



St Catherine's MONTESSORI

BRINGING WISDOM TO LIGHT •



SCW

WELCOME TO ST. CATHERINE'S

Our Mission is Clear

In 1966, two Dominican sisters envisioned an education that could serve the hearts, minds and spirits of students. More than 50 years later, St. Catherine's Montessori continues this vital mission.

St. Catherine's provides an academically and spiritually engaging environment, and a culture of environmental stewardship. Academic progress is a crucial

focus of our program, but it is only part of our goal.

Our underlying mission is to help students develop the character, confidence and resilience to handle whatever life brings. As a Catholic Montessori school, we have the distinct advantage of intentionally integrating the spiritual and the practical.



THE ST. CATHERINE'S PROGRAM

Houston's only comprehensive Catholic Montessori education for **ages 14 months – 12th grade**

Accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department (TCCB ED). Carrying the highest "Recognized" level by the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI)

AMI-trained faculty

After-school care and extracurricular music and sport programs

Located near 610 South between Stella Link and South Main

Convenient to West University, Bellaire, Texas Medical Center, Downtown Houston, Braeswood, Meyerland, Willow Meadows and Willowbend



What Is Montessori?

M O N T E S S O R I : A N E D U C A T I O N F O R L I F E

“Our care of the child should be governed, not by the desire to make him learn things, but by the endeavor always to keep burning within him that light which is called intelligence.”

– M A R I A M O N T E S S O R I

Montessori is more than a method of education. It is an outlook on life with a deep reverence for the innate potential of each person. It is a spiritual mission to create a more peaceful and loving world.

Maria Montessori believed that each child is born with a unique personality and gifts, along with an innate desire to learn and to experience the world. By encouraging children’s interests and cultivating their inborn strengths, Montessori believed that children would develop into productive, community-minded adults. At heart, education must serve the whole child—intellectually, socially, physically, and spiritually.



The Prepared Environment

To aid children in the process of self-discovery, Montessori designed what she called “the prepared environment.” The prepared environment includes manipulative materials for all subject areas that encourage interactive learning. The work emphasizes both process and product.

The Montessori classroom embraces the concept of “freedom within limits,” meaning that children have some liberty to choose their work, whether to work individually or collaboratively, and to move about the classroom. However, they are also subject to age-appropriate limits and the wisdom of their guide (and oftentimes, their peers).

Granting even the youngest children some degree of freedom helps them develop their zest for learning and their self-confidence. The freedom in a Montessori classroom also cultivates the self-discipline needed to make responsible choices and to complete a project from start to finish.





The Montessori Guide

The Montessori teacher, or guide, as we more appropriately refer to the role, compassionately supports children in their self-development. An integral part of the prepared environment, the guide is foremost a trained observer who recognizes the optimal time to present materials and lessons to children as they become ready. The guides are also models of the attitude and behaviors being cultivated in the classroom community, including respect, kindness, patience, warmth, and joy in learning.

Mixed-Age Classrooms

The Montessori classroom is not only a place for individual learning; it is a vibrant community of children, where the child learns to interact socially in a variety of ways. The 3-year cycle of the Montessori classroom enables older children to mentor and teach the younger ones. Younger children are inspired to more advanced work and social skills as they observe the older children. With such variety of levels in the classroom, each child can work at his or her own pace, encouraged by cooperation. The 3-year cycle also allows children to form meaningful relationships with their guides, who become well-acquainted with each child's personality and development.



14
MONTHS
–
3 YEARS

Infant Community

Maria Montessori believed that the most important period in a child's development was from birth to age 6. The Infant Community provides a nurturing and cooperative first social experience for the child of 14 months to 3 years of age. With the support of a Montessori-trained guide and an assistant, the 12 children in the community practice the skills of refinement of movement, early language, and what Montessori calls practical life.

AGES
3–6

Primary Community

Children ages 3 to 6 possess “the absorbent mind”—the ability to learn many aspects of one's culture and environment with seemingly little effort. In the Primary classroom, this extraordinary stage of development is supported with an array of manipulative materials in subjects including mathematics, language arts, and cultural studies. The Primary environment enables children to move at their own pace in a stimulating environment that cultivates their natural desire to learn.

GRADES
1–3
—
GRADES
4–6

Elementary Community

LOWER EL • UPPER EL

From ages 6 to 12, children become reasoning explorers, developing new powers of abstraction and imagination, and a heightened interest in social life and justice. Capitalizing on their growing intellectual capacities, the Montessori Elementary curriculum introduces children to the vastness of the universe and emphasizes the interconnectivity between subjects as diverse as astronomy, biology, chemistry, history, religion, language, and mathematics. This approach helps children understand academic subjects as systems by which human beings make sense of the world. It also encourages students to begin thinking about themselves in relation to all living beings and as citizens of the global community. With the support of their guide, Elementary students take responsibility for their own education, learning to make choices and to communicate effectively, and peacefully.

GRADES
7–9

Adolescent Community

The St. Catherine's Adolescent Community provides a unique educational opportunity for students ages 12 to 15. A broad and deep range of experiences meet the young person's needs for social development, intellectual stimulation, creative expression, independence, and responsibility, as well as spiritual and personal growth. A student's experience has three major components: study, work, and community living.

In addition to rigorous academic inquiry, students maintain an expansive outdoor learning environment, allowing them to personally experience interdependency with the natural world, other members of the school community, and the world beyond. In preparation for adult responsibilities, students learn to use their individual knowledge and gifts in service to others.

GRADES
10–12

High School

After completing the formative 3-year cycle in the Adolescent Community, our students aged 15-18 are ready to enter high school. The Montessori High School curriculum is highly integrated, emphasizing connections between spiritual life, academic disciplines, and methods of inquiry. As these students make the transition into adulthood, they have the opportunity to pursue their individual interests outside of the classroom, through independent study, mentorships, internships, and inquiry-based experiential learning through travel.

The Spiritual Life

of the Child

We believe that children of all ages have a unique relationship with God, and assisting even the youngest children in spiritual and moral growth is a crucial aspect of our mission. In accordance with both our Montessori and Catholic beliefs, we have adopted the teachings of “The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd” to support the spiritual life of our students.

Inspired by the profound religious intuition of children, the Catechesis curriculum was designed to combine the self-teaching principles of Montessori with the theological moorings of Hebrew scholarship, scripture studies, and Roman Catholic liturgy and doctrine.

The Atrium

Beginning at the Primary level, students attend Mass monthly and visit the school Atrium weekly. The Atrium is a prepared environment specifically intended for the spiritual growth of children. The Atrium helps to nourish children’s relationship with God by:

Allowing for a period of retreat, facilitating introspection and silence

Encouraging religious life through community and worship

Providing concrete, tactile work through which children may converse with God

Preparing the child for involvement in the larger worshiping community





The Catechist

The catechist, or spiritual guide, nurtures the child's intuitive understanding of God by preparing the Atrium environment and giving presentations from scripture and liturgy. Rather than providing all the answers, the catechist reflects with the child on the mysteries of transcendence.

FOR THE YOUNG CHILD (AGES 3-6)

Catechesis centers on the Parable of the Good Shepherd. Young children are particularly interested in the most essential elements of our faith—the announcement of God's love through the life and resurrection of Christ.

FOR THE ELEMENTARY CHILD (AGES 6-12)

Spiritual inquiry at the Elementary age responds to elementary children's imagination and need to understand their relationship with God, family, friends and the larger community.

FOR THE ADOLESCENT (AGES 13-18)

As students embark upon adolescence and adulthood, greater emphasis is placed on the response to God's love. Adolescents are encouraged to recognize the responsibilities that come with receiving God's gifts and to envision themselves as collaborators in a life committed to spiritual work and understanding.

After-School Activities

St. Catherine's offers a variety of after-school options for students beginning at the Primary level. The After-School Program is available daily until 6:00 p.m. Activities include continued Montessori work, arts and crafts, games, cooking, and unstructured outdoor play.

After-School Music includes orchestra for Elementary, Adolescent Community, and High School

After-School Sports includes soccer, volleyball, basketball, and track and field for 4th – 12th grade students. Parents host Saturday Soccer for Primary and Lower Elementary students.



Our Campus

St. Catherine's Montessori occupies a state-of-the-art campus designed specifically for Montessori education. The 10.4-acre campus, featuring outdoor learning environments for all ages, was also designed with our school's longstanding dedication to sustainability and global stewardship. Certified by the U.S. Green Building Council, our school was the first K-12 facility to receive the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) designation in Texas.

In addition, St. Catherine's owns five acres of land at Japhet Creek, our sustainable urban campus near downtown Houston, where our students explore environmental studies.



Accreditation

St. Catherine's Montessori is associated with Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, and accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department (TCCB ED) under the aegis of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and AdvancED. We are also "Recognized" by the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI). AMI is the international organization founded by Dr. Maria Montessori in 1929 to maintain the integrity of her approach to educating children. AMI is regarded as the foremost authority on Montessori education. St. Catherine's Montessori maintains certification as AMI "Recognized," which is the highest level of acknowledgment for Montessori schools worldwide.



