

BenchMark Raising the bar

BenchMark International School is a division of BenchMark Knowledge Centre- a cluster of educational institutions catering to the multiple instructional needs of the Malabar region of Kerala State. Our vision is for a high achieving, multi-institution educational complex in which all young people achieve their potential through high quality personalized learning that is designed to meet their individual needs.

BenchMark International School aspires to be a house of learning where the children enquire life, encounter knowledge and envision future. We mission a life where learning is seamlessly stitched into living and living is effortlessly aided by learning.

The BenchMark Montessori emphasizes the following fundamentals:

- Children learn as total persons (emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually).
- Children learn through their senses (hearing, seeing, touching, tasting, and smelling).
- Each child is a unique person with his/her own individual rate of growth and development in all areas.
- Differences in perception, ability, stages of development, and interests are expected and accepted.



Follow the Child Approach

All subjects are taught at BenchMark Montessori in a “hands-on” three-dimensional approach to promote the cognitive, social, emotional and physical growth of your child. The curriculum is designed to develop children's knowledge and skills in the physical, moral, cultural and intellectual areas.

recognize the extensive amount of learning which has taken place before children come to school and builds on that foundation

We

help children learn how to learn so that the foundation for future learning is established early

develop the child's sense of competence and self-esteem and foster positive feelings towards school and learning



The program has an integrated approach. Traditional subject areas are taught through units of study using large group activities, small group activities, and individual tasks.



Teaching at BenchMark Montessori

Good teaching is the core of good schooling. At BenchMark Montessori we rightly stress the quality of our teachers. We ensure a judicious blend of aptitude, attitude, communication skills and learning ability in our teachers. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is taken seriously and we have put in place a mechanism for periodic evaluation and structured training. The training involves a whole menu of subjects varying between people skills and Multiple Intelligence.

Faculty BenchMarks

The Montessori years are acutely sensitive years. The impressions formed during these early years will powerfully influence the attitudes, values and outlook of the children for the years to come. Hence, we take utmost care and concern while selecting our Montessori faculty. Once selected, the Staff Development Club (SDC) of the school constantly trains and updates them on a regular basis. Skill training is combined with specialised sessions on Psychology and social awareness in these sessions, not to mention the updations provided in a suite of areas related to early childhood education.





Montessori at BenchMark

The Montessori Method is a child-centered alternative educational method for children. It is an approach to education that takes to heart the needs, talents, gifts, and special individuality of each child. It stresses the importance of adapting the child's learning environment to his or her developmental level, and of the role of physical activity in absorbing abstract concepts and practical skills.

BenchMark Montessori school is warm, supportive and responsive communities of children, teachers and parents. In the multi-age mixed level blend of the Montessori classrooms, learning is not an act of rote drills or memorization. The young children are far more independent and self learned.

Montessori education is a flow experience. It builds on the continuing self-construction of the child daily, weekly, yearly for the duration of the program.



Montessori Curriculum: Areas of Life and Learning

Living for Real

Caring for oneself and one's environment is an important part of Montessori Practical Life education. Practical Life exercises include exercises for the care of self, the Environment and for the Development of Social Skills, Grace & Courtesy. Children also learn how to dress themselves, tie their shoes, wash their hands, and other various self-care needs through a wide variety of materials and activities. Language preparation too comes in many forms in the practical life area. Montessori practical life activities train the young children to maintain control of the environment in which they live and work.

Senses

The child's intellect does not work in isolation, but is everywhere and is always intimately bound up with his body, particularly with his nervous and muscular system. All learning first comes to us through the senses.

The specific Montessori materials and activities help the child refine his or her experience of sight, sound, touch, taste and smell. For example, take the colour red. The color tablets used for teaching colours are all exactly the same except for one thing - their color in the middle. This helps take away the confusion for the child and helps them to focus on specifically what 'red' is.

The Montessori method places great emphasis on using the correct terminology for what we see. It practically trains them to differentiate a circle from an oval shape. This is readily apparent in the sensorial area. The sensorial area also falls over into the math area quite regularly.





Culture

This area aims at understanding that there are various cultures and these cultures have a lot to offer us. This includes both the studies of the world and various cultures. When a student is doing the map of Asia, pictures, stories, facts about different Asian countries, and a variety of learning opportunities open up to give the child a real sense of the world and how it is different - even within the same area. A focus on appreciating and enjoying other cultures is also a core part of the curriculum.

Science

Children in early childhood are very detail-oriented. They know what an animal is. They are curious to know the various body parts of an animal. They want to know the life cycle of different animals. They will launch into a series of questions as to the parts of a plant or a car. The science curriculum takes the opportunity for the child's natural questioning and draws a design which is age appropriate.

Language

The language curriculum involves everything from vocabulary development to writing and reading. Children learn their basic letter sounds through the use of sandpaper letters. The child traces the letter and they get a real image of how the letter feels. An appreciation for literature is another strong point in the Montessori elementary curriculum.

Math

Young children are usually introduced to the concepts of number and quantity by being asked to count loose objects. But a child's ability, for instance, to point and count at the same time without losing track, recounting, etc. develops gradually and is often difficult for the child at first. Here the child's first introduction to quantity and one-to-one correspondence is with the Red and Blue Rods. Once the child has mastered this material and learned to pair the quantities with the corresponding numerals, he/she is introduced to the Spindle Box. Then the children move to the Cards and Counters. Thus Children go from a very solid understanding of math to a more abstract concept.



Homework

Homework tasks are assigned in conjunction with the school's homework policy. Our children love working at home because what we assign them is what they enjoy - painting, drawing, marking, sketching, picture spotting, paper cutting etc. Even in activities like these, we ensure that the young children are not taxed.

Show and share

Later in the year your child will be asked to bring along favourite toys to school for show and share. Children may be asked to tell about their toy. We wish to encourage peaceful / cooperative play. Dolls, games, books, cars, trucks, colouring / activity sets, stuffed toys etc. would promote this type of play

Colour Days

To reinforce the various colours we have some colour days. On this day students will be encouraged to wear something of that colour, however, we don't want parents purchasing anything just for this purpose. They can have that colour on their shirt, socks, shoes, a stripe on their pants, etc. They should bring a show and share item relating to the colour and if desired a snack of that colour.

Library

Your child will bring home a book that s/he has chosen from the school library. It is intended to be read to your child for enjoyment. Children will also spend some time in the computer lab learning how to use specific computer programs. The children and their teachers, will work with the Learning Resource Teacher on activities that will focus on the development of ICT literacy skills.



Parenting

The family and the home environment provide key context for learning. And the parents remain the prime influence for the children right through their lives. This belief is the cornerstone of the BenchMark approach to learning. Hence we promote the family values and urge the parent to closely involve in the learning experience of the children.

Comfort Dressing

At BenchMark, children are persuaded to school dressed comfortably for all school activities. We have taken a lot of care in the choice and design of our uniform to make certain that children are not inconvenienced. Sneakers (with non-marking soles) should be used for inside footwear and kept at the school at all times.

Field trips

Children like moving around. They love traveling. Their senses feast on the new sounds and sights. Throughout the year our children may participate in field trips. This ensures the children are given a chance to encounter and experience what is often spoken of and taught about.



Health BenchMarks

Young children need food that ensures a balanced intake of vital nutrients. BenchMark Kindergarten will provide hygienic food cooked in our premise. The menu, made available to the parents at the time of admission, will feature the right mixture of vital nutrients. The BenchMark cookery offers a number of advantages both to the children and the parents. It guarantees equal nourishment for all the children and helps avoid the morning rush of the parents to beat the clock!

Health Card

It need not be asserted that the health of the young learners is a sensitive issue. The teachers at the school need to possess the necessary information regarding the health of the children. We put the children through check ups and maintain a comprehensive record of the children at school to help us provide the correct follow up in the case of sickness. This is in addition to the information provided in the enrollment form at the time of admission.

Environment

Clean, well lit, airy and spacious rooms are ideal learning space for the young children. The environment has to be stimulating and energizing as well. BenchMark classrooms are invigorating for the learners in space, lay out, colour, design, furniture and materials.

Volunteers

We have an active volunteer program. If you or a relative have some free time to spare, please contact the principal to share your talents with us. The teachers may be assisted in putting together booklets, cutting out game pieces, and making posters or bulletin board signs. If you are interested please contact your child's classroom teacher.

Home-School Relationship

Parent-Teacher conferences help sharing of thoughts and experiences between the teacher and the parent. The teacher gets a chance here to provide a glimpse of the child's work to the parents, with the individual folder of the learner maintained at the school. It also allows the parents to experience our little environment and they appreciate this glimpse into their child's classroom life. The teacher shows the cutting samples, self-portraits, Progress report and other work samples. It is nice to show how this skill improves over the school year.

Transportation

The transportation of the young children is a serious concern for the parents. BenchMark provides bus facility for the students within a radius of 25 kilometers. The children will be picked up from and dropped back at the various locations on the routes. Details of the routes will be intimated to the parents and will be available on the web for reference.

ICT environment

BenchMark is rich in the use of Information Technology which has become a staple of the emerging generation. Extensive use of audio and video materials, computers, interactive CDs, listening materials will distinguish our classes from the TV-centered teaching learning which is fast becoming conventional. Multi media enabled activity-rooms, ICT integrated academic and administrative arrangements and coded access to student evaluation data on the school web are a few of the examples.



Gaming with BenchMark

Play is the first and most important defining behavior of a young child and it is vital in cognitive development. Children who play freely with designated materials exhibit more thinking skills and problem-solving abilities than those not given opportunities to play. Play also fosters creativity and imaginative thinking. This is why BenchMark has daily morning exercise sessions. We also provide a broad variety of age-appropriate and knowledge targeted play materials.

Educational materials

Everything is a learning material for a young child. An effective curriculum should be able to creatively channelise the inquisitive urge of the young into learning opportunities. Education should be able to exploit the inherent curiosity on the part of the children. At BenchMark, we provide the young learners a wide selection of materials to aid their learning in guided contexts - Toys, charts, flash cards, alphabet boxes, letter garments, computer games, wooden devices, play things, sports goods etc are but a few of what we offer.

BenchMark Montessori Diploma

BenchMark offers its customised International Diploma Programme for those who aspire to take up teaching at the Montessori level. The Programme is designed taking into account the regional peculiarities and culture while interacting with the kids and parents. The trainees of the programme are provided state of the art training with periodic exposure to actual classrooms. ICT and Language skills are added to sharpen the teaching skills of the trainees.



Home Visits

Early childhood teachers play an especially important family support role. By building relationships with parents and other significant adults in their students' lives, teachers contribute to the creation of safe and healthy learning environments for children. Hence, the Home Visit Policy of BenchMark has strong emotional and cultural justification. Our teachers visit each and every child's home and gets closer to their emotional space. This not only brings the teacher and the parent closer, but also lets the teacher have a close look at the life pattern and routine of the child.

Monthly Get together

BenchMark Montessori has introduced monthly get together which are occasions on which the kids and the teachers get together to celebrate and share. These are social unions in which the kids learn to know one another better and to share the joys too. Kids celebrate their birthdays and teachers show as their skills. These happy hours are days keenly awaited by kids and teachers alike

Towards Holistic Kid Life

BenchMark Montessori leaves no stone unturned in the effort to provide a realistic exposure to kids keeping in mind the life which awaits them outside. We foster a secular outlook among them developing a creative awareness of other communities and cultural variations. The celebrations we hold for the kids at BenchMark reflect this outlook.

