

Christian Montessori Academy's Middle School Classroom

7th & 8th grade

Montessori Middle School graduates are innovative, independent, self-motivated, and leaders.

Students learn valuable life skills in the middle school classroom that prepare them for not only the next level in their education, but the work environment too. They learn to organize their work, manage their time, engage in meaningful class discussions, and work collaboratively. Community service, fundraising, school newsletters, yearbook, photography, and the garden are integral parts of our real-life classroom.

Our students' individual needs and abilities are nurtured and encouraged as we foster independence, awareness, and growth during adolescent development, as their journey to mature responsibility and adulthood continues.

"Education should therefore include the two forms of work, manual and intellectual, for the same person and thus make it understood by practical experience that these two kinds complete each other and are equally essential to a civilized existence."

- Dr. Maria Montessori

CMA's Middle School program is based on foundations built in our primary and elementary programs. Students have an expected level of independence, self-direction, and a love of learning.

A Classroom of Growth

Adolescents rely less on manipulatives, choosing more advanced styles of learning such as abstract thinking, discussion, reading, and application. This stage of development in a child's life can be exasperating for parents when presented with the changes their child is experiencing: mood swings, attitude, etc. We, as a community, work toward balance, realizing it takes a village to raise a child.

Our students enjoy taking care of their environment by daily tasks, volunteering, etc. – with each student expected to contribute his or her best effort to the task at hand.

Curriculum

"The great American dream is universal education. The great American tragedy is that education is confused with schooling."

- William Graham Sumner

"The thing that is important above everything else is that the adolescent should have a life of activity and variety."

- Dr. Maria Montessori

Our curriculum provides students with diverse levels of academic skill sets suited for varied styles of learning. Subjects are cross-curricular, allowing for a wider vision of how things came to be and where things fit in their world.

Students keep a weekly log of lessons and materials studied. This provides a powerful communication tool between school and family.

Teacher/Guide: Of all levels of the Montessori program, the “teacher’s” role as “guide” is most pronounced at the Middle School level. When a child reaches the adolescent growth period, they are testing boundaries, limits, & independence more than before. Our role as guides within the entire Montessori program, is to provide instruction but more importantly provide foundations for a life-long love for learning, discovery, and introspect so that informed decisions can be made on the road to adulthood.

Math: The foundation of middle school math is built in the elementary levels. Students strengthen their understanding of operations and properties, strategies, and critical thinking skills. They develop a knowledge base for algebraic reasoning by applying skills to real-life concepts. Study areas are: operations, integers, fractions, decimals, percentages & ratios, probability, number theory, measurement conversion, charting & graphing, algebra, area & volume, Pythagorean Theorem, plane & solid geometry, and coordinate & spatial geometry.

Science: Science is a process and a natural extension of a student’s curiosity. Here, questions arise, research is conducted, and answers are discovered. Our job is to motivate each student to develop an intrinsic desire to learn more about the world in which they live. Science is success and failure through which, great discoveries are made.

Studies in zoology, botany, earth, space, anatomy, physics, and chemistry are presented throughout the two year middle school cycle. Dissection is conducted every other year and students participate in the annual Tulsa Engineering Challenge, building, creating, & exploring projects in a competitive field. CMA has won awards in various projects each year we have entered.

Language: Through the elementary years, language has been built on reading, grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, and spelling. Now those skills are put to use in a broader sense through the study of American, historical, and world literature. Students explore different genres to gain informed and critical understanding of texts presented. Through analysis and group discussion, students develop skills for effective writing and communication within essays/reports, short stories, letters, etc., while honing mechanical skills during the process.

Geography & History: Continents and countries are incorporated into each field of study, building upon knowledge gained in previous levels of Montessori education. Students explore the world around them and how it came to be by exploring the ancient civilizations through the modern world. CMA utilizes Biblical history intertwined with world history to deepen the understanding of past events. The world as it is today, is examined ecologically, economically, environmentally, and socially to establish knowledge of current events.

American history studies include Native Americans, explorers, colonization, westward expansion, battles & wars, and the industrial revolution, with students providing interpretations through class discussion, presentations, and outings.

The Arts & Extras: Our students participate in Spanish class, classroom plays, and have the option of Show Choir, acting class, robotics, sewing, swimming, recorder, & piano to enhance their educational experience.

Social/Self Inspection: The yearbook, newsletters, and fundraising tasks require the students to participate in school activities in a leadership role allowing interactions with all other classroom levels, providing opportunities to learn social skills independent of “peer” experiences. In addition, the middle school day includes a block of personal time. Albeit misunderstood by some, this requirement is practiced in the majority of Montessori middle school programs to ease the adolescent’s state of mind which can sometimes be tumultuous. Family time in the evenings/weekends is full of sports, church, and other activities. This personal time is an opportunity to decompress, allowing for quiet self-reflection and creativity.

Testing: Most Montessori programs do not give standardized tests. It is difficult to test a Montessori student on material that has been given specifically to students for the purpose of testing, when Montessori students study materials for the purpose of gaining knowledge and understanding. That being said, each student is able to converse with the guide daily regarding lessons he or she has studied. These conversations and the guide’s observations of the student’s daily work output, allow us to determine if the student is ready to move on, or if additional work is necessary before proceeding.

Upon completion of the 8th grade, it is necessary, as the educational system is designed today, to have a cumulative test (math, reading, & language) result in order to enter high school. We offer the state TABE test to our 8th graders at an off-site testing facility. The TABE test also suffices for the State of Oklahoma Reading Proficiency test required before a student is allowed to obtain a driver’s permit.

High School Transition: The majority of Montessori students will transition well to a traditional learning environment at the high school level. Montessori curriculum is structured differently than traditional curriculum and transitioning at a younger level can sometimes be more difficult. By the time

the student finishes 8th grade, he or she has completed the required curriculum and sometimes exceeded their counterparts in other learning environments.

Montessori students have learned how to structure their time, work on their own, and do independent research. They typically have a good attitude toward school and an enthusiasm for learning, serving them well in any environment.

Our graduates have successfully attended public, private, and chartered high schools. When the time comes, we will be happy to assist you to help ease this transition for you.