

Preschool Program

Organic | Meaningful | Fun!



International School
Tenerife

About

Kaleide International School is a family-run, not-for-profit school in Tenerife, born from a powerful dream: to create a space where children are truly heard, education respects their rhythms, and learning is joyful, meaningful, and deeply human.

We are a community, supported by families and educators who believe in a more respectful, connected, and purposeful way of growing up together.



Ethos

We believe children are competent, curious, and full of potential.

Learning at Kaleide isn't delivered; it's co-created daily through questions, projects, relationships, and play. We draw inspiration from Reggio Emilia, Montessori, Forest Schools, democratic education, and the latest neuroscience, with an ethos rooted in care for ourselves, each other, and the natural world.



Our Vision of Childhood

What children learn does not follow as an automatic result from what is taught, rather, it is in large part due to the children's own doing, as a consequence of their activities and our resources.

—Loris Malaguzzi



In our view, every child is a subject of rights—capable, curious, and actively engaged in making meaning of the world.



From birth, children are wonderfully equipped for learning: they are intrinsically motivated, self-directed, and constantly experimenting, observing, and forming theories about themselves and their surroundings.



We don't see our role as shaping children, but rather as accompanying and supporting them as their unique identities unfold.

This image of the child informs everything we do: it defines how we relate to them, what we expect of them, and the freedom and responsibility we believe they are ready to hold.

Our vision of Learning

At Kaleide, learning is not something that happens to children — it's something they live. Rooted in a set of guiding principles, our approach is designed to nurture each child's growth with joy, meaning, and purpose. These beliefs shape every corner of our learning community:

Learning Begins with the Heart

We believe learning is personal. Every child brings their own rhythm, emotions, and ways of making sense of the world.

Sparking Engagement

When children are captivated — when learning feels like an adventure — curiosity takes the lead.



Hands On, Minds On

Learning comes alive through doing. We invite children to dive in, get messy, build, question, test, and create.

A Strong Web of Relationships

In an environment of genuine care and connection, every child feels seen and heard.

Nature as Our Companion

Our outdoor spaces and the natural world are essential companions in learning. We embrace nature as a powerful setting for discovery, exploration, holistic development, and a place where we learn to care deeply for the non-human world.

Voice and Choice

With choice comes the responsibility to care. Children have the freedom to make choices and the guidance to take responsibility for their learning, their relationships, and their environment.



What Makes Kaleide Different?

Our distinctive approach to education creates an environment where children can flourish:

Prioritizing Social and Emotional Well-being

We understand that a child's cognitive development is deeply intertwined with their emotional health. Our program is built on fostering a safe space where children feel seen, heard, and valued. We explicitly teach emotional literacy, restorative conflict resolution, and reflective practices, ensuring children develop the self-awareness and empathy crucial for all learning, and for life.

Real Relationships & Personalized Attention

With exceptionally low adult-to-child ratios (fewer than 7 children per adult), we ensure that every child receives truly personalized attention. This allows our facilitators to build deep, trusting bonds with each student, understanding their unique needs, interests, and developmental rhythms. Children feel genuinely supported, fostering confidence and a strong sense of belonging.



Integrated Language Immersion

Children are naturally immersed in both English and Spanish throughout their day. Rather than formal lessons, languages are woven into playful, real-life interactions, stories, songs, and projects. Our facilitators speak in their native languages, creating an authentic bilingual environment where language is a bridge to new connections, never a barrier.

No Rush, No Pressure

Our days unfold gently, respecting each child's individual pace of development. There are no bells, no tests, and no push to meet artificial, age-based milestones.

We believe that true, deep learning happens when children are intrinsically motivated and not rushed, allowing them the space to grow organically and develop a lifelong love for learning.

Small, Connected Community

By intentionally maintaining a small size, Kaleide fosters a powerful sense of community and belonging. Children build strong, authentic bonds with peers and adults across different ages, creating a supportive "community of learners" where everyone is known, heard, and has the opportunity to contribute.

Mixed-Age Learning

Our Siroccos group (ages 3-7) is a vibrant, mixed-age community. This unique structure allows children to learn with and from one another, mirroring family dynamics. Younger children are inspired by older peers, while older children develop leadership, empathy, and mentoring skills, enriching the learning experience for everyone.



No Grades, No Tests—Just Growth

We focus entirely on each child's individual progress and holistic development, rather than external validation. Without the pressure of being graded or compared, children are free to explore, experiment, and learn from mistakes, fostering intrinsic motivation and a genuine love for the learning process itself.

Strong Family Involvement

Families are integral to the Kaleide community and are encouraged to be active co-educators. Through family meetings, workshops, volunteering days, and open communication via platforms like Class Dojo, we strengthen the vital links between home and school, ensuring a collaborative and supportive environment for every child.

A Day in the Life of a Sirocco

Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand.

—Albert Einstein



Bonding Period

For new children, we co-create a gentle transition (bonding) process.

We encourage parents to accompany their children during their first weeks in school. Trust and connection are our first curriculum. We work closely with families to design a process that feels safe and natural.

We see this bonding time as the beginning of a meaningful relationship—with the environment, the facilitators, and the wider community. It lays the foundation for true confidence and joy in learning.

Kaleide's preschool group is called Siroccos: a mixed-age community for children aged 3 to 7 years. Here's a glimpse into our daily rhythm:

Flexible Entry (8:45 - 9:40)

Children arrive and choose between indoor quiet time in Spiral (our calm, cozy indoor space) or play in the garden. There's no bell, no pressure—just a human, caring welcome.

- Families are invited to stay for a short moment, chat with facilitators, and support their child's transition.
- Indoors, they might listen to a story, draw quietly, or explore provocations prepared by the facilitators.
- Outdoors, they may begin the day in movement—climbing, digging, playing, or simply soaking in the morning light.

Keybu Circle

Our daily welcome circle, co-created with children, includes games, songs, the day's plan, and space to share ideas or feelings. On Mondays, we plan the week together.

Example in Action

In our morning circle in Spiral, we love to spark curiosity with fun and imaginative questions! We pull subjects from one basket and verbs from another, leading to wonderfully whimsical inquiries like: "What if flowers could fly?", "What if cars ate spiders?", or "What if children ate dragons?" These delightful prompts become springboards for lively discussions, fostering oral communication, imagination, creativity, debate, and metacognition in a truly enjoyable way.



"If children ate dragons, we'd breathe fire from our mouths!"

"If flowers could fly, the sky would be full of colors!"

"If cars ate spiders, they'd have mouths and get poop all over the other cars!"



Focus Time

Voluntary, hands-on activities to explore numeracy and literacy in both English and Spanish. We use puzzles, stories, games, and small group stations, which we call "Curiosity Corners".

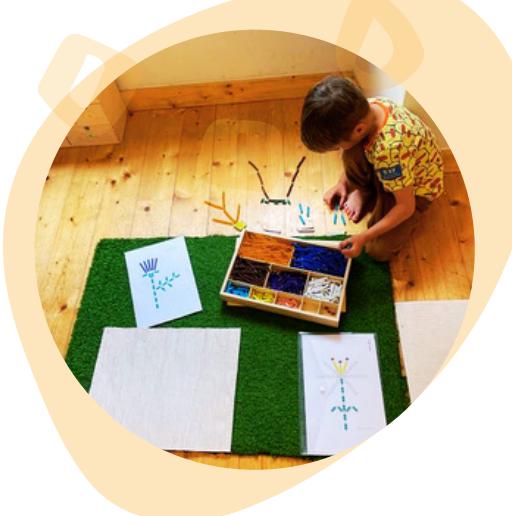
Example in Action

During Focus Time, children might engage in a challenge using Montessori math beads to solve addition problems, or work together to sequence story cards and retell a narrative in English, building their comprehension and vocabulary.



Curiosity Corners

Every day we prepare thematic provocations: natural elements and weights, jigsaw puzzles, Montessori materials, story prompts, loose parts, or water experiments.



Example in Action

In our "Playing with Letters" corner, children might write letters to loved ones, compile grocery lists for baking cookies, play "spot the difference" with drawings, craft necklaces, or create beautiful wild flowers using Montessori beads, all while developing early literacy skills.

Workshops

From potion-making to loom weaving, from woodwork to theatre, our workshops emerge from the children's interests and the world around us.



Example in Action

In a "Science and Experimentation" workshop, children might mix "magic potions" using various liquids and natural elements to observe chemical reactions, or use a microscope to explore the intricate details of leaves and insects.

Free Flow

Children choose what they want to explore, with no pressure, judgments, or comparisons.



Example in Action

During Free Flow, they might spontaneously build an elaborate fort with loose parts, developing engineering skills and collaborative problem-solving.

Outdoor Learning & Forest School

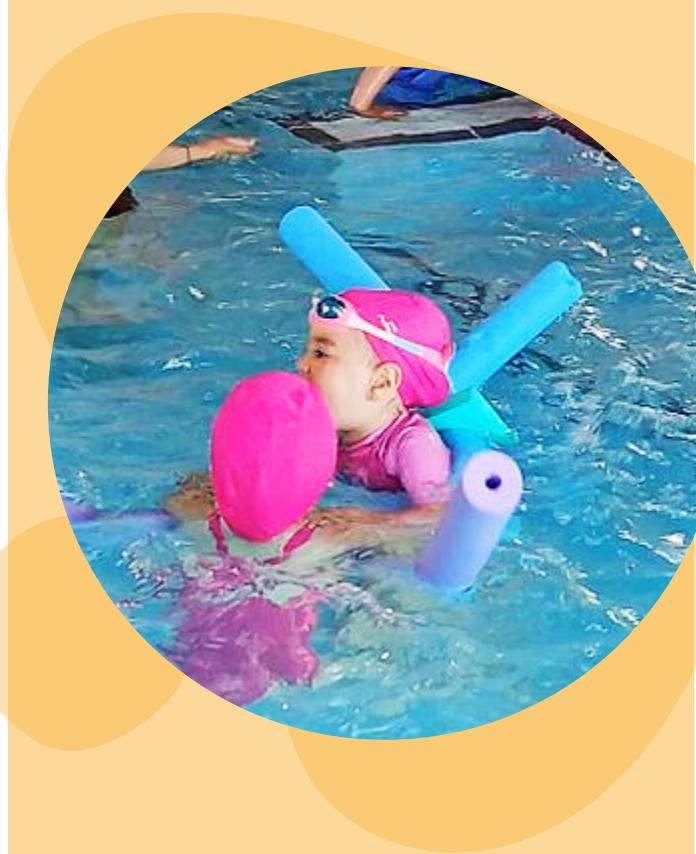
We spend long stretches in nature. Children build shelters, forage, follow animal tracks, use real tools, and learn to navigate the seasons.



Example in Action

During Forest School, children might play "find me in the forest," sharpen sticks safely with knives, or forage for lemons and figs.

Our vegetable patch in the garden provides endless opportunities to understand natural cycles and learn to care for the non-human world.



Sports Activities

Our students enjoy regular opportunities for sports and active play. Once a week, we visit La Manzanilla Stadium for football, athletics, or collaborative games. Every Friday, we have a swimming session at the San Benito sports center.

Example in Action

At La Manzanilla Stadium, children might organize their own football game, practicing teamwork and spatial awareness, or engage in relay races, developing gross motor skills and friendly competition.

During swimming, they not only learn strokes but also build confidence and water safety skills through fun games and instructor-led activities.

Role Play

Imaginative spaces shift weekly: a hospital, an outdoor den, a train. Children co-create these environments, exploring social roles and storytelling.



Example in Action

In a "hospital" role-play setup, children might take on roles as doctors, nurses, and patients, practicing empathy, communication, and understanding of community roles.

Lunch & Relaxation

We share lunch together and enjoy calm, unstructured time afterward.



Closing Circle

We reflect, celebrate, and say goodbye. Songs, gratitude, and shared moments close the day.



Example in Action

For the Siroccos, we love to tell a story during our "Closing Circle" every day. When we're out in the forest and don't have books, we tell an invented story. It's a moment of calm and attentive listening that helps us connect deeply as a group.

How We Learn

There is no single path to learning. The paths are as many and as varied as the children who walk them.

—Loris Malaguzzi



Academic learning through inspired discovery

Our approach to academic learning is rooted in neuroscience and a profound understanding of how young minds thrive.

We believe that learning is not about rote memorization, but about sparking genuine curiosity, fostering active engagement, and connecting concepts to real-world experiences.

That's why we don't rush children, compare them, or coerce them.

Our curriculum is not rigid—we follow children's inquiries, projects, and the world around them. Learning emerges from life itself, adapting to each child and group.

Literacy & Numeracy: Building Foundational Skills

Our approach to literacy and numeracy is dynamic and deeply engaging, recognizing that a child's emotional connection to learning is paramount.



Literacy

We believe that children come to reading by being read to, and want to write when writing is connected to real-world experiences. In order to model the love of reading and writing, each day:

Before children can read, facilitators read aloud to students in order to help them develop an appreciation of reading. Hearing adults read fluently models what good reading sounds like and gives access to more complex language development.

Before children can write, facilitators act as scribes for them and model writing skills.

Example in Action

In our "Playing with Letters" corner, children actively engage in a variety of literacy development activities:

When they wrote letters to loved ones, they practiced early writing skills, understanding of audience, and the purpose of written communication.

By compiling grocery lists for baking cookies, they developed pre-reading skills, vocabulary related to food, and an understanding of sequencing.



When they played "spot the difference" with drawings, they honed their visual discrimination, attention to detail, and descriptive language.

Through crafting necklaces and creating beautiful wild flowers using Montessori beads, they developed fine motor skills, pattern recognition, and imaginative expression, all while engaging with foundational concepts that support later literacy.



Numeracy

Learning is not the product of teaching. Learning is the product of the activity of learners.

—John Holt

We embrace the Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract (CPA) approach, making mathematical concepts tangible and accessible.

Children first work with physical objects (Concrete), then move to drawing or visualizing (Pictorial), before grasping abstract symbols (Abstract).

From building with Kapla blocks to playing sorting games, math truly comes alive through play and problem-solving.

Example in Action

In our "Math Learning in Every Corner," students enthusiastically engage with mathematical operations in a "Little Market" setting, practicing writing shopping lists and calculating with accessible materials.

Even during breaks, older students spontaneously pose addition problems to the Siroccos, ingeniously using pebbles from the garden like Montessori beads to solve them, showcasing the natural integration of math into their daily lives.



Language Immersion: A Natural Journey

To have another language is to possess a second soul.



—Charlemagne

We believe that true language acquisition unfolds through authentic immersion, rather than forced instruction. Your child will be naturally immersed in both English and Spanish throughout their day, learning by living the languages through play, projects, and conversation.



Our facilitators speak in their native languages, creating a truly authentic bilingual environment where language acts as a bridge to new connections, never a barrier. For instance, a facilitator might lead a cooking workshop entirely in Spanish, with children learning vocabulary for ingredients and actions, while another leads a storytelling session in English, encouraging children to respond and ask questions in English.

Research has shown that speaking more than one language benefits the brain and other cognitive functions. Far from being a hindrance, maintaining and developing their home language actually enriches their journey into additional languages.

We encourage parents to actively support their multilingual learners by continuing to speak and read to them in their home language.

The more robust a child's foundation in their first language, the more readily they can transfer those linguistic and cognitive skills to learning new languages.



Transition to Elementary

At Kaleide, your child's transition into and out of our Siroccos group is smooth and personalized, based on their readiness, not just age. We work closely with families and incorporate feedback from your child, you, and our team. When moving to the Alisos group, children gradually explore new spaces and meet new facilitators.



Our Preschool and Elementary programs offer a unified and continuous learning experience.

Daily activities and pedagogical approach evolve and deepen across both stages.

For example:

Mixed-age learning in Preschool prepares children for similar groups in Elementary, fostering collaboration and peer mentoring.

Hands-on, play-based learning continues from Preschool into Elementary, forming a foundation for complex, project-based learning.

Self-direction and autonomy developed in Preschool prepare children for co-creating learning paths and increasing independence in Elementary.

A playful approach to math and literacy in Preschool extends into Elementary, keeping subjects engaging and relevant.

Compassionate communication and restorative practices from Preschool transition into formal "Agreements Circles" and conflict resolution in Elementary

In both stages, our facilitators act as companions, observers, and guides, providing individualized attention to ensure your child feels supported throughout their entire learning journey at Kaleide.

This holistic approach ensures that the values, rhythms, and relationships your child builds in their early years at Kaleide continue to flourish in Elementary.

Involving Families

Our community is built on a “three-party” model: children, facilitators, and families working side by side. We invite parents to be active co-creators in the life of the school through many meaningful avenues:



Daily conversations at pick-up—because small moments build strong relationships.

Monthly school meetings—to reflect together, share ideas, and grow as a community.

Twice-yearly Parent Workshops—hands-on sessions where you can experience our pedagogy firsthand.

Volunteering Days—joyful moments where families come together to help in the garden, share stories or skills with the children, or prepare a meal together.

Every moment of connection enriches our shared journey. When families step into the life of the school, children see that their world is united and whole—a place where learning, love, and community all go hand in hand.

