

Kanata Montessori School

Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information about the school, the programs it offers, how it operates and what is expected of you as parents in the school.

History of the School

Kanata Montessori School has been operating for over 40 years. It was started in 1974 by Stella Koros, a parent who had moved into the new subdivision of Kanata. It was known then as March Montessori School. The name was officially changed in 2002 to Kanata Montessori School. Within a matter of months Stella had 48 parents and the school was up and running. The school has maintained its not-for-profit charity status since inception. It continues to depend on and elected parent board and hires professional staff to ensure the school is operated professionally and efficiently. The school has moved a number of times in its history, from church basements to shopping malls. It moved to its location here at 355 Michael Cowpland Drive in 1989 and has recently completed a 6,000 square foot addition. Although the school continues to grow to meet the needs of students and parents, maintaining the friendly atmosphere and homelike environment for students is a priority.

What is Montessori Education?

Montessori is a philosophy of education which was developed by Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952) in the early part of this century. The Montessori approach helps children fulfill their own potential. Each child works at his own pace and level under the guidance of specially trained educators, who use Montessori-designed teaching materials.

The Montessori philosophy recognizes in the child a natural curiosity and desire to learn. The philosophy stresses that children learn and progress at their own pace so that fast learners are not held back and slower learners are not frustrated by their need for more time to perfect themselves.

The classroom provides rich learning experiences based on your child's individual developmental needs. Children are presented with concepts at a time when they are most receptive to learning them. Maria Montessori called these the Sensitive Periods of learning. The classroom consists of mixed age groups which provide opportunities for peer learning and teaching. Respect for others and their work is fostered in this classroom environment.

Almost all the instructional staff at Kanata Montessori School (KMS) are trained at AMI (Association Montessori Internationale) which is an internationally recognized training institution. A few staff have alternative Montessori training (AMS, TMI) that is recognized by the Canadian Council of Montessori Administrators (CCMA).

KMS is also licensed as a daycare under the Ministry of Education. As well, the school is licensed as a private school for its Elementary program under the Ministry of Education. Parents are encouraged to learn about the Montessori method. The school holds parent workshops and there are books available in the office which you may borrow.

Ownership of the School

KMS was founded in 1974 by a group of parents spearheaded by Stella Koros. These parents wanted the quality in early childhood education that a Montessori environment could provide for their children.

The founding members of the school formed a corporation. Every parent who had a child in the school was a member of this corporation, thus becoming part "owner" of the school. This continues to be the structure of ownership and responsibility today. The parent corporation elects a volunteer board to provide long term direction for the school, but qualified staff are employed to manage the school on a day to day basis.

KMS provides quality education for children and continues to grow to meet the needs of the parents and students it serves.

Kanata Montessori School is committed to carrying out the Montessori philosophy as set out by Maria Montessori.

Kanata Montessori School Program Statement

Kanata Montessori School provides a high quality early years program that is consistent with the Ministry of Education's policies and pedagogy. Some of the ministry documents we have referenced in the development of our program are: "How Does Learning Happen?", "Think Feel Act: Lessons from Research about Young Children" and the "Ontario Early Years Policy Framework."

As is consistent with the Ministry of Education's pedagogy, it is our aim to facilitate the development of each child based on the following four foundations:

- 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 himself or herself in many ways.

Kanata Montessori School uses the writings and philosophy of Maria Montessori to create an engaging environment where children can learn and grow. Our environment consists of dynamic and purposeful, age appropriate materials, classrooms with different ages to foster leadership and independence, and three- hour work cycles to allow children to develop self-regulation and a lifelong love of learning. In our program, children are given the opportunity to choose their work and follow their interests. Our classrooms are seen as communities in which each member is unique and able to contribute in many different ways. At Kanata Montessori School, the children and the educators are viewed as colleagues, working and learning together.

Children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential:

"Children are human beings to whom respect is due, superior to us by reason of their innocence and of the greater possibilities of their future."

-Maria Montessori

Kanata Montessori School enables each child to develop at their own pace by creating prepared environments with purposeful materials where each child works at a level consistent with their current developmental abilities. Children are given the opportunity to repeat materials within daily work cycles as many times as they would like to develop concentration, self-regulation and mastery of skills. The materials in the classroom engage the children on many different levels including sensory, fine and gross motor, creatively and socially. There are many extensions to the work available in the classroom that allows the child to look deeper into any subject he or she is interested in. The educators take time to observe, record and communicate with each child about their work to ensure each child is engaged and attaining everything they can from the materials.

Math and language are woven into all of the daily activities at Kanata Montessori School. We strive to build on the child's natural mathematical mind and their desire to organize and classify the world around them. We read books and sing songs in both French and English to encourage language development. We communicate through story telling, conversations, expressive arts and other informal means are encouraged.

Routine is also an important part of the environment at Kanata Montessori School. Routines around arrival and departure, outdoor play, lunch time, nap time and using the bathroom are very important to help the children feel safe and secure while at the program and to help them become self-reliant in dressing, toileting, washing, eating and putting their work away. To encourage self-reliant behaviour, educators are always present and available for assistance when needed, but the expectation is for the child to be responsible for the job at hand.

Kanata Montessori School encourages children to communicate in positive ways through modeling. The educators in our program are continuously modeling the behaviours they would like to see in the children. They use gentle, calm voices and kind language when speaking with the children. Small group activities are also used to allow the children to practice social behaviours such as shaking hands and saying "good morning" or "goodbye", saying "excuse me" or walking away when someone is bothering them. There is a focus at Kanata Montessori School on respect and understanding through appropriate communication.

Kanata Montessori School believes in a connection to nature. Our outdoor environments allow children to engage with nature in ways that stimulate mind and body. Children are encouraged to discover what nature has to offer and to explore their physical limits in a safe and well-maintained, outdoor area. To further develop a sense of community and responsibility, children are encouraged to help care of all our environments, including the outdoors. In the winter, the children help to shovel snow and in the spring, summer and fall, rake and sweep when need be.

Health and Safety

Kanata Montessori School follows all health and safety requirements as set out by the Ministry of Education and local government bylaws regarding recommendations, inspections, first aid, immunization, illness and accident, serious occurrence and anaphylaxis. All menus for the school provided lunches and snacks follow the Canada's Food Guide and are posted for children, parents and staff to see. This information is also available for parents for guidance on what to send for snacks when needed.

Kanata Montessori School strives to create an environment where children feel safe and secure and are able to express who they are. Educators and staff at Kanata Montessori School ensure that each and every child in our care feels respected and cared for. Children in our program have the ability to choose their work and guide their learning. They also have time in the afternoon to rest or enjoy some quiet space if needed.

Engagement with parents and community

Kanata Montessori School is committed to supporting strong relationships with parents and community. Kanata Montessori School views parents as experts on their own children and strives to connect with parents regularly to ensure a well rounded understanding of their child. Parents are also connected to the classroom through observation windows, daily posting on Facebook and monthly newsletters. Educators also connect with parents through parent nights, parent teacher interviews and being available at the beginning and end of the school day and through e-mail.

Educators at Kanata Montessori School have strong connects to community partners that can help parents and children through many different challenges. Kanata Montessori School also

encourages community members to participate in classroom activities through education programs and the sharing of knowledge and traditions.

Ongoing professional development

Kanata Montessori School is committed to providing its staff with quality opportunities for professional development. Staff participate in monthly staff meetings and P.D. Days and discussion about the program is always ongoing to ensure the best program is being provided. Educators are also encouraged to further their professional development through workshops, conferences and special guest.

Kanata Montessori School recognizes that observation and documentation are key elements in learning about children and ensuring the best possible program is in place. Staff observe and record children everyday and use this information to inform future planning and the understanding of each child's needs. These observations are also an opportunity to make children's learning and understanding of the world visible to themselves, to other children, to their families and to the program staff. It also is a way to reflect on developmental growth over time and provide a self-reflection opportunity for staff.

Parent Participation-Volunteerism

The staff of KMS relies on and greatly appreciates the invaluable help volunteers provide in order to give the children the best possible experience for their first introduction to school. Requests for volunteers are posted throughout the school and in the monthly newsletter.

The school would like both parents to attend school activities regularly. In particular, the parent education evenings, interviews with staff and social events such as "Meet the Staff Night" are essential for both parents.

All volunteers must have a current (not older than six months) vulnerable sector check prior to volunteering. Volunteers and students are supervised by a KMS staff at all times. Volunteers are not permitted to be alone with students at any time.

Arrivals & Departures **Signing your child in and out**

If your child arrives before the start of school (as early as 7:30) or leaves after normal dismissal time (3:30-3:45) you will be required to sign your child in/or out. The sign in/or out is an important step in the security of your child and is required by law.

Kiss and Ride Program

At the school there is a drop off area which has been incorporated into the parking lot. Parents are encouraged to drop off their children using the drop off lanes between 8:30 am and 9:00 am. Staff will be outside to greet children and ensure they get settled into the classroom. Please do not park – rather, pull up your car parallel to school and wait for staff to assist your child.

In order for the "Kiss N' Ride" to be successful, we strongly encourage you to arrive between 8:30 and 9:00 am.

Separation Anxiety

As a parent it is important for you to impart to your child that they will have a great day and you will be back for them at the end of the day. This gives your child confidence that you know your child will have a good day. The staff, greeting your child at the front door, are ready and willing to accept responsibility for your child, even if he or she is experiencing some separation anxiety.

Children experiencing distress are given care and attention immediately and usually stop crying as soon as the parent has left.

If your child continues to cry for an extended period you will be notified and strategies will be discussed to make the separation process as smooth as possible. It is important to remember that it is quite natural for your child to be upset when you leave, but almost without exception when they realize you have left they turn towards the staff or their peers and within a short period are happily engaged in the classroom. The saying that the parents suffer more than the children in this process is so often true. Staying in the hall only makes this process more painful for your child as they wonder if you are just outside the door.

Wait Lists

Kanata Montessori School will occasionally keep a wait list for programs that are at capacity. There is no charge for this service.

Leaving from Outdoors

At times the children will be dismissed from the playground. We ask that you pick up any clothes, artwork, etc. **before** collecting your child. Once your child has said good-bye to his/her educator, we ask that you leave the playground area promptly. This is primarily for safety reasons and we must also adhere to specific student/staff ratios on the playground.

Please make an appointment if you wish to speak with an educator about your child's progress. Montessori staff are pleased to meet with you before or after school. It is difficult for staff to talk about your child's progress during arrival and departure times.

Departures from Indoors

When the children are dismissed from their classrooms the educator or assistant will come to the door when the children are ready to leave. Again, we ask that you leave promptly with your child.

Late Fees

Late Fees apply if you are picking up your child after his/her scheduled pick up time. Students registered in the morning program will be charged late fees after 12:00.

The majority of students are registered in the school day program (9:00-3:30). We have extended pick up time to 3:45 to allow for parents to juggle busy schedules and also to help alleviate congestion in the parking lot. **Late fees will be charged after 3:45.**

Children often get anxious when their parents are late. We would appreciate a phone call if you are going to be late, so we may reassure your child that everything is fine.

Birthdays

If your child is celebrating a birthday during the school year, feel free to bring in a special **chocolate & nut free** snack that day provided that you have notified the educator in advance. (fruit platters or veggies and dip are a good choice) Invitations to any birthday parties, which do not include all the children in the class, should not be distributed at school. Children can be extremely sensitive and we wish to avoid unnecessary hurt feelings.

In an effort to increase the wealth of books in the school, we are suggesting parents donate a book to the school on your child's birthday. A special stamp will indicate who and when the book was donated. This thoughtful donation will help us keep our library up to date and will give something special for your child to share with other students on their birthday.

Bulletin Board & Mailboxes

Please make a point of checking the bulletin board outside your child's classroom regularly. Notices on these boards will provide you with the pertinent information about what is happening in the class and how you might help to enhance the class program. Minutes of Board meetings and administrative notices are posted on the bulletin board next to your mailboxes. Please check your mailbox regularly for school notices. Parent mailboxes are located at the beginning of the main Casa hallway.

E-Mail

The school is working to improve communications with parents. If you would like to make any inquiries our e-mail address is info@kanata-montessori.com Information is also posted on our website at www.kanatamontessori.com.

Calendar

Please keep the current school calendar handy so that you will be aware of special events at the school; interview times, professional development days, etc. You will be reminded of these events through your monthly newsletter as well. The school calendar is posted on our website.

Classroom Placement

The decision to place your child in a specific class is at the discretion of the Principal and Vice principal. For toddlers moving into the Casa program, the Toddler educator along with the Vice-Principal make the decision of where to place your child based on your child's needs and best interest. As much as possible, the school tries to maintain a balance of ages and sexes in each classroom. It is important to remember that the interests of the whole class are taken into account, as well as the particular needs of your child. The school does not promise particular children will be placed in a specific class.

Student Information Forms

Each year the parents are given student information forms to be updated with all current information regarding your child. It is very important these forms are filled out and returned to the office promptly in order that we have updated information regarding your child and all current contact information for parents.

School Closures

The school may have to be closed because of severe weather. If the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board closes their schools, KMS will be closed. Should closure of the school become necessary, a member of the staff will contact you as early as possible. Please listen to CBC Radio One (91.5) for an announcement or Magic 100 FM (100.3). These stations have agreed to broadcast our announcements.

In some cases, the school may be closed for instruction, but emergency care will be provided as much as possible. On those days where it is quite dangerous to be on the roads the school will make every effort to provide emergency staffing for parents who require care for their children.

How to Dress for School

Indoors

Children should dress appropriately for working in class. The children often work on the floor and this should be kept in mind when suggesting what your child might like to wear to school. It is very important that children wear shoes in the classroom. In the winter an extra pair of shoes

can be left at school. The floor can be slippery and is sometimes wet when a child has spilled water. Also, in case of emergency, the children must be ready to vacate the school immediately.

Outdoors

Children should also wear appropriate outdoor clothes, especially in winter. Children are encouraged to dress and undress themselves, so clothing that is easy for children to put on and take off is best. Casa children often have an outdoor play time toward the end of the morning and also at the end of their school day. Outdoor activities help the child develop physically, socially and emotionally. If your child is not well enough to go outside we recommend you keep him/her at home.

Spare Set of Clothing

The school requires each child to have a complete change of clothing including underwear and socks. The children can leave extra clothes, plus a plastic bag in a bag provided for this purpose on their hook. When you see the plastic bag hanging on the hook you will know that your child has wet clothes to bring back home.

Please label all of your child's clothing, shoes & boots.

Communicable Diseases

The following regulations are issued by the Ottawa-Carleton Health Department.

Pupils who have contracted communicable diseases may be readmitted to the school when:

Chicken Pox-the child feels well and is able to fully participate in all school activities.

Diarrhea-stools are solid.

German Measles {Rubella}-Seven days after the onset of the rash.

Mumps-Nine days from the onset of swelling in the salivary glands

Pediculosis{Head lice} and Nits-When no further nits (eggs) or lice (insects) are present and special treatment has been given.

Strep Throat, Scarlet Fever-24 hours after the start of effective medication, provided it is continued for 10 days.

Whooping Cough-Five-days after beginning of antibiotic treatment.

Pink Eye-24 hours after the onset of antibiotic treatment.

Concerns

A problem resolution process has been defined to resolve school related problems and concerns. In order for the instructional staff to work effectively with you as a partner in your child's education, it is important that parents follow this procedure when they have concerns. The process is as follows:

Educational Matters:

1. Discuss with your child's educator first.
2. If you are not satisfied with the way the problem or concern has been dealt with, discuss your concern with the Principal. The Principal sets up meetings with all stakeholders to ensure a solution that meets the needs of the student.
3. The parent elected board does not deal with day to day management issues, nor do they get involved in specific curriculum issues. This is the Principal's role.
4. Parents should contact the Vice Chair only after attempting to resolve concerns with the Principal.

Financial Matters:

1. Discuss with the Office Administrator.
2. Unresolved issues or clarification should be taken up with the Principal.
3. If you remain unsatisfied or still have some concerns, you may provide a letter to the Vice Chair.

Other concerns:

1. Please raise any other problem or concern with the Principal.
2. If you remain unsatisfied or still have some concerns, a meeting will be set up with the Principal and the Vice Chair.

Field Trips

Throughout the year the classes will go out on a variety of field trips. (eg. museum, strawberry picking, concerts) Your assistance as a chaperone may be requested. All volunteers must provide the office with a recent copy of a police check. When several classes go together, school busses will be used. Your signature will be required on a consent form for each trip.

When assisting on a field trip you are responsible for a group of children. Your undivided attention is needed by the staff to ensure the safety of the children. For this reason younger or older siblings cannot be brought on the trip.

Criminal Reference Checks for Parents

As directed by the Ministry of Education, any staff member or volunteer who directly works or assists with children, must provide the school with the result of a police check, prior to working with the children. Therefore, any parent accompanying a class on a field trip must submit the result of the police check prior to going on the field trip. The school will reimburse parents the cost of having a police check done. A positive criminal reference check does not prevent a parent from participating on field trips. The school is only interested in protecting children from adults who have been convicted of offences which may put a child at risk.

Fundraising

Please support the school by actively participating in organizing or helping out with our fundraising events as your time and energy permit. Information regarding all fundraising activities will be published in the monthly newsletters and, in some cases, by additional notices on school bulletin boards. Please watch for them and give your support.

When Your Child is Sick

Children who are not well enough to participate in any outdoor activities should be kept at home. Please do not send your child to school if they are ill. Children will not be kept in during outdoor times. Staff cannot act as surrogate parents and it is unfair to the classroom to have children who are ill and require extra love and care. Sending sick children to school also increases the chances of spreading the disease, especially in the winter. Parents who send children to school when they are ill will be called and will be required to pick up their child. Please call the office to report that your child will not be at school.

Emphasis on Independence

Independence is a strong concept in Montessori, because the Montessori method of teaching helps the child become more independent. Being independent means being able to do things without help from others. In order for a child to achieve this, (s)he needs a supportive environment, one where (s)he can become independent.

The main purpose of independence is:

- to help the child work towards the fulfillment of his/her own potential
- to help the child become truly free within the community to which (s)he belongs
- to help the child judge realistically his/her own worth and also to realize his/her limitations

There are some basic rules an adult has to abide by in order to support this process to independence. It is very important that a child is not interfered with, while working in his/her classroom. For instance if parents come into the classroom during school hours, this is a disruption for children concentrating on their work. Please try to maintain consistency between school and home routines. Mixed messages will only confuse children and hinder their route to independence.

Integration of New Students

In order to ensure that no classroom is overwhelmed with children who are new to the school, KMS integrates new students one or two at time. This ensures that returning children can assume their leadership roles and helps new children adapt quickly as the school focuses on your child during the first few days to ensure they have a successful beginning at KMS.

Toddler Children

The Toddler educator will provide a schedule for new children to integrate with one of their parents. The toddler educator will meet with you prior to the commencement of school to arrange this.

Casa-Primary Children

New children, enrolled in the primary program are integrated into their classroom throughout the month of September or at other times during the school year in a gradual way without a parent staying in the classroom. Short initial visits allow the educator to devote individual attention to your child and facilitate your child's adjustment to the class and its routines. This procedure may be individual to each child. Your child's happy adjustment is our primary concern.

Loonie (Pizza) Lunches

Loonie lunches (cheese pizza) are held near the end of the month for all students. Loonie lunches are part of the school's fundraising efforts, as well they are a social event for the children.

Lost and Found

Lost and found articles are kept in a bin at the end of the Casa hallway. All unmarked, unclaimed articles are periodically given to charity, after being displayed in the main hall during the Loonie Lunch day, for parents and students to identify their lost articles and take them home.

Lunches

Lunches are provided for toddler and casa aged children. Children may be exempt from the lunch program due to dietary restrictions or if the child is over 44 months as stated by the Ministry of Education.

If your child brings his lunch to school, please ensure that the lunch consists of a well-balanced, nutritional meal, excluding candy and other highly sugared foods with excessive quantities of additives and preservatives. **Please note that Kanata Montessori School is a peanut and nut-free school.** The hot lunches provided by the school do not include snack. Morning snacks are organized with the assistance of parents for the Casa & Toddler students. Casa children must provide their own afternoon snack and drink.

Medication

The school will administer medicine to children staying all day. The medicine must be in the original container and must have the child's name clearly marked on the bottle. Parents must complete a permission form giving staff permission to give your child the medicine as well as indicating dosage and a schedule that sets out times the medicine is to be given. The form will be available at the office or from your child's educator. The medicine and completed form should be left with the child's educator. Staff members are not permitted to apply sunscreen, calamine lotion, diaper cream, etc on a child without written permission from a parent/guardian.

Please note that the regulations for the use of prescription drugs are mandated by the Ministry of Education. The school has no ability to be "flexible" on these issues as our licensing depends on strict adherence to these provincial regulations.

Newsletter

A Newsletter will be posted on our website on a monthly basis. Please take the time to read it. Newsletters will keep you informed about what is happening at the school and remind you of special events. The newsletter is our way of keeping in touch with parents. We also appreciate parental contributions to the newsletter.

Social Media

KMS has a Facebook page and we encourage all our families to like the page so they can receive daily/weekly updates and photos of classroom, afterschool and field trip activities. Students' last names are not used in the Facebook posts.

Classroom Observations

Classroom observations are welcomed. For short periods of time you may observe your child at work through the one-way windows. If you would like to observe a specific activity or book a specific classroom observation time, you may approach your child's educator to arrange an appointment time suitable to you both.

Parent-Educator Interviews

There are two opportunities each year for parent/educator interviews. The dates are indicated on the school calendar. If you wish to speak to the educator about your child, at any other time, please arrange an appointment. Discussions at the classroom door are discouraged. It is difficult for both educator and parent to concentrate adequately on a discussion with the children present.

P.D. Days & Interview Days

During professional development days and interview days the school offers childcare. You will be able to register for these programs at www.kmsregistration.com For those students registered in the Lunch program a meal will be provided.

Full Day Montessori Programming

Full day Montessori programming allows children to have a more seamless day. Children spend their day with familiar staff and maintain a familiar work and play pattern throughout the day.

Before School Programming

7:30 am-9:00 am-Toddler,Casa & Elementary

Children who arrive at the school for this program will gather in one room. During this period the children will participate in crafts, stories and play time. The Elementary students will spend time outside in the playground beginning at 8:00 a.m.

Casa Program

Children 3-6 years of age

Five mornings per week

9:00-11:50 am

Casa is short for Casa di Bambini which is Italian for "House of Children", the name of Maria Montessori's first school. This is the term used for programs for children aged 3 to 6 years. The children take in their environment with what Dr. Maria Montessori called The Absorbent Mind. The Absorbent Mind is at its peak receptivity prior to the age of six. Because of this, the children do not need direct teaching in order to learn. The classroom environment is designed to allow the children to move, manipulate and explore the prepared environment. The children are given the freedom with limits to choose their own work without interruptions. This helps the child build concentration and independence.

Books and pamphlets regarding the method and philosophy of a Montessori education are available at the office. Our educators will answer any questions you may have. Parent Workshops are also a valuable means to learn about the Montessori classroom.

School Day Programming

9:00 am to 3:30 pm

In this Montessori Program all children who have participated in the morning program can take part in the afternoon program. However, the older children {aged 4 1/2 and up) will have the opportunity to participate in more concentrated work with the educator in the afternoon. In order to fully benefit from the Montessori method, once children have reached the age of 4 1/2 to 5, they are - on the recommendation of the educator - encouraged to stay for this more advanced afternoon program.

Nap or Rest Period
1:00-3:00

The Toddler and first year Casa (3 year olds) children have the opportunity to nap daily. If the Casa child is not sleeping at approximately 45 minutes into the sleep time, they will return to the classroom. Younger children who normally nap in the afternoon will continue to have the opportunity to do so. Children who have this rest period bring a small blanket and pillow which can be kept at the school. These items should be taken home every Friday to be washed. If you take any of these items home for washing, please ensure that you return them with your child the next school day. Children may be upset if familiar things are missing, especially at nap time. Cots are available at the school.

Lunch

Students eat lunch in their classrooms. Adult supervision is provided at lunch time in all classrooms

After School Programming
3:30 pm - 5:45 pm

Children may be picked up at any point during this time. If the children are in the indoor environment, please let the educator know that you have arrived and allow time for your child to disengage from his activities. The educator will send your child to you after saying good-bye. If the children are outdoors when you arrive, please collect all necessary items from your child's hook and then come to get your child. Please ensure that your child says good-bye to the staff member on duty. All children in this program must be signed out by the parent or designate. Please encourage your child to put on his/her own outdoor clothing and make departure time a pleasant experience for your child by allowing adequate time and not rushing.

Elementary Programming
Grades 1-6

In 1996, the school launched the first part of the Elementary program for 6 to 9 year old children following the Montessori method of education. The program, now expanded to children 9 to 12 years old, is licensed under the Ministry of Education.

The Montessori Elementary Program allows for the child to consume a life long education. It allows for the natural growth of the 6 to 12 year old child.

Maria Montessori noted that knowledge can best be given where there is eagerness to learn so this is the period when the seeds of everything can be sown. The child's mind is like a fertile seed ready to receive and germinate into culture. Hence the whole universe is presented, for in the universe are the answers to all questions. The Elementary program responds to the power of imagination, the child's interests and needs. Great stories and key lessons reveal the truths of the universe arousing the children's curiosity.

Materials in math, science and geometry are self teaching and accommodate the individual's level of ability. The apparatus aids in the child's mental development and self construction. The material aids the child's growth by providing stimuli that capture the child's attention and initiate a process of concentration. The child learns to use the apparatus to develop co-ordination, attention to detail and good work habits. The materials build upon abstractions already developing in the children through their earlier work with concrete materials in the Children's House (Casa).

The elementary child has a desire to know everything. The curriculum is open ended following the keen interest and pace of the child. The curriculum and prepared environment provide the keys of each discipline of study: Arithmetic, Geometry, Language, Grammar, Botany, Zoology, Geography and History in a manner that meets the elementary child's needs for inspiration as well as order.

The disciplines are fully integrated. The lessons and materials are presented in such an intriguing manner that the child's curiosity is bound to be captured. The key lessons are the means to help each one reach his/her own potential.

The role of the educator is that of a guide and facilitator. It is their responsibility to respond to the interest of the children and to capitalize on those interests in order to help the child find meaningful involvement. The function of the educator becomes that of conservator of the relationship between subjects. The educator organizes them around the child's vital interests according to the needs of the child.

In addition to providing a regular school day, the school also offers before and after school care for elementary children. Parents can opt for school day programming (9:00-3:30), full day programming 7:30-5:45 or Full Day Comprehensive, which not only provides an education and care from 7:30-5:45 but also includes costs of all after school activities as part of the program. Registration is required for all after school activities.

Adolescent Programming **Grades 7 & 8**

In 2004, Kanata Montessori School launched the first part of the adolescent program for grade 7 following Montessori's principles of education. This now expanded grade 7 and 8 program is licensed under the Ministry of Education.

The Adolescent program invites students to continue their Montessori education and provides the student with the tools to successfully meet his/her changing environment.

Adolescence is a humanistic age. During this stage of development, students are trying to find their place in the world. Adolescents are asking big questions like "Who am I? Where do I fit in?" Maria Montessori noted that adolescents need to interact with the adult world and need to be able to take on adult responsibilities. The student, through the Casa and Elementary programs, is able to meet that challenge. The adolescent, through engagement in meaningful work, continues to be a contributing member to the community. Adolescence ushers in a new level of independence. This independence must be provided for in the Montessori environment by increasing activity from the point of view of work level, choices, and planning.

The adolescent student (Adole) continues to work in math, science and geometry with a focus on how these apply to real life situations. Students are now performing higher-order thinking skills and are continuing their exploration of subject matter.

Language arts, social science and second language instruction are integral at this stage of development. The adolescent is attracted to creative work that provides an opportunity for self-expression. Different cultures, and different time periods entice the adolescent to explore new topics. The student develops confidence in subject matter through seminar, oral presentations, debates, drama, essays, play writing, poetry, and short stories.

Subjects are fully integrated in order to intrigue and excite the student. Students work independently and in groups to reach their own potential.

The role of the educator is as a guide and facilitator. Adolescents must come in contact with experts in specific subject matter. The adolescent and educator have a unique relationship in a Montessori program. The educator helps to build awareness and introduction of subject matter and the adolescent pursues the big work.

French Program

French instruction is given to every child in Casa and Elementary programs. The lengths of the lessons vary depending on age group and are as follows:

Casa children (2 nd & 3 rd yr.)	30 minutes
Elementary students	45 minutes
Adolescent students	1 hour + an integrated program

Reports

Written reports for Adolescent, Elementary & Casa students (where applicable) will be distributed in December & April. Your child's progress may be discussed during parent-educator interviews. These dates are posted in the school calendar. Please book your appointment on the sign up sheets which are available approximately one week before the interview date. We strongly encourage parents to have on-going communication with their child's educator throughout the school year.

Behaviour Management

Discipline of misbehaviour of a child will be handled in the following order as misbehaviour escalates:

- a. child is redirected to another activity.
- b. child is kept close to an adult in the class.
- c. child is kept close to an adult outside the class

If the behaviour problems persist, the Principal/Vice Principal will be consulted. If necessary, parents will be asked to meet to discuss measures to be taken in handling their child's behaviour.

Prohibited Practices at the Kanata Montessori School:

- Corporal punishment of the child.
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
- Locking the exits of the child care center or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures.
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth.
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding.
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

The behaviour management practices of employees are monitored on an ongoing basis by the Principal throughout the school.

Violence

There is a zero tolerance to violent behaviour at the school. If staff encounter such behaviour the Principal will be informed immediately. Steps necessary to prevent such behaviour in the future will be discussed with the parent (s) and will be put in place.

Serious Occurrence

As required by the Ministry of Education, in the case of a serious occurrence, KMS will post a serious occurrence notification form in accordance with the Ministry policy.

Security

The school encourages every parent to discuss the following policies with their children, so they become *security* aware.

1. The child shakes hands good-bye with the teacher prior to leaving. Once this is done the child becomes the parent's responsibility.
2. Children will not be released to anyone who is not listed on the child's emergency card unless prior approval is given by the parents.
3. If prior approval is not given to the staff by the parents for another individual to pick up the child, the staff will contact the parents for approval. The staff will then ask for identification to confirm the identity of the individual.
4. Parents are asked to please pick-up all of your child's belongings before greeting your child.
5. Parents are required to leave promptly after picking up their child/children to minimize the number of persons in the hallway at one time.
6. Staff will question anyone they feel is not part of the school community.
7. Staff move around the playground areas to ensure maximum visibility and safety of the children.
8. Communal washroom is checked frequently by staff throughout the day. One child at a time per classroom is allowed to use this washroom unless it is an emergency, and/or, an older child is helping a younger child.
9. To ensure the safety and privacy of the children, parents and caregivers are not allowed in the communal washroom with their child. If your child needs to use the washroom and they require your help, please use the individual washrooms.

Snacks

A schedule will be posted outside your child's classroom indicating to you which week(s) you are required to provide snack for the classroom. Please contact your child's educator about any food allergies that may be present in the classroom.

Please note that KMS is a peanut and nut-free school.

A healthy snack might include some of the following:

- Fresh fruit (apples, oranges, bananas, melon)
- raw vegetables (celery, carrot sticks broccoli, cauliflower, cucumber)
- whole wheat pita bread with cheese and alfalfa sprouts
- plain yogurt or cottage cheese with fresh fruit

- breadsticks
- bagels
- miniature rice cakes
- small plain bran or oatmeal muffin

Toys

Children may not bring toys in to the school. Toys left in cubbies are distracting to others. Please leave them at home or in the car. The one exception to this is for children who may want a soft toy for nap time. If your child is bringing a toy for naptime, please place it in the bag with his/her blanket. Thank you.

As Maria Montessori writes:

"If one helps them a little the children work by themselves from a very early age."

"We do not prepare the child for school but for life."