

The purpose of the prepared environment is to allow the child to fully develop and learn at this or her own pace through scientifically developed, purposeful activities.

The Elements of the Prepared Environment:

Didactic Materials are specifically designed, hands-on manipulative materials which are self-correcting using size, color, number, or shape. The materials are interrelated and arranged sequentially. They allow the child to learn with their hands, using their senses; avoiding rote learning, while increasing their level of understanding. They invite the child to explore.

Child-sized furniture and fixtures so that everything is within the child's reach and easily accessible to the child. He or she can gather and return the materials for their work independently because the materials are in sequence and within reach. There are also a variety of work areas.

A teacher, originally called a directress, who facilitates learning and maintains a safe environment. The Montessori teacher supervises, nurtures, and guides the child on his path to self-discovery. She or he is a trained observer and recorder of the child's progress, and serves as a role model having intellectual curiosity, self-discipline, and a passion for learning. At California Montessori Project, our lead teachers have both California state teaching credentials and Montessori certification for the age they are teaching.

A garden, or other area, where the child can care for plants and animals. Our classrooms are aesthetically pleasing and filled with specimens from the natural world, fine art, and music.

While you can often hear the hum of children learning, we also practice silence and encourage quiet learning time.

Long periods of uninterrupted work, helping the child to build a high level of concentration and gain deep understanding of the concepts being learned.

Individualized learning is our mandate as we follow the child in their journey of discovery. Each child is allowed to follow her or his own inner pace and learning preference as they progress through the curriculum.

Peer teaching is encouraged because we believe that if a child can explain what they know to make others understand, they gain a truer and deeper understanding themselves.

