



**ASM** | AMERICAN  
SCHOOL  
OF MILAN

## Early Childhood 2022-2023



## **Table of Contents**

[Our Mission](#)

[ASM Values](#)

[Early Childhood Program](#)

[Language and Literacy](#)

[Mathematics](#)

[Science](#)

[The Social Curriculum](#)

[Music](#)

[Art](#)

[Italian](#)

[Physical Education/Movement](#)

[Library](#)

[Assessment and Reporting](#)

## Our Mission

ASM inspires students to discover their unique potential and to become curious learners, critical thinkers and global citizens who positively impact our world.

## ASM Values

**Respect:** We honor ourselves, others, the school, and the planet.

**Courage:** We do the right thing, even when difficult or unpopular.

**Integrity:** We are honest and sincere.

**Curiosity:** We ask questions in pursuit of truth and wisdom.

**Kindness:** We are friendly, generous, and considerate in actions and words.

## Early Childhood Program

Welcome to our Early Childhood Program where children between the ages of 3-5 learn through exploration in a hands-on environment to discover the world around them. Our students are guided through exploration, play and discovery to develop targeted skills and experiences that are aligned to their development age and readiness for learning.

Students in the Early Childhood Program are encouraged to explore and ask questions about their surroundings and participate in structured activities that build on their knowledge and prepare them for Kindergarten. Our view of Early Childhood stems from the belief that children at this age are shaped by the experiences and interactions around them which contribute to their social and pre-academic development.

The view of the 'whole child' reflects our philosophy that we must nurture children's social-emotional development, their language and communication skills, and their cognitive and physical development. The program is designed to provide children with purposeful exploration about the world around them, as well as to introduce them to literacy, math, science, music, movement and the arts. Students are encouraged from an early age to develop independence and autonomy and to learn to collaborate with others.

## The American School of Milan believes in:

- providing students with the skills and knowledge to succeed in an increasingly complex world
- a framework that combines an American-style education with the rigor of the International Baccalaureate continuum of International education;
- developing high academic levels of English language proficiency while respecting the culture and language of Italy, the host country;

- constantly pursuing excellence in all aspects of the school's program by providing a well-planned and sequenced curriculum that provides our students with the highest standards of international education;
- providing ample opportunities for our students to develop intellectual skills, which include information gathering, organization, synthesis, analysis, critical thinking, decision making, problem solving and effective communication;
- providing the opportunity for our students to pursue excellence in arts and athletics and to experience service to others;
- an encouraging environment of creativity, curiosity and the spirit of scientific inquiry in mind, body and spirit that will foster a lifelong interest in learning;
- a solid grounding in the use of modern technology, its applications, potential and limitations;
- a positive, caring, and safe learning environment that encourages questioning and allows students to step outside their comfort zone;
- encouraging the development of individual integrity and high ethical standards;
- encouraging the understanding and acceptance of the dignity and worth of all people;
- celebrating the cultural diversity among our community of learners

Our Early Childhood classrooms are a dynamic and exploratory environment which promotes learning through play and encourages positive socialization skills. Through experience, children construct ideas of the world around them, building on their existing knowledge. These formative years play a fundamental role for future learning and are an important part of their developmental milestones.

Children are encouraged to develop their English language skills and to communicate ideas in different ways through problem solving and collaboration with others. Structured and unstructured activities help children to develop coordination, fine and gross motor skills and to explore the world around them. The classroom environment is inquiry based and collaboration is modeled throughout the day.

Pre-academic exposure is informal and based on the individual needs, interests, and development of each child. Themes are central to units and can range from several weeks to several months. Topics such as Me and My World, Changing Seasons, and Fairy Tales & Nursery Rhymes are some examples of units explored.

	September	October - December	January-March	April-June
<b>Year 1</b>	Me and my class community	Changing seasons  Five senses	Earth- Reuse, Reduce, Recycle	Nursery Rhymes
	Year long theme - Changes			
<b>Year 2</b>	My family and my heritage	Seasons and the Earth  We are Big and Strong	Space Exploration and Astronauts	Fairy Tales

## Language and Literacy

During the early childhood years, children are enthusiastic and curious about reading and enjoy listening to stories. Children will focus mostly on illustrations and share their ideas. They enjoy books with rhythm, repetition, and rhyme and regularly participate in pre-reading activities. Pre-reading is built over time, through exposure to print and to a gradual understanding of phonemic awareness which does not begin until the age of 4 or 5, depending on the child. Many of our Early Childhood students are acquiring English in addition to their mother tongue and as such, the process of language development is modeled primarily by the teacher and school environment.

Young children rely on their drawings to show meaning and express ideas through pictures. Children will often pretend to read and write and will gradually develop awareness of written symbols which correspond to sounds. Children are encouraged to explore literacy rich materials and will often share ideas and stories about what they have created. At home, children are encouraged to continue their mother tongue exposure by listening to books in their native language.

### Literacy Objectives:

- Select own reading materials
- Connect stories to life experiences
- Listen to and talk about stories and illustrations
- Retell, act out, or respond through drawing to familiar stories
- Begin to learn letter sounds and names
- Use patterned language and rhymes
- Recognize signs, labels, and logos
- Use mostly pictures to show meaning
- Begin to label and add words to pictures
- Write first name
- Understand that print conveys meaning
- Make marks to simulate writing
- Write recognizable letters to represent words
- Talk about own pictures and writing

## Mathematics

In all of our classes, children are learning to think about mathematics in two main areas: (1) developing a good sense of numbers using concrete objects including concepts of correspondence, counting, cardinality, and comparison; (2) describing shapes in their everyday environment. Exploring and developing number sense is fundamental and age readiness allows us to further extend learning as children are more ready for greater understanding of these concepts. Children develop an understanding of basic math concepts by manipulating, comparing, counting, and sorting objects. They use various hands-on materials, such as



pattern blocks, unit blocks, and geometric shapes. They begin to develop an understanding of the relationship between a numeral and a given quantity and begin to recognize patterns in their world and connect them to their daily lives.

### **Mathematics Objectives:**

- Count orally and recognize and write numerals 1 to 12
- Count objects 1 to 12 using 1:1 correspondence
- Add numbers, using up to 5 objects
- Look for and discover a variety of patterns in the environment
- Arrange objects in a graduated series (e.g., smallest to biggest)
- Recognize some two-dimensional shapes
- Describe measurements of comparison (e.g. , empty, full, faster, slower)

### **Science**

Children are naturally curious, exploring their surroundings as they become aware and wonder about the world around them. Classroom units and activities help to develop an awareness of science. Students participate in a wide range of hands-on activities which are designed to stimulate their senses and curiosity about how things work, embedding the beginnings of scientific inquiry into all that they do. Children are encouraged to organize their ideas and communicate their thinking through conversations or drawings. Students will attend our science lab for weekly activities while all children will participate in our in class science explorations.

### **Objectives:**

- Begin to develop observational skills
- Use senses to gather and record observations
- Make predictions
- Make comparisons and examine similarities and differences
- Recognize how things grow and change over time
- Communicate ideas and explanations
- Recognize basic cause and effect relationships
- Care for self, other living things, and the environment

### **The Social Curriculum**

Children between the ages of 3-5 build close relationships with adults and peers, increasing their self-confidence and sense of competency. Children develop social skills at an early age and continue through lifelong experiences of relating with others. Much emphasis is placed on how to respect the needs and feelings of others as well as to develop empathy and the ability to express their emotions through language.

During the early years, children are inquisitive, take initiative, and are motivated to pursue what interests them. They begin to solve problems that develop during their activities, and to work together with others.

**Objectives:**

- Express choices, decisions, and plans
- Express feelings and pose solutions when problems arise
- Take initiative to get own needs met
- Cooperate in routines
- Relate to adults and peers
- Make friends with other children
- Engage in working together with peers
- Express feelings
- Offer solutions to problems
- Resolve conflicts with peers

**Music**

Music is an important vehicle for language development in the elementary child. Our music program allows children to explore and engage with music and movement. Our music teachers use the Orff approach to introduce music to young children which involves singing, saying (rhythm of the words), dancing and playing (using a variety of percussion instruments). Through these activities, children learn group cooperation and develop listening skills. All children perform at least twice yearly in concerts for the school community.

**Art**

Children are able to express themselves through art when given ample opportunities to explore their creativity with a variety of materials. Art experiences in the Early Childhood classroom are created through painting, drawing, coloring, cutting, and exposure to a wide variety of materials, textures, and mediums. In addition to in class art lessons, a partnership has been established with an art specialist that will work with our students on a regular basis.

**Physical Education/Movement**

The focus of our Physical Education classes for our Early Childhood students is for children to learn to cooperate with each other and to practice good citizenship by playing by the rules. They learn the habits of wellness and good fitness by engaging in a variety of physical activities, while developing greater coordination, balance and gross motor skills. PE is held twice a week.

**Library**

Early Childhood students attend the library with their class once a week. During library time students listen to stories, explore books and participate in child centered lessons that develop their interest in books and pre-reading.

## Assessment and Reporting

Assessment in Early Childhood is conducted through observations, and guided by developmental benchmarks. Teachers regularly assess student progress by:

- Identifying what and how the student is thinking and learning;
- Analyzing the achievements of the student;
- Setting goals for learning and reflecting on strengths and weaknesses.

Parent teacher conferences are held twice a year, first in the fall and then again in the spring. Conferences are valuable moments for parents to meet with their child's teachers. This is also an opportunity for teachers to share strengths and goals and for parents to gain an understanding of how best they can support learning in both the academic and social domains.

In January and June, families receive official student report documents which provide feedback on progress of grade level standards, as well as on students' attitudes to learning and social skills.

Parents will also be able to monitor their child's progress regularly in all areas of their learning through Seesaw, a digital portfolio platform.