



The Montessori Program

at Eagle Harbour Primary School



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Welcome to the Montessori Program at Eagle Harbour Primary

West Vancouver School District— *The premier place for learning*

In West Vancouver School District, children thrive in an innovative, enriched and academically rigorous educational environment. Here, we value family involvement and support students as they develop the confidence, character and leadership skills that will shape their future as engaged global citizens.

The quality of teaching and learning in West Vancouver public schools has never been better.

One of the ways in which our school district distinguishes itself is through our wide array of programs of choice. Providing differentiated learning environments allows students to discover new avenues of achievement and personal fulfilment.

We are pleased to introduce our newest program of choice:
The Montessori Elementary Program
at Eagle Harbour Primary School.

Eagle Harbour Primary School

At the heart of West Vancouver's distinctive seaside neighbourhood of Eagle Harbour lies a small, intimate primary school, where classes are small and staff are like family. It's where children experience:

- Warm, friendly settings with the lowest class sizes in the Lower Mainland.
- Beautiful, well cared-for facilities—both inside and out.
- Enriched learning environments with caring, nurturing teachers.
- Academic achievement at the highest levels in BC.

Welcome to Eagle Harbour Primary School.



Eagle Harbour Primary Vice-Principal Val Stevenson and students at the school's weekly assembly



The Montessori Program and Philosophy

Key Characteristics of the Montessori Program

- A multi-aged, multi-graded, heterogeneous group of students.
- A partnership with the family to support the individual child's total development.
- A diverse set of Montessori materials, activities, and experiences, which are designed to foster physical, intellectual, creative and social independence.
- A schedule that allows large blocks of uninterrupted time to problem solve, to see the interdisciplinary connections of knowledge, and to create new ideas.
- A classroom atmosphere that encourages social interaction for cooperative learning, peer teaching, and emotional development.





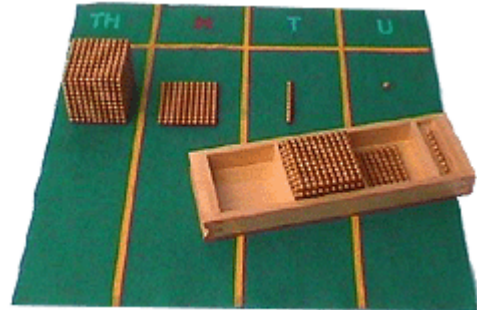
The Montessori Program and Philosophy

What does a Montessori classroom look like?

Learning in a Montessori classroom takes place through the senses. Within the child's reach are specialized self-correcting sensorial materials, for example, the moveable alphabet, the binomial and trinomial cubes, and the golden beads. Many of these materials and activities are designed to allow for self-correction, a feature that leads towards the child's independence.

Children will be provided with opportunities to learn through exploring the natural environment. Eagle Harbour is perfectly situated to support this learning, as it already has an onsite garden, large green space, and close proximity to Parc Verdun and Eagle Harbour beach.

Field trips will be an important part of the program in order to provide children with authentic learning experiences.



*"Free the child's potential, and you
transform him into the world."*

—Dr. Maria Montessori





Children around the world celebrated the Montessori Movement's 100th year in 2007.



Background on Montessori Philosophy

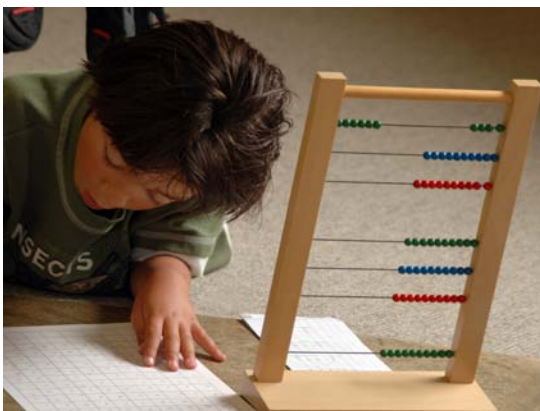
Montessori schools have been in existence for over 100 years in both private and public school settings in countries around the world.

Montessori education was founded by Dr. Maria Montessori as a result of her scientific observations of the behaviour of young children. It was her observation that young children learn best in a nurturing environment, filled with developmentally appropriate materials that provide experiences contributing to the growth of self-motivated, independent learners.



Montessori philosophy and methodology has influenced much of what is considered “best practice” in our elementary schools today. This includes a focus on child-centred, developmentally appropriate, authentic “hands-on” learning experiences. Montessori education fosters the development of an inquiring mind and an appreciation for one’s place in the physical environment, and one’s responsibility as a citizen of the world.

In North America there are greater numbers of Montessori schools serving families of children ages 3-5 than those with children ages 6-9. Increasingly, parents are seeking schools which provide the Montessori Elementary program (ages 6-9). In Vancouver and the Lower Mainland, several public school districts have established Montessori specialty programs in the elementary and secondary settings. These include the Coquitlam, Langley, New Westminster, Richmond, Surrey and Vancouver boards of education.



How does the philosophy fit with the BC curriculum?

A Montessori education is child-centred and based on the interests and needs of learners. The approach is consistent with the BC Ministry of Education's Primary Years Program.

Students learn through a sensorial method, moving from the concrete to the abstract in developing their understanding of concepts. Thematic units focus on the "great lessons" which are taught through a multi-disciplinary and inquiry based method.

As well, Montessori education focuses on social responsibility through the development of age appropriate leadership skills, self-discipline, and citizenship. A core aspect of the Primary Years Program is the development of these social responsibility skills.



"From the moment the child enters the classroom, each step in his education is seen as a progressive building block, ultimately forming the whole person, in the emergence from childhood to adult. All focus is on the needs of the child."



How would Montessori fit with my child?

A Montessori education is inclusive, and is suitable for all learners. Many families who have their children in Montessori preschools are keen to continue their child's Montessori education in the elementary years. Eagle Harbour Primary will be the first public Montessori elementary school on the North Shore.

How will Eagle Harbour introduce the Montessori Program?

Eagle Harbour will provide a graduated introduction to the Montessori program, beginning with one Kindergarten class in September 2009.

An additional grade will be added each subsequent year, leading to full implementation by September 2012.

As grades are added, the school will develop a Montessori multi-grade class model (i.e., in 2010, will have Montessori K, and a Montessori Grade 1; in 2011, will have Montessori K, and a Montessori Grade 1 and 2 multi-age class; in 2012 will have Montessori K, and a Montessori multi-age Grade 1, 2, 3 class).



For new parents, or parents with children currently attending Eagle Harbour Primary, this means that if you have a child entering Kindergarten in September 2009, he/she will be in a classroom setting which supports the Montessori methodology, and meets the BC curriculum guidelines.

For all students entering Grades 1 to 3 in September 2009, the regular programming would continue, also meeting the BC curriculum guidelines.



Our Vision for Your Children

On November 4, 2008, the West Vancouver Board of Education approved the introduction of a Montessori program at Eagle Harbour Primary School. Every decision the Board makes, whether it is pursuing educational excellence, planning for system sustainability, or establishing community connections, is based on what benefits each child under our care.

The Board takes great pride in introducing the Montessori Elementary Program at Eagle Harbour. And, as part of the Board's expanded mandate to provide early education opportunities for our very youngest learners, we opened West Vancouver School District's second StrongStart BC Centre at Eagle Harbour Primary in October 2008 for three- and four-year-olds and their caregivers.

Together with our well-established full-day Kindergarten program, K PLUS, which has been a popular choice for parents for over nine years, Eagle Harbour Primary is the busy hub of the community, providing access to extended learning opportunities for children and families.



Eagle Harbour Vice-Principal Val Stevenson (left) and West Vancouver-Garibaldi MLA Joan McIntyre flank StrongStart coordinator Sharon McGavin at the grand opening of the new Eagle Harbour StrongStart Centre in 2008.

- *Eagle Harbour Primary Montessori*
- *Eagle Harbour K PLUS Program*
- *Eagle Harbour StrongStart Centre*

Eagle Harbour Primary

At Eagle Harbour Primary School, we welcome students from Kindergarten to Grade 3. Situated in the scenic and serene west side of West Vancouver, Eagle Harbour is a short distance from beaches, a marina and a golf course. The surrounding school grounds include a stream that is used as a fisheries enhancement project, large grass fields, and a well-equipped playground area.

The school is a spacious, modern facility. Children have access to a fully-networked computer lab, a well-stocked library, and a large gymnasium that was constructed in partnership with the community. We actively promote the celebration of multiculturalism and place both emphasis and value on community and national pride. Through the collaborative efforts of staff, parents and students, Eagle Harbour offers an outstanding educational opportunity for all.

We aspire to be the best school system in the country for our employees, our children and our world.



*the finest education
country—for our children,
our community,*

—West Vancouver Board of Education

Registration Information

We are pleased to accept applications from families residing both within and outside of West Vancouver School District (space permitting).

Registration priority

First priority is given to students living within Eagle Harbour Primary's school boundaries.

How do I register my child?

Please drop by the school during school hours to take a tour, find out more about the Montessori Program, or register your child. (School office hours: 8:15 am–3:00 pm.)

Please bring the following documentation with you:

Your child's birth certificate and proof of residency (e.g., a utilities bill).

Specialty program fee

A fee will be attached to participate in the Montessori specialty program in order to support the expense of equipping each classroom with the special materials used in a Montessori program.

Specialty Program Fee: Please contact the school office for current fee information. *Please note:* This fee applies to Kindergarten children ONLY in September 2009. The fee will be applied to each grade level as the Montessori program is introduced in consecutive years.

*Mural, exterior—Eagle Harbour Primary School
by Marta Robertson Smyth*



Eagle Harbour Primary School
5575 Marine Drive
West Vancouver, BC V7W 2R4
T (604) 981-1380
F (604) 981-1381
www.sd45.bc.ca/eh

Contact:

Val Stevenson, Vice Principal
T: (604) 981-1380
E: vstevenson@sd45.bc.ca