

Early Childhood *(Infants-2 year olds)* **Philosophy and Curriculum**

Learning begins at Kehoe-France Northshore in early childhood, with infants (eight weeks old) through two-year-olds. Our approach is deeply inspired by the Reggio Emilia philosophy, focusing on the image of the child and the environment as the third teacher. We provide a safe and welcoming school environment to develop young children, emphasizing child-led exploration and learning.

We strive to teach children how to socialize, interact, and respect others, expand each child's awareness of the world, and aid them in their understanding of it. We acknowledge and encourage each child's skills development and build their confidence and independence by offering hands-on exploration and discovery opportunities. This approach helps build lifelong critical thinking skills.

Using a play-based, individualized, supportive, and effective curriculum, our teachers address all important areas of learning and support every type of learner. Our teachers observe children in the context of everyday experiences, an effective way to assess young children, understand them, and help them grow in a supportive environment.

The Learning Environment and Our Staff

At Kehoe-France Northshore, we provide an aesthetically pleasing, safe, and sanitary indoor and outdoor learning environment for children. Our indoor learning spaces are divided into well-defined interest areas that encourage distinctive types of play and promote creativity, imagination, and cognitive, social, and emotional development. These areas are flexible and have materials and manipulatives that promote fun, hands-on learning. Outdoors allow children to run, play, climb, and interact on developmentally appropriate playground equipment.

Each classroom has a lead teacher and at least one or more assistants, ensuring a low student-to-teacher ratio for plenty of individualized attention and interaction. Our teachers are qualified professionals who work hard to ensure their classrooms serve as a learning community. They build strong, positive relationships with each child, help children learn to work and play with others, and aid in developing positive peer relationships and friendships. Teachers guide children's behavior using positive guidance strategies and support learning throughout the day. They are intentional and responsive to the needs of the children, providing them with a consistent, respectful learning environment.

The Daily Curriculum

Children follow a daily routine that supports active learning through play. The school day is divided into small and large group meetings, choice time when children interact in play-based centers, snack and lunch, read-alouds, outdoor play, music, and rest time. Throughout all these learning periods, children engage in activities that help them develop and build a strong foundation in language, physical, social-emotional skills, literacy, and mathematics.

The curriculum is enriched with learning experiences incorporating children's home values, cultures, and family traditions. It includes social-emotional strategies for building relationships and increasing children's comfort and confidence at school, instructional strategies to facilitate receptive and expressive language acquisition and understanding, and strategies for promoting comprehension during read-aloud time.