

TODDLER CURRICULUM INFORMATION

Practical Life

The Practical Life area in a Montessori Children's House is fundamental to children's development and the Montessori philosophy. These activities help the child adapt to their environment as they learn to engage in everyday exercises and activities in a purposeful way.

The activities within the Practical Life area help the child to gain control in the coordination of their movement, and support the child in gaining independence as they adapt to their society. The Practical Life exercises also aid in the growth and development of the child's intellect and concentration and will in turn also help the child develop an orderly and logical way of thinking.

Practical Life exercises can be categorised into four different areas: Preliminary Activities, Care of the Self and of the Environment, Grace and Courtesy lessons and Control of Movement. Working within these areas allows the child to learn how to do every day exercises as part of their society, that enables them to care for themselves independently (e.g. washing hands), or care for their environment (e.g. dusting a table).

Grace and Courtesy activities are social lessons that help the child develop a respect for themselves, their peers and their environment. The child also is able to learn his or her own movements and how to refine his or her coordination through Control of Movement activities, such as pouring or spooning. The repetition of working with the Practical Life materials, overtime gives the child a sense of responsibility and ownership of their learning environment. It helps them to feel as part of a community as they become a valued member. The work in Practical Life also contributes to the child's overall development of concentration, independence, fine and gross motor control, orderly working habits and logical and sequential thinking.

Sensorial

The sensorial materials in a Montessori learning environment help to familiarize the child with their world through their senses. Exploring the world using all senses was important to Montessori and her beliefs on children's education as she viewed our senses as the gateways to intelligence. Children in a Montessori environment are experiencing the sensorial materials during the first plane of development and are very much sensorial learners. Montessori felt that it was appropriate to support children's experiences with the materials in the environment by giving them the tools to acquire an understanding of their world through their senses. The more classifications the child is exposed to, the more refined their thinking can become. The continued classification of their environment helps the

child perceive the world more accurately. This allows the child to refine their senses. The more educated our senses are and the more experiences we have, enable our brain to become more perceptive. The sensorial materials in Montessori education also allow the children to further develop a love for their environment.

The sensorial materials invite the child to sort things by size, shape, colour, touch, sound, temperature, and weight. They further their experience with classification in a scientific manner when completing sensorial activities that incorporate grading (e.g. from light to dark, from large to small, and from rough to smooth). The sensorial materials allow for individual work, encourage repetition and include a control of error so that the child is able to correct themselves independently, without being afraid of making a mistake.

Language

The acquisition of language is something that comes naturally for the child depending on their environment. The Montessori classroom is a language-rich environment and a child is immediately given a preliminary introduction to language. Their vocabulary begins expanding through spontaneous conversations, stories, songs, poems and classified cards. In a Montessori environment, the development of language is promoted in all areas of the classroom and we focus on supporting language and the development of vocabulary is every aspect of the Toddlers' school day.

Counting & Numeracy

Numeracy skills are introduced very concretely to the child and the activities progress into more abstract concepts. Like other areas of the Montessori environment, the activities move from simple to more complex. For the child to understand the concept of Mathematics, they must first understand quantity. We allow the children to explore and problem solve by giving them a range of material to manipulate. The math materials in the toddler classroom allow the child to spontaneously explore quantity and numbers in concrete form. Songs that include counting and sequencing are included every day during circle time to continue developing a mathematical foundation at this stage.

Arts and Crafts

Children are encouraged to explore their imagination freely, using a variety of mediums to express themselves. We emphasize the importance on the process of the work rather than the finished product. In our environment, Arts and crafts are traditionally done at the child's own will during the morning work cycle.

Music

A specialised music enrichment programme is offered for all students. Classes take place on a weekly basis and include singing, dancing and movement, games and exploration with instruments.

Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework

At Montessori School of Cayman we incorporate the learning outcomes outlined in the C.I. Early Years Curriculum Framework into our curriculum in all programmes. The framework is focused around four areas of development: Exploration, Respect, Communication and Well-Being.

These learning outcomes can be found in the material description for all of the Montessori activities that make up our curriculum. Each lesson description can be found on our Transparent Classroom app.

Various themes that will be explored by our Toddler students over this school year:

- All About Me
- Feelings & Emotions
- Halloween & Harvest
- Colours
- Shapes
- Transportation
- Christmas
- Celebrating where we are from
- Easter
- Animals
- Plants & Seeds
- Seasons
- Fruit and Vegetables
- Under the Sea
- Being Kind to our Earth (reduce, reuse, recycle)
- Sports