

A Fraser Woods Montessori Education



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Table of Contents

Cosmic Education	3
Teacher’s Role	3
Child-Centered Classrooms.....	4
Students.....	4
Montessori Materials	4
Respect and Order.....	4
Extensive Assessments	5
Montessori Moments	5
Education After Montessori.....	5

A Fraser Woods Montessori Education

An education at Fraser Woods Montessori School includes a challenging curriculum encouraging competent, responsible, adaptive citizens who are lifelong learners and problem solvers. Our goal is to stir your child's passion for asking questions about their world. That curiosity allows him/her to go beyond set limits and provides opportunities for advanced discovery and the pursuit of their full potential.

Cosmic Education

The Greek word *cosmic* means "order and harmony in the universe"

Cosmic Education is the way we show students how everything in the universe is interrelated and interdependent from the tiniest molecules to the largest organisms ever created.

A Montessori Cosmic Education first gives a child an all-encompassing sense of the universe with its billions of galaxies. Next it focuses on our galaxy, the Milky Way, our solar system, planet Earth and its geological history, the specimens of life, all species of plants and animals and finally human beings. Montessori's Cosmic Education, taught through a series of "Great Lessons", gives a student the understanding that he/she is also part of the whole and has a part to play and a contribution to make. Cosmic Education encompasses the following concepts:

- **Conservation:** With the understanding that the universe is the "all" that there is, one can never really throw anything "away" because there is no "away". The earth in particular is home to us all and is itself a living, evolving entity.
- **Values:** Human beings are the only known beings that have the heart and mind to contemplate our existence. Through our awareness and care we nurture and manage our lives and this planet, as well as awaken others to the splendor of all creation.
- **Hope:** Hope is our ability to observe and assess a situation in a positive manner. Cosmic Education reinforces that despite much violence in the universe (fireballs, explosions, meteors colliding) and on planet Earth in particular (hurricanes, volcanoes, earthquakes, and wars) life still continues to progress toward a higher degree of complexity.
- **Gratitude:** At the core of Cosmic Education is coming away with a sense of wonder and awe over years of evolutionary labor as the earth prepared itself for living things, including humans, and the thousands of years humans progressed to provide us with technology and comfort for which we now benefit.
- **Openness:** In appreciation over all that the universe has progressed, one comes to the understanding that we are still amidst its progression and that the cosmos is still unfolding. The possibilities of further progression cause one to question the next step. If the universe is not stagnant, if the earth itself is a living, changing entity, where do we go from here? Openness to all possibilities is fostered in Cosmic Education.

Teacher's Role

All Fraser Woods Montessori Head Teachers are Montessori certified. The certification involves a rigorous curriculum equivalent to that of an advanced educational degree. Our teachers are committed to the educational approach inspired by Dr. Maria Montessori and the mission of Fraser Woods Montessori

School. They each bring their own gifts and talents to the table. Every classroom from Toddler through Elementary is led by a Head Teacher, and depending on the level, at least one additional Assistant Teacher. At the Middle School level teachers are divided by their subject of expertise. Each teacher becomes your child's role model, mentor and confidant.

Our specially trained teachers cultivate a student's desire to learn and constantly assess where each student stands in their learning process. Through observation, the teacher is trained to recognize periods of readiness and carefully documents the child's progress. Providing a profound respect for the child, the teacher provides what is necessary but then gets out of the child's way. When the child masters a lesson, the teacher then guides the child toward new concepts and materials. Each new concept is incremental and aids in the development of new skills and inspires the child's growing interest, leading them to greater challenges and awe-filled discovery.

Child-Centered Classrooms

Our prepared classroom environments meet the students' needs by respecting each child's social, emotional, physical and cognitive growth. Classrooms are organized around subject areas and encourage students to move toward independence. Ground rules and expectations are established enabling the children to feel secure within their surroundings.

In an atmosphere of freedom within limits, students find an opportunity to learn at their own pace. Classrooms are non-competitive and include mixed ages, which allows for reciprocal, cooperative learning between students. Older students serve as a role model for younger students when they share their knowledge and solidify their own learning. This interaction prepares students social skills within various age groups throughout their early lives and beyond.

Students

From Toddler to 8th year, when students build on their successes they become increasingly more motivated at building mastery at each level of work. Within their community the child finds social satisfaction through being helpful and realizing the positive impact they have on others. If Montessori children are free to learn, it is because they have acquired from their exposure to both physical and mental order, an "inner discipline." Our students bring unique personalities, talents, and interests that enrich our school environment. We are deeply grateful to our students for their part in making Fraser Woods Montessori an exceptional setting to learn, collaborate and grow.

Montessori Materials

Each Montessori material serves an explicit purpose. They are designed to be beautiful, precise and appealing to children. Materials, which often look like games, are called "work" and are specifically made to foster cognitive development. A prepared environment means there is a reason for each material and their respective placement within the classroom.

Respect and Order

Respect for one's self, for others and for one's environment is the hallmark of Fraser Woods Montessori School. Respect for self promotes healthy self-esteem, which is vital for true learning to take place. Respect for others inspires a caring, trusting environment. Respect for one's environment strengthens the knowledge of one's place in an ever-changing world.

Extensive Assessments

Our methodology allows students to focus on learning and discovery instead of on specific letter grade achievement. Children are allowed to work on a subject material until they reach mastery and are encouraged to correct their mistakes. It is our belief that standardized testing before fourth grade dramatically narrows the scope of assessing the children's cognitive development. Third Year Elementary students begin developing test-taking strategies and practice taking tests in a relaxed atmosphere. Fourth Year through Eighth Year students take a formal yearly test from Educational Records Bureau (ERB) called the Comprehensive Program Testing (CPT IV). In Middle School, students frequently take quizzes and receive percentage grades for each subject matter.

Depending on the student's grade level, either once, twice or three times a year, parents receive a detailed document (averaging up to six pages long) on their child's progress covering a wide range of specific aspects of the child's academic and social development. Each of the child's teachers include their own progress report for their particular subject matter.

Montessori Moments

Watch the joy in the faces of two-year-olds in their safe, toddler-sized "kitchen" as they accomplish tasks they have witnessed a parent do at home. Observe the four-year-olds' intense concentration as they sort the pieces of the pink tower and learn size and spatial relationships. Listen to Elementary students working together to solve a math problem. Monitor Middle School students discussing the pros and cons of 13 colonies declaring independence from England.

Next, share the smile of an Elementary student helping a Toddler get settled for a school assembly. Marvel when Middle School students excitedly tell you how much money their class raised for boxes of medicine for developing countries around the world—and tell you from a place of deep understanding what those boxes contain, why it's needed and why the developing countries cannot provide.