

The Way of Life in a Children's House Classroom

In the Children's House classroom, we promote each child's individuality while encouraging a balance of self expression with responsibility and respect for the classroom community.

Grace and Courtesy

Intermingled with academic lessons, and presented with equal importance, Children's House students are taught to behave with grace and courtesy, the foundation of conduct expected of each person at Oak Meadow. In the resulting environment of peace and safety, students move with inner tranquility toward greater self confidence and independence. Students calmly concentrate and marvel, as the materials before them reveal wonders of knowledge.

Nurturing Setting

At the threshold of our Children's House classrooms, students are greeted by their teacher with a handshake and smile. This warm and respectful welcome characterizes the nurturing setting they enter as their day begins. Alongside their classmates and friends, the youngest members of the Oak Meadow community happily involve themselves in a self-paced Montessori journey through the five areas of study.

Respect for Others

At Oak Meadow, there is respect for the uniqueness of each child. Students learn to appreciate the many differences within their diverse community. As our young learners work side by side in a cooperative and supportive manner, the seeds of harmonious living are sown. This fundamental yet highly ethical precept of the Montessori experience is perhaps the greatest gift received by the students at Oak Meadow.

Respect of the Child's Mind

The Montessori teacher presents lessons to an individual or small group and continuously observes the students, noting each child's interest and progress in all disciplines. Regularly, with current knowledge of each young learner, the teacher offers a child a choice of lesson options. The offering is shaped by observation, is mindful of the present interest of the child, and is, ultimately, respectful of the child's developing intellect. For the student, the act of selecting a lesson satisfies curiosity within a learning timeline unique to that student.

Social Life and Multi-age Grouping

Classrooms at Oak Meadow are bright and cheerful. Children are excited to be here. They have fun working on lessons in the classroom and playing outdoors. Their social life is enhanced by working in pairs or small groups. Children learn to be supportive and to help each other. Strong friendships develop as students enthusiastically work side by side toward success at a

task. The Montessori tradition of multi-age (three year) grouping allows for older students to model good conduct for the younger students and in doing so, to reinforce what has been learned. And, the inclination of the younger students to be like older classmates makes for natural imitation of these behaviors.

Indoor/Outdoor

Maria Montessori knew that there was much to be learned from the world outside the classroom. Classrooms at Oak Meadow have been architecturally designed with windows that allow for the two distinct purposes of letting children see beyond the lesson at hand and for inviting the eyes of children to gaze out to the world for which their lessons are preparing them.

Peace Education

Oak Meadow is committed to the Montessori tenet that each person can play an effective role in bringing peace to the world. The school actively teaches peace education. In Children's House, students learn conflict resolution as a way of achieving peace within the classroom. Cooperative living is put into practice as students complete daily chores with the common goal of keeping their classroom neat and tidy. The concept is extended to the world outside when these young students participate in caring for their planet through recycling. Children's House classes host guests who awaken awareness of differences as the school promotes tolerance. Students learn philosophies of peace when they study the lives of historical peacemakers. It is with an eye toward world peace that the school has the expectation that each member of the school community will act with grace and courtesy. Oak Meadow hopes that each graduate of the school will exemplify this fundamental Montessori practice along every path followed.