

Montessori Country Day School

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Primary and Upper Elementary Program: 2021–2022 School Year

Program Philosophy

The goals and curriculum of the elementary program of Montessori Country Day School are based on the philosophy and pedagogical methods of Maria Montessori. At the center of this philosophy is the importance of an individualized education that values the strengths and unique abilities of all students. Children are inherently interested in learning. A Montessori program builds on this curiosity, with the goal of teaching students how to learn on their own, not to teach *to* them. The Montessori philosophy and method shape the way that the classroom and curriculum are structured. Important characteristics of our elementary program include:

- A holistic approach to the curriculum, integrating subjects in a thematic way that leads to an understanding of the world, nature, and the human being.
- An emphasis on strong academic preparation as well as on personal and practical life skills.
- A curriculum that allows for a self-initiated focus in areas of interest and is not strictly age-based.
- The integration of multiple age groups into one classroom.
- A celebration of pluralism in our local communities and throughout the world, through the study of multiple cultural traditions, geography, history, and language. The program encourages open-minded acceptance of all peoples.
- Curriculum that integrates experiential, hands-on learning with a progression to understanding abstract concepts.

Curriculum

The curriculum conforms to state regulations by including all required subjects (every year: English, reading, spelling, writing, math, science, social studies, health, physical education, art, music, and at least once every six years: history of the U.S., history of Pennsylvania, geography, civics, safety education). But more importantly, as noted above, the curriculum is modeled on the Montessori philosophy and method. There is an emphasis on integrating subjects thematically across disciplinary lines; this integration includes subjects such as art, music, and physical education. In accordance with Montessori philosophy, students move from an experiential understanding to an increasingly abstract understanding of subjects. While the philosophy and methods follow those with which the children are familiar from pre-school, there is an increase in structure and formal expectations in the elementary program. Although students continue to be self-directed and motivated, the curriculum includes more demanding and structured expectations than the pre-school/pre-kindergarten/kindergarten program. Research shows that children coming out of Montessori elementary schools have an extremely strong preparation in academic fundamentals and are well equipped to learn in many different environments.

Our goal is to create and support students who are well trained in academic disciplines. We want our students to love learning, value knowledge, and practice creativity. Our goal is to develop responsible, critical, confident, powerful, and caring members of society. Our hope is to provide an environment that encourages all of these characteristics, supporting our students, as they become goal setting, achieving individuals. Students are taught to think clearly, research topics, express themselves in writing and speech, and put their knowledge to practical application. French, music, and art are offered, formally, once a week in both the Primary and Upper Elementary classes. Health and physical education are offered formally each week. Initial conferences are scheduled in October and followed up with written progress reports in February and June. Conferences with your child's teachers can be requested at any time.

Summarizing the Elementary Program

The program will include children within a 4-year age span. In keeping with the Montessori philosophy, we will attempt to strike a balance between the numbers of grade level students within each classroom. First grade students must be 6 years of age by October 31st or a previous kindergarten student at MCDS.

The school day operates from 9:00 AM through 3:30 PM, Monday through Friday. Students must provide a lunch from home. All lunches are refrigerated until the scheduled lunchtime at 12:15 PM (Primary Elementary) or 12:30 PM (Upper Elementary). There are extended care options available before and after school from 7:30 to 9:00 AM and from 3:30 to 5:00 PM. Extended care hours are an additional expense.

Registration applications are recorded in the order that they are received. Programs are assigned in that order. Enrollment in our program does not guarantee placement in a set grade by your school district for the following year. Parents must familiarize themselves with their own school district policies.

Registration Fee and Payment Policies

A \$100.00 registration fee is required to guarantee placement and must be returned with the registration form. This is NON-REFUNDABLE. All tuition payments are due on the first of the month: June 1, 2021, and then September 1, 2021 through May 1, 2022. The first payment is due June 1st, 2021 and is necessary to ensure placement for your child. If you choose to withdraw after making that 1st payment, you must do so in writing by August 1st, 2021. After receipt of the written request, the first tuition payment will be reimbursed to you. We use an online software system to post tuition charges. All families are able to access the amount due each month. We accept cash, checks, e-checks and credit cards as payment. If you choose to pay with a credit card, you will automatically be charged a 3% convenience fee per transaction. Receipts must be requested from the office.

2021–2022 Elementary Program	10 Monthly Payments of:
Grades 1 through 8, 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM	\$1117

Additional Before and After School Care

Additional care hours are available from 7:30 to 9:00 AM and 3:30 to 5:00 PM. Pre-scheduled care is an additional cost of \$11.50 per hour. Drop-in care is available at a cost of \$13.00 per hour.

Pre-scheduled care is care that has been scheduled through the office and paid for one month in advance, as part of the tuition payment. Drop-in care must also be scheduled through the office and paid for at the time of service. Arrangements will be made for drop-in care after staff and child ratios are considered.

Sickness, Vacation, and Withdrawal Policies

FULL TUITION IS DUE EVEN IF YOUR CHILD IS SICK OR ON VACATION. This payment is necessary to hold your child's slot in the program. If you choose to withdraw your child from our program anytime during the school year, you will not be obligated to pay the remainder of your child's annual tuition. **You will not however, be refunded any portion of tuition already paid to the school.**

Rolling Admission

If there is available space, children can be enrolled at any time throughout the school year. Monthly tuition rates may be different from the rates printed on the chart on this form. Tuition is based on a 180-day school year calendar. Tuition will be pro-rated depending on the time of year your child begins in the program and the number of days remaining in the school year.

Registration Procedures

Please complete the elementary registration form. Sign and submit it to the school with a non-refundable \$100.00 deposit. Thank you. *If you have any additional questions about the elementary program or registering your child, please contact the school at 610-777-3080.*