

EARLY CHILDHOOD

Nursery and Kindergarten



Circle Time

Artistic
Activities

Free
Play/Outdoor Play

Story Time

Music

Rhythm

Practical Work

Festivals

WE'VE GOT THE RHYTHM

It is an undisputed fact that rhythm is cosmic, universal and natural. It reflects in nature, in our bodies (in our breathing, in our heartbeats), in our languages, and even in our cultural influences. This congruence is what we nurture the children with. A rhythm alternates carefully between expanding and contracting, helping to situate the child in her time and place, which builds security and confidence.

In nursery and kindergarten, we incorporate this rhythm in not only obvious ways – song and movement – but also in the not-so-obvious ways through our 'Nature Table' that reflects the changing seasons, through our festivals and celebrations, and even in how we approach snacks for the week – Monday is soup day, Tuesday is fruit day, and so on.

'Circle Time' is another important feature of the early childhood curriculum that features rhymes and songs woven out of familiar daily activities and experiences of nature, nourishing the child's language development, stimulating their natural delight in singing and inviting them to participate in a flowing rhythm. The songs are rich in languages from several regions and brimming with imaginative verses that help strengthen memory, while also bringing better spacial awareness, leading to healthy brain development.



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FREE PLAY

At the heart of our early childhood programme is our understanding that self-initiated play and hands-on learning is critical to the healthy development of all young children, so we allow ample time for creative play each morning. We provide children with simple toys made from natural materials, like silk scarves, knitted wool puppets, wooden blocks, shells, acorns and even stones collected from their nature walks.

These materials nourish the child's developing senses, exercise their creative muscles and help develop their emerging fine motor skills. Structures that they can move, crawl over and into, and explore with their whole body helps develop gross motor coordination.

Through indoor and outdoor freeplay, children experience an unbridled expression of their imagination, creativity, language, social skills, cultural orientation and sense of balance.

The Waldorf philosophy also believes in the inherent power of imagination that later leads and forms the basis for critical thinking, academic rigour and concentrated focus.

In addition to movement through free play, nursery and kindergarten children also go on regular field trips, to local parks and bio-diverse and rich natural spaces tucked into the corners of the city.



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ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES

Artistic activities are essential to develop the inner senses of the child. Activities such as painting, drawing, moulding, and kneading are not directed at essentially creating a talented Craftsman, Chef or Artist, but to create a generation that has passion at heart, and a sense of art and beauty that comes naturally to their hands, whatever their choice of livelihood be.

Painting, coloring, beeswax modeling, sewing and finger knitting are just a few examples of the artistic activities in our programme that help hand-eye coordination, focus and fine motor skills.



PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

Practical activities include snack preparation, washing and chopping vegetables, making chapathis, watering plants, polishing toys, mending, and repairing and making toys. This helps foster healthy living, where caring for the environment – both within and without – becomes imperative towards harbouring social responsibilities.

Snack time is another opportunity to build on community, as children not only prepare their own snacks, but also sit together to eat, bringing good eating habits and digestion, leading to good organ development. These hands-on experiences are often connected to the seasons, and carried out with as much independence by the children as possible.



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STORY TIME

Countering the noise of digital media, our teachers practice the art of storytelling and puppetry. The teller's pacing, intonation, gestures and expression all support the child's growing vocabulary, listening comprehension and attention span. When children are told a story, they develop an ability to listen, to remember, to sequence the elements of a story, to hear the subtleties of characterisation, and perhaps, most important, to imagine.

As they listen they, "think the pictures", creating a strong foundation for their emerging literacy skills. The archetypes from different cultures that are present in the stories help form the foundations of a moral compass in the child, as well as give them an understanding of relating to others and overcoming challenges.

MUSIC

in the early childhood programme, music is an integral part of the day. Music is used to transition from one activity to another, while they are engaged in handwork, or when the teacher is setting up an activity. In fact, children are singing for most part of the day, which becomes a comforting influence, building a deep appreciation for music and willing participation in all activities.



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