



SOPHIA MONTESSORI ACADEMY

Key School Policies

Age and Potty Training

Children should be 3 years old by the first day of school and potty trained to be enrolled in the 2024-2025 school year. Exceptions may be possible in certain cases. 2.5 year olds may be enrolled if they are potty trained and show signs of readiness. A school visit and meeting with the guide is required prior to enrollment.

Three-Year-Cycle

Montessori classrooms are organized following children's planes of development as outlined by Maria Montessori. The first year is a foundational year, the second year is a year of exploration, and the third year allows for mastery and becoming a leader and teacher to younger peers.

To receive the most out of their time at Sophia Montessori, it is important for children to experience the full three-year cycle. The third year (ages 5-6) is critical in allowing children to master their academics and take on the role of teacher within the classroom. We strongly encourage all families to plan to enroll for all three years.

Part-Week Primary

SMA is happy to offer part week options to students in our Primary program (Monday-Tuesday or Wednesday-Friday). Our part week options are organized as consecutive days in order to best meet children's need for consistency and routine.

SMA teachers do their best to repeat lessons for part week students but when a family enrolls part week, **it is understood that their child may miss some lessons, events, activities, experiences, and celebrations.**

Part week children are invited to join SMA for field trips, special events, and Divine Liturgy when it falls on a day other than their scheduled day as long as they are accompanied by a parent for the entire duration and as long as they offer notice to SMA staff.

Kindergarten and Elementary

For children to receive the fullness of what Montessori education can offer, it is strongly encouraged for children ages kindergarten and up to be enrolled full week-full day or to supplement their learning at home in collaboration with their guides.

It is preferred for elementary students to have Montessori experience prior to enrollment.

Parent Events

Here at SMA, we strongly believe that parents are the primary educators of their children. Our role is to support, guide, and partner with parents in guiding their children to their full potential. To accomplish this, we work hard to create a strong relationship and partnership between the home and the school.

One of the ways we strive to do this is by offering parent events throughout the school year.

We offer two events that all families are expected to attend:

Orientation Day is the Friday before the first day of school. It is a time for the children to get situated and receive preliminary lessons from their guides. During that time, parents will meet with the administration team to discuss what it means to be a part of SMA, our school handbook, policies and procedures. This is an important time to prepare for a successful school year as a community as well as a time to meet other parents and welcome new families.

Montessori Info Night is a time to discuss what Montessori education is, what you can expect your child to do at school, and how best to support your child at home. We will discuss children's unique needs based on which year of the three-year-cycle they are in, answer questions, and offer an opportunity for parents to try their hand at the Montessori materials. This is also a great time for returning families to share their experience and wisdom with new families.

It is also expected for all families to attend our Fall and Spring parent teacher conferences.

Throughout the year, we will also offer a variety of opportunities for families to get to know each other and grow in their role as primary educators. These events include our beginning and end of year potlucks, our annual school gala, Montessori meet ups, playdates, and others.

Volunteering

Volunteering at SMA is a beautiful way both to model an attitude of Christian charity and to build community. It reduces operating costs of the school, which in turn impacts tuition fees. Throughout the year there will be many opportunities to volunteer in the classroom and for a variety of events.

We ask each family to plan to volunteer a minimum of 10 hours per school year or if they are unable to volunteer their time to pay a \$250 fee. Parents are asked to keep a log of their hours, which will be turned in no later than May 15th. A form will be sent over the summer. Any family who is not able to complete the full 10 hours, will be asked to cover a fee of \$25 per incomplete hour.

Your volunteering is a huge support to our staff and school. Thank you!

Application Policies

Submitting an application for enrollment does not guarantee your child's admittance to Sophia Montessori Academy.

A tour of the school is required before children may be placed on the waitlist.

Once an application is turned in and a tour has been completed, your child will be placed on the waitlist. Being on the waitlist does not guarantee your child's admittance to Sophia Montessori Academy.

Application Fee:

1. Fee is non-refundable, and due at the time of application
2. One fee per family
3. The summer camp application fee is a separate fee

Other fees may apply throughout the school year (supplies, field trip, etc...)

Admission is based on space availability. Children of Holy Protection of the Mother of God parish and siblings of current students have priority for enrollment. Additional openings will be filled by families on the waitlist.

Frequently Asked Questions

Enrollment

- Can my child be placed on more than one waitlist?
 - Yes! You may place your child on the list for any option that would work well for you at no additional cost.
- How soon will we hear from you if we are on the waitlist?
 - In February of each year, we will contact waitlist families with open spots for the following school year. If your child is on the waitlist, you will be contacted according to the order of enrollment as soon as a spot becomes available in your preferred schedule. If a space becomes available and a date for enrollment is agreed upon, a completed enrollment packet, current health status and immunization records, and fees must be received by SMA before the child can start.

Religion

- Can my child attend SMA if we are not Catholic or Byzantine Catholic?
 - Yes, we welcome families of all faiths and from all walks of life. As a school in the Byzantine Catholic tradition, sung or chanted prayer is a big part of our daily life. We begin and end the day with prayer and attend Liturgy regularly. We use Catechesis of the Good Shepherd to teach about the Catholic Faith and life of Christ, and weekly emails keep parents informed about what their children learn throughout the week.
- What is the difference between the Roman and the Byzantine rites?
 - The Byzantine rite is one of the six rites that make up the Catholic Church. While doctrine and dogma remain emphatically the same and each rite recognizes the primacy of the Pope, the emphasis and expression look a little different. We invite you to visit our parish, [Holy Protection of the Mother of God](#), to learn more.
- Do you attend Mass/Divine Liturgy?
 - Yes, we typically attend Divine Liturgy (Byzantine Catholic Mass) at St. Francis de Sales twice a month with our Chaplain, Fr. Joel Barstad. During the Great Fast, Divine Liturgy is traditionally not said during the week so we attend a prayer service instead.

Schedule Options

- What schedule options do you offer?
 - SMA offers a Full Week, Part Day or Full day option, to Primary and Elementary students. Part week options are available to Primary students only. These include Monday-Tuesday, Wednesday-Friday and Monday-Friday schedules. School days are consecutive in order to provide consistency for the child. Each day begins with drop off between 8:00 and 8:15am. Half Day pick up is at 12:45pm and Full Day pick up is at 3:00pm.

Fundraising and Tuition Support

- What types of fundraising and tuition support do you offer?
 - Annual Gala: this event raises funds for a variety of needs for the school in addition to tuition support for families
 - All proceeds from [fundraisers](#) such as King Soopers, Safeway, Dine to Donate, and others go into the SMA tuition support fund

- We offer a discount to siblings and Holy Protection parishioners
- Tuition assistance is available to families in need. Once a family has been enrolled, they are eligible to apply for assistance through FACTS. More information will be provided upon enrollment.
- ACE scholarships are available for students kindergarten age and up.

Credentials

Sophia Montessori Academy is recognized as an independent Catholic School in the Archdiocese of Denver by Archbishop Aquila.

What Montessori credentials do your teachers/guides have?

- Our lead guides are Montessori trained through MACTE accredited programs
- Our assistant guides receive intensive Montessori orientation and are supported in their learning.
- All staff study, research, read, and discuss Maria Montessori's methodology and educational approach and research. All staff attend a minimum of 15 hours of professional development each year.

Is SMA accredited by a Montessori institution?

- SMA is validated as a Montessori school by the [Colorado Montessori Association](#).
- At this time, SMA is not formally accredited by a Montessori institution.

Security

- What does your security look like?
 - SMA staff is responsible for the safety and security of every child in our care. In order to keep the environment secure, the front door is locked at all times. A staff member is always present at the front desk during drop off and pick up times. All visitors are required to sign in at the front desk. In addition, our front door and playground are monitored by security cameras.
- All staff attend a safety training each year and complete yearly CPR, First Aid, Universal Precaution, concussion trainings. All staff are mandated reporters and complete a yearly training.
- A 1:10 ratio is kept at all times and adults are never alone one on one with a child without another adult nearby or without surveillance from security cameras.

Immunization Requirements

- Are immunizations required for my child to attend SMA?
 - SMA follows the Colorado State requirements for immunizations. Parents are required to provide a signed immunization card to SMA prior to their children starting at school. We are also required to have a current health form signed by a physician.

Uniforms

- Do you have uniforms at SMA?
 - Yes! Uniforms are required for the children who attend SMA. Our uniforms are purchased through **Educational Outfitters**. We will give you details for uniforms in your enrollment packet.

Extra Care

- Do you offer extra care?
 - Currently we are not offering Before Care. After Care (3:00-4:30) involves recess time, play and work time, crafts and projects, and story time.

Snack and Lunch

- How do you do snack and lunch?
 - Parents provide snacks and lunches for their children. SMA provides the lunch boxes and snack bags so that the items can fit into the child's snack drawer and our refrigerator. Our snack period does not have a set time. Children are welcome to have a snack when they are ready to, or as a place is available at the snack table throughout the morning. This procedure allows the children to choose when to have a snack and learn the procedure independently.
 - We are a nut free facility.

Resources

- Do you recommend any books to learn more about Montessori?
 - Yes! Some of our favorites include:
 - *Maria Montessori: Her Life and Works* by E.M. Standing
 - *Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius* by Angeline Stoll Lillard
 - *Positive Discipline in the Montessori Classroom* by Jane Nelsen and Chip DeLorenzo
 - *The Montessori Method* by Maria Montessori
- Sign up for our Newsletter for the latest updates
- Join our Patreon to receive various perks such as swag and one-on-one consultations- <https://www.patreon.com/SophiaMontessoriAcademy>
- Follow us on Social Media
 - LinkTree- <https://linktr.ee/sophiama>
 - Instagram- <https://www.instagram.com/sophiamontessori>
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