

MONTESSORI EDUCATION AT VMS

A Montessori Education is to assist the child in becoming a complete integrated human being by the time they reach adulthood. It is not about intellectual, academic excellence though that may occur. It is about being a caring member of the planet earth.

We believe that our responsibility to our students is to provide them with the necessary tools and environment to experience and discover the joy of learning.

Dr. Montessori taught “no human being is educated by anyone else—the learner must do his own learning, inspired from within.”

The Montessori Method is not for the exceptional child but for all children. The prepared environment for learning meets the physiological and spiritual aspect of learning discovered by Montessori’s scientific investigations. Children, very young children, have a love of work and need to succeed at what they put their hands to. They need order, learn through their senses, can develop self discipline and a strong foundation in language skills and math.

We believe that children need freedom within the guidelines established for them in a properly prepared environment. We believe that there should not be pressure placed on the young child to perform and achieve. It is the process not the product that is important for young children.

Our philosophy is simply stated by this old Chinese proverb:

When I hear, I forget.

When I see, I remember.

When I do, I learn.

In accordance with Dr. Montessori’s philosophy, scientific studies, and observations, we believe the first six years of life to be the foundation upon which the life of each human being constructs themselves. During this all important time of life, a children’s powers of observation, their ability to absorb and retain, explore and discover, present themselves as sensitive periods. A sensitive period allows effortless growth in an area which at another time would require massive effort. During these absorbent periods a thing will captivate the mind and heart of the young child. They will become totally engrossed in acquiring the skill or information which has captivated them. When this sensitive period passes so does the ease with which the child learns and the intensity of interest.

We believe that environment is stronger than will, which is why the environment must be carefully prepared and ordered. This prepared environment allows optimal learning on every level (social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and spiritual). Montessori was the originator of the prepared environment.

The role of the Montessori Guide is to prepare the environment and monitor and guide each child toward individual exploration, self-discipline, independence of thought, self-acceptance, and acceptance of others.

The Environment/ Curriculum

The Montessori Environment and Curriculum present to young children an orderly organized integrated web of exercises which move the children from the concrete to the abstract. It is not a compartmentalized curriculum but flows naturally from one area of the classroom to the other, as the children experience success. These exercises, which we call 'work' are organized into categories.

Practical Life:

This area is arranged ideally by a source of water easily accessible to the smallest child. Contained in practical life are exercises to help gain the mastery necessary for the child to function as independently as possible. Life skills are the main event. Here the children will experience a great deal of success as they develop social skills, eye hand coordination, a sense of mastery and self confidence.

Sensorial:

The beautiful and precise Montessori Sensorial Materials were developed to help children 'make sense' of the random pieces of information that come to them through their senses.

See it...Touch it...Smell it...Taste it...Hear it

These 5 senses are the way in which children acquire the necessary information to go on to more abstract forms of learning.

Math:

The math materials begin with the hands on, concrete acquisition of quantity. It moves from the concrete to the symbolic and abstract. Montessori builds upon what was acquired in the earlier sensorial preparation to help young children refine and integrate the world of mathematics. The Materials are sequential starting with quantity and move from the simple concept of oneness to the complex functions of addition, multiplication, subtraction and division of numbers that go into the thousands.

Language:

It starts with our senses. Touch the sandpaper letter and make the sound. The approach to writing and reading are phonetic. We do not push we let the desire to learn to write and read direct the child through the well thought out and concrete approach to the acquisition of the necessary skills.

Cultural:

The cultural area of the classroom is arranged to introduce children to the world in which they live. It includes exercises and lessons from subject matter contained in curriculums of Geography, History, Natural Science, Botany, Zoology, foreign language, music and art, & the Garden.