosmic narratives in depth three times, once of them in depth within the framework of a project week.
- In grades 4-6, changing interdisciplinary topics from the framework curriculum structure the school year. On the basis of a connecting topic, the pupils can acquire competences from the subject natural sciences (e.g. getting to know the climate zones of the earth), German (e.g. creation and comparison of certain text forms) and mathematics (e.g. creation and analysis of diagrams). The topics structure the free work and presentations, are oriented towards the life world of the learners and are selected by the teacher with the participation of the students.

Inter-year learning

Our students learn in mixed-age groups. The children in grades 1 to 3 and those in grades 4-6 learn together. This principle gives each child the opportunity to experience themselves sometimes in the role of the younger and sometimes in the role of the older.

Mentor roles of older children for younger ones, create concrete reference persons for the younger ones, which gives them a sense of security and orientation. The older children, on the other hand, learn and experience taking responsibility. In this way, they learn social competence.

Children have their own special language. They can explain topics and tasks to each other very well because they are very close in feeling and thinking to each other. In addition, they deepen what they have already

¹ Derived from "Pensum" - subject matter, daily work, task to be completed in a certain time.

learned by explaining things to others. Therefore, we promote learning from and with each other in the cross-grade groups.

Prepared Environment

The children can expect a prepared environment in the classrooms and on the school grounds, which offers a variety of learning, movement, play and experience opportunities and enables them to learn in a largely self-determined manner. The individual areas of each classroom are thematically designed: The open-access Montessori learning materials invite the children to be active. There are areas with didactic material for German, others for mathematics or cosmic education / world exploration.

The adults working in the school are responsible for the "prepared environment" every day, which they change or supplement - according to the framework curriculum and the needs of the children. Being part of the 'prepared environment' themselves, the adults provide a relaxed atmosphere that supports togetherness.

We mainly use the materials developed by Maria Montessori. Depending on the needs, they can be constantly supplemented. Computers and tablets are available for the children.

Learning and working methods

Weekly morning, daily lunch and weekly closing circle.

Rituals as an orientation aid are indispensable for our school culture. We begin the school week with a morning circle and end it with the closing circle. Lunch circles in the learning groups take place regularly. These rituals allow the classes to become a community based on trust.

We gather in a chair or sitting circle. The gaze is automatically directed towards the centre, where constantly changing themes are clarified through symbolic design. We find themes for the morning, noon and closing circles in the seasons and in daily life. In the process, larger and everyday connections become clearer to the children. The weekly closing circle is also closely linked to the class council.

Free work

The largest part of the teaching time is free work. As a rule, it takes place every day from 8:30 a.m. (with an open start until 9:00 a.m.) until lunch break at 12:00 p.m. (grades 1-3) or 12:30 p.m. (grades 4-6). Within the framework of free work, the children work on the contents of the subjects German, mathematics and science (or from grade 5 onwards social sciences and natural sciences) according to the framework curriculum. Depending on the timetable, music and/or art can also be added.

According to Montessori, free work is more than a method for optimizing learning. We see it above all as a form of learning, a form of school that does justice to the child. Here, the individuality and the independent activity of the individual child are the focus of the pedagogical action. The "sensitive phases" of the child are given special consideration.

This form of learning requires the greatest effort from children and a high degree of personal responsibility. The teacher accompanies the children and provides incentives and motivation to learn in the prepared environment. For the educators, this form of teaching means a change of perspective. As a companion of the children during free work, they become an attentive observer who participates in individual learning planning and the learning process as needed.

The free allocation of time makes it possible for the children to devote themselves intensively to one thing and to begin and complete it according to their own interests. This internally motivated, externally uninfluenced work enables the polarization of attention described by Maria Montessori - learning gains a new quality. Clear rules and a safe atmosphere support respectful interaction with people and materials.

For the students, free work means "Help me to do it myself" (Maria Montessori):

- Free choice of work topic: The child chooses his work every day from the environment prepared by the teacher. In this prepared environment, the pupils find the development materials that can be

assigned to all the subjects of the framework plan, individual projects and particularly specialized teaching units.

- Free division of working time: If children are allowed to learn and work at their own pace, this creates a self-confidence that does not make them shy away from larger projects. Thus, work can last several days, but also the alternation of different work within the Free Silent Work is possible and is practiced by the children on their own responsibility. Working at their own pace leads to comprehension. Of course, 45-minute cycles do not set the pace here.
- Free choice of partner: The children choose their own working partner and the material they want to work with. In addition to individual work, work in changing communities is always possible. Mutual consideration and mutual help lead to solidarity and social togetherness.

Daily reports are made on the work done - always with their own review and reflection on the work of the day. The results are reviewed and reflected on daily. We trust the children to be responsible, independent, and self-critical in recognizing themselves as the cause of their achievements.

Open beginning

From 8:30 a.m. the classroom is open for all children, a teacher awaits and welcomes them. Each child can individually plan their free work for the day, make arrangements with classmates and teacher, set up their workstation and begin their work. Because the pupils arrive one after the other, the teacher also has the opportunity to greet each individual and to make brief arrangements. By 9:00 a.m. at the latest, everyone has started their free work.

On Monday, the procedure is slightly different: Here, too, the work can be planned, arrangements can be made and the workplace can be set up. However, the actual work should only start after the morning circle at the beginning of the week. The morning circle begins at 9:00 am.

Subject teaching

Some subjects are taught separately from free work. Reasons can be:

- a subject is not included in the timetable for all years of a learning group (e.g. science/social studies in years 5 and 6),
- a subject requires a specific subject teacher and/or specific rooms (e.g. sport, depending on the number of hours and the qualifications of the class teacher also music and/or art),
- teaching groups should be formed across learning groups (e.g. separation according to language of origin/second language English, joint teaching phases in year 3/4 to support the transition from learning groups 1-3 to learning groups 4-6).

These subjects should not interrupt the free work in the morning, but are scheduled, if possible, after the lunch break or in a separate block on one morning per week. The subject lessons then form a time and thematically limited framework - but are carried out within this framework according to the same pedagogical principles that apply to the free work.

Class Council

The class council promotes democratic cooperation and participation in the school. It is the democratic forum of a class. In the weekly meetings, the students discuss and decide on topics of their own choice: on the organization of learning and living together in class and school, on current problems and conflicts, on joint planning and activities.

Timetable

Vintage	1		2		3		4		5		6	
Subject	WST ²	IMS	WST	IMS	WST	IMS	WST	IMS	WST	IMS	WST	IMS
German	7	20	8	20	8	18	8	24	5	21	5	20
Mathematics	5		5		5		5					
Sachunter- richt	2		2		3		5		0		0	
Science	0		0		0		0		4		4	
Social Science	0		0		0		0		3		3	
English	0		0		2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5
Art	2	2*	2	2*	2	2*	2	2	2	2	2	2
Music	2	2*	2	2*	2	2*	2	2	2	2	2	2
Sports	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Elective clas- ses	0		0		0		0		2	2	2	2
Total	21	27	22	27	25	27	28	34	30	34	31	34

Bilingual Learning

IMS is a bilingual school because the children come into contact with two languages, German and English, every day, both formally in class and informally in activities, in the playground, etc., spoken both by native German and English speakers and, depending on the development of their abilities, by the children themselves. The bilingual work is described in more detail in the "Concept for Bilingual Work" (attachment).

Prerequisites of our children

Most of the children who start at IMS are native German speakers who are learning English as a second language. Some have had their first experience with English (for example in the Montessori Kinderhaus), others have almost no previous experience with English.

In addition, there are a number of children who are either native speakers of English or have acquired a high level of English skills: These children need to be taught a higher level of English (see document "Teaching English".) Most of them also need to learn German as a second language and require the appropriate teaching of German for this purpose (see DaZ below).

English as a second language in years 1 and 2 (no English lessons yet)

There are usually two teachers in the classroom, one German and one English native speaker. Lessons, explanations and assistance are given in both languages. Children are encouraged to respond in both languages. Efforts will be made to purchase all Montessori materials in German and in English. Children are initially taught to read and write in German, but are encouraged to transfer these skills to English.

English as a second language from year 3

In addition to the bilingual immersion approach mentioned above, the children receive structured lessons in English 2-5 times per week in which they develop their literacy skills as well as their ability to speak, contribute and perform in English.

² Weekly timetable: requirement for state schools in Berlin, status: school year 2020/21

* Art and music can also be taught as part of free work in grades 1-3.

From Year 3 all children keep a dictionary to develop their vocabulary and spelling skills. From Year 5, all children keep a personal writing book to develop their individual writing skills. Children are expected to choose activities in English as well as activities in German during free work.

The daily sentence can be in English, German or both languages: The children learn the grammatical terms for parts of speech (noun, verb, adverb, adjective, etc.) in both languages.

English for native speakers

From Year 1, children learn to read and write in English. Depending on their experience with the German language, learning to read and write in German is started at a later stage (from the second half of Year 1 or in Year 2).

German as a second language

The school children, whose mother tongue is not German, go through a special language learning program, which focuses first on learning vocabulary and oral skills, before they learn to read and write in German.

Special needs

In accordance with our pedagogical mission statement, we support all our students according to their individual level of achievement. Thematic offers according to the individual learning level, individual time for working on tasks and individual feedback are a matter of course for us. This is the basis for our support of children with special learning difficulties or special educational needs.

The starting point for support planning can be:

- the assumption by teachers or educators based on observations in everyday school life,
- the assumption by subject or class teachers based on the development of performance (e.g. results of the Lernausgangslage Berlin [LauBe], the Hamburg Writing Test or the comparative tests VERA 3, Pensensbücher),
- Parental Notes.

If there are such suspicions or indications, the class teacher and parents discuss the procedure for further observation and diagnosis, e.g. of partial performance weaknesses such as reading and spelling difficulties or arithmetic difficulties or of special educational needs. If special needs are identified, the class teacher draws up an individual support plan.

In this process, classroom teachers use guidance and support services:

- Internal: a teacher assigned to provide internal guidance around special needs,
- External: School Psychological and Inclusive Education Counselling and Support Centre (SIBUZ),
- if necessary, parents or school apply for further state support (e.g. school aides) after joint agreement.

Extracurricular activities

Early support

The IMS is open for students from 7:30 am. Those who wish can start the day relaxed in the early care until 8:30. Resting, talking, playing together - the after-school team usually accompanies the "early risers" in the after-school rooms, in good weather also in the schoolyard. The breakfast club is also prepared together.

Breakfast Club

At the same time as the classrooms for the open start, the canteen with the breakfast club also opens. From 8:30 to 8:50 a.m., the students of all classes can have their breakfast here. We hope that all children who do

not eat breakfast at home will take advantage of the breakfast club. In the later individual breaks, a small snack can be taken as a supplement.

Pedagogical offers

For grades 1-3, our open all-day school offers daily educational activities from 14:00 to 15:30. The offers are designed by teachers, pedagogues from the after-school team or externals. The students register for these activities - depending on the offer for half or a whole school year. The program can change from school year to school year, but some offers are part of every year at IMS, namely:

- Forest educational offers
- Dispute Resolution Program
- Creative design
- School garden and insect hotel
- English: Preparation for the Cambridge Language Certificate
- Knobel-/Schach-Club
- individual support and remedial teaching (e.g. German as a second language)

Study groups and other activities in the afternoon

After the end of classes for grades 4-6 and the pedagogical offers for grades 1-3, the after-school care team looks after the children daily from 15:30 as part of our open all-day offer. The schoolyard, the movement room³ and the after-school care rooms on the ground floor are open for free play. A fruit snack is offered.

Optionally, AGs can be attended, which are offered daily from approx. 15:45 by teachers from the after-school team or external teachers. Here, too, the program can change annually. The fixed component of the AG offer includes:

- Dog-AG
- Instrumental lessons piano
- Creative design
- Media-AG
- Sailing
- Self Defense
- Dance
- Yoga

[Performance assessment, feedback, evaluation](#)

We want to support and accompany each student individually. Therefore, a regular performance assessment serves primarily for feedback, reflection and planning of the further learning path and learning support.

We would like to inform children and parents regularly about learning progress, strengths and support needs. Therefore, verbal evaluations are the central component of our report cards and therefore regular personal conversations about the learning status take place.

We reject a learning culture that is characterized by pressure to perform, learning for the test and selection of "good and bad students". Grading with marks does not occur in everyday school life as far as possible. We do not use grading as a means of reward or pressure.

³ Re-opening planned in autumn 2020 after relocation of learning group 4-6 to the top floor.

When the children leave our school, they will have the same opportunities for their further education and life as the students of public schools. On the one hand, our students are just as well prepared because our teaching is based on the Berlin-Brandenburg framework plan, which also applies to public schools. On the other hand, our students can also be considered equally at secondary schools with high demand, because they receive a promotion forecast. For this purpose, we assign numerical grades in the 5th grade (internal attachment to the report card) and in the 6th grade (on the report card). In doing so, we strive for a fair evaluation analogous to the standards applicable at public schools.

Details on the use of feedback and assessment tools and on the criteria for assessment are contained in the "Assessment Principles at IMS", which were adopted by the General Conference in February 2020.

4. Organization and framework

The sponsor: Montessori & Friends Education gGmbH

The IMS is run by the Montessori & Friends Education gGmbH. In addition to IMS, it also runs 6 Montessori children's houses in the southwest of Berlin and in Potsdam. In total, the institutions of the sponsor accompany about 400 children. The teachers in the children's houses also work according to the principles of Maria Montessori and bilingually in German and English.

Building, outdoor area, other facilities

Since 2013, the historic, listed Landhaus Oppenheim in Berlin-Wannsee has been the home of IMS. The building, including the grounds, is leased for an indefinite period by Wannsee-Schule e.V., which operates the Wannsee Schools for Health Professions located next to IMS.

The extension of the attic is expected to be completed in the summer of 2020. Then the following rooms will be available for a total of up to 125 pupils:

- Ground floor: Gallery with lockers, exercise room according to Hengstenberg, library, 2 further after-school care rooms, refectory, shoe cloakroom
- 1st floor: secretary's office, 3 classrooms for grades 1-3, corridor area (use for free work planned), team room, offices for school management and school administration,
- 2nd upper floor: 2 classrooms for grades 4-6, multi-purpose area for free work, 1 media room,
- Basement: science workshop, creative workshop, jacket cloakroom, storage rooms.

The outdoor area includes

- two terraces,
- a school garden,
- a partly asphalted, partly tree-lined playground,
- Opportunities for exercise and sport: a small football pitch, a basketball hoop, a table tennis table and a high bar.

For sports and swimming lessons we use additional external facilities as tenants:

- Wannsee Stadium, Chausseestrasse
- Gymnasium and swimming pool of the Wannseeschule, to Heckeshorn
- Indoor swimming pool Hüttenweg

Admission of pupils

We give preference to enrolling students at the beginning of first grade. If there are more applications than available places, we will first consider children who have previously been cared for in the Montessori Children's Houses of Montessori & Friends. Admissions in the current school year and in higher classes are possible in principle if there is free capacity. In this case, the school management considers on a case-by-case basis whether integration into the existing learning groups in the current school year is sensible and possible.

It is important to us that families consciously choose IMS and our educational concept. We want the children to feel comfortable and to develop well while working according to the principles of Maria Montessori. For this reason, the admission process takes place in several steps:

- Interested parents are first invited to an information evening where we introduce our concept, our work, our building and some of our colleagues. There are several information evenings per school

semester. The main focus is between the summer and autumn holidays (before the registration period for the 1st grade). In addition, we offer an open day between the summer and autumn holidays.

- Parents who have become acquainted with our school and wish to enroll their child in our school fill out a written enrollment form.
- Registered children first observe one morning of lessons with us. After getting to know each other, we give feedback to the parents.
- If there is still mutual interest, we will conclude a school and after-school care contract with the parents.

Daily routine/structure

Time	Procedure for learning group 1-3	Procedure for learning group 4-6
7:30-8:00	Early support	Early support
8:00-8:30		
8:30-9:00	Open beginning	Open beginning
9:00-9:30	Free work / Monday: Morning circle	Free work / Monday: Morning circle
09:30-10:00	Free work	Free work
10:00-10:30		
10:30-11:00		
11:00-11:30		
11:30-12:00	Free work / Tue-Fri: Lunch circle	
12:00-12:30	Lunch	Free work / Tue - Thu: Lunch circle
12:30-13:00	Court Recess	Lunch
13:00-13:30	Subject lessons / reading time / class council	Court Recess
13:30-14:00		
14:00-14:30	Pedagogical offers ⁴	Subject lessons / class council (Classes end on Fridays at 14:00)
14:30-15:00		
15:00-15:30		
15:30-16:00	Working groups ⁵ / Support	Working groups / Support
16:00-16:30		
16:30-17:00		
17:00-17:30	Late-afternoon care	Late-afternoon care
17:30-18:00		

Shaping togetherness

School is a place of learning and living. Children and adults should feel comfortable and safe here, stay healthy and enjoy working together. This requires respectful and considerate cooperation. Everyone - teachers, children, parents and guests - share responsibility for this.

⁴ Forest pedagogical offer 1x per week until approx. 15:45 hrs

⁵ Study groups can have different start and start times between 15:30 and 17:00.

In order to promote cooperation, successes as well as conflicts are regularly reflected in the learning groups, especially in the weekly class council. Common rules in the learning groups and for the whole school define the limits of personal freedom where consideration for others requires it. The rules for the school are laid down in the school and house rules (appendix). The educators are responsible for reliably implementing the intended consequences for rule violations.

Cooperations

We cooperate with the Montessori children's houses, which also belong to Montessori & Friends, e.g. by:

- Annual IMS parents' evening for the preschool children in the children's houses to inform them about the school registration procedure,
- joint events, e.g. summer party for employees, joint committees on various projects/topics of the executing agency,
- mutual exchange of pedagogical specialists (educators),
- Preferential consideration for first grade enrollment of children who have previously been cared for in Montessori Children's Homes.
- Use of the school garden also by the Kinderhaus Wannsee on the shared campus.

We regularly cooperate with the following extracurricular places of learning and external providers:

- International Music School Berlin (instrumental lessons as AG)
- Zeuthener Segler-Verein (sailing club)
- Wannsee Schools for Health Professions (annual back school for all learning groups)

Parental work, participation of pupils, committees

An educational partnership between parents and school is a prerequisite for the best possible support of the children. We work on an open and cooperative collaboration with the parents and expect this from the parents as well. If there is a constant exchange between home and school, trust and cooperation become a matter of course for the children.

It is indispensable that the parents are familiar with the educational concept and actively participate in its implementation. For this reason, we will be organizing Montessori parents' evenings several times a year starting in the school year 2020/21. Here we present the principles of Maria Montessori's pedagogy and its implementation at IMS, answer parents' questions and exchange ideas on current educational topics. Every family should attend one of these Montessori parents' evenings during the school year.

Important highlights of the direct exchange about the individual child are:

- the evaluation talks (Eva talks). As a rule, shortly before the autumn holidays, children, parents and class leaders talk about the current state of learning and development.
- The report interviews on the last days of the half-year / school year. On the occasion of the half-year report, individual meetings are arranged between the class leaders and all parents. For interested parents, the class leaders also offer such development discussions on the occasion of the report at the end of the school year.

These conversations are an important supplement to the report card. Further parent meetings are arranged individually as needed.

Evaluation

The school management is responsible for the ongoing internal evaluation of the school. On the one hand, this involves checking the extent to which our goals are being achieved: How is the performance of our students

developing? How is the well-being of our students developing? Do all students have equal opportunities to develop their potential?

On the other hand, it is about analysing and evaluating the processes: Are our pedagogical mission statement and our school concept implemented in everyday life? Which further developments of the concept make sense? Which qualification and support offers do the teachers need?

A detailed evaluation concept is to be developed in the course of the school year 2020/21. Already now are important sources for the evaluation:

- Observation of the school management team in lessons and extra-curricular activities
- VERA 3 results
- Hamburg writing sample
- Survey of parent representatives and parents
- Feedback from the students in the school committees

Public Relations

We communicate directly with the children entrusted to us and their families - in personal conversations, in our committees, through messages in the newsletter or by e-mail. Important information for a learning group or the whole school is sent by e-mail by the class leader or the secretary's office.

We use the following channels for communication with interested external parties:

- the school website www.montessori-am-wannsee.de
- School flyer in German and English
- Events: Open house, info evenings
- Event announcements via Facebook

Funding

The state participates in the financing of IMS through the state substitute school financing of the state of Berlin and the voucher financing of the after-school care by the district youth welfare offices (see also page 3). This does not cover all the costs of running the school. The following costs / fees are paid by the families:

- a one-off administrative fee on admission of 350 euros,
- a deposit of 2 monthly instalments of the school fees, which will be returned at the end of the contract,
- a monthly school fee, the amount of which depends on income,
- from the 3rd grade onwards, a monthly after-school fee according to the rules of the Land Berlin (also income-dependent),
- an annual material fee in the amount of 200 Euro,
- Renting a locker from our external service provider, costs currently approx. 30 Euros per school year,
- possibly further costs for selected study groups offered by external providers (e.g. sailing group / instrumental lessons),
- depending on the agreement within the parent body, costs for a class fund / a class trip.

The current tuition table is published on www.montessori-am-wannsee.de. There you will also find the sibling discounts as well as the loyalty discounts for children who transfer to IMS from one of our Montessori Children's Houses.

5. Our team

Pedagogical staff

The *teachers* at IMS have acquired the 2nd state examination in Germany or an equivalent qualification abroad or are acquiring this qualification as career changers while working. In addition to this, we expect all teachers to have an intensive involvement with the Montessori pedagogy. Class teachers should have a full Montessori diploma. If required, the sponsor also supports the employees financially in acquiring this Montessori diploma on a part-time basis.

Our *teachers in the supplementary support and care (after-school care) and teaching assistance* are recognised educators, career changers in the educator profession, social assistants, colleagues with comparable foreign qualifications or trainees.

In class, a learning group is usually accompanied by 2 educators at the same time. These are:

- one teacher and one pedagogical assistant (grades 1-3) or
- two teachers (grades 4-6; in grades 1-3 on 2 mornings per week if the class teacher teaches in English - this ensures German literacy)

School management

The school management consists of three members, two headmasters, Mr James Brennan and Mr Delpont and the head of the after-school care, Mrs Anke Deus. The school management coordinates closely with the management of the sponsor.

Non-educational staff

The smooth running of the school is organised and supported by our non-educational team. This includes the following positions: the school secretary (general administration and communication), contract management (student contracts), a technical team (building management, technical infrastructure), a janitor (maintenance, repairs, installations), a housekeeper (serving meals, cleaning dishes), two cleaners (building cleaning).

Forms of cooperation

Regular exchange formats are essential for close teamwork. At IMS we maintain the following meetings:

- weekly joint preparation time in the class team,
- weekly meetings of the year teams (1-3 and 4-6),
- every 14 days meeting of the after-school team,
- regular meetings of the whole pedagogical team:
 - o a joint preparation week before the start of the school year each year,
 - o two pedagogical days per school term (October/November, March),
 - o Overall conferences in all other months except February and July.

The teams are responsible for inviting, preparing and documenting the results. For the overall team meetings, these tasks are taken over by the school management.

Technical support and staff development

The *Montessori expert advisor* of the sponsor supports the school management in the further development of the school in the field of Montessori education. He participates in the preparation, implementation and

evaluation of the pedagogical days in the whole team. In addition, he supports individual teachers by arrangement, e.g. by observing lessons and providing professional advice/coaching.

The *school management* also regularly observes lessons and extracurricular activities and evaluates them together with the teachers. The observations are an important basis for the staff development discussions with the individual employees, for which the school management is also responsible, and for the planning of the pedagogical days in the whole team.

Regular *professional suggestions from outside* are also important to us. We support our educators by giving them time off and financially to acquire a Montessori diploma while working. In addition, we encourage our staff to visit other institutions.

If necessary, individual employees can receive coaching. The pedagogical days are moderated by an external person if required.

6. Outlook

This concept describes the state of development of the IMS as of August 2020. In the future, it will be reviewed by the team in each preparatory week at the beginning of the school year to ensure that it is up to date and updated as necessary.

The next development steps planned for the IMS are:

- Establish and open the attic as a learning environment for grades 4-6 (fall 2020),
- State recognition by the school supervisory authority (school year 2020/21),
- Development of a detailed concept for internal evaluation (school year 2020/21)
- Media pedagogical concept: media competences and media use
- Further development of the all-day concept
- Establish lower secondary education (medium term).

Topic repository: In the course of the conceptual work, further topics were identified on which more in-depth work is to be done in the continuation of this concept:

- Shaping transitions: Arriving in grade 1, transition from 1-3 to 4-6, transition to secondary school.
- Environmentally and climate friendly school
- Democracy education
- Documentation of the students' work
- Sex education and child protection
- Complaint management at the IMS
- Bibliography

7. Attachments

- School and house rules
- Valuation principles at the IMS
- Concept for bilingual work