

The Reggio Way

Green Preschool is a Reggio Emilia inspired school. We seek to model in our own cultural milieu the unique global contribution of the schools of Reggio Emilia Italy.

What is the Reggio Emilia Philosophy?

Post World War II families and the community of Reggio Emilia, Italy emerged from destruction to reimagine a healthy community rooted in education. They imagined a school grounded in community support which challenged existing ideas of education and which especially supported critical thinking. Some of the elements of the model which we incorporate are the following fundamentals of the Reggio Emilia way:

The Competence of the Child - At Green Preschool we assume competence as the children are active participants in their classroom and learning. Their creativity, confidence, intelligence, and energy are celebrated, supported and scaffolded.

The Environment as the Third Teacher - Classrooms and outside areas are designed to invite play and exploration. We have designed beautiful learning environments marked by the distinctive use of light, intentional and homelike furnishings, materials displayed for child usage, natural and organic toys, loose parts, light tables and art materials of all kinds. Children are encouraged to move throughout the space, exploring and constructing.

The Hundred Languages of Children - One of the formative documents of the Reggio movement is the poem, The Hundred Languages of Children, by Loris Malaguzzi. Simply, the poem makes a case for understanding the many modalities of children's learning and expression. Words provide an essential way to understand the world, but expression takes many modes. The central role of art at Green Preschool is not to "make or reproduce" a model, but as one of the "hundred languages."

The Role of the Teacher - A teacher listens, observes, documents and supports children's learning. Teachers take on the disposition of researchers and co-learners with children. Teachers scaffold children's knowledge by noting their current level of knowledge and helping them to reach the next level by facilitating new skills, adding resources which they can utilize, facilitating social learning, and arranging new challenges. Teachers plan "invitations" and "provocations" using their expertise. They plan and invite children into explorations of different concepts and ideas. Thus, the teacher bridges the child's current understanding and available knowledge and skills with new learning.

Documentation - Teachers seek to "make learning visible" by documenting and displaying all phases of children's learning. Documentation serves as a way for families to be involved in children's learning, as well as allowing teachers and children to reflect and build on learning and growth. It shows respect for children's learning. Documentation is a research model which serves to provide a fuller and more complete picture of learning, unlike a test.

Family Involvement - Family involvement is critical to the successful support of children in school. Families are experts in their own areas, and a school's hospitality to them expands the possibilities for learning. They are their children's first and lifelong teachers

Emergent Curriculum - Emergent curriculum stems from the observed interests and curiosities of the children as well as from the ideas of the teachers in their day to day experiences with the children. Children's learning is most vigorous when it is play based and of interest to them and when their teacher infuses academic content into the projects and explorations of the children. Projects can be in depth studies of concepts and ideas generated from the children's interests and can last as short as a few days or up to an entire year.

Real Life Experiences - To the extent possible, real life experiences and materials are provided for children, utilizing all of the senses. The development of the whole child is emphasized.

