



Wheatland Elementary School

Lead with confidence

Learn without limits

Love who you

are

Principal: Amy Van Vliet

Associate Principal: Michelle Silver Rushford

Wheatland Montessori

"What the hand does, the mind remembers."

--Maria Montessori

Welcome to our Montessori K-3 program. We offer a multi-age grade grouping that features self-directed, hands-on, cooperative learning. Our students benefit from a balance of individualized, small group and whole group instruction.

What Is Montessori?



Maria Montessori (1870-1952) was a visionary in education. After becoming Italy's first female doctor, her interests turned to the education of children and she began her lifelong study of human development. Based on a profound respect for the potential of each individual and the belief that children learn best when they are able to follow their individual interests, Montessori created carefully prepared classrooms that allow freedom of choice and movement with a balance of guidance and structure.

Program Eligibility

It is recommended that students enter the Wheatland Montessori Program at the Pre-K or Kindergarten level. Montessori Materials are introduced in a progression where conceptual learning builds from concrete to abstract. A student who enters the program late may miss out on some prerequisite lessons with the Montessori Materials.

Registration Requirements

The Wheatland Montessori K-3 program is publicly funded. An annual Montessori material fee (\$50) will need to be paid in order for your child to participate.

- Completed registration and FOIP form
- Montessori material fee \$50 (non-refundable)

The above must be submitted to ensure your child has a space in the program. It is very important to inform the school if any of your contact information changes,

Montessori Program Staff

Principal -	Mrs. Amy Van Vliet
Associate Principal -	Mrs. Michelle Rushford
Office Staff -	Mrs. Melissa Pearson Mrs. Deb Gordon
Montessori Teachers-	Mrs. Lisa Carless (Pre-K) Mrs. Corri Kennedy (K/1) Mrs. Leanne Pinel (Pre-K, 2-3) Mrs. Vicky Smith (2-3)

Program Structure

The Prepared Environment

"The first aim of the prepared environment is, as far as it is possible, to render the growing child independent of the adult."

The Secret of Childhood :: Fides Publishers, 1966 :: p. 26

The Prepared environment refers to how everything is carefully designed to facilitate children's learning. Materials are on shelves in a logical subject oriented manner with areas for reading, language arts, math and culture. To foster a community atmosphere, the students sit at tables rather than individual desks and school supplies are shared. The classroom is calm, neutral and organized. The Montessori classroom is designed to minimize things that may over stimulate and distract a child while they are learning. The environment is designed with a comforting sense of home in mind. The Montessori classroom helps children connect with nature by having wicker baskets, cloth mats, natural wood, trays, shelving & care of plants and animals. Imagination and creativity is encouraged by focusing on real-life, not pretend, cartoon or unreal things.

The Montessori Materials

"The hands are the instruments of man's intelligence."

Dr. Maria Montessori 1879-1952



The Montessori learning materials reflect the ideas of the Montessori method; they were designed for specific reasons and are presented to children in a particular order. The object of the materials is for the child to learn by exploration. Hands on materials progress from simple to complex to support a natural flow of learning. Children work on materials at their own pace and level. Depending on the child's level of independence, self-direction and motivation, the materials can also offer many opportunities for more advanced learning and enrichment. The classroom features only one of each material. Children learn to wait their turn, to cooperate, develop patience and respect the work of others. Students may only work on materials that they have been introduced to by the teacher. Materials are presented as students show readiness. Many materials are designed for the student to self-correct their own work. When they are finished with each material, they return it to the shelf from which it came, ready for the next child to use.

The Teacher

“Help me to do it by myself.”
Dr. Maria Montessori

Teachers carefully prepare a structured learning environment that is designed to facilitate self-directed learning. This gives the student greater control, ownership, and accountability over his or her own learning. The classroom begins teacher-directed as expectations and routines are set. It becomes more student-directed once students show growth of independence and responsibility for their own learning. The teacher offers presentations of the materials either individually or in groups. The children are then free to work with these materials as long and as often as necessary. Once the children have engaged in their work, the teacher does not unnecessarily intervene, as this can interrupt the child's concentration. The teacher observes student progress and adapts the environment as necessary to meet individual learning needs. Children benefit from working with the same teacher for more than one year.

The Child

"A child needs freedom within limits"

Dr. Maria Montessori 1879-1952



Multi-age groupings promote peer-teaching, self-esteem, leadership and positive social interaction. A sense of community is established in which everyone has varying abilities, they learn from one another and everyone contributes. Multiage groupings also allow each child to find his or her own pace without feeling "ahead" or "behind" in relation to peers. In Montessori, there is a strong focus on developing self-direction and independent work habits. Basic rules and procedures allow the child to balance freedom with responsibility in order to structure work choices and time to cover the curriculum. Using time management skills, they learn to independently plan, organize their own supplies and then proceed with their scheduled tasks. Children have the freedom of movement and may work anywhere in the room, at tables or mats on the floor. They are also free to help others, work in groups or with a partner – within the boundaries of respect and responsibility. Children benefit from the freedom of choice in the classroom. Children become more engaged, motivated, and successful when they have choice. Freedom does not imply Chaos. The amount of freedom each student receives depends on their level of independence and self-discipline. Some students may require more direct instruction and teacher guidance than others, gradually increasing the amount of freedom as they are ready. External rewards are kept to a minimum. The Montessori method focuses on an internal reward system, helping the child feel and develop his/her own level of satisfaction. The goal is to see the children learning for the joy of learning, and not for the purpose of getting a sticker or external reward.

Practical Life

Provide the students with opportunities to learn, practice and develop motor skills, coordination, develop confidence in their abilities, develop independence and learn to get along with others. Practical Life Exercises also aid the growth and development of the child's intellect and concentration and will in turn also help the child develop an orderly way of thinking. Practical life is divided into four areas:

Preliminary Exercises – tucking in a chair, rolling a mat, carrying a tray

Care of the Person – Washing hands, preparing a snack, dressing frames, sewing, cooking

Care of the Environment – Washing a table, sweeping, dusting, taking care of plants and animals

Grace and Courtesy – Greeting a person, introducing one's self, coughing, interrupting, offering help

Program Standards

All teachers in the K-3 Montessori program hold an Alberta Teaching Certificate and additional training from an accredited Montessori training institute. The Alberta Program of Studies is followed. Students are taught curriculum outcomes using the Montessori philosophy and materials. The Golden Hills Learner Profile is used to report student progress.

School Climate



We are a part of the Wheatland School Community; our students join the rest of the school for recess breaks, assemblies, spirit days and other school-wide events. Montessori students have the same access to all school support services and extracurricular activities.



