
Frequently Asked Questions

What programs does The Portland Montessori School offer?

Our program serves children aged 15 months to 12 years of age. All classroom programs are Monday through Friday. Starting with the youngest, children 15 months to 36 months can enroll in our toddler program. The toddler classroom runs 8:30 am to 3 pm. For children who are 2.5 to 6 years old, our primary program is available. These classrooms run on either a half day (8:30 am – 1:00 pm) or full day (8:30 am – 3:00 pm). Our elementary program, for children ages 6 - 12 years old, also runs from 8:30 am until 3 pm. We offer optional after-school Enrichment programs until 4:30 pm.

How is The Portland Montessori School different from daycare?

It is important to clarify that Montessori is a method of education, not a daycare. The Montessori approach includes mixed-age classrooms, which allows students to learn from their peers, and provides the opportunity for the student to develop as compassionate leaders. Children ages two and a half to six in the Primary Classroom are given the freedom to learn academic lessons independently with the guidance of a Classroom Guide (teacher) who focuses on each child's learning style and readiness to learn a new skill, and presents the materials of the building curriculum in a way that is best suited for each child. You will learn more about the Montessori approach and how The Portland Montessori School implements Montessori methods on your visit to our school.

Why is it important for my child to complete the last year of the Primary program (the Kindergarten year)?

The Kindergarten year is included as the final year of our Primary program. Ideally, children begin our Primary program as a 2 ½ - 3-year-old and spend the next 3 to 4 years in the same classroom community. Children receive the most out of our program if they attend the Primary for multiple years and complete their final year. Children who leave our school before they have completed their final year miss out on the opportunity to be leaders in the classroom, and to complete the sequence of lessons. This also has a ripple effect on the classroom as a whole. The younger students miss out on having your experienced child model the role of leader in the classroom, something which they have benefitted from as a younger student. If you are not planning on completing the Kindergarten year with us, please speak to our Director of Admissions before applying.

What do the children do in the after-school Enrichment Program?

The Enrichment Programs provide a continuation of the Montessori philosophy of mutual respect, independence and cooperation that the children are accustomed to in the classroom. Children are given ample outdoor time daily in addition to a wide assortment of materials and activities indoors. The Enrichment studios provide unstructured time for children to read, play, write, create, and just be together. Children are free to choose the activities that interest them.

What is the ratio of adults to children at The Portland Montessori School?

The State mandated ratio for preschool is 1:10, for toddlers the ratio is 1:4, and elementary the ratio is 1:14. The Portland Montessori School maintains these ratios or better.

Are there any animals on-site?

We have fish, birds, and rabbits on site. Occasionally we have hosted guest animals. If your child has an allergy to any animals, please let us know.



The Portland Montessori School

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What are the enrollment requirements?

For the toddler program, children must be 15 months old and walking independently. For the primary program, children must be at least 30 months old, and fully toilet trained to apply for enrollment. Our license for the primary program is for children who are reasonably independent in the bathroom and are no longer wearing diapers or pull up products.

Do you ever enroll children at 4 or 5 years of age into the Primary program?

Space is limited for new Kindergarten aged students. Enrollment for the final year of the primary program is also dependent on your intent to continue into the elementary program. Our classroom curriculum builds and emerges over three to four years. It is anticipated that children experience all three to four years, and see the greatest outcomes from the full cycle. Enrollment eligibility is determined on an individual basis and spaces for older children are limited. Families of potential students age four or older should speak with our Director of Admissions about the potential enrollment for their child.

I have turned in an application with the application fee, when will I hear about placement?

A period of priority re-enrollment is given to current families during the month of February. After this period of re-enrollment, we begin reviewing applications for new students. We begin matching new students to available classroom spaces in March. Due to the limited availability of Guides during the summer months, applications may take longer to process during this time.

When will my child have an opportunity to visit the school and see the classroom?

After our Director of Admissions reviews the information you have provided and makes a recommendation for your child to a classroom, the Guide will contact you to schedule an introductory meeting with your family.

Is The Portland Montessori School accredited?

The Portland Montessori School is affiliated with AMI – Association Montessori Internationale. All Classroom Guides and many of our Assistants are AMI trained and certified to teach in Montessori schools internationally.

Are there materials available for parents to learn more about Montessori?

Please visit our school website often for the latest event information, portlandmontessori.org. The internet has a number of great resources. Good places to start would be: [Montessori Northwest](#), [Association Montessori Internationale](#), and [Montessori Guide](#).