

## **UNITED KINGDOM**

### **Montessori Society AMI (UK)**

#### **Highlights**

Our annual highlight is always our seminar held at the beginning of every year. This serves as our yearly gathering of interested parties, from all walks of life—from teachers to parents, to other educators and healthcare professionals, to congregate and listen together to a talk that highlights in different ways the great potential that children bring to the world. This year Alicia Eaton spoke about the power of positive language. An insightful talk by an experienced, engaging and articulate professional in her field.

#### **Mission**

To raise awareness of Montessori education and its place as an essential aid to life, across all spectrums of society within the United Kingdom.

#### **Events and Activities**

In collaboration with the Maria Montessori Institute London, we organised our AGM in September 2015 around the topic of neuroscience. Dr Dumontheil, a lecturer in the Department of Psychological Sciences at Birkbeck University of London and Elina Rautasaulo, a Director of Training at the Maria Montessori Institute actively discussed the questions “what does neuroscience say about children’s physical, cognitive, social and emotional development” and “how does Montessori education respond”.

In January 2016, we invited Alicia Eaton to provide for our delegates a day of discussion and workshops on ‘Words that Work—How to help children do almost anything!’ Originally an AMI-trained Montessori teacher, Alicia ran her own Montessori School for five years and followed this up with training as a Psychotherapist and Clinical Hypnotherapist. She also followed numerous trainings in Neuro-Linguistic Programming with Paul McKenna and Richard Bandler and assisted on their seminars for many years. She is now a qualified Trainer of NLP, running workshops on a variety of topics, including parenting.

Our website, [www.montessorisociety.org.uk](http://www.montessorisociety.org.uk) contains articles and videos on Montessori and has a web-shop that sells a wide range of Montessori books. We provide a noticeboard where new schools and adverts for position vacancies within Montessori schools are listed; in addition, and for many years, we provide contact information on all the AMI-run Montessori schools in the UK. Our website is a place where the interested newcomer can find out more about Montessori and the seasoned visitor is able to find the resources and/or links required to further broaden his interest.

#### **Collaborations & Partnerships**

We are delighted to be continuing our sponsorship agreement with Nienhuis this year and to continually find ways in which our relationship can be expanded and thus improved. We are also excited about forging a new sponsorship agreement with LifeLong Learning Materials; a fairly new organisation in the UK that distributes both Gonzaggeredi and Nienhuis materials on their behalf. As with many professional

collaborations, we look forward to striking a balance that gives us the resources to be able to widen our scope of activities but at the same time, without infringing on our core Montessori values.

## **Publications and Media**

In December and January, the Society was inundated with enquiries and general media interest when news that Prince George was to start attending the AMI-run Montessori Nursery in Norwich. In collaboration with the Maria Montessori Institute, we responded by giving interviews and articles around this “hot” news topic.

The three feature articles in issue 13 of our own Publication called, *Direction* tackles the typical depth and breadth of articles we like to cover in our bi-annual magazine, aimed at both Montessori teachers and parents. The piece by Mark Berger, US Montessori teacher and administrator, reflects on whether the use of technology could add anything to the Montessori approach or not. Alicia Eaton, in our second feature, gives parents and teachers ten top tips about how to use positive language. Wouldn't life be so much easier if we could simply wave a magic wand to get children to do as we asked, first time around? Too many parents, nowadays, will admit that they struggle to get their requests heard, understood and taken seriously. Alicia Eaton spoke at our seminar this year, and is a Children's Behavioural and Emotional Wellbeing Specialist, and also a qualified AMI Montessori Teacher and mother. In our third feature article, experienced Montessori teacher, Lori Woellhaf gives us some practice tips to help make our Grace and Courtesy activities really guide the children to respectful behaviour.

## **Memberships**

As at March 2016, total membership count comes to 422. Our UK individual memberships stand at 98. There are also five group memberships, which make up the remainder of the total membership number.

## **Board and committees**

Vice Presidents: Elizabeth Hood, Hilla Patell and Muriel Dwyer  
Chair: Emma Wong Singh  
Treasurer: Dipti Kanani

### **General Purposes**

Committee: Michelle Bernard, Diana Bradley, Jane Luetkens, Beverley Maragh, Joanna Morfey and Eva Stauffer (The GPC is made up of AMI diploma holders (practising and non-practising teachers, and parents of children who attend AMI-run Montessori schools.)

Editor of *Direction*: Louise Livingston

Emma Wong Singh  
Chair