

## Program Statement

The Montessori Philosophy is based on the idea that children are self motivated to learn from their surroundings. The Queensway West Montessori School invites the child to participate in an environment prepared carefully by the Directress, which is both self-motivating and self-correcting. This prepared environment encourages concentration, reasoning and independent choice. It is nurturing and respectful. It is designed to meet the needs of each child for self construction and to reveal their personality and growth patterns. The Directress acts as a guide, facilitating the child's learning, while removing the obstacles and serving the needs of the child patiently.

We believe children as being **competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.**

**Our goals for children, consistent with the Ministry of Education pedagogy are as follows:**

- \* Every child has a sense of **belonging** when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.
- \* Every child is developing a sense of **self, health and well-being.**
- \* Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with **body, mind and senses.**
- \* Every child is a **capable communicator who expresses themselves** in many ways.

**Health, safety, nutrition and well being of the children;**

- All staff is up to date on personal information regarding the children and especially on children that have severe health concerns.
- Children only leave the school with parents/adults who have been authorized to pick them up.
- An unknown adult will need to have written consent to pick a child up and will need to show identification.
- Monthly fire drills are part of our program and all staff is aware of their roles.
- We have an "Illness" Policy in place which can be found in the Parent Handbook and under our Policies.
- Parents are encouraged to provide a nutritious snack and lunch daily, which follows the Canada Food Guide.

**Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff;**

- Our programs offer a **nurturing** home like environment that is prepared for the child's needs and growth patterns. The students will explore and learn through hands experience, investigation and research.
- We are always pleased to see the parents/guardians of the children. In the event that a parent requests a meeting to:
  - discuss something specific with the administrators or teachers;
  - visit or observe a classroom, we ask that appointments be arranged ahead of time, for a mutually convenient time for both.
- Parents are welcome to join the Primary Class on Field Trips

**The Queensway West Montessori School believes that the children come first but the parents are close second.**

**Encouraging the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate;**

- Our students learn through hands on experiences, investigating and research. They develop self discipline and an internal sense of purpose and motivation. We consistently encourage and challenge our students to be the best they can be.
- The Montessori Materials are self-correcting, so the children learn to work through it themselves.
- Positive learning environments and experiences, focused on active play-based learning, encourage children's communication, self-expression and self-regulation.

**Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry;**

- Our focus is on the individual and developmental needs.
- Experimenting with the different materials can enable a child to investigate, ask questions, solve problems, and engage in critical thinking, innate curiosity and creativity, thereby opening the door to new learning.
- When children are calmly focused and alert, they are best able to modulate their emotions, pay attention, ignore distractions, inhibit their impulses and understand the consequence of their actions.
- It is important to explain why behaviour is not acceptable and discuss calmly how the situation could be changed to become positive.
- For the staff members, it is important to try step back, observe and try not to interrupt a situation unless they feel it is necessary. Let the children work it out for themselves when possible.

**Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences;**

The Montessori Environment is set up with the child's needs in mind.

- We find if the children have a schedule to follow, they are more content throughout the day; when a child is new to the program, we notice a set schedule (which can be adjusted at times) usually helps the child become comfortable in the program in a shorter period.
- We feel change is good sometimes and everyone needs to learn to adapt when this happens during the day.
- We do try to follow the child as much as possible; some days, the children are having a hard time staying focused on their chosen task; during these times we readjust the schedule to follow the child's needs.
- The children at the school feel very content and comfortable to come to a staff member for assistance during the day when they need it.

**Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported;**

- Our classrooms are set up for the child and safety is definitely comes first.
- Our classrooms are very inviting and the children are invited to explore with the teachers observing, keeping them safe.
- The materials are changed regularly in both classrooms, so the children stay engaged in

their chosen task.

- Large motor group games are encouraged to be played in the yard or in the gym.
- The play yard is checked twice a day for any items that are unsafe or toys that need to be discarded because they are broken.
- Seasonal inspections are also done by the supervisor
- Both check-off lists are kept on file in the office.

**Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care;**

- Large motor and outdoor exploration activities are very important for a child's mental well being.
- The children go outside twice daily (weather permitting) or to the gym, for large motor activities; also, the Primary Class has a structured gym class twice a week.
- During the nice weather, we often have snack time outside; either at the picnic tables or on a blanket in the grass.
- when the weather permits us, the Primary children walk to a neighbouring park and have a great time exploring in the sand and using the play structure.
- The Toddler Class uses a walking rope that gives us the opportunity to explore a bit of the neighbourhood in a safe matter.

**Rest and Quiet Time**

**Toddler Class**

There is a cot available for each child in the Toddler Class to rest or sleep. The children bring their own sheet and blanket weekly (which is sent home at the end of the week to be washed). We feel the children are more comfortable on their own bedding. Most of the children at this young of an age need to have a rest. If a child is extremely unsettled during this time, quiet activities (books) or one on one time with a staff member will be available. Since most of the children who attend the school have quite a long day, they usually can get quite emotional if they do not have a sleep. With the quiet music playing it is usually a time they enjoy and find relaxing.

**Primary Class**

There is a coat available for each child in the Primary Class to rest or sleep. The children bring their own sheet and blanket weekly (which is sent home at the end of the week to be washed). The children enjoy having their bedding from home. Some of the children in this age group still enjoy a sleep. If a child has outgrown their nap or is restless during this time, quiet activities are available in the classroom. A staff member is available in the sleep room, as well as the classroom.

**Foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children;**

- Parent/Teacher Interviews:

- \* There will be two Parent/Teacher Interviews during the year;
- \* They are held in November and May;
- \* If a teacher or parent feels they need to set up a meeting before or after the set interviews, with concerns about a child, a date will be schedule that is convenient for both. They are listed on the School Calendar (given to parents when they enroll their child).

Field Trips (Primary Class):

The field trip consent form must be filled out by the parents/guardians, allowing the Queensway West Montessori School to take your child to local places of interest that reinforce our class themes.

The parents are more than welcome to volunteer for Field Trips and we would appreciate it if you would inform us before the day of the scheduled trip if you would like to volunteer.

Sun Ceremony Celebration

Each child's birthday will be acknowledged in the class on the school day nearest the birthday. We celebrate with the "Sun Ceremony". It is common, but by no means necessary, for the parents to bring in a snack for the class. Parents are reminder follow these guidelines:

- \* The snack should be simple and nutritious;
- \* Avoid Popsicles, chocolate and donut holes, icing on cakes or candy;
- \* Snacks must be in individual servings;
- \* NUT FREE;
- \* Celery sticks and cheese, fruit and dip, carrot or banana loaf (cut-up without icing) are great choices.

Concerts and Family Day

We have two concerts throughout the school year. The children are very proud to perform for their family members. After the concert, we have a social gathering and it is a great time for everyone to enjoy each other's company. Of course there may also be a few treats to indulge in also.

At the end of the school year we like to show the parents and children how much they are appreciated. We have a Family Day which includes entertainment and lunch. It is also another time that we all have time to socialize with each other.

**Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff;**

- The school offers a Music Class for the Toddler Class twice a month and the Primary Class once a month during the school year.
- The Primary Class enjoys a visit from the local librarian various times throughout the school year.

- Monthly Fire Drills are scheduled and safety discussions are had with the children regularly. We have also had the Fire Fighters come for a visit with their trucks.
- The Primary Class goes on scheduled Field Trips during the school year; they include the Museums, Tulip Festival, Farms, etc.
- The community Police Officer has come for a visit around Halloween to discuss safety when Trick and Treating.

**Support staff, or others who interact with the children at a child care centre in relation to continuous learning;**

- If it is recommended that a child who is already registered at our school needs to see a Speech Pathologist during school hours, we will accommodate a time that works for the child and their schedule.

**Staff Training and Workshops**

We will encourage the staff at the Queensway West Montessori School to stay up to date on resources that are available to them with respect to staff training and development. We will refer them to the Ministry of Education and Early Childhood Education websites for updated information and offer educational workshops on the school's Professional Development Days. We will also forward information sent to the school through emails that pertain to the development and the well being of the children.

Mandatory attendance will be expected for the workshops. If a staff member cannot attend, he/she will need to speak with the supervisor before the date of the workshop to explain the reason they cannot attend.

All staff at the Queensway West Montessori School will have access to all the information from **How Does Learning Happen** either by hard copy or the internet.

**Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in the above clauses on the children and their families;**

- Quarterly reviews will be done on the children in the classrooms, to see if the program is meeting each child's needs who are enrolled in the school. The reviews will be documented after each review by the supervisor. Parents will have the time during their child's interview to go over any questions or concerns they may have with the program or their child's progress. If a parent needs to speak with a teacher or supervisor other than the scheduled Parent/Teacher Interviews, a convenient time for both parties will be scheduled.

**Sign Off Sheet for the Program Statement**

Each staff member, volunteer and student will read and sign off on the Program Statement before their employment at the school. It will be reviewed and sign off on annually.