

Woodside Montessori Academy Age 3 - 8th Grade

Dedicated Montessori educators since 1985



Thank you for your interest in Woodside Montessori Academy. We are honored that you are considering our school for your child. Enclosed you will find an application package highlighting our programs and services, as well as our educational philosophy.

Located in the suburbs of Boston, WMA blends into pleasant, treed surroundings. Spacious classrooms, large windows, and a unique building combine to provide a bright, cheerful, indoor learning environment. The outdoor area is equally pleasant with a variety of play equipment and ample space for games, climbing and other sports activities.

During its twenty years of operation, WMA has evolved to become a community of approximately 120 children. The school has developed a reputation for academic excellence within a family-oriented setting, nurturing the child's needs for social, emotional and academic growth. We are committed to a multi-age environment guided by the exceptional Montessori philosophy of education and development.

WMA is pleased to offer the full Montessori educational experience, educating students from three years old through eighth grade. Our school offers a challenging and stimulating academic environment where students are guided by faculty members who are knowledgeable, dedicated, and caring. Our in-school academic atmosphere is complemented by the wide variety of real life experiences.

Our class sizes are small so teachers are in the enviable position to offer a great deal of individualized attention to their students, which is so essential during these foundational years.

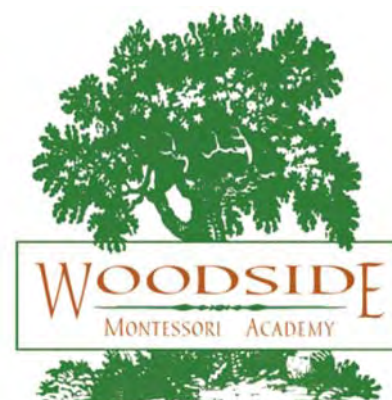
If you are interested in learning more about WMA, please call to schedule a visit. We conduct Open Houses twice a year; if you are not able to make our Open House, we also schedule individual parental observations. Observations are an excellent opportunity to tour the school, observe a classroom in action and have your questions answered by our knowledgeable staff. Visiting a classroom is an important part of the application process.

Finding a school that inspires your child to succeed both academically and socially can be challenging. We are eager to share with your family our unique and outstanding school and the educational method which drives it. We thank you again for your interest in Woodside Montessori Academy and we look forward to meeting you and your child.

Warmly,

Kathleen A. Gasbarro

Kathleen A. Gasbarro
Head of School



Woodside: A Leader in Montessori Education

In September of 1985, Woodside Montessori School opened with twelve students age three to six. Since then, Woodside has continued to grow:

- 1993: Woodside expands to include a Lower Elementary class for 6-9 year olds.
- 1998: Kathleen Gasbarro assumes directorship of the school and the name is changed to Woodside Montessori Academy.
- 2000: Woodside adds an Upper Elementary classroom serving 9-12 year olds.
- 2002: Woodside's Middle School program begins.

Woodside now has a student population of approximately 120 students.

Based largely on Dr. Maria Montessori's ideals and teachings, the program reflects a love and respect for the child. It is completely child-centered, with a commitment to the success and happiness of the children, primary through middle school aged.

Our program creates a strong sense of community, which is coupled with a well-developed Montessori curriculum and practice. Our highly qualified, Montessori-certified faculty are key to the program's mission of providing children with an optimal learning experience. This experience is individualized and designed to fit each child's unique needs.

By incorporating children from all racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and intellectual backgrounds, Woodside aims to prepare its students academically, emotionally and physically to become good citizens of the world.

Accreditations & Affiliations

- Full Affiliate of the American Montessori Society
- Member of the Association of Montessori International
- Licensed by the Department of Early Education and Child Care
- Member of the Montessori Schools of Massachusetts
- Member of the MassCue (Massachusetts Computer Using Educators)
- National Association of Science Teachers
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
- Member of the National Middle School Association
- North American Montessori Teachers Association
- Radiant Child Yoga Program

“ To stimulate life and then leave it free to develop, to unfold. That is the first task of the educator. ”
Maria Montessori



Guiding Philosophy

Woodside Montessori Academy draws on the concepts developed more than 100 years ago by Dr. Maria Montessori, Italy's first woman doctor of medicine. Her scientific observations led her to conclude that children thrive when allowed to develop at their own pace, in an environment specially equipped with a rich choice of stimulating learning materials. It's an education based on respect for each child as an individual and it aims for the fullest possible development of each child as an individual.

Our Goals

Our goal is to provide a warm and stimulating environment to nurture the development of children to their fullest potential. Our children are treated with respect and dignity; their self-esteem as individuals is a paramount concern. We place great emphasis on learning by doing and we value all aspects of a child's work. By stressing process rather than products in the child's work, we enhance feelings of competence and self worth. Freedom of choice in a well-defined structure characterizes our classes. The development of independence of thought and action is the result of activity guided by caring adults who act as links to the educational materials.



At a Glance

At Woodside Montessori Academy our goal is to educate the child as a whole, balancing academic subjects with music, art, and practical activities. Our curriculum focuses on the following:

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| Mathematics | Practical Life |
| Science | Music |
| Language Arts | Art |
| Social Studies | Yoga |
| Reading | Movement and physical education |
| Spanish | Computer Science |

How do Children Learn in Montessori?

Learning is a natural part of development. Just as one witnesses physical growth, experimentation, repetition and mastery, so does growth proceed in the personal, social, and academic realms. Here at Woodside Montessori Academy, we prepare a learning environment conducive to allowing each child to fulfill his or her maximum growth potential.



How is This Accomplished?

Woodside Montessori Academy classrooms are set up with careful attention to materials and teacher training. Materials are selected that are multi-sensory, self-educating, and self-corrective, and that speak to a child's desire to touch, explore, and learn in a sequence that scientifically caters to their developing mental capabilities.

In an atmosphere that nurtures self-concept and confidence, concentration, clarity of thought process and social grace emerge. Self-concept and confidence are fostered through building the classroom on these concepts:

- Free flow of socialization and movement within the classroom.
- Freedom of choice in selection of materials.
- Respect and guidance on self-initiated tasks.
- Large blocks of work time to allow for full access and development of projects.
- Individualized expectations and goals.
- Provision for real life experiences and presentation of expanded subject matter.
- The Adult in the Classroom is a keen observer and protector of each child's needs.

Goals of Montessori Education

According to the American Montessori Society, the goals of Montessori education are:

- » To stimulate the child's innate love of learning
- » To provide a nurturing, cooperative learning environment
- » To incorporate all the senses in the learning experience
- » To consider the whole child: "The physical, emotional, social, aesthetic, spiritual, and cognitive needs and interests are inseparable and equally important."
- » To encourage respect for self, others, the environment, and all life



We must prepare the whole environment, including all material objects, to a degree that the child can perform every activity himself.

Maria Montessori



The Foundations of the Montessori Classroom:

Prepared Environment:

Dr. Montessori developed what she called the "prepared environment." The prepared environment is established by an adult and is designed to facilitate maximum independent learning and exploration for the child. The Montessori prepared environment provides children with the opportunity to work on activities of their own choice at their own pace. As a result, they experience both freedom and self-discipline in a space designed to meet their specific developmental needs.

At every step of learning, the teaching material is designed to test the child's understanding and correct their errors. The structure of Montessori learning involves the use of many materials with which the child may work individually.



The Role of the Teacher

The teacher in a Montessori classroom is a model of what the child can eventually become and the preparer of the environment for the child. The bond between the teacher and the child is based on respect and trust, which boosts the child's self confidence.

Since the children have learned to work independently in the prepared environment, the Montessori teacher is then able to observe a child individually. An observant teacher is then able to efficiently facilitate a child's individual developmental, social and academic needs. The Montessori teacher also facilitates classroom activities, carefully planning the environment, and helps progress from one lesson to the next.



The Multi-Age Environment

Children are grouped in mixed ages, typically in a three year age span based on the child's development. Children in a mixed age classroom are challenged according to their individual ability and through constant interaction with other students. The Montessori multi-age grouping is a key variable in creating a positive environment for individual and collaborative learning and social development.

The benefit of this three-year age grouping is that children learn from each other: the younger ones learn from the older ones; the older ones demonstrate their mastery of an area by teaching the younger ones what they know. Children have the opportunity to learn, grow, and explore at their own pace, gaining experience and understanding—and ultimately becoming self-directed learners. Children learn to negotiate, cooperate, and accept ideas other than their own.

This multi-age grouping also has a social benefit for children: they develop their social skills in an environment that mimics social and family positions. Even only children can have the experience of being the youngest, middle, and oldest child in the classroom family.



Woodside Curriculum Overview

A Montessori Education:

Prepares students to be life-long learners

Develops the whole child

And is:

Interdisciplinary

Focused on the Child

Hands-on; allowing for problem solving

Instrumental in developing self-confidence and leadership skills

Collaborative; student to student, student to teacher, teacher to student

Academically rich and challenging

The Absorbent Mind - Primary (ages 3 to 6)

Young children take in a tremendous amount of information from their environment. Our Primary Program provides an enriching and nurturing hands-on learning experience with specially formulated Montessori materials for math, language, sensorial exploration, practical life activities, art, science, and geography. The necessity of making choices and using coordinated movements to accomplish tasks leads the child toward self-regulation and self-control. By manipulating, experimenting, and discovering, children begin to move from the concrete to the abstract as they prepare for the more complex studies of the WMA Elementary Program.

Each day consists of some group activities, individual work time and outdoor play. The largest time block is for individual work. We have three Primary classrooms at Woodside, with half-day or full-day academic programs.

The Intellectual Mind - Lower & Upper Elementary (ages 6 to 12)

The Elementary years break down into two basic parts: The Age of Imagination for 6-9 year olds in Lower Elementary (grades 1-3), and The Age of Reason for 9-12 year olds in Upper Elementary (grades 4-6). Maria Montessori wrote of this stage, "All other factors sink into insignificance beside the importance of feeding the hungry intelligence and opening vast fields of knowledge to eager exploration." In Lower Elementary, teachers feed children's need to know through the use of storytelling that sparks both the imagination and the quest for knowledge. In Upper Elementary, teachers feed children's need to know not only what but why. With teacher guidance, students explore the workings of math, science, history, and language in a context that gives their work personal perspective.

The Creation of the Socially Conscious Individual - Middle School (ages 12 to 15)

As a school community, we recognized the need for an adolescent program which would meet the unique psychosocial characteristics of the student in the third plane of development. The addition of the adolescent program to the school community prepares our young adolescent students for high school in a healthy, self-confident manner. They are a vital, integrated part of the community; they are leaders for younger students and models for what a healthy adolescent can be.

The mission of the program is to provide opportunities for adolescents to be self-confident and gain self-knowledge, to belong to a community, to learn to be adaptable, to be academically competent and challenged, and to create a vision for their personal future; thus, to empower early adolescents.



Extracurricular Activities

After School Enrichment Programs

Woodside offers many opportunities for students to enhance their learning outside of the school day. Our after-school Enrichment Program offers activities for students from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.. The program has included specialty classes in Suzuki violin, theater, karate, yoga, robotics, origami, and babysitter training. We also offer enrichment programs for adults in the evening, including yoga, book clubs, Creative Memories scrapbooking, childbirth education, and active parenting classes. Weekend programs are also planned throughout the year, and have included hiking trips, ski trips, and outdoor survival skills.

Summer Program

The goal of the Woodside Montessori Academy summer program is to provide children with an opportunity to retain and develop their skills in a relaxed summer atmosphere. Our Summer Program, is full of fun creative experiences with just the right balance of positive educational projects. There is ample time for play, personal growth, and exploration while forming new friendships and creating new ideas. WMA offers fun and stimulating programs for children ages 2.9 through 15 years old.

What Happens After Woodside?

Parents often ask about the transition into other educational systems, whether public or private, for students who have reached age 15 and the end of the Woodside Middle School curriculum. We are pleased to report that graduates of WMA have proven very successful in making this transition. The aim of the Montessori philosophy is to produce in each child a lifelong love of learning accompanied by the self-discipline and self-motivation to pursue that love. These skills so often prove their value, providing students with the foundation to continue to learn and prosper regardless of the educational system or classroom setup. WMA graduates have demonstrated that they are well-equipped to thrive in public and private independent schools.

Former Woodside Montessori Academy students are currently enrolled in local public high schools and have been admitted to private independent schools including, but not limited to, the following:

- Beaver Country Day School
- Brimmer & May School
- Cambridge School of Weston
- Chapel Hill – Chauncy Hall School
- Montrose School
- Moses Brown School
- Mt. Alvernia
- Mount Saint Charles
- The Wheeler School
- The Woodward School

