

# Brilliant Star Montessori School Programs



## Casa Program Preschool & Kindergarten

*"Much like an artist **the young child has the task of creating a great masterpiece ~ which is the adult the child will become.** This is why you can no more hurry a child than you can hurry the work of a great artist."*

Maria Montessori 1870 -1952

**Casa students** are of preschool and kindergarten age, 3-6 years old, and form a community of 12-18 children all working together or alongside one another. Equal numbers of each level (3's, 4's and 5's) create an optimum dynamic for learning. Older children are the examples for and mentors to younger children. Children 3 and 4 attend a half-day program and 5/6 year olds attend a full day program.

The teacher's role is one primarily of guide/facilitator. The child is taken through a sequence of lessons that are designed to create greater skill and independence. Students, once introduced to the materials, have the freedom to move about

and choose their own learning activities leading to increased confidence and satisfaction.

Dr. Maria Montessori discovered that children at this age have extraordinary powers of the mind. She called it “the absorbent mind.” It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to absorb knowledge with peak receptivity. The Primary Montessori environment takes advantage of this opportunity by creating a classroom rich with material for learning.

### **The Casa curriculum integrates several focus areas into a fully comprehensive 3 year program**

The prepared environment and the guidance of the teacher help the child attain the following goals during their Casa school years:

**Practical Life Skills**, in which they learn to care for themselves and the environment. These help develop a sense of order, coordination, concentration, and independence. Practical life activities such as polishing, buttoning, and pouring strengthen motor skills and concentration.

**Sensorial Skills**, by clarifying and putting names to the senses of sight, touch, sound, taste, and smell, a child develops knowledge of the real, which is the basis for later abstraction. Many of the materials are precursors to mathematics and geometry.

**Language Skills**, which are developed and encouraged at a time when they are highly receptive to sounds, the alphabet, words and stories, reading and writing.

**Mathematical Skills**, such as internalizing the concepts of numbers, symbols, sequencing, operations, and memorization of basic facts through manipulation of the Montessori mathematics materials.

**Cultural Skills**, understanding and appreciating different peoples of the world, and a fascination for science in the world around them. The world's geography and peoples are explored through such materials as maps, flags, water and landforms, and books.

**Integrated Art, Music, and Physical Activities**, the arts are incorporated into our daily classroom activities. The children have access to a variety of musical instruments daily. They are given the opportunity to express themselves through dance and are exposed to skilled instruction in physical activities. Various mediums and techniques in art are explored while discovering and learning about local and famous artists.

**French**, is introduced at the Kindergarten level. Full day, or kindergarten-age, students receive curriculum support from a French specialist.

**Field Trips**, we will be taking the children on excursions into our 'real' world for positive learning experiences related to their curricular themes. Our full day students will have field-trip opportunities for skilled instruction in physical activities such as gymnastics, swimming, skating, soccer, volleyball, basketball, and Pilates.



A young child with dark hair is looking down at a blue butterfly resting on an open book. The child is wearing a light-colored shirt. The background is softly blurred, showing green foliage. The text "Lower Elementary Grades 1 ~ 4" is overlaid in blue on the image.

## Lower Elementary Grades 1 ~ 4

*"Our aim is not only to make the child understand, and still less to force him to memorize, but so to touch his imagination as to enthuse him to his innermost core."*

Maria Montessori 1870 - 1952

As students move from the Casa program into Lower Elementary, academic and developmental needs change. Students move from the sensorial level to the abstract. A turning towards the intellectual and moral sides of life also occurs at this age. There is a great transformation in the child –wanting to explore the world in which he/she lives, wanting to learn what is right or wrong, and wishing to explore meaningful roles in society. Children of this age want to know how everything came to be, the history of the universe, how our world works and why humans behave as they do. They ask the BIG questions and need real answers.

**Montessori Elementary education** speaks to a child's imagination to begin a life-long voyage of learning and discovery, and balances the imagination with concrete, hands-on materials that help the child understand the abstract. The children are in the same class for 3-4 years permitting the teacher to become very familiar with each child's development and follow his or her progress through the years, allowing each child to progress at his or her own pace. The multi-age class encourages younger children to learn from and emulate the older students, while older students can teach and be role models for younger ones.

**Respect for each Individual's learning process:** The Montessori Elementary classroom continues the experience of individualized learning the children benefit from in the Casa years. Respect for each child and their process of exploration is paramount as well as the elementary community as a whole. Social development blossoms with the large age span, as the spirit of cooperation encourages children to create friendships that have greater depth.

**Curriculum:** Our Elementary curriculum follows the Saskatchewan curriculum and includes all the traditional subjects – language, mathematics, geometry, geography, history, art, music, physical education, drama, French, and the sciences. The Montessori curriculum is built around the Five Great Lessons given each year – the creation of the Universe, the coming of life on Earth, the timeline of humans, and the development of language, mathematics and inventions. The aim is to inspire and instill a sense of awe and plant the seeds for further investigations. Students are encouraged to seek understanding of a subject through research, discussion, experiments, and hands-on experience.

**A Sense of Independence:** The children have daily and weekly requirements for their work periods. They plan their work time and may work alone or in small groups with their younger or

older classmates. They learn to think, make decisions and self-direct their study independently and in groups.

**Interrelated Studies:** The Elementary child has an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. Therefore a Montessori Elementary education is intended to provide an interrelation of all areas of study rather than a collection of memorized facts. It gives a systematic framework for studying and researching all things that interest them. The core academics of reading, writing and mathematics are refined through applied work that starts from the children's own questions from exploring and learning about the world around them.

**World Citizens**—The children work in an atmosphere of kindness and mutual respect. Learning to serve humanity is an integral part of the curriculum. The Elementary classroom is an environment in which children accept responsibility for themselves and begin to see themselves as people of integrity and character who have a role to play in the global community.



## **EXTENDED CARE**

We offer an on-site before and after care program to assist our families who require extended care for their children. Extended Care hours are from 7:45 a.m. - 8:45 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. The Extended Care Program is available for all children in the Casa and Elementary Programs.



*“The child who has felt a strong love for his surroundings and for all living creatures, who has discovered joy and enthusiasm in work, gives us reason to hope that humanity can develop in a new direction”.*

Maria Montessori 1870 - 1952