



Position Statement on Age at Admission

Because the development of a child is unique to that child, we believe that developmental characteristics such as cognitive, social, emotional and physical traits are a better predictor of a child's success in the Montessori environment than chronological age alone. Therefore we consider *ranges of ages* more appropriate. The ultimate goal is to best serve every individual child. The following guidelines are just that, general considerations that guide our decisions, not set-in-stone policies. Many other components come into play: child's temperament, maturity of the child, psychological and physical development, as well as parenting style and family dynamics. Human development does not follow a linear, regular progression. Therefore, we strive to follow every child and accommodate each individual based on our assessment of where that child is at that particular time.

Toddler House:

- When considering a child for TH we will be considering the child's ability to walk erect, to navigate a group of 11 other children, to separate from parents or care giver and to attach to the adults in our environment. Typically developing children between the ages of 14 and 24 months are in the ideal range to start in Toddler House.
- When a child reaches a stage where she would benefit from more advanced cognitive and social stimulations and would be able to feel comfortable in a larger group of 23-25 children, then we consider that child ready to transition to the Children's House environment. However, depending on the availability of spaces in our Children's House classes, we may not be in a position to transition a toddler to CH mid-year.
- It is our preferred practice to place children **around** the age of 3 years (32 months and above) in a Children's House class as that child would quickly outgrow the TH environment. However, entering CH under the age of three *possibly* means that the child will remain 4 years in CH before being considered for Lower Elementary.

Children's House:

- The ideal age to start in a CH environment is **around** the age of 3 years. We consider children younger than 3 years old as these children would quickly outgrow a Toddler House environment. In this instance, there is a strong possibility that the child will remain in CH for 4 years in order to be ready for Lower Elementary.
- For most children, this is a three year program.
- For some children, depending on the rate of development, acquisition of reading, writing and math skills, depending on social and emotional development, it might be necessary to stay for a fourth year in CH. This allows for a deeper consolidation of cognitive as well as social-emotional skills which will benefit the child at the elementary level. Again, the age is only one factor;

parenting style and child's temperament are also pieces of the puzzle. Our goal is to see a child successful in the classroom environment. Allowing a child to solidify skills and knowledge in a less pressured environment is a gift whose benefits will be life-long.

- Applicants to Children's House will be asked to meet with one of our teachers for a short visit in the classroom environment outside of school hours. Parents will be encouraged to separate from their child. A child older than three or four years old at the time of the interview will be asked to come spend a longer time while the classroom is in session. Prior to the interview, parents are asked to come and observe the classroom in session and to meet with the administrative staff responsible for admissions.

Lower Elementary:

- It is recommended to start Lower Elementary between the age of 6 and 7 years. It is beneficial when a child turns 7 during the first year of Lower Elementary. This child develops a level of maturity that is needed to be truly successful and to have a positive experience in LE.
- A child's overall maturity, work ethic, self-motivation and self-direction, ability to work in groups, ability to concentrate and take risks, ability to work and concentrate for longer periods of time are all elements to consider when looking at a child's readiness for Lower Elementary.
- This is a three-year program for most students. Other students benefit from a fourth year in LE depending on their overall maturity or/and rate of cognitive development.
- It is preferable to enter Lower Elementary with prior Montessori experience. Ideally a child should have completed a full cycle in the Children's House environment. However, depending on the child's personality, learning style and social-emotional maturity, Lower Elementary might be a good match. This is considered an exception rather than the rule.
- An applicant coming from a different school than FCM will be asked to come spend a day in the classroom after parents have a chance to observe the classroom in session and after having a dialogue with the classroom teacher to give background information on the student.

Upper Elementary:

- Upper Elementary is best suited for children 9 years and older with previous Montessori experience.
- A child's overall maturity, work ethic, self-motivation and self-direction, ability to work in groups, ability to concentrate and take risks, ability to work and concentrate for longer periods of time, are all elements to consider when looking at a child's readiness for Upper Elementary.
- An applicant coming from a different school than FCM will be asked to come spend a day in the classroom after parents have a chance to observe the classroom in session and after having a dialogue with the classroom teacher to give background information on the student.