



Dolce Casa Montessori

Our Approach to the Curriculum

At Dolce Casa Montessori, we recognise the importance of the early years in shaping children's development. Our curriculum is rooted in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and supports children to grow as confident, capable, and curious learners.

Our **curriculum intent is to deliver the EYFS principles through the Montessori approach**. We take a holistic approach, focusing on the unique child, positive relationships, enabling environments, and thoughtful adult interactions. Our practice is inspired by Montessori principles and a calm, nurturing, home-from-home ethos.

Our Rationale

The period from birth to five years is a time of rapid development. Children learn best when they feel safe, valued, and understood. By getting to know each child well — particularly through the key person relationship — we are able to support learning that builds on children's interests, strengths, and developmental stage.

We believe that:

- Every child can make progress with the right support
- Early support helps children catch up and keep up
- Parents and carers are children's first and most important educators
- Fostering independence has a profound impact on children's confidence and self-esteem

We work in close partnership with families to ensure children feel secure and confident in their learning journey.

Last Review: February 2026

Our Curriculum Intent

Our curriculum sets out what we want children to learn, based on the EYFS and Development Matters guidance, delivered through the Montessori approach.

Our intent is to:

- Support all children to make steady progress
- Prioritise emotional wellbeing, communication, and independence
- Foster curiosity, confidence, and a love of learning
- Develop children's independence so they become capable, self-motivated learners

We believe independence is not only a practical skill but a foundation for resilience, confidence, and lifelong learning.

EYFS Principles and Montessori

The four key EYFS principles strongly complement and align with the Montessori philosophy.

The Unique Child

We believe every child is unique, capable, and naturally eager to learn. Children develop at their own pace and in their own way. Our role is to observe carefully and respond thoughtfully to their individual needs and interests.

Positive Relationships

We aim to create secure, respectful relationships where children see adults as guides. Practitioners act as calm facilitators of learning, supporting children while encouraging autonomy. Children know they can rely on their teachers for support as they develop new skills and confidence.

Enabling Environments

Our environment is carefully prepared, calm, and purposeful. It encourages exploration, independence, and concentration. Provision is based on children's interests and developmental stage and is flexible and evolving. Resources are accessible and promote choice, responsibility, and self-direction.

Learning and Development

We understand that children learn in different ways. Practitioners observe closely to understand

each child deeply and plan accordingly. Learning experiences are tailored to children's abilities and interests, ensuring meaningful progress across all areas of development.

We ensure inclusive practice for all children, including those with additional needs.

Areas of Learning and Development

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning, all of which are interconnected.

We place particular emphasis on the Prime Areas, as these are time-sensitive and form the foundation for future learning:

Prime Areas

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

These are supported through the Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Our Montessori environment provides carefully structured materials that support progression across all seven areas in a concrete, hands-on way.

How Children Learn

Learning at Dolce Casa Montessori takes place throughout the day through:

- Child-initiated exploration (which we refer to as “work”)
- Adult-guided experiences
- Everyday routines and practical life activities
- Indoor and outdoor environments

In Montessori philosophy, we believe that **children’s play is their work**. Therefore, activities in our environment are referred to as “work,” as they have purpose, structure, and progression.

Our spaces are calm, inviting, and thoughtfully organised to encourage independence, focus, and deep engagement. Natural and open-ended resources are used to support creativity, logical thinking, and problem-solving.

Practitioners:

- Observe children carefully to identify learning opportunities
- Engage in meaningful conversations and sustained shared thinking
- Model skills when appropriate and step back to allow independence
- Encourage resilience, repetition, and mastery
- Support children in completing a full cycle of work

Learning Through Montessori Practice

The Montessori environment supports all the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Playing and Exploring

Children independently choose activities, explore materials, and engage deeply with the prepared environment.

Active Learning

Children are motivated to “have a go,” repeat activities, and try again until mastery is achieved. Repetition builds concentration, perseverance, and confidence.

Creative and Critical Thinking

Many materials involve sequencing, matching, problem-solving, and logical progression. Children are

encouraged to think critically, make connections between activities, and complete a purposeful cycle of work.

These characteristics are embedded into everyday practice rather than recorded separately.

Assessment and Planning

Assessment at Dolce Casa Montessori is ongoing and proportionate. We use:

- Observations during work and daily routines
- Professional knowledge of child development
- Reflection and discussion within the team
- Partnership with parents

Planning is responsive and evolves with the children, ensuring experiences remain meaningful, appropriately challenging, and engaging.

Our Aim

We aim to nurture kind, confident, capable, and independent children who feel secure in themselves and excited to learn.

By embedding the EYFS principles within the Montessori approach, we support children to develop resilience, independence, concentration, and a lifelong love of learning.