



Monmouth Montessori School

Creative learning for 2-11 years



...for a different school of thought...

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Principal: Mrs Rosemary Whaley BSc Hons PGCE (Cantab)





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I am delighted to have created Monmouth Montessori School which rose out of a conviction that there is a better way for children to learn.

*Here children's progress can be limitless, as they learn **at their own pace**, and are championed for every emerging skill, led by enthusiastic experts in each topic.*

The atmosphere at Monmouth Montessori School is vibrant, optimistic and happy, with a home-from-home feel that is comfortable and safe.

We enable every child to have a positive experience of childhood and education, growing into the unique adult he or she can be, with a secure and positive self-image.

I invite you most warmly to come and see us in action and you will see how we can provide the education you want for your child.

Rosemary Whaley

*Mrs Rosemary Whaley BSc Hons PGCE Cantab
Principal*

Mission Statement

To explore ways of motivating children in their education and nurturing them as a whole person ready for moving towards adulthood.

Our commitment to you

We aspire to the highest levels of achievement possible for our children. In a family atmosphere and a beautiful environment we are determined to preserve the individuality of each child so that they can follow their natural desire for knowledge.

Teamwork and care of others is championed and children are urged on through praise and the satisfaction of achieving each stage of development. Each child belongs to a School house: Ruby, Sapphire, Emerald, and can gain points for effort, achievement and behaviour towards the end-of-year house shield.

The happiness and security of each child is paramount and we expect everyone to deal politely and sensitively with each other, forging life-long relationships and good memories of childhood.

We ensure that every subject is taught by an expert in their field to give children authentic exposure to each area of learning.

We pride ourselves in our provision of home-cooked meals with locally sourced ingredients. Our cook prepares everything on site. Special dietary options are available.



Your commitment to us

Bringing up children, nurturing and protecting their well-being needs to be a team effort. You need to keep us informed of any concerns or incidents that may have an effect on your child. We expect you to support the ethos of the school and promote similar values so that your child can feel secure.

We welcome your involvement, particularly in special projects, events and any skills you can share with the children.

We encourage dialogue between parents and teachers. We want you to feel that your child is as happy here as at home.

Our learning experience

We deliver each topic orally, visually, physically and rhythmically. This means that children enjoy learning and remember what they have learnt.

learning by doing - we remember 5% of what we hear and 95% of what we do.

raising excitement and involvement in subjects - each topic is taught by enthusiastic experts.

using the body to reinforce the mind - acting out a concept enhances memory and promotes understanding.

stimulating the imagination - role-play, music, story-telling and drama stimulate the imagination and broaden skills and confidence. Children learn to appreciate others and enjoy working together as a team.

using the senses - The combination of practical left-brain skills and creative right-brain skills can increase the effective IQ by up to 10 percent.

capitalising on strengths and motivations - A child who receives applause at Assembly for her fine flute-playing enters her maths lesson with a sense of achievement which spills into her next learning experience.

responding to natural concentration spans - Concentration and application do not come in 40 minute bites. Flexible lesson times ensure that learning and concentration coincide. We make sure that the curriculum is covered but we do not teach a one-hour lesson if the job has been done in twenty minutes.

individual learning techniques - The children are allowed to learn in the way that best suits them. Many cope well with reading and writing, while some prefer to use more concrete methods. Others need to experiment in a non-threatening way, for instance using whiteboards and pens until they have the confidence to commit their ideas to paper.

vertical grouping - Children learn at their own pace, in groups that are suitable for them. For instance they may study English in a predominantly older group but stay with a younger group for maths. Because this is such a firm ethos of the school the children accept it without judgement.

Our Academic Life

English

It is essential that children should master the basics of reading and writing and become competent in these areas. This is our priority. Each child reaches adult literacy in their own way and their own time. The teachers do their utmost to avoid a sense of failure at any point. To this end, children are grouped vertically and not restricted to year groups. It is because of this that the school produces such high results without excessive pressure, frequently averaging over three years ahead in reading ability. Some children do not want to be hunched over a desk too early. We encourage emerging writing skills on wall-mounted whiteboards at first, with the opportunity for experimental movements with a pen. These beginnings lead to confident, fluid writing at the appropriate time.



Mathematics

Everyone needs to be able to handle the basic number skills involved in our everyday living. Our priority, therefore, is to achieve a facility with number, time and money. Once these are fully understood, children explore the more complicated concepts, many going on to achieve above the National Curriculum expectation.

Science

Science has been given high priority in the National Curriculum and so it is here. The subject is expertly taught so that all the children are given the chance to experience the joy of experiment, result and conclusion. Our "hands-on" approach often leads to comments from senior schools on the high level of interest shown by our children in this subject.



Humanities

Working outwards from their own experience and the locality, History and Geography are approached as living topics to be explored and acted out, and Religious Education introduces other cultures and beliefs as well as Christianity. We are careful not to treat these subjects as extended English lessons, so the children make brief notes about what they have learnt rather than extensive essay-writing.



Languages

With our membership of Europe and living in a bi-lingual country we must give our children encouragement and the opportunity to explore other languages. To this end we begin Spanish and Welsh, and introduce French, where possible taught by native speakers. We aim for the children to get a feel for the sound and nuance of the language before they try to write or learn the grammatical rules.

The school has also initiated a relationship with the Suzette school in France, giving them an insight into another culture, communicating with letters and skyping.



Information Technology

From the youngest age children are encouraged to explore, play and research using our computers. Under teachers' guidance they have regular access to the internet opening up a realm of information to support their lessons.

Children who are less confident in their handwriting often respond well to the different medium of the computer. For a different computing experience, each year the children visit the facilities of the Monmouth School IT suite. Modern technology dictates that confidence in computing skills are essential to support the children in their working lives.



Art & Design

Through our Art & Design curriculum we aim to develop the children's creativity, imagination and dexterity through the exploration of visual, tactual and sensory qualities of a range of materials and processes. We relate their work to relevant artists and craftsmen, so the children become aware of the vast range of possibility within each medium and of our cultural heritage. We have access to a kiln and at least once a term the children will produce a ceramic piece.

With an enthusiastic art graduate teacher creating a stimulating environment, original thinking is encouraged.





Music

Taught by a music graduate, children are encouraged to explore musical notation and theory as well as the first elements of improvisation and harmony. Singing together is a much-valued activity, as is performance. The choir performs at Harvest Festival and Christmas services and we have premiered several works by local composers.

Children are exposed to the sound of instruments and a variety of musical styles, encouraging them to build up knowledge and taste according to their individual personality.

Recorder is taught to everyone, and piano, violin, cello, clarinet, flute, drums, guitar and singing lessons are available, with other instruments considered upon request.

Drama and Communication Skills

At Monmouth Montessori School we lay great emphasis on the ability to feel comfortable in conversation and debate. We therefore encourage the children to talk about their topics in class and also at Assembly, where they often have the opportunity to read their own work or recite a poem they have enjoyed. Others thus have a chance to acquire the desirable skill of listening.

At election time the children prepare and explore political debate.

Every year we produce a play or musical, often commissioned by local authors, in which every child has the opportunity to participate in a solo role.

We also hold an annual Eisteddfod where the children showcase their talent in many areas including comedy, puppetry and ballet, and are judged by an external invited guest.

Our Productions



Sport, Movement and Dance

Situated, as we are, in the country we take advantage of the space to let the children explore their sporting potential.

We believe that sports are best learned in an intensive way. Typically, the range of sports for the year could be:

Autumn term: Archery, Swimming and Ball skills (Netball and Football)

Spring Term: Hockey and Rounders

Summer Term: Tennis and Athletics

Football goals, table tennis, climbing frames and other sports equipment are always available at break time.

Weekly Feldenkrais movement sessions are taken by an expert in the field of child physical development with the aim of keeping the children supple and helping to monitor any physical strains or stressful habits.



Outdoor Pursuits and Ecology

The children are taken on orienteering and nature trips, as we are keen that they recognise and learn our native species. These projects broaden the children's experience and range of problem-solving skills, and encourage them to find out about the world around them. This helps prepare them for time spent at the local Outdoor Pursuit Centre.

The children have been undertaking a mini archeological dig in the grounds in conjunction with the Monmouth Archeological Society.

Monmouth Montessori was the first private school in Wales to gain an ECO flag, reflecting the high level of recycling and conservation that the children undertake.

Examples of the sorts of activities that won us the award are:

- The children grow and enjoy their own plants, vegetables and herbs, led by an enthusiast in the subject of horticulture.
- The children learn about forestry, planting trees on our premises. We are members of the Woodland Trust and join in their activities each year.
- The School is part of a community project and helps to plant and maintain the Monmouth Community Orchard.
- The children applied for, and won, a grant to build their own recycling shed.



Indoor Pursuits and Philosophy

We believe that children are natural philosophers and that the ability to think for themselves is one of the best gifts we can give them. We foster the thinking process in sessions where the children debate moral questions so that they grow in confidence and self-knowledge, able to think laterally.

The children produce a regular contribution to a local newspaper, often involving interviewing a local celebrity and asking them about their career. The children create an occasional in-house newsletter with puzzles.

Cooking is also a popular activity.

Extra-Curricular Activities

We like to draw on local talent in order to provide occasional workshops such as creative writing, history days, and design and technology projects.

We also run a Friday after-school club, with football led by a professional coach.



Our leavers

Since the school was created our school leavers have won entrance to the following schools: Abberley Hall, Monmouth Comprehensive School, Monmouth School, Haberdashers Monmouth School for Girls, Hereford Cathedral School, Fairfield, Stonar, Hereford Steiner Academy, Bredon, John Kyrle.

A number of our leavers gained scholarships to their schools.



Here are a few comments from our pupils.....

I can't help comparing my senior schools to Monmouth Montessori...

Freddie, ex-pupil

Without Monmouth Montessori I would never have discovered my talents...

Megan, ex-pupil

Our Principal

Rosemary Whaley, the Principal of the School, moved to Monmouth from London in August 1998.

For seventeen years she taught in a major London Preparatory School, Garden House in Sloane Square, including ten years as Headmistress.

She brings to Monmouth Montessori School her knowledge of the National Curriculum and the Common Entrance standards and syllabus, her contacts with the senior schools and a technique of teaching and running a school honed by many years of wide experience.

Rosemary's passion is singing, having trained at the Guildhall, London. She runs the local choir. When not singing she can be found on the tennis court!

She has three boys of her own.



Our Board of Advisors

Mr Ray Billington

Mr Edward Butler

Mr Jonathan Freeman

Mrs Jean Harding-Rolls

Mrs Mabel Jackson

Mrs Judith McConnel

Mrs Rosemary Whaley

One of our Parents

One of our Teachers

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, shares our vision for education. He came to the School, and said, "This is everything I was hoping it would be."

Staff List 2010 – 2011

Mrs Rosemary Whaley <i>BSc Hons PGCE (Cantab) Principal</i>	Maths, English, Music
Mrs Rosie Francis <i>BA Cert.Ed.</i>	Maths, English, Art, DT
Mr John Gregory <i>B.Ed M.A.</i>	Science, Maths
Mr Steve Eddy <i>BA PGCE</i>	English, Philosophy
Miss Clare Stevenson <i>BSc PGCE</i>	ICT, Sport, Geography, RE
Mrs Jeannette Shalliday <i>HND, AC</i>	Maths, English, History
Sr Carles Riba	Spanish
Mrs Jennifer James <i>NVQ3</i>	Nursery Supervisor, Welsh
Mrs Myra Hughes <i>NVQ3</i>	Assistant Nursery Supervisor
Miss Jess Robertson	Nursery Assistant
Miss Meg Williams <i>NCHEE, AECDL</i>	Housekeeper, Secretary
Mrs Rosemary Whaley	Choir, piano, singing
Mrs Selina Hamilton	Violin
Mrs Sara Greenwood	'cello
Mr Ian Thomsett	Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone, Piano
Mrs Sarah Merriam-Pierce	Feldenkreis Movement
The Revd. Simon Guest	Chaplain



Our History

Monmouth Montessori School was built in 1870 by John Rolls, the father of the aviator Charles. During the war it was home to over a hundred children and it remained open as the Village School until 1991. Many local people remember with affection their days at the School and we are often visited by older children and adults of all ages who want to reminisce.

After two years' rest the School opened its doors again as Monmouth Montessori School, providing popular Nursery education for the wider community. This provision has continued uninterrupted since. Its popularity meant that in 2001 we extended the School to provide education up to age 11. The School also supports Home Schoolers up to GCSE.

Christopher Harding-Rolls of Llangattock-Vibon-Avel, was pleased to offer the use of his family crest for the newly-established Monmouth Montessori School.

The school maintains strong links with both the Rolls family and Rolls Royce. Rolls Royce have kindly given us a statue of Charlie Rolls to be given each year as the Science and DT Award.

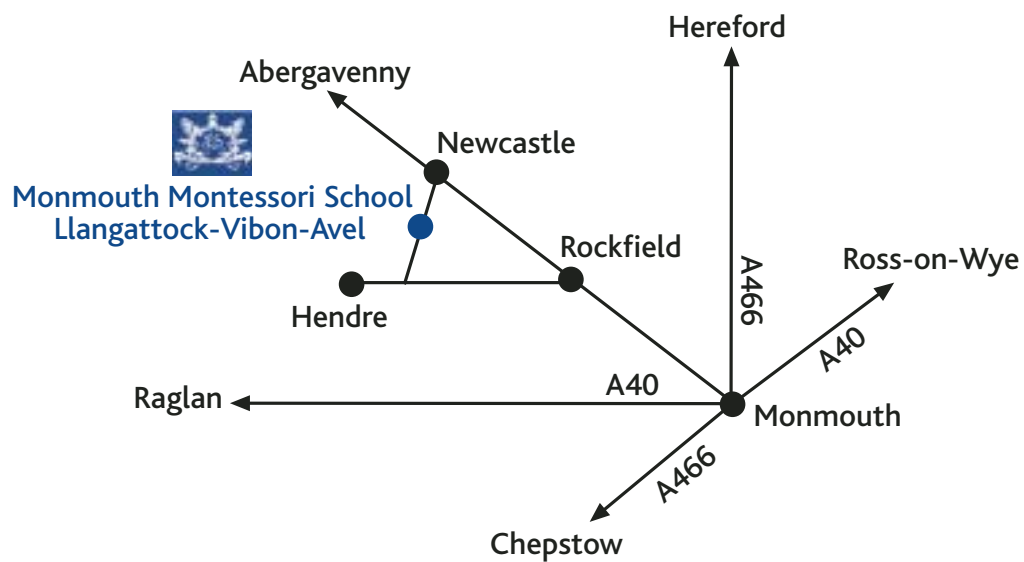


In 2010 we celebrated the centenary of Charles Rolls' death with a production of the newly-written 'Charlie Rolls - the Musical'.



Location

The School is between Rockfield and Newcastle off the old Abergavenny road. Near Monmouth, it is within half an hour of Hereford, Chepstow, Abergavenny and Ross.







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