

KINDERGARTEN

Four years of Pre, Junior and Senior Kindergarten

The goal of the 'Maternelle', is to establish a foundation for learning that children may build upon in subsequent years. Children develop their motor, sensory, and academic skills during this critical period of time. Specialized teaching techniques are employed to promote problem solving, inquiry, and repetitive practice. Students learn the basic principles of social life by forming relationships with others through individual and team play. Within the classroom, teachers create a nurturing environment to help with the child's transition from home to school. Taught in a bilingual immersion setting, students naturally absorb the school's two mainly languages.

Components:

There are five main areas of instruction in kindergarten. Each area is critical to the development of the student and plays an important role in child's daily life at school

1. **Reading, Writing and Language Skills**
2. **Acting and expressing oneself through Physical activities**
3. **Acting and expressing oneself through Artistic Activities**
4. **The building blocks for Mathematical Thinking**
5. **Discovery of the World**

Reading, Writing, Language Skills

Students acquire vocabulary through listening to their teacher's directions, listening to music and stories, imitating their peers, and repetition of the French and English pronunciations.

In pre-kindergarten, children learn to recite the alphabet, trace letters and write their name. Once in Senior Kindergarten (Grande Section), students are introduced to syntax and phonics. They learn to couple words to construct sentences and are introduced to the difference in the present and past tense.

In kindergarten, children receive 13 hours of English and 13 hours of French classes each week. They read classic children's literature and modern stories to promote a love of reading. Students learn sight words, grammar, and phonics. They sing songs together to reinforce their social skills, amongst others.

Acting and expressing oneself through Physical Activities

A sports teacher, certified by the French ministry of education, helps children to discover the joys of movement through guided physical activities. This skills-based class reinforces fine motor coordination, body awareness, focus, calculated risk-taking and intellectual reasoning. Students also develop interpersonal relationships, embracing their classmates' differences and respecting their range of abilities. Sports take place four times a week, with the option of extracurricular sport activities.

Acting and expressing oneself through Artistic Activities

During art classes, the students explore a variety of artistic methods that spark their imagination and creativity. Thoughtful approaches to artistic techniques develop their fine motor skills as well as their analytical reasoning. The activities are organized in order to introduce the children to different medias, including painting, sculpture, drawing, photography, collage and cinema.

Students are also exposed to performing arts. They develop their auditory skills through songs. They perform theater skits to build their vocabulary and presentation abilities.

The Building Blocks for Mathematical Thinking

The kindergarteners discover numbers and their purpose, explore shapes, sizes and patterns, and learn how to approach a multi-step problem.

Discovery of numbers and their purpose

Students explore the use of familiar objects (dominos, dices, etc.) to recognize quantities. They learn the fundamentals of basic measurement, developing

vocabulary such as “more than” or “less than”. Through their games and activities, they are encouraged to formulate questions and draw logical conclusions.

Exploration of shapes, sizes and patterns

Students are taught to classify, group and organize shapes. The identification and replication of patterns help them strengthen their analytical reasoning. They begin to understand basic measurement by comparing the size of objects. The knowledge gained at this level serves as a building block for geometry covered in cycles 2 (grade 1, 2 and 3) and 3 (grade 4, 5 and 6).

Discovery of the World

Time

During ‘circle time’, a daily activity where the students sit together in a circle, they discuss the days of the week, the various seasons, and the time of the day. This process enables them to gradually comprehend the regular patterns out there.

Placing oneself in a surrounding environment

Through daily classroom routines, they understand the cyclical aspects of the day and what their role is in terms of being part of a class. They sometime bring items from home to ‘show and tell’, to distinguish between what is kept at home versus what is kept at school.

Exploring the living world, objects and matter

Children learn about the different forms of life, lifecycles and habitats. They plant vegetables and flowers, observe insects and also discover their own bodies with respect to function, hygiene, and nutrition. The basic characteristics of matter are recognized by cutting, modeling, and assembling materials like wood, soil, paper and cardboard. To make the abstract more tangible, they experiment, observe, and conclude. For e.g.: What happens if you freeze water? How does light affect shade? Natural hazards are discussed in the context of safety. The students learn how to recognize and respond to unsafe situations.

Evaluations

While teachers observe the development of their students year-round, a written report and a parent-teacher meeting take place twice a year. During these meetings and through ongoing dialogues, parents and teachers agreed on effective academic strategies for their children and how to best prepare them for elementary school.