

North Star Montessori

Class Descriptions

Little Dippers

Little Dipper Class is for 15 month olds to young 3 year olds. Children must turn 15 months by August 1 to attend. Children do not need to be toilet trained. The class will consist of learning areas and work stations similar to those found in the Pegasus Class (3-5 yr. Olds). Subject areas include, but are not limited to, Practical Life, Art, Sensorial, Language, Math and Science. Materials on the shelves will be geared toward 2-3 year olds, with their special needs in mind (no small objects that could be choking hazards, for example). Work stations will include areas of interest such as Play-Do, taping work, and coloring work.

Fine and gross motor skill acquisition is emphasized. One area of the classroom is dedicated to developing gross motor skills. This area includes activities such as building with large foam blocks, climbing stairs, a small slide, a large ball for rolling and a balance board. We have a restroom with a size/age appropriate stool for those just learning to use the toilet. A changing station is nearby for those children in diapers. We are pleased to assist families who are ready for potty training.

Classes meet from 8:30 to 11:30.

Pegasus Class and Aries Class

Preschool ages 3-5

The Montessori classroom is geared to the pace and interests of children, giving them freedom in an environment prepared with attractive materials. Children are free to choose their own activities, to work alone or in small groups, with the Montessori materials for most of the class session. These materials can be divided into the following main groups:

Practical Life Exercises, which give the child opportunities to master the environment and self-care. Tasks like pouring liquids, scrubbing tables, and preparing food have a natural order for children to follow while allowing them to imitate adults. This order is the basis for the Montessori classroom environment. As sequences increase in difficulty, the child's ability to concentrate and attend also increases while the development of self-reliance builds confidence.

Sensorial Materials, such as the *Cube Tower*, *Color Tablets* and *Sound Cylinders*, are designed to support the balanced development of all five senses. All information young children take in goes through their senses, By refining their senses the goal of the sensorial curriculum, we are helping them achieve more detailed forms of classification in their brains. According to Maria Montessori, this helps increase the child's intellectual capacity.

Math Materials introduce children to one-to-one correspondence, numeration, sequencing of numbers, numeral place value and beginning arithmetic operations. Operations such as addition and subtraction are experienced concretely first through the manipulation of materials before introducing such concepts abstractly on paper.

Language prepares children for reading with a multi-sensory approach including phonics and language experiences. According to Maria Montessori, children will write before they can read so they start learning letter formation by tracing sandpaper letters. Next, children write using a moveable alphabet so they begin expressing themselves in familiar language, which they can read. Language materials are carefully sequenced so that the child gains a gradually increasing awareness of the rules of phonics. Concepts of grammar are introduced in a concrete way.

Geography includes physical and cultural geography. With large wooden puzzle maps, children gradually learn the names of continents and the US states along with information about those places. Children also learn

common land formations such as island and peninsula by making models of them. Exploring customs, food, music and language of other countries gives children an awareness of the world around them and the universality of child life throughout the world.

History materials focus on the history of the earth and understanding the concept of time using concrete experiences, such as making a time line of one's own life.

Science and Nature In science the child's natural curiosity is stimulated through discovery projects, experiments and exploration of our outdoor environment. These activities help the children draw their own conclusions. The plant and animal kingdoms are studied with simple classification exercises and with an emphasis on love, appreciation and respect for all living things.

Creative Arts and Crafts allow for self-expression and fine motor development. The emphasis of art projects in the Montessori classroom is on the process rather than the product.

Music highlights listening skills, ear training, rhythmical movement, singing and the creation of music.

Perceptual Motor Development emphasizes physical activity, which leads to coordinated movement.

Community or Line Time, which allows for children and adults to gather and experience being part of a large group activity. Songs, discussions, short group presentations, games, sharing and silence activities all happen under the teacher's direction. Parents or individuals from the community who share special talents or knowledge may present special programs with the children.

Class meets 5 days a week Monday-Friday. Students may enroll in mornings only from 8:30-11:30am, or for a full day from 8:30am to 3:00pm.

Pisces/Leo Class, K-6

This program allows children to continue with the Montessori method of education through their elementary school years. As the elementary-aged child gradually moves from the concrete learning pathways of preschool to the more abstract processes of elementary, Montessori meets his/her developmental needs each step of the way.

Children who have been educated using the Montessori method grow into competent learners who know how to learn, and who love learning.

Major subject areas of the elementary program are:

Language Children are exposed to concrete pre- and early reading materials. Classic children's literature, poetry and drama are used to build spelling, grammar and vocabulary skills.

Mathematics Math operations, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, are introduced and children are exposed to early geometry concepts. Critical thinking skills are developed and even more complex concepts such as algebra can be introduced.

Science The curriculum focuses on experimentation in the areas of biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy and meteorology, with the goal being an ecological view of life and a feeling of responsibility for the environment.

History and Geography Students follow the development of the solar system, life on earth, human development, early civilizations and recorded history. Geography begins with the development of Earth and proceeds through physical science and continent and culture study.

Art and Music These areas are incorporated into the curriculum with reading and cultural studies. Special art and music courses are offered on occasion for enrichment.

Physical Education Outdoor play is encouraged and movement classes such as yoga and calisthenics are also presented.

Evaluation A quantitative evaluation of each child's development is provided. Beginning with second grade, standardized testing is done annually.

Field Trips, Celebrations and Performances Small groups take field trips to local destinations. Service-oriented projects are encouraged. Holidays from around the world are celebrated and family participation is encouraged.

Classes meet from 8:30am to 3:00pm.