MONTESSORI BILOBA

HAUS DER KINDER - SCHULE & AKADEMIE

Handbook

International Montessori Academy Biloba Switzerland



Parkstrasse 36 / 5012 Schönenwerd / Switzerland

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1. WELCOME

We are excited to get to know you and journey with you on an AMI Montessori training course. AMI Montessori courses are world renowned for their holistic and meticulous approach to training teachers. Undertaking an AMI Montessori course will be enriching and insightful and give you a fresh perspective to not only teaching but to life.

The dates for upcoming courses are available on our website at: https://www.montessori-biloba.ch/ami-3-6-kurs

About our Institute

The International Montessori Academy Biloba Switzerland (IMABS) is housed in the Ballyhouse that is over a hundred years old, set within magnificent grounds in Schönenwerd / Kanton Solothurn in Switzerland. The location is just a 10-minute train ride from Olten, a central hub of the Swiss rail network. The Academy is easily accessible in around an hour from many of Switzerland's major cities, such as Zurich, Lucerne, Zug, Bern and Solothurn.

Address: Montessori Biloba / Parkstrasse 36 / 5012 Schönenwerd

How to get there:

- By car: take the Olten or Aarau motorway exit / follow the road signs to Schönenwerd / turn left at Fash and Fish and follow this road to the end / car park.
- By public transport: Take the express train to Olten or Aarau, then change to the S-Bahn to Schönenwerd / walk towards Ballypark from the station.

At weekends, there are 3 parking spaces available directly in front of the building, as well as paid parking spaces in the immediate vicinity; the railway station is just a 5-minute walk away.

The Academy has lecture room and a prepared environment. There is also a kitchen and 2 toilets and a small balcony.

Our administration team can be contacted during our business hours of 8:00am to 4:00pm, Monday to Friday.

Each AMI diploma course is led by a course director, who is responsible for running the course and overseeing all educational content. The course directors have many years of experience in Montessori education and have also successfully completed the comprehensive AMI Training of Trainers (TOT) programme.

2. APPLICATION AND ENROLMENT

2.1. Language of the Course

The lectures are delivered in German and translated into English.

2.2. Application Documents

Applicants will be considered for admission on receipt of all the following documentation:

- Completed application form

- CV (outlining academic and employment history)
- Qualifications / Diplomas
- Motivation letter
- Two signed letters of recommendation, including contact details of reference.
    - One being professional in nature.
    - One being a character reference.
- Application fee proof of payment. (refer to section 4)

Once all documentation has been received, an interview with the Director of Training is scheduled.

2.3 Application Procedure

Applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis until the course is fully enrolled, after which a waiting list will be created. Application forms can be requested by post, phone, or email, and are also available on the website https://www.montessori-biloba.ch/ ami-3-6-kurs website. Completed applications, along with the required supporting documents, should be submitted to: kurs@montessori-biloba.ch

Please note that admission is granted at the discretion of the course Director of Training and the Director of the Academy.

2.4. Confirmation of Enrolment

Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application by email. Those who are accepted will receive a confirmation of enrolment letter. Please note that a place on the course is only secured once the applicant has made the initial payment toward the course fees, in line with the applicable fee schedule.

2.5. Enrolment Policy

Those interested are asked to submit their registration at least one months before the start of the relevant course to ensure that places are allocated and that applications are processed correctly.

2.6. International Students

International students are responsible to fulfil their visa requirements in order to attend the course in Switzerland.

2.7. Disability Statement

Applicants who require special consideration or accommodations due to a disability are asked to indicate this in their application. While we aim to make our courses as accessible as possible, we cannot guarantee that all individual needs can be fully accommodated.

3. COURSE INFORMATION

3.1. Course Title

The complete title of the course is AMI Montessori Diploma Primary (3-6).

3.2. Course Description

A comprehensive study of Montessori pedagogy with a particular emphasis on the developmental needs of children between the ages of three and six.

3.3. Course Delivery

A minimum of 400 hours of classroom-based instruction, including lectures, at least 140 hours of supervised work with Montessori materials, and 170 hours dedicated to observation and teaching practice in Montessori environments.

3.4. Course Dates

see separate sheet.

3.5. Course Units

The courses units in the AMI Diploma are:

Title	Code	Description
The Montessori Philosophy, Psychology and Child Development	AMID201	This course component introduces Dr Maria Montessori's philosophy and psychology of human development, focusing on early learning and child development from three to six years of age.
The Child's Acquisition of Fundamental Learning Skills	AMID202	This course component introduces the exercises of daily life (practical life). These exercises promote coordination of movement, independent function, social grace, self-esteem, impulse control, empathy, attention, and concentration through the integration of mind and body.
The Development and Education of the Senses	AMID203	This course component introduces the activities known in Montessori education known as Exercises for the Education of the Senses. These are designed to lead the child to an intelligent and imaginative exploration of the world. Content includes identification of a child's process of classifying his world, problem solving, decision making and critical thinking. This area includes extensions in the areas of music, geometry, geography, and botany.
Language and Literacy	AMID204	This course component introduces exercises for the development of spoken and written language, reading readiness, pre-reading and reading skills appropriate for children ages 3-6. Content includes a focus on self-confidence and self-expression within a social setting. There is also emphasis on spoken and written language in the areas of daily life, storytelling, composition, literature, geography, history, biology, science, music, art, as well as the functional aspects of grammar, syntax, and reading analysis.
Mathematics	AMID205	This course component is designed to explore the way in which a young child develops their 'mathematical mind' and to show by demonstration and lecture the Montessori activities that provide sensorial foundations for geometry and algebra, counting and arithmetic.
Montessori Materials and their Role in Assisting Child Development	AMID206	The aim of this subject is to acquire a deep understanding of the qualities of the Montessori materials and their function as aids to child development.
The Critical Role of Observation	AMID207	The aim of this subject is to observe children in Montessori classrooms in order to appreciate the role of observation as a major source of information

		about the child. Through the experience the student will come to realise the role of exact, detailed, objective observations in facilitating a greater understanding of the Montessori theory of growth and development. An additional aim is to raise awareness of the importance and nature of the interactions between the child, the adult, and the prepared environment.
Montessori Professional Experience	AMID208	The aim of this subject is to provide the opportunity to work under the direction of a qualified and experienced Montessori teacher, to apply the acquired theoretical knowledge of child growth and development to practical situations in established Montessori classrooms.

Educational Theory and Practice	AMID209	This subject will introduce students to a selection of theories of education and child development. The students will be introduced to the profound nature and effects of parent/child issues on the development of young children.
Administration	AMID210	This subject will assist in informing and preparing students for the administrative and professional environment in which they are likely to be working.
Legal Issues and OHS	AMID211	This subject will assist in informing and preparing students for the administrative and professional environment in which they are likely to be working.
Reading and Discussion Sessions	AMID212	The students are to read books and make use of them for both their written work/essays as well as practice with material and related discussions. The course reading list includes required and recommended titles.
Written Work	AMID213	Each student shall compile an individual manual for each area of the Course. These manuals should include an introduction to each area; a description of each piece of material; the age of the child working with the material; and the aims and purposes of the material. The manuals are the student's personal record of their course work; the work is supervised with a final assessment at the end of the Course. In order to clarify the basic points connected with Montessori child psychology the students are to write essays on topics supplied by the Course.
Material Making	AMID214	Under supervision students will also engage in material making. All such materials are checked by the Trainer(s).

3.6. Qualification Award

The AMI Diploma is awarded upon the successful completion of all course requirements, including the attendance criteria outlined in the AMI Requirements for Certification document, which is signed by both the Director of Training and the student upon acceptance into the course.

The AMI Diploma is granted once the following course requirements have been satisfactorily fulfilled:

- Attendance
  90% minimum attendance in course lectures and activities, including supervised practice.
- Theory Album
  Compilation and submission of an acceptable theory album.
- Reference Albums
  Compilation and submission of acceptable and original reference albums in all areas.
- Material Making
  Submission of acceptable material making assignments.

- Observation
  80 hours of observation training, on site and in Montessori settings.
- Practice Teaching
  90 hours of practice teaching in a Montessori environment.
- Written Examinations
  Passing marks of 50% or higher on the written examinations.
- Oral Examinations
  Passing marks of 50% or higher on each area of the oral examinations.

Admission to the training course does not guarantee certification.

AMI is widely regarded as a global leader in Montessori education. Its accredited training is known for its rigour and authenticity, and the AMI Diploma is recognised internationally.

Awarding of this AMI Diploma does not qualify the holder to train other teachers.

3.7. Required Materials and Supplies

Each student is required to prepare specific materials for classroom use. Students are liable for the purchase of all items needed to make these specific materials.

3.8. Required Readings

Students will be required to read selected materials and participate in discussions on assigned topics bevor and throughout the course.

By Dr Maria Montessori:

1. The Secret of Childhood
2. The Discovery of the Child
3. The Absorbent Mind
4. The Formation of Man
5. Education and Peace
6. The Advanced Montessori Method, Vol. 1
7. 1946 London Lecures

By other authors:

8. The Four Planes of Education (AMI Pamphlet) By Mario M. Montessori, Snr.
9. The Human Tendencies and Montessori Education (AMI Pamphlet)

3.9. Recommended Readings

By Dr Maria Montessori:

1. From Childhood to Adolescence
2. To Educate the Human Potential
3. Education for a New World
4. The Child in the Family

By other authors:

5. The Child, Society, and the World By Silvana Quattrocchi Montanaro, MD

6. Understanding the Human Being By Mario M. Montessori, Jnr
7. Education for Human Development By E.M. Standing
8. Maria Montessori, Her Life and Work By E.M. Standing

3.10. Director of Training

Mariza Hefty

- Born on 21 January 1970 in Männedorf, Canton of Zurich, Switzerland
- 1990: Trained as KindererzieherIn / KindergartenTeacher / Worked in Day care centers
- 2000–2005: Established and managed her own Day care center, Wundertüte
- 2005–2022 Obtained AMI Montessori diploma and worked in various Montessori institutions in Switzerland
- 1996–2023 Organised AMI courses at the International Training Centre of Switzerland (MCH)
- 2020–2026 Board member at MCH
- 1995 – 2025 Teaching on the training course for Childcare Specialists (EFZ) and serving as a cantonal examiner for final examinations
- 2000–present: Advising Montessori institutions on quality improvement
- 2023 AMI Trainer Diploma for children aged 3–6
- 2023 – present: delivering AMI 3–6 Diploma and Orientation Courses at MCH
- 2027 organisation and delivering face to face AMI 3–6 Diploma and Orientation Courses at International Montessori Academy Biloba Switzerland (IMABS)

3.11. Course Details

3.11.1. Albums

Each student is required to prepare a personal reference album for every curriculum area covered in the course. The process of writing and illustrating these albums serves as a way to internalise and restate the course content, demonstrating that the student has understood the material and can present it in a clear and coherent manner. Class notes, both written and illustrated, form the foundation for the preparation of these albums. Students should adhere to the recommended format, and albums should be either typed or neatly handwritten.

Albums are reviewed regularly by the Trainer, with support from album readers, and students receive written feedback as part of the evaluation process.

3.11.2. Supervised Practice with Montessori Materials

Students are required to complete supervised practice under the guidance of the Trainer. This practice enables students to deepen their understanding and refine their use of the didactic materials before beginning work with children in a classroom setting.

Sessions are designed to create an interactive environment in which students can individually demonstrate how they would present activities to a child, followed by constructive group discussions on the effectiveness of the presentation and its key elements. These discussions also help connect the practical use of the materials with the child's development.

3.11.3. Theory Papers

Theory papers or assignments are completed by students during the course and take the form of essay-style work on theoretical topics. A list of topics is provided early in the course. The main sources for these papers are lecture notes and the required readings. The purpose of the theory papers is to support students in understanding the significance of Montessori philosophy, and they also serve as preparation for Written Examination Paper A.

It is essential that students keep up with their coursework, as those who fall behind often find it very difficult to catch up later.

3.11.4. Observation and Teaching Practice

Observation is central to the Montessori teacher's role. During the course, students complete 80 hours of observation of children. In addition, they must successfully complete 90 hours of work experience in Montessori 3–6 environments. Each student carries out a self-assessment of their practice and is also evaluated by those responsible for the learning environment.

Confidentiality is required at any time and place, students are working with children. If questions arise during there Observation or teaching Practice, they may talk to their Trainer and discuss them.

3.11.5. Written Examinations

The course timetable specifies the dates of the written examinations, and all students are required to be available to sit these examinations on the scheduled dates. Only those who have completed the albums will be admitted to the written exams.

There are two written examination papers: Paper A and Paper B.

1. Paper A contains theory questions on key Montessori concepts including child development, the role of the adult, the role of the environment, the study of the child, self-awareness in young children, development of movement and independence.
2. Paper B contains questions which reflect the basic Montessori principles and how these underpin the key materials in each of the curriculum areas. While this paper is more practically oriented than Paper A, questions are worded so that they are different to those asked in the Oral Exam.

In each paper, exactly 4 questions out of a choice of 7 need to be answered.

3.11.6. Oral Examinations

Each student is required to demonstrate their knowledge in an oral examination before an examining committee selected by AMI and the Director of Training.

During the examination, students are expected to present Montessori educational materials across all four areas of the prepared environment. They are assessed based on their demonstrated competence with the materials, as well as their ability to explain the connections between the materials and the underlying theoretical principles.

3.11.7. Conferences

Conferences between the student and the Director of Training are scheduled during the course, including again after the written examinations and before the oral examinations. In these meetings, the student's performance is reviewed and feedback is provided on completed work and overall progress in the course.

Students also have the opportunity to ask questions and seek support during these conferences. Additional meetings may be arranged when necessary; however, responsibility for academic progress remains with the student.

3.11.8. Internet Access

Internet access will be required from time to time during the course. Should the need arise, parts of the course may be hosted online until such time that face-to-face presentations are able to proceed.

4. FINANCES

4.1. Course Fees

Total 8'500.- CHF. (inkl. Registration and Exam fees)

The course fees include the first year of a **AMI membership**. Students may choose to renew their membership for subsequent years. The Academy advises students to continue this membership.

4.2. Payments

Registration fees are payable when applying for admission as a student. Registration fees are non-refundable.

Tuition fees need to be settled at the following intervals:

down payment:	submit with enrolment documents	CHF	500.00
Fees 1st instalment:	due upon receipt of confirmation for the course	CHF	3'800.00
Fees 2nd instalment:	Due before start of Module 5	CHF	2'100.00
Fees 3rd instalment:	Due before start of Module 7	CHF	2'100.00
Total fees		CHF	8`500.00

Course fees can also be paid in monthly instalments upon request with an interest rate of 4%.

Failure to pay tuition fees by the required deadline will result in students being unable to continue attending modules until their account has been fully updated.

Students whose accounts have not been paid in full at least one month before their first examination date will not be permitted to participate in the written and oral examinations.

4.3. Banking Details

Montessori Biloba Schule, 5012 Schönenwerd
Raiffeisen Bank am Eppenberg / Swift Code RAIFCH22XXX
CH03 8080 8008 7127 4830 9

4.4. Late Payment of Fees

Students who experience difficulties in meeting payment deadlines are required to contact the Academy by email at least 10 days before the payment due date. The email should include an explanation of the situation together with a proposed payment arrangement for the outstanding fees.

Emails to be sent to: kurs@montessori-biloba.ch

4.5. Cancellation and Refund Policy

All requests for fee refunds or for cancellation of enrolment must be addressed in written form.

4.5.1. Cancellations

Please send an email to: kurs@montessori-biloba.ch to submit a cancellation of enrolment.

4.5.2. Refunds

Registration fees are non-refundable.

Course fees are calculated to cover the costs incurred in running the entire course. For this reason, early cancellation or withdrawal during the course is not permitted under any circumstances.

Should a student nevertheless withdraw after the course has definitively commenced, this will result in a financial loss to the Academy Biloba amounting to the outstanding course fees. The student therefore undertakes to cover the following costs in addition to the course fees already due in accordance with point 4.2

At the time of withdrawal before start of the 1st module:	CHF	1’400.00
At the time of withdrawal before the start of the 2nd module:	CHF	1’800.00
At the time of withdrawal before 6th module:	CHF	2’400.00
At the time of withdrawal before the examination:	CHF	600.00

If a participant is unable to continue attending the course due to force majeure, illness or other serious circumstances beyond their control, the Academy Biloba will endeavour to find an appropriate solution. Depending on the situation, this may involve a partial refund or a mutually agreed arrangement in the interests of both parties.

5. ACADEMY POLICIES

5.1. Academic Integrity Policy

Any of the following is an act of academic dishonesty, which may result in dismissal from the course.

• Plagiarism
Defined as, “the use of intellectual material produced by another person without acknowledging its source.” This also applies to texts regenerated by AI.

• Cheating
Defined as, “fraud, deceit, or dishonesty in an academic assignment, including the use of or attempted use of materials, or assisting others

in using materials that are prohibited or inappropriate in the context of the academic assignment in question."

• Falsification or Alteration of Documents
This includes, but is not limited to, providing false information, copyright violation, misrepresentation of credentials, and alteration of training centre documents.

5.2. Reproduction of Materials Policy

Each student follows an individual learning journey throughout the course, and all work, albums, and materials prepared are intended solely for their personal use when working with children after graduation. These materials must not be reproduced or shared in any form. Any unauthorized reproduction or distribution of work may result in dismissal from the course.

5.3. Recording of Lectures and Supervised Practice Policy

Unless written permission has been granted by the Director of Training, the recording of lectures and supervised practice sessions is prohibited. All lectures and presentations remain the intellectual property of the presenter. Any unauthorized recording may result in dismissal from the course.

Students are welcome to take photos and social videos for private use during lunch breaks, as well as before and after class. We encourage you to enjoy the course experience and create memories to take home with you.

5.4. Attendance Policy

Students must achieve a minimum of 90% attendance in order to be eligible to sit the written and oral examinations. It is therefore essential that absences, whether due to medical reasons or family emergencies, are kept to an absolute minimum. This strict attendance policy reflects the demanding and intensive structure of the course, in which even a small number of absences may negatively affect a student's progress.

If you are unable to attend a class, you must notify the Student Group Leader and the Director of Training as soon as possible.

Students are expected to arrange with the Director of Training to complete any coursework missed as a result of approved absences.

Where a student accumulates many absences, the Director of Training will hold a meeting with the student, and the student may be placed on probation until their attendance improves.

If a student has accumulated so many hours of absence that they can no longer be made up, the student may make them up in the next course and will only then be admitted to the examination.

5.5. Electronic Devices and Internet Policy

The lecture and practice rooms are regarded as professional working environments. Therefore, unless otherwise authorised in writing by the Director of Training, the use of electronic devices such as mobile phones during class is prohibited. This policy is intended to reduce distractions for students, fellow classmates, and the Trainer, while encouraging full engagement in all group activities.

Electronic devices may, however, be used in other areas of the Academy as well as during lunch breaks and before or after scheduled classes.

5.6. Social Media Policy

We ask that you be mindful when posting on social media. Please refrain from making negative comments about the Academy or other students.

5.7. Alcohol and Drugs Policy

Students are prohibited from arriving at the Academy under the influence of alcohol or other substances. The consumption of alcohol, drugs, or any illegal substances in the Academy or surrounding premises is also strictly forbidden.

5.8. Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Policy

Biloba Academy maintains a strict zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and discrimination. The Academy is committed to providing a safe environment for all individuals and will thoroughly investigate any allegations of sexual harassment or discrimination.

5.9. Dismissal of a Student

The Academy reserves the right to dismiss a student if they are found to have acted in a manner that violates the student code of conduct, compromises the safety of others on the Academy, or is otherwise disrespectful or not in keeping with the values of the Biloba community.

Dismissal may also result from a breach of one or more Academy policies. Where applicable, specific policies will indicate whether an infraction may lead to dismissal.

5.10. Grievance Policy / Complaints Procedure

- Step 1:
  - Any complaint related to academic matters must first be discussed with the Director of Training in an effort to resolve the issue.
  - Any complaint concerning administrative matters must initially be addressed with the Course administrator.
  - Any complaint relating to financial matters must first be discussed with the Finance Lead.

- Step 2:
  - If the issue cannot be resolved through discussion with the relevant person listed above, students may escalate the matter to the Operations Lead of the Academy.

  Step 3:
  - Should the matter remain unresolved after review by the Operations Lead, students may then approach the responsible Board Member of the Academy.

If the problem cannot be resolved by the Executive Board, there is the option of involving AMI as a last instance.

Complaints may be submitted via email to the Office Administrator at: kurs@montessori-biloba.ch

The complaint will be reviewed by the relevant section and a response will be sent by email within a week.

6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

6.1. Statement of Confidentiality and Accessibility of Files

Evaluations of a student's course work and daily attendance records are held by the Academy. The student's file is archived, once a student completes the course or is dismissed from the course.

All the following contains a student file, or the appropriate portion thereof:

- Application form and all supporting documents.
- Student records from the course.
- Summary evaluations of albums, materials, observations, and practice teaching.
- Summary sheets with scores from the written and oral examinations.
- Copy of the Montessori Diploma.

All student files remain the sole possession of the Academy and the Director of Training and may only be accessed to the extent required for a legitimate and lawful purpose. All student files are held in the strictest of confidence.

Further, each student authorises the Academy and the Director of Training to provide AMI with a copy of relevant student records where required by AMI.

6.2. Course Format Changes

The Academy reserves the right to modify the format of a course, including changing delivery from in-person to online, where it determines that such changes are in the best interests of both the students and the Academy. One possible reason for such adjustments may include lockdown measures resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Students will be informed by email and/or through an instant messaging platform. Students are responsible for ensuring that the Academy has their most up-to-date contact information.

6.3. Unexpected Closures

In cases of emergency or unforeseen closure of the Academy, students will be notified by email and/or through an instant messaging platform. Please ensure that the Academy always has your latest contact details on record.

6.4. Dress

Students are expected to maintain an appropriate standard of appearance and dress at all times. Clothing should allow for ease of movement within the practice room environment. Garments displaying offensive language or inappropriate images are not permitted. Students are also expected to dress appropriately when attending an observation school.

6.5. Food and Drinks

Students are responsible for their own food and drinks. The Academy will be equipped with a small corner kitchenette, microwave, fridge, and kettle for students to use. In addition to this there are dishwashing facilities in the building for students to use. Food and drinks may not be taken into the lecture or practice room.

6.6. Personal Belongings

There are no locker facilities available. The Academy is not responsible for any loss of, or damage to, personal belongings.

6.7. Smoking

Smoking is restricted to specific areas outside. Smoking inside is prohibited and may lead to dismissal of the course.

6.8. Visitors

Speak to an Academy team member before inviting a visitor. All visitors should check in with an Academy team member upon arrival.