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## PREPRIMARY CURRICULUM

## **THE PROGRAM**

The Students in Montessori Children's Center spend a good portion of their day involved in both group and individual activities using Montessori materials. Lessons are also given in Sign Language, Spanish, Art, Music and Physical Education. Field trips and special activities as well play an important role in the children's education.

Our preprimary environment for children ages 3 through 5 maintains a staff/student ratio of 7 to 1 in the classroom and a maximum of 10 to 1 in daycare and creative arts. Children may attend a half day or full day program, and must be toilet trained.

Montessori education employs this mixed-age grouping so that children may move at their individual academic pace, while staying with their social peers. Children also have the opportunity to instruct and assist other children. This mixed-age group mirrors the world they are preparing to enter and provides the opportunity for developing the skills required to live effectively in society.

Our program emphasizes:

- \* Learning through the use of concrete materials developed by Dr. Maria Montessori.
- \* Education based on individual progress according to the abilities of each child.
- \* Learning through real life experiences (field trips, special projects, etc.).
- \* Assisting the child to become an independent, competent, and confident individual.
- \* Respect for the developing person in each child.

## THE CURRICULUM

**SENSORIAL:** It is the nature of the Sensorial curriculum in the Montessori classroom to enhance and hone the five senses. The curriculum is designed to sharpen perceptions and develop these natural senses to their keenest abilities. The child will learn to observe and note the smallest differences in size, shape, color, touch, temperature, smell and taste. He will compare these differences and learn to order them. Through the use of Montessori materials and activities the child's ability to discriminate sensorial impressions is greatly increased.

**LANGUAGE:** The direct aims for the language curriculum are to develop and strengthen in the child the ability to make comparisons and decisions in determining similarities and differences in words, sounds, and written symbols. The language program stimulates self-expression and confidence. Through a phonetic approach, a firm basis in spelling and reading is developed. With these acquired skills, reading becomes effortless and pleasurable.

**PRATICAL LIFE:** The everyday living area of the Montessori classroom is the most important and basic foundation block for the development of the whole child. It is here that a child begins to discover all that he can be. This introductory area includes care of self, care of the environment, grace and courtesy. While the child is learning practical skills such as snapping, zipping, greeting and sharing, he is also developing concentration, advancing his independence and building small muscle control. Everyday living exercises fortify a child's own sense of order and correspondingly develop that sense into a full work cycle. Activities are presented to the child in such a way that concentration, coordination, independence and order are developed.

**MATHEMATICS:** The objectives of the math curriculum are to establish within the child the basic and life building attitudes of concentration, coordination, confidence, order and independence. Montessori materials allow the child to see concretely instead of abstractly the quantity and later the function he or she is performing. This hands-on approach allows the child to experience rather than memorize math. As the child follows his own natural curiosity, he will gain a concept of numbers in which the precise and logical nature of mathematics will flourish naturally.

**HISTORY:** The study of history begins in the preprimary program with personal timelines and continues through civilizations, as well as, other particular subjects such as transportation, inventions, musicians, and others.

**SCIENCE:** The study of science is pursued through real life objects in the classroom. Plants and animals are studied in the classroom. Experiments with magnets, the microscope, water and plants are always being undertaken as a group or individually. Cards for studying botany, zoology and physiology are also available to the child.

**GEOGRAPHY:** The study of geography begins using large puzzle maps and simple globes. Dr. Montessori emphasized the study of geography because it is a subject important to everyday life.

**MUSIC:** Musical studies begin in class with ear training exercises and continue through elementary classes with the study on notation and playing instruments (e.g. recorder, Montessori bells). The Montessori approach to music is a four-faceted one; music appreciation, ear training, notation and playing instruments.

**ART:** Art education helps the child to learn creativity, self-expression, resourcefulness, flexibility, self-confidence and small motor coordination. Art includes formal art classes and art appreciation. Art is also incorporated into many of our classroom and after school activities.

**SPANISH:** All preprimary students receive Spanish instruction weekly. Games, songs, pictures and real objects are used to make this subject more interesting and enjoyable. Each classroom is equipped with Spanish materials to further their studies.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION:** Because physical education is a vital part of the development of the total child with which Montessori education is very concerned, physical activities are a part of our program. All children participate in a physical education class stressing movement, large motor skills, hand-eye coordination and group play on a weekly basis.

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Montessori Children's Center follows a regular school calendar from early September to mid-June with breaks at major holidays and mid-February. Professional development days may also be scheduled throughout the year.

A summer program is available.

Progress reports are given out in January and June. All directresses hold office hours one day per week from 4 to 5 p.m. to encourage a close parent/teacher communication.

We hope you take this opportunity to involve your child in our educational program at the preprimary level.

Welcome to our Montessori community.

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