



Casa Programme Supplement Information

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Casa Class Schedule

To help provide structure to our daily school life, teachers will endeavor to follow the below schedule, allowing of course for flexibility as and when it suits:

7:30 – 9:00	Morning Arrival & Early Work Cycle: A teacher will settle your child into the classroom and begin individual and group presentations. Please note all children should arrive by 8:30.
9:00 – 10:00	Outside Play & Morning Snack: The children will enjoy the expansive garden during free play and organized activities to promote gross motor skills. During this time a healthy snack will also be set out which is varied regularly. Children are invited to help themselves when they are ready. Our children take pride in being responsible for serving themselves as well as tidying up their plates when they are finished.
10:00 – 11:45	Second Work Cycle: Children are free to select activities and material they wish to work with. Teachers will assist by demonstrating the materials on a one-to-one basis or in a group. Older children will be encouraged to demonstrate activities or materials to their younger classmates. During this cycle the class will also engage in Circle Time which is a valuable time to share ideas, information and stories.
11:45 – 12:00	Story-time/Half Day Dismissal: All of our students will gather together to listen to stories and sing songs while they wait to be collected. Full day students will continue with Outside Playtime.
12:00 – 1:30	Lunch & Outside Play time for full day students
1:30 – 2:30	Afternoon Work Cycle and free play
2:30 – 3:00	Afternoon snack & dismissal
3:00 – 5:00	Aftercare



Casa Programme Curriculum

Our Montessori Casa curriculum is designed to further develop a child's independence, motor skills, practical life skills, language, mathematics, geography and culture. Our focus is to provide positive encouragement and activities that foster growth and development in a safe and nurturing environment. The children are welcome to observe before participating and are given the freedom to repeat activities as often as they choose. In accordance with Montessori philosophy, the adults present are there to allow the children to work as independently as possible and provide guidance when needed.

Practical Life

Building on the foundations established in the Toddler years, the children are encouraged to further develop their Practical Life experiences and skills, while continuing to focus on motor control, manners and courtesy, personal care and social working habits. Our Practical Life exercises encourage the children to play an important and equal role in their family household, fostering their independence and sense of self-worth.

Through daily activities which closely mirror home life, children will be exposed to a variety of fine and gross dexterity equipment, increased awareness of class and social behavior, and everyday activities such as food preparation, gardening, washing and caring for school items.

After individual skills are refined, children apply them in purposeful work, such as serving juice or polishing. Specifically, these activities contribute to the control and coordination of movement, development of concentration, and the self-esteem that comes with making a real contribution to the group.

Sensorial

Dr. Montessori believed that the senses are the beginning of conscious knowledge, and help children to distinguish, categorize and relate new information to what they already know. Through exploration our curriculum encourages children to expand their exploration into the world around them to further develop the information they already know.

Through careful selection of items of different textures, colours, sizes, and geometric shapes, children will discover relationships and will discover differences between objects, whether in shape, size, smell, sound or texture. It is these sensorial experiences which also indirectly prepare children for future exploration of language, mathematics, geometry, art, and music.

Language

Dr. Montessori believed the power of language development to be “a treasure prepared in the unconscious, which is then handed over to consciousness, and the child, in full possession of his new power, talks and talks without cessation.”



Developing language skills rely on human contact, as adults help apply words to label and explain our experiences. A child who has varied experiences and is given words for them will develop a well-rounded vocabulary of expression. It is from here the transition to reading and writing is developed on the basis of a strong vocabulary.

Mathematics

Our Casa mathematics curriculum leads the child through progressive hands-on activities, emphasizing concepts while preparing the child for abstract interpretations. The extensions and variations we provide serve to complement and support their foundations' work as we dive deeper into the concepts taught on the number rods, building blocks, bead chains and bars. As their developing minds yearn to organize, classify and quantify, the children develop an interest in mathematics which forms an excellent foundation for their primary years.

Culture and Geography

Geography and culture is the study of place and how humans have adapted to various environments. Through meeting the basic human needs for food, shelter; and clothing, groups of people developed language, tools, transportation, rituals and celebrations, religion, music, art, and crafts. By celebrating various traditions with food, music, and stories, children can begin to see the uniqueness of other cultures yet come to understand how much we all have in common.

Our puzzle and map tools allow the children the opportunity to gain an awareness of the physical world, learning the names of other countries and their place relative to home. Through exploration of our physical world, and cultural world, children gain an understanding and develop a compassion for people all over the world.

Nature & Science

The Science curriculum in the Casa programme provides students with many opportunities to focus on the process and issues of science: the study of life, the laws and structure of the universe, and the work of scientists. Students learn to ask questions, follow a systematic process of observation, collect and analyze data, and conduct controlled experiments.

Our programme provides hands-on experiences before introducing abstract concepts like naming and classification. With a concrete experience “in hand,” Montessori children are inspired to learn everything about their world. Observation, experimentation, and construction encourage children to explore new ideas and concepts and develop an appetite to question everything. With the right presentation, access to materials, and an opportunity for follow-up research, children will begin to explore the nature of the universe.



Arts and Crafts

Art activities in the Montessori classroom are not meant to impress parents or visitors, as our belief is that the process is far more important and valuable than the finished product. Our art curriculum is designed to support the child's creative development. They can take as much time as they need, incorporate skills from previous lessons, collaborate with others, and take risks. They'll develop concentration through repetition and will refine their motor skills. Their artwork will never be graded, compared, or critiqued by the adults in the classroom.

As with all Montessori materials, Montessori art activities are introduced as individual presentations and an emphasis is made on learning new techniques and working with care and precision. Children will be provided with a broad range of art mediums, materials and methods during the year, which they can select as desired during their working time.

History

Our unique histories are a collection of vibrant and interesting stories which help explain who we are today. Through our history curriculum, the children will develop an appreciation of the human story and how our past shapes our present and our future. Through re-creation, model building, storytelling and picture books, the children develop a sense of the 'living' history found in the world around us. To help further develop this area, we also use the children's personal histories to introduce timelines with them.

In our Casa programme, we also turn our attention to our Cayman heritage through art, music and local artifacts, and throughout the year, we invite various local people into our school to demonstrate traditional Caymanian dancing, culture and other activities or themes.

Health & Physical Education

We continue with our emphasis on a healthy lifestyle that includes exercise, a balanced diet, and intelligent choices regarding personal health, hygiene, and stress reduction. Our physical education programme combines activities and equipment to develop co-ordination, motor skills, balance, flexibility and hand eye co-ordination. Our Casa children will benefit from having a weekly dance class, which will be held outside in our large gardens under the protection of shade trees.

Personal Care

In the Casa years the children begin to gain greater independence, and this is especially relevant to toileting. The teachers will encourage all children to do proper hand washing and personal hygiene. All Casa children need to be toilet trained before starting in September, however we understand that children may have accidents in the initial few first weeks. We encourage open communication between teachers and partners/caregivers in this regard to help where possible.



Please also remember that in the earlier stages of mastering toileting, please dress your child in clothing that is easy for him or her to manage. Tight buttons, snaps, laces, etc. will only frustrate your child and will likely end in an accident.

Accidents happen, and for that reason we ask parents to ensure that several clean changes of clothing are kept at the school at all times. Should a child have an accident, soiled clothes will be sent home and new ones should return the next day.

School Outings and Field Trips

Children in the Casa class may be offered school field trips occasionally to places of cultural or historical significance on Grand Cayman. These trips are an essential supplement to the Montessori curriculum. For each field trip, a Permission form will be provided to all Casa children which must be signed by their parent or guardian for them to take part in.

Transportation to/from such field trips may include a bus service and/or parent volunteers. All field trips will be announced well in advance to allow for proper planning for all. During all field trips, teachers will carry the class phone which will have the current contact listing, as well as a small travel first aid kit.

If a student is late on a day which the field trip is planned and they miss the scheduled transportation, it will be the parent's responsibility to get his/her child to the class group.

Parent Volunteers

If you are willing or able to be called upon for occasional classroom support, please speak to any one of our teachers.

Education Council guidelines require that all teachers and classroom volunteers have a current Child Protection Training Certification which we can assist with arranging, as well as a Cayman Islands Police Clearance certificate, however these can be obtained online through the RCIP at https://online.gov.ky/cro/faces/home?_adf.ctrl-state=6tt83uqdo_14