

# Yoga

## benefits for the whole child

Maria Montessori once commented that “children are the makers of man” and that by providing them with a foundation of love and respect – for themselves and the world around them – we help the new generation to create and live harmonious and satisfying futures.

She saw each child as a unique individual, who developed at their own rate, and believed in educating the whole child, with movement paramount to the education of the mind. “Movement, or physical activity, is thus an essential factor in intellectual growth, which depends upon the impressions received from outside,” she wrote in *Discovery of the Child*. “Through movement we come in contact with external reality, and it is through these contacts that we eventually acquire even abstract ideas.”

YogaBeez Children’s Yoga combines traditional yoga with the philosophies of Maria Montessori and other well-respected educators to create classes that exercise, energise, empower, relax and nurture the development



exercising, educating and empowering the whole child

- Both are non-competitive with the emphasis being on the process and not the end result – we encourage children to enjoy the poses without trying to perfect them
- Just as Montessori aims to build self-esteem, we modify the poses and give children the tools they need to

YogaBeez Children’s Yoga incorporates the Montessori curriculum into its classes in order to stimulate all areas of a child’s development.

Personal, social and emotional: We use group and partner poses to encourage social interaction. We always foster a win-win attitude – there are no losers in a yoga class. Just taking part and putting in your best effort is all that’s required. Emotionally we

**Yoga, like Montessori education, is a process of discovery. A mindful, non-competitive exercise, emphasising movement and breathing and the connection of body and mind, it helps students to understand our own nature and live harmoniously with others.**

of the whole child. In an age where technology means that children often spend long hours glued to a screen, this is more relevant than ever.

Yoga, like Montessori education, is a process of discovery. A mindful, non-competitive exercise, emphasising movement and breathing and the



connection of body and mind, it helps students of any age to understand our own nature and live harmoniously with others. In fact Yoga and Montessori philosophies align seamlessly in many ways:

- Both focus on

complete them successfully

- Both work to balance and calm the child
- Both begin simply and gradually increase in difficulty, moving from the concrete to the abstract
- Both value movement as vital to the development of the mind
- There are three parts to a yoga pose: going into the pose, being in the pose and coming out of the pose with control. These correlate with carrying a piece of work from the shelf, using the work and thoughtfully placing the work back on the shelf
- Just as the Silence Game is a vital ingredient in Montessori classrooms, meditation is introduced to children in yoga classes to help improve awareness and focus



encourage not only interaction with others but also looking within to find your inner silence.

Breathing exercises teach children to master their own emotions – breathing out stress, breathing in calm, exhaling anger and inhaling joy. We teach children to try and focus on the positive but also that all emotions are recognised and welcomed.

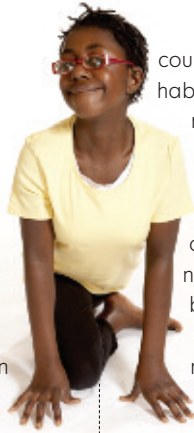
The Volcano Pose is a great tool for noticing anger or anxiety in the body and finding a healthy way to channel these sometimes crippling emotions.

Communication, language and literacy: Each yoga class has a theme which we discuss and explore. Through the theme of the class we discover the anatomy of our bodies and learn the scientific names for our bones and muscles. We chat about nutrition

and how to live healthily. The children take turns to read guided imagery or make up stories during the relaxation period at the end of the class. We bring books to life with yoga, play name games and explore the alphabet through our poses. The vocabulary we use in the classes is rich and varied and languages from around the world are introduced. We also encourage teachers to set up pen pal projects with children in other yoga classes across the globe.

**Physical development:** When moving through the poses, children become more aware of their bodies. They are constantly reminded to listen to their body and observe how it feels. Yoga strengthens, stretches and loosens muscles. Senses are educated and each pose has a particular balancing effect on the body's various systems – skeletal, muscular, circulatory, respiratory, digestive, nervous, lymphatic, hormonal etc.

**Knowledge and understanding of the world:** We use the theme of each class to explore different cultures, languages, foods, instruments and music from different



countries. Fauna and flora and animal's habitats are learnt through adventures to rainforests, jungles, wetlands, under the sea, to space and so on. We use the poses to plant seeds in various learning areas so that the children are continuously being exposed to new facts about ecology, science and biology.

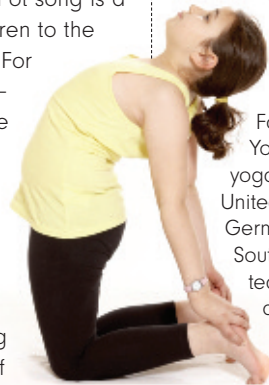
**Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy:** We highlight patterns, sequences, angles, numerical awareness, counting and rhythm while practicing poses.

For example, singing the Tea Pot song is a fun way to introduce young children to the Triangle / Trikonasa yoga pose. For older groups we look at angles – obtuse and acute – and measure the various triangles our body makes: scalene, isosceles, equilateral.

**Creative development:** We encourage the imagination and creativity of each child through the use of drawing and colouring meditations. We make models of

skeletons, paint interpretations of visualisations and prepare healthy snacks. Music from all over the world is incorporated into the classes through different instruments, rhythms and beats. One area we try and escape from is the technical world. Children receive so much stimulation from technology and the media today – in our yoga classes we aim to leave all this at the door and come back to our basics: our bodies, minds and spirits.

We do not incorporate any religion into our sessions; we simply honour and respect the diversity of all beliefs, cultures and traditions – YogaBeez aims to share the countless benefits of yoga with as many children as possible.



**Bryony Duckitt** is the Director and Founder of YogaBeez International. YogaBeez runs accredited children's yoga teacher training courses in the United Kingdom, Belgium, France, Greece, Germany, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and South Africa and has a database of teachers available to work in schools across the globe. See [www.yogabeez.com](http://www.yogabeez.com) for more details.

## Certificate in Higher Education

### Montessori Early Childhood Practice

- Level 4 qualification in one year full-time
- Meets the Early Years Educator criteria
- Combine college study with professional placement in Montessori setting
- 120 University credits

STUDENT FINANCE AVAILABLE



MCI regularly hosts **OPEN EVENTS** to provide further information on their range of Montessori courses.

Email: [admissions@montessori.org.uk](mailto:admissions@montessori.org.uk) or telephone: **020 7493 8300**

[www.mci.montessori.org.uk](http://www.mci.montessori.org.uk)



**Montessori St Nicholas**  
Child led, future focused