

Our curriculum. Their journey.

## CASA PROGRAM

Children 3 to 6 years old (Preschool, JK/SK)



“The greatest sign of success for a teacher... is to be able to say, ‘The children are now working as if I did not exist.’” Maria Montessori



Named after Maria Montessori's first program in Rome, *Casa dei Bambini*, our Casa Program is geared toward the growth of the preschool child. It is based on the recognition that this is one of the most critical periods in a child's educational and emotional development.

#### WHAT THEY LEARN AND WHY

Starting around age 3, children have the unique ability to absorb knowledge efficiently. The children explore the world and process information with their senses, which is why the hands-on Montessori materials of the classroom are so very important at this age. These materials are presented in a specific way to appeal to the child's strong sense of order, creating a foundation for their future learning.

All Casa children must be toilet trained. There is no scheduled naptime, however children who are tired are able to lie down on a mat in the classroom.

We encourage all five-year-olds to attend full-day class in the third year of the Casa program.



#### AREAS OF LEARNING

**PRACTICAL LIFE:** Practical life activities continue to reflect daily life, which allows the child to further develop their skills with purposeful, meaningful work. Practical Life activities develop the child's concentration, voluntary control of attention, gross and fine motor skills and the ability to follow the steps required to complete a task. The practical life exercises fall into four main groups:

- Care of the environment
- Control of movement
- Care of the self
- Grace and courtesy/ social relations

**SENSORIAL:** At this age (3-6 years), children use their senses to explore the environment, which they strive to classify in an ordered manner. The content of the Sensorial program includes:

- Auditory Discrimination
- Visual Discrimination
- Tactile Discrimination
- Olfactory and Gustatory – using taste and smell to identify and experience different types of foods etc.
- Stereognostic Exploration – feeling around an object to gain knowledge of it

**LANGUAGE:** Birth to 6 years is a period of intense language acquisition. Receptive and expressive language skills are nurtured by focusing first on the spoken word then progressing to writing, followed by reading and the exploration of grammar. This area builds upon the foundation of concentration, logical sequential thinking and motor control nurtured in the earlier Practical Life and Sensorial areas.

**SOCIAL:** Opportunities for the awareness of one's needs and the needs of others are supported through the lessons of our Restitution Process, Grace and Courtesy and Peace Education. Children become profoundly aware of the importance of noticing and acknowledging the needs of others while also honouring their own needs through discussions, modelling behaviour, and dramatization of feelings, positive socialization and conflict resolution. In their final year of this plane of development (age 6), children have moved from "parallel play" to more collaborative interactions with their peers.