



AMS Montessori Philosophical Messages

Deep respect for children as unique individuals.

Multi-age classes allow teachers to develop close and long-term relationships with their students, allow them to know each child's learning style well and encourage older students to become role-models, mentors and leaders to younger students.

Integrated Curriculum is carefully structured;

- connects subjects within programs, e.g. history and cultural arts to maximize the opportunity for learning.
- builds from program to program to progress from concrete to abstract learning.

Independence is nurtured and leads to children becoming purposeful, motivated and confident in their own abilities.

Peace and conflict resolution are taught daily and children learn to be part of a warm, respectful and supportive community.


Character development is a central focus of the curriculum. The child creates, in a very real sense, the adult that is to be, through their experiences, interactions, and environments.

Hands-on learning is central to the curriculum in all programs and leads to children being engaged rather than passive with their work.

Self-directed learning is supported through the environments that are responsibly and carefully prepared with multisensory, sequential, and self-correcting materials.

Our supportive community allows teachers and children, and teachers and parents to work together.

Self-expression is nurtured in all children. Children experience art, music, poetry, theatre, writing and other forms of creative arts with confidence and passion.



Benefits of Multi-age Groupings

(source: AMS position paper)

Both research and experience point to the benefits of multi-age groupings and many educational settings are now incorporating this model. Positive outcomes include:

- **Depth of relationships**
Each child remains in the same classroom with the same teaching team for 3 years. Only 1/3 of the group is new each year enabling the teachers and students to get to know each other very well. The stress of yearly transitions is reduced and teachers are better able to personalize instruction.
- **Improved sense of community and development of social skills**
Children learn from each other formally and informally; children act as models for each other and peer teaching is encouraged. This aids in the development of personality, collaboration and cooperation.
- **Increased self-esteem**
All children are not expected to have identical skills and perform equally, so there is less anxious competition. This leads to respect for the individuality of each child and recognition that each child has unique strengths and contributions. Comparisons are not made and cooperation is encouraged, accommodating the naturally occurring uneven development of individuals. Collaborative learning is both teacher-directed and spontaneous as the children learn to ask each other for help.
- **Confidence in risk-taking**
Groups of children working together are flexible and differ depending on interests, subject matter and ability. Young children develop confidence about trying to work with more complex material because they have seen older children experiencing success.
- **Enduring understanding of concepts**
Spending 3 years in the same classroom allows the children to re-explore the same materials at deepening levels. This repetition aids in true understanding rather than the "studied, tested, and forgotten" phenomenon of other educational settings. The geometric solids, for example, are first explored sensorially, then named, matched, duplicated with paper and pencil, and finally explored mathematically and geometrically.
- **Supports inclusion**
Importantly, multi-age grouping lends itself to the inclusion of children with special needs into classrooms with typically developing peers. This benefits all the children cognitively, socially and spiritually.