



## Casa Programme Curriculum at Montessori School of Cayman

The Casa Programme at the Montessori School of Cayman offers a warm, engaging, and purposeful environment designed to support the developmental milestones of children. At this crucial stage of growth, our curriculum emphasizes fostering independence, creativity, social development, and a deep love of learning. While we follow the Montessori philosophy, our programme is also closely aligned with the Cayman Islands Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (CIEYCF), ensuring that it meets local educational standards and provides a well-rounded, developmentally appropriate learning experience.

Additionally, our third year (Kindergarten) curriculum is closely linked with the standards set by the Cayman Islands Primary National Curriculum and the UK National Curriculum, ensuring that students are well-prepared for their transition to primary school. The integration of Montessori principles with the CIEYCF, along with the alignment to primary curriculum standards, ensures that our children thrive in a comprehensive and enriching learning environment that nurtures their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development.

### Areas of Development and Activities

#### Practical Life

The Practical Life area in the Montessori Casa environment is essential for developing independence, concentration, and motor control. Through purposeful activities, children learn to care for themselves and their environment while developing critical life skills.

#### Activities found in Practical Life:

- **Care of the Self:** Children practice activities such as washing hands, brushing their teeth, and dressing themselves. These activities promote personal independence, coordination, and self-care.
- **Care of the Environment:** Activities like dusting, sweeping, and setting the table help children develop an understanding of their role in maintaining their surroundings. These tasks build responsibility, order, and a respect for their environment.
- **Grace and Courtesy:** Social lessons focus on teaching children how to interact politely with others, such as greeting a friend, saying "please" and "thank you," and sharing materials. These activities develop respect for others and enhance social skills.

- **Control of Movement:** Activities like walking on a line, transferring objects with tongs, or practicing balance on a beam support the development of coordination, concentration, and motor control.

**Link to CIEYCF:** These Practical Life activities align with the CIEYCF's emphasis on communication, respect, and exploration, providing the foundation for emotional well-being, social competence, and independence.

## Sensorial

The Sensorial area helps children refine their sensory perceptions, enhancing cognitive development and supporting intellectual growth by engaging them in activities that involve the senses of sight, touch, taste, smell, and hearing.

### Activities found in Sensorial:

- **Pink Tower:** This classic Montessori material, made up of ten pink cubes that vary in size, is used to develop the child's ability to distinguish differences in size and refine their spatial awareness. It fosters concentration, coordination, and order.
- **Sound Boxes:** Children explore different sound combinations by shaking and matching pairs of sound boxes. This develops auditory discrimination and enhances their ability to focus and differentiate sounds.
- **Texture Tablets:** By feeling various textures, children develop tactile awareness. This activity helps enhance the child's vocabulary and understanding of the physical world through touch.
- **Grading and Sorting:** Children engage in activities that involve sorting objects by size, color, or shape. These exercises promote classification skills and logical thinking.

**Link to CIEYCF:** Sensorial activities support the development of exploration and communication by refining sensory experiences and encouraging children to classify and understand their environment.

## Language

Language development in the Casa programme fosters both oral and written communication. Children are encouraged to build their vocabulary and learn the foundations of reading and writing.

### Activities found in Language:

- **Storytelling and Vocabulary Games:** Through spontaneous conversations, storytelling, and songs, children expand their vocabulary. They also practice articulation and language comprehension through phonetic games.
- **Sandpaper Letters:** Children are introduced to the tactile experience of writing through the use of sandpaper letters. This helps develop fine motor skills and prepares them for writing.

- **Moveable Alphabet:** This activity allows children to compose words by arranging letters, which encourages early literacy and spelling.
- **Writing with Metal Insets:** Children use metal insets to refine their fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination, building a foundation for later writing tasks.

**Link to CIEYCF:** Language activities foster communication and respect, and support the development of cognitive and social-emotional skills as children learn to express themselves clearly and confidently.

## Mathematics

Montessori mathematics materials provide a concrete approach to numeracy, where children explore concepts of quantity, number, and mathematical relationships through hands-on activities.

### Activities found in Mathematics:

- **Number Rods and Cards:** Children match number cards to rods, introducing them to numbers and quantities in a concrete, visual way.
- **Golden Beads:** This material is used to introduce the decimal system, allowing children to understand units, tens, hundreds, and thousands in a tactile way.
- **Memorisation of Number Combinations:** Simple addition and subtraction activities, using objects or beads, allow children to internalise basic number operations.
- **Fractions with Fraction Circles:** Children are introduced to fractions by using colorful fraction circles to understand parts of a whole.

**Link to CIEYCF:** The emphasis on exploration and concentration supports children's understanding of mathematical concepts and helps them approach numeracy in a concrete, hands-on way.

## Culture: Geography, History, Religion, Zoology & Botany

The cultural curriculum helps children develop a deeper understanding of the world, its people, and its ecosystems. Through exploration of various countries, cultures, and sciences, children develop a respect for diversity and a sense of global citizenship.

### Activities:

- **Geography:** In term two, children study the continents, exploring different countries and learning about their geography, history, culture, and environment. This is complemented by field trips, such as visiting the Botanic Park, Cayman Turtle Centre, Nautilus Submarine, and Parrot Sanctuary.
- **History and Culture (Local and Global):** We explore the history of the Cayman Islands, celebrating local symbols, holidays, and stories. Children also compare Caymanian culture to others around the world. In addition, we celebrate and explore cultures and traditions from around the world, helping our students gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the

diverse communities and beliefs that make up our global society. This global perspective enhances their social and cultural awareness, fostering respect and curiosity.

- **Religion, Mindfulness & Meditation:** Montessori valued the ideals and beliefs of all people and cultures. At Montessori School of Cayman, we aim to introduce our students to the many different faiths and cultural practices that exist worldwide. Through our Study of the World in our second term, we explore each continent, learning about the unique celebrations and festivals that take place around the globe. We encourage children from different countries to share their experiences and bring in items to engage in sensory experiences, helping them gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of other cultures. We offer students the opportunity to learn about and participate in the celebrations practiced across the world, fostering respect for individuals with different beliefs. Our goal is to instill a sense of wonder and curiosity about the world in each student. Through daily **Mindfulness and Meditation** classes, children reflect on their own feelings and experiences, developing respect for others and their cultural practices. This helps cultivate empathy and an appreciation for the diversity of beliefs and traditions in our world.
- **Zoology & Botany:** Children study local and international plants and animals, exploring their characteristics, habitats, and roles in nature.

**Link to CIEYCF:** This area ties into the CIEYCF's focus on exploration, communication, and respect, encouraging children to develop a broad understanding of the world and the various cultures that shape it.

### 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.

**Link to CIEYCF:** Arts and crafts support well-being and communication by allowing children to express themselves and engage with their creativity.

### Outdoor Classroom

The Outdoor Classroom provides children with the opportunity to engage in physical and nature-based activities that complement their learning inside.

- **Gardening:** Children plant, water, and care for plants, learning about nature and responsibility.
- **Creative Play:** Outdoor play includes activities such as drawing on a large chalkboard, mud kitchens, and water play.

**Link to CIEYCF:** The Outdoor Classroom enhances physical well-being, communication, and exploration, allowing children to connect with nature in meaningful ways.

## Music and Dance

Specialised music and dance enrichment programmes are offered for all students. Classes take place on a weekly basis and include singing, dancing and movement, games and exploration with instruments. Children learn songs, engage in rhythmic movements, and explore music as an expressive medium.

**Link to CIEYCF:** Music fosters communication and well-being by providing children with an outlet for self-expression and emotional regulation.

## Alignment with the Cayman Islands Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (CIEYCF) and National Standards

At Montessori School of Cayman, we align our Casa Programme with the Cayman Islands Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (CIEYCF), which focuses on four core areas: Exploration, Respect, Communication, and Well-Being. This ensures that our programme nurtures the whole child by fostering their cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development in a holistic manner. Additionally, our third-year (Kindergarten) curriculum aligns closely with the standards set by the Cayman Islands Primary National Curriculum and the UK National Curriculum, ensuring that our students are well-prepared for their transition to primary education.

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 Casa students over this school year:**

- All About Me
- Halloween & Harvest
- Cayman Culture (Pirate's Week)
- Christmas around the World
- Study of the World (exploring the seven Continents)
- Easter & Spring
- Being kind to our Earth (reduce, reuse, recycle)
- Plants & Seeds
- Dinosaurs
- Planets
- Community Helpers
- Coral Reef
- Life Cycles
- Seasons