**CURRICULUM**

Alf & Bett Scholars adopts the British Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) as well as the Montessori Approach to Childhood Education.

EYFS OVERVIEW

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework aims to support children’s leaning, development and welfare. The areas of learning are:

* Communication, Language and Literacy: This includes Language for Communication, Language for Thinking, Linking Sounds and Letters, Reading, Writing, Handwriting.
* Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Dispositions and Attitudes; Self-Confidence and Self-Esteem; Making Relationships; Behaviour and Self-Control; Self-Care; Sense of Community.
* Problem-Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy: Numbers and Labels and for Counting; Calculating; Shape, Space and Measures.
* Knowledge and Understanding of the World: Exploration and Investigation; Designing and Making; ICT; Time; Place; Communities.
* Physical Development: Movement and Space; Health and Bodily Awareness; Using Equipment and Materials.
* Creative Development: Responding to Experiences; Expressing and Communicating Ideas; Exploring Media and Materials; Creating Music and Dance; Developing Imagination and Imaginative Play.

MONTESSORI OVERVIEW

The Educational System known as the MONTESSORI SYSTEM was founded by Dr. Maria Montessori, an Italian physician who felt that the goal of early childhood education should be to cultivate rather than to simply teach facts as often prescribed by traditional curriculums.

She believed that all children possess sensitive periods, whereby every experience the child has is soaked up by them and no matter who or where the child is, these sensitive periods would stimulate the child’s whole persona.

From her research Dr. Montessori devised a method of Education where children would work with didactic (self-teaching) apparatus. Alongside the apparatus, the teacher directs and guides the child, according to each child’s unique aptitude for learning.

The Montessori enriched curriculum is organized as a spiral of integrated studies, rather than as compartmentalized subjects. At suitable levels for each child, the Montessori Curriculum offers: everyday living skills, sensory awareness, large and small motor skills, reading, literature, grammar, creative writing, spelling, handwriting, mathematics, geometry, geography, history, science, art, music, a foreign language and an appreciation of many different cultures.

There are six areas within the Montessori classroom:-

* *Practical Life:* These are everyday tasks that children adore to complete, not just for the end result- such as polishing a shoe, but because they enjoy the activity in itself. Directly they teach the child a skill, indirectly they promote and refine the child’s gross/fine motor development, concentration, hand and eye co-ordination and independence. This in turn will encourage the child to be self aware and confident.
* *Sensorial:* These activities encourage the refinement of the child’s senses and give them experiences that enable them to be more aware of the world around them. They enhance visual discrimination, auditory awareness and chromatic sense to name a few. Indirectly they prepare the child for later language and mathematical work.
* *Numeracy & Literacy (Language and Arithmetic):* Earlier work with Practical Life and Sensorial exercises will have indirectly prepared the child for basic linguistic and numeral operations. The apparatus relevant to these areas introduces the child directly to the world of spoken and written language, as well as basic numerical and mathematical operations.
* *Cultural Activities:* The World of Biology, Geography, Zoology and Science will be opened to the child. These activities are designed to promote experiences that encourage the child to see and involve himself in the world around him.
* *Creative Studies:* Through various group projects and activities, the child’s creative attributes will be explored, thus encouraging self-awareness, confidence, self-esteem and a positive self image. Our nursery is well-equipped with Dr. Montessori’s apparatus; the teachers within them have the knowledge to guide the child into self discovery of themselves and their capabilities. Although Montessori education features within our environment, not all children will benefit from it, hence if need be, our environment and teachers can adapt to suit the needs of each individual child. Using traditional teaching methods and materials can do this.