

“If education is to profoundly touch the heart and mind of a child, he must be learning because he is curious and interested, not simply to earn the highest grade in the class”

Dr. Maria Montessori



Mountainview Montessori Elementary

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A Choice Program in the Surrey School District

Maria Montessori

Maria Montessori was born in the town of Chiaravalle, in the province of Ancona, Italy, in 1870. She was an active advocate for the rights of the child. After becoming Italy's first woman doctor, her interests turned to the education of children, and she began her lifelong pursuit of studying child development. In her medical practice, her clinical observations led her to analyze how children learn, and she concluded that they build themselves from what they find in their environment. Her desire to help children was so strong that in 1906 she gave up both her university chair and her medical practice to work with a group of sixty young children of working parents in the San Lorenzo district of Rome. It was there that she founded the first Casa dei Bambini, or "Children's House".

What ultimately became the Montessori method of education developed there, based upon Montessori's scientific observations of these children's almost effortless ability to absorb knowledge from their surroundings, as well as their tireless interest in manipulating materials. Every piece of equipment, every exercise, every method Montessori developed was based on what she observed children to do "naturally", by themselves, unassisted by adults.

Dr. Montessori was nominated three times for the Nobel Peace Prize for her contributions to education and advocacy of the rights of the child. Dr. Montessori believed that a truly educated individual continues learning long after the years spent in the classroom because of inner motivation, a natural curiosity, and a love of learning. The aim of the Montessori philosophy is to provide a learning environment that enhances the development of intellectually reflective individuals who are caring and ethical members of the community.

Dr. Maria Montessori died in Noordwijk, Holland, in 1952, but her work lives on through the Association Montessori Internationale, the organization she founded in Amsterdam, Netherlands, in 1929 to carry on her work.

Montessori Education Program Philosophy

Maria Montessori's philosophy of education, with all its vitality and vision, is the foundation of the District 36 Montessori Choice Program, founded in 1981. Maria Montessori viewed education as a process involving the whole child, respecting their uniqueness and ability to shape their own future.

It is the task of the teacher to create an environment which is most favourable to the enhancement of concentration, and to provide the child with the means with which to educate themselves. Any unneeded help can be considered a hindrance to the student's learning. This requires that the teacher get to know each child and assist them at their own rate of progress. For this reason, children usually spend three years with the same teacher although both class size numbers and grade groupings can look different as we work within the public school system.

The Montessori materials in the classroom enable the child to take advantage of sensitive periods for the acquisition of skills and knowledge. Classroom materials stimulate the child's reasoning and imagination, prompting them to connect the concrete, sensory world to the realm of the abstract. Once the child has mastered a particular task, they are guided to a new area of learning to explore in further depth through independent study. This new learning follows the interests of the child and activities are based through their wonders.

The curriculum has an integrated approach, with the child learning first about the unity of the universe and then focusing on its constituent parts. Teachers follow Maria Montessori's guidance to, "follow the child" in curriculum design and implementation. We are a hybrid of Montessori and public education and ensure the requirements of B.C. curriculum are reached.

Although freedom and independence are cultivated, the child learns that their liberty is bounded by respect for others and responsibility towards their environment. The child's integration in a multi-age group fosters an interdependent disposition which leads to the goal of becoming peaceful people.

The Montessori program places an emphasis on respecting and caring for the environment. A global viewpoint is encouraged, and Montessori teachings support an appreciation of diversity and interdependence of people and the natural world.

Parents are expected to familiarize themselves with the Montessori philosophy and play an active role in their children's schooling. Once again, a unified approach is stressed, as the child's home and his classroom are seen as part of the Montessori community.

"The child is not an empty being who owes whatever he knows to us who have filled him up with it. No, the child is the builder of man. There is no man existing who has not been formed by the child he once was."

Maria Montessori

Program Description

Classes are arranged according to the psychological characteristics of the elementary-age child. Dr. Montessori observed how younger children learn from older children or those at a more advanced stage of knowledge in any subject. At the same time, older children confirm their own newly acquired knowledge by explaining it to their juniors, as well as understanding the social qualities of leadership and respect for the growing abilities of those coming along behind them.

In the elementary learning years each child continues to learn at their own rate according to their abilities and interests in combination with the specific learning outcomes set out in the BC Provincial Curriculum. The teacher's task is to observe this process and guide the children as individuals, while at the same time encouraging a deeply felt appreciation of both group relationship and social spirit.

The following are some characteristics of the Montessori Elementary Program:

- There is a multi-age group in each class. Wherever possible, children stay with one teacher for three years. At Mountainview, students spend Kindergarten with only their peers, grade 1-3 together, 4-5 together (sometimes 4-6), and 6-7 together (sometimes just 7).
- The assumption is that children are self-motivated to learn. Whenever possible, the program is individualized. The child progresses at their own rate.
- There is the use of self-correcting concrete materials which are devised to be used in a sequence matched to the child's sensitive periods beginning at an early age. Materials are limited so that the children learn to share and help one another.
- Children have a variety of work areas to choose from. Some may work at tables or desks, while others may choose mats or carpet on the floor. Students have opportunities to talk, help others, work in groups or with a partner – within the boundaries of respect and responsibility.
- There are large unbroken time spans for work, with a minimum of interruptions that disturb the child's concentration.
- The ungraded curriculum is designed to develop in the child a cosmic or global view of humankind, stressing the interdependence of humans and the care of the environment.
- There is an emphasis on the moral development of the child as a contributing member of the world society.
- The use of technology is encouraged and integrated into the curriculum.

“In order to educate, it is essential to know those who are to be educated.”

Maria Montessori, A Pedagogical Anthropology

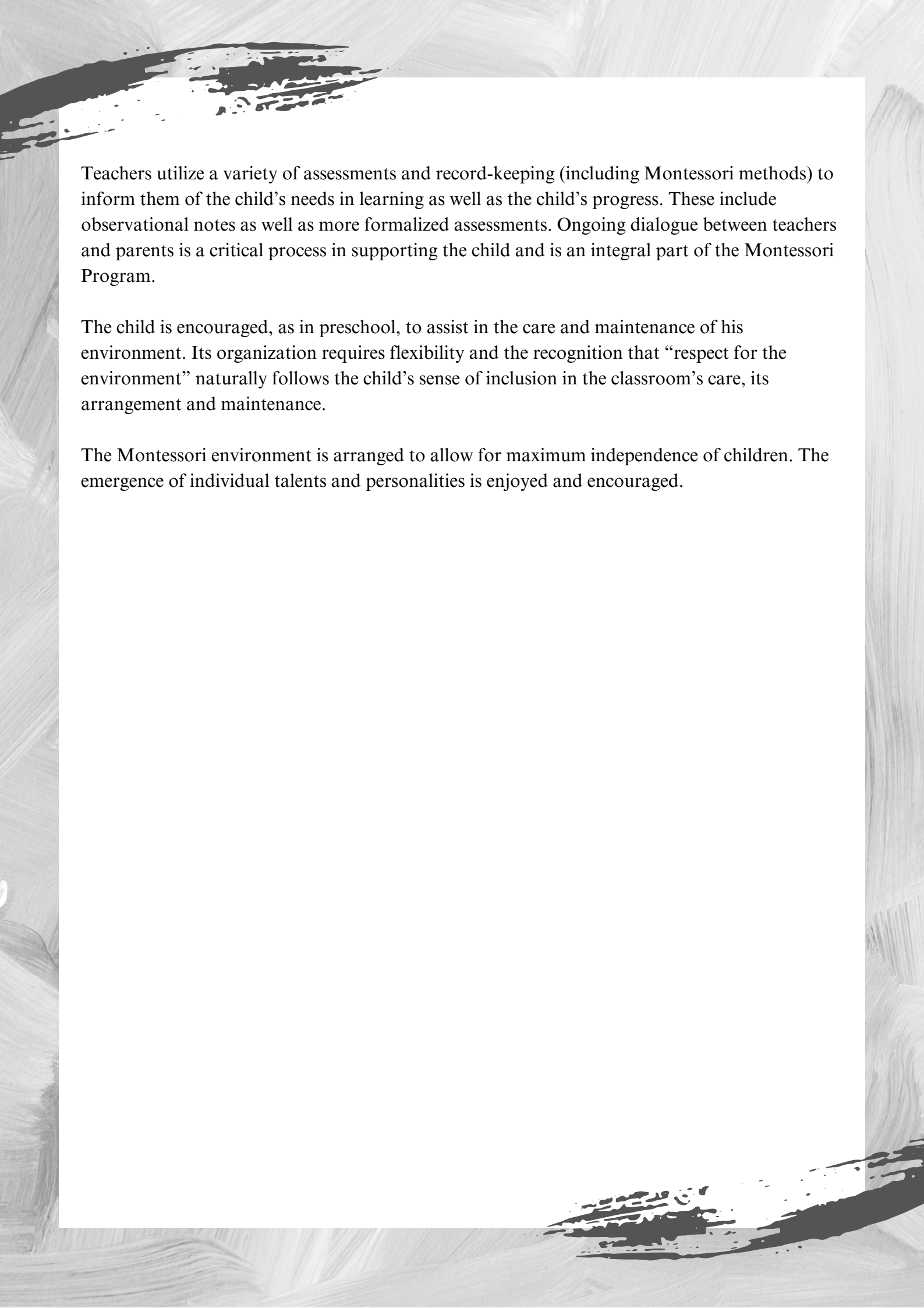
Instructional Style, Methods, and Use of Materials: The Prepared Environment

A Montessori classroom and curriculum requires thoroughly trained teachers. The teacher prepares a learning environment – classroom, materials, social setting, and atmosphere – that supports children and encourages concentration, self-motivation, problem solving, and experiential learning. With the guidance of a trained adult, there is much opportunity for purposeful work, both alone and with peers. Together, the teacher and child form a relationship based on trust and respect that fosters self-confidence and a willingness to try new things. The prepared environment allows children to take responsibility for their own education, giving them the opportunity to become human beings able to function independently and interdependently.

The classroom is rich in materials specially developed from Dr. Montessori's philosophical and practical observations of the child at work. These materials are purchased from specialized suppliers as well as made by hand by teachers and parents. The range and sequential nature of these materials permit each child to progress at their own level. The materials lead the children from the concrete to the abstract. Eventually, the child will discard the use of concrete learning apparatus when the process of mental abstraction becomes faster for them than the use of concrete materials.

Lessons are presented to the large group, small groups or individuals, depending on the subject matter and degree of skill required in their understanding and mastery. Large groups are used to make general introductions to a subject. They help awaken the child's interest and strike their imaginations. Small groups give an opportunity for the presentation of more detail, for excursions into the outside world and for sharing exact techniques in experiments, arts, and research projects. Individual presentations are made by the teacher when a child chooses some work which requires some mastery of a particular aspect before they can proceed to a higher level of work.

Provincial requirements of curriculum are met and parents are provided with student learning progress reports three times a year, or for some teachers, a digital portfolio assessing student growth throughout the year with a written summative report at year end. Additionally, the Montessori curriculum includes studies in practical life and cultural/global studies. Learning of the curriculum often involves explorations outside of the classroom, utilizing all resources available on the school site as well as in the community. This inclusive approach fosters a feeling of connectedness to all humanity and encourages the desire to make positive contributions to the world.



Teachers utilize a variety of assessments and record-keeping (including Montessori methods) to inform them of the child's needs in learning as well as the child's progress. These include observational notes as well as more formalized assessments. Ongoing dialogue between teachers and parents is a critical process in supporting the child and is an integral part of the Montessori Program.

The child is encouraged, as in preschool, to assist in the care and maintenance of his environment. Its organization requires flexibility and the recognition that "respect for the environment" naturally follows the child's sense of inclusion in the classroom's care, its arrangement and maintenance.

The Montessori environment is arranged to allow for maximum independence of children. The emergence of individual talents and personalities is enjoyed and encouraged.

Practical Life Skills

When students work with practical life activities, they are learning to work independently in the classroom and to develop concentration skills that are needed for future success in more academic work. Through these activities, the children learn independence, competence, problem solving and care for themselves and their environment. What can you do to prepare your child for school and independence?

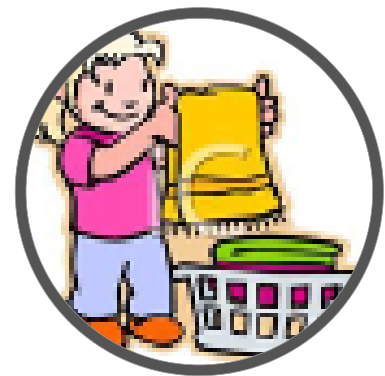
Encourage your child to do things for him/herself, from pouring water, juice or milk, to cutting up their own food. Provide opportunities for your child to assist with household chores... table setting, sweeping, tidying their own toys, dusting and washing. Provide child size brooms and tools to help in their “work”.

Ensure that your child is independent with dressing, including shoes and with toileting – including a public washroom.

When spills or mistakes happen, don't rush in and ‘fix’ things for your child. They should be a part of the process of fixing. Help them to problem solve how to fix the situation and help them to get the materials needed to clean.

Encourage and expect your child to share in caring for their materials, including carrying their own bags and backpacks, putting their toys away in the proper place, making their own beds, hanging up their clothes. Do not expect perfection but do expect attempts to learn and to improve with practice. Provide opportunities for your child to be of service to others in their own way... helping with small tasks gives them a sense of accomplishment and a willingness to try new things.

And most of all, **BE PATIENT**. Allowing your child to do things for him/herself takes time – give them the gift of time and wait for them to be successful.



“The essence of independence is to be able to do something for one’s self”

Dr. Maria Montessori

Parent Involvement

Parents are children's first and most important teachers. The golden triangle of child, teacher and parent working in partnership will help the child to flourish. As a part of the Montessori community, there is an expectation of significant parent involvement. There are a variety of ways in which parents are expected to help at school:

- Assisting on fieldtrips
- Assisting as a classroom helper
- Assisting as a class parent representative
- Having membership in the PAC and assisting with extracurricular fundraising activities
- Having membership in the Surrey Montessori Society
<https://www.surreymontessorisociety.org/>
- With material making
- Helping with home assignments and projects

We encourage parents to research the Montessori philosophy and teaching methods. There is a lot of information available about Montessori on the internet and there are many books available at the public library.

Field Studies

Fieldtrips, neighbourhood walks, nature studies and outdoor education are an important part of Montessori education at Mountainview Montessori. Students in the intermediate grades attend camp most years. This is an important outdoor learning experience for our students.

Registration Information

We are a public Montessori school with the Surrey School District. We teach Kindergarten through Grade 7. At the present time our school is FULL and we are accepting names for our waitlist only.

Kindergarten Registration

The Superintendent's department selects the dates for the Kindergarten registration. Beginning late-December this date is published on the school district website, www.surreyschools.ca, and in the local newspapers. Parents should read this information carefully because it will include information regarding the dates for Kindergarten catchment registration and the registration process for Choice programs.

Kindergarten registration (siblings) During the month of December all kindergartens registering for the following school year, that have a sibling currently attending and that will continue to attend Mountainview Montessori in September, are accepted. These numbers are forwarded to the district. Siblings must be registered before the regular registration starts. If they are not registered before this date, the sibling will have to register with the non-siblings.

Kindergarten registration (no sibling attends) New Kindergarten students that do not have a sibling attending a Choice program must register at their regular catchment school within the dates set by the Superintendent's department. Applicants will then obtain a spot or be placed on a waitlist. There is no guarantee that a sibling will gain a seat for September during this process

Waitlist Information

Kindergarten Waitlist

To add a kindergarten student to the waitlist after registration, parents contact the school directly to have their child's name added to the waitlist for September. The school will contact the applicant when a spot comes available. If a space becomes available, we will call the first name on the waitlist. Parents have 24 hours to decide whether they want to accept the spot or not. If we are unable to contact the parent (we will try 3 times to make contact) or if the parent indicates they are no longer interested, we move to the second name on the list and so on. If you do not hear from the school by January and you would like to be placed on the waitlist for grade 1 you must notify the school by the end of February. This can be done by telephone or email. You will then be placed on the waitlist for the following year and maintain your place on the waitlist. If you do not contact the school, your name will be removed from the waitlist.

Grades 1-7 Waitlist

Waitlists are compiled for grade 1 through 7 students starting in March (after Spring Break) for the following school year. Students of siblings that are currently attending Mountainview Montessori, and will continue to attend in September, are accepted first. Once the sibling list has been exhausted, we move to the waitlists. When a spot comes available, we call the first name on the waitlist. Parents have 24 hours to decide whether they want to accept the spot or not. If we are unable to contact the parent (we will try 3 times to make contact) or if the parent indicates they are no longer interested, we move to the second name on the list and so on. If you do not hear from the school by January and you would like to be placed on the waitlist. To add your child's name to the waitlist, please call the school during regular school hours from September through June from 9:00am – 3:00pm or email at mountainview@surreyschools.ca. Waitlists are closed January and February, no names will be added during these months. During these two months we only accept notification from parents/guardians currently on the waitlist to move their student forward to next year's waitlist.

Q&A

How long will it be before my child will be accepted?

Unfortunately, we are not able to answer this question. We have no idea when families are going to move, creating available spots for new students. Parents can be assured, however, that available spots will be offered first to siblings of current students and then to the first person on the waitlist.

What number am I on the waitlist?

Your number on the waitlist may change as siblings are added to the waitlist.

Why can't all my children start at the same time?

It is very important that parents understand that we may not have room for all of the children in the family **to begin attending at the same time. For example, a student moves out of the Grade 1 class. Your family has three children: a grade 1 student, a grade 3 student and a grade 5 student. In this case we would be able to offer a spot to the grade 1 child, however, the grade 3 and 5 students would have to continue attending their regular school until spots open for their siblings.**

Is there a school bus?

No. Transportation is an important consideration for parents when considering attending our school. Parents are responsible for transporting their child(ren) to and from school each day. We have found that although some parents are enthusiastic about the Montessori program and are anxious to get their child into the school, when they experience the daily drive to drop off and pick up their child, we sometimes see challenges with punctuality and an increase in absences. It is very important that students have consistent attendance and are on time so they do not miss important morning activities and instructions.

Where can I find out more about the Montessori Program?

We encourage parents to research the Montessori philosophy and teaching methods. There is a lot of information available about Montessori on the internet and there are many books available at the public library.

Where is the Montessori Program offered?

Mountainview Montessori Elementary (single track Montessori K-7)

15225 – 98 Ave, Surrey BC Tel: 604-589-1193 <https://www.surreyschools.ca/mountainview>

Douglas Elementary (dual track; regular catchment and Montessori program)

19233 60 Ave, Surrey BC Tel: 604-576-9184 <https://www.surreyschools.ca/douglas>

For more information: <https://www.surreyschools.ca/page/820/programs-of-choice>