



Dear Families,

Thank you for your interest in our school! Philly Montessori is designed for children aged 18 months to 6 years old. Inspired by the very first Montessori school, *Il Casa Dei Bambini* (*The Children's House*), our **beautiful** and **inviting** schoolhouse provides a secure and inspiring **home-away-from-home** for the children and families we serve. We are very proud of our Authentic Montessori school that offers the only Spanish-bilingual Montessori program in Philadelphia, in an intimate and intentionally designed environment, led by experienced, dedicated, and certified Montessori teachers.

Our school is intentionally designed as a **Teacher-led school**. This means that teachers serve as school administrators, which allows them to more nimbly and aptly make programmatic decisions that respond to each unique group of students they serve. By cutting out the traditional role of administrators in communication, teachers and parents have daily direct communication, enabling strong and trusting relationships and **meaningful teacher-parent partnerships**, and allowing them to give personalized attention to each family. Throughout the year, parents are welcomed into the classroom, to observe, participate, or even share their own culture, passions, or hobbies in the classroom.

All students at Philly Montessori have access to our **fully equipped Montessori classrooms**. Our East Campus has its own **playground complete with nature-based play equipment and an urban garden**, and is expanding to include an indoor gym. Our West Campus has **an indoor gym and a patio which also includes an urban garden**. A day in the classroom is well-rounded with daily group meetings, storytime, enrichment classes, and gross motor play. Enclosed in this informational packet you will find a description of our **mission statement, our daily schedule, our programs, and our tuition schedule**.

Should you have any remaining questions about our school or our programs, you can email me directly at terri@phillymontessori.com. Thank you again for your interest in our school, and we look forward to connecting with you soon!

Warmly,

Terri Hennessy, M.Ed.

Director and Lead Teacher



Philly Montessori at a Glance

Philly Montessori West Campus (PMW) was founded in 2018 when Sheila was searching for a program for her daughter, Emma. As the daughter of two Montessori educators and a Montessori educator herself, Sheila wanted a quality program for Emma that reflected her values. Unable to find a bilingual Spanish/English Montessori program in an intimate, inviting, and inspiring setting with an inclusive, teacher-led culture, Sheila set about creating Philly Montessori. PMW was Sheila's initial dream realized, and Philly Montessori East (PME), which opened in February 2025, is a testament to how our dreams can grow!

Mission

Philly Montessori nurtures each child's individual curiosity, intrinsic motivation, and love of learning. Our authentic Montessori schools are teacher-directed, with a bilingual English/Spanish program and an inclusive curriculum. Our city school takes advantage of the community around us, focusing on community collaboration and connecting to nature in our neighborhood, on the playground, and by bringing nature into the classroom.

Campus

Our school is spread across two campuses in Queen Village. PMW opened in 2018 and has two classrooms, an indoor gym, and an outdoor patio. PME opened in February 2025 with two classrooms and a playground, and will expand to a total of five classrooms with an indoor gym in addition to the outdoor playground by September 2026. Both campuses are intentionally designed for our students.

Programs & Facilities

- Our program supports children from toddlerhood through kindergarten enrolling children from 18 months to 6 years old.
- All our lead teachers are certified Montessori educators.
- Each classroom has at least one Spanish-speaking teacher.
- Aftercare is available until 6:00 pm when children are enrolled in the Extended Day program.
- All classrooms have music class with a teacher from Mister John's Music each week.
- Art, Spanish, Dance, Sensory-Motor Storytime, and Soccer Shots are offered as optional enrichment classes throughout the year.
- Our students benefit from the rich culture in South Philly, and we have developed relationships with the Magic Gardens, Charles Santore Library, Mister John's Music, Fitz on 4th, and other local businesses.
- Eight weeks of optional summer programming are offered for families who need summer care.
- Our campuses are peanut and tree-nut free.

Accreditations & Affiliations

[American Montessori Society](#) Verified School

[Licensed Commercial Childcare Center by the Department of Human Resources](#)

Diversity Statement

Philly Montessori admits students of any race, religion, disability, ethnic, and national origin, gender identity, or sexual orientation to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded and made available to students at the school. Philly Montessori does not discriminate based on race, religious affiliation, disability, ethnic and national origin, gender identity, or sexual orientation.



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Philly Montessori is to bring out each child's **natural curiosity**, **joy for learning**, and **independence** by adhering to these 5 guiding principles:

Authentic Montessori Classroom



Montessori environments nurture each child's natural curiosity, self-motivation, and love of learning. Through hands-on and individualized learning, Montessori classrooms not only lay solid foundations for academic readiness, but also emphasize emotional intelligence, leading to highly perceptive, empathetic, and collaborative learners. Philly Montessori is accredited by the American Montessori Society (AMS).

As an accredited program, Philly Montessori has specially trained Montessori-certified teachers, self-correcting materials, an uninterrupted work cycle, mixed-age classrooms, and a carefully designed environment.

Teacher-led School



As a teacher-led school, teachers serve as school administrators, which allows them to more nimbly and aptly make programmatic decisions that respond to each unique group of students they serve. By cutting out the traditional role of administrators, teachers and parents have daily direct communication, leading to strong and trusting relationships. Throughout the year, parents are welcomed into the classroom, to observe, participate, or even share their culture, passions, or hobbies with our school community.

Bilingual Spanish-English



Philly Montessori classrooms are bilingual classrooms; wherein, we use the one caregiver, one language approach. Following this approach, we have at least one Spanish-speaking teacher and one English-speaking teacher in the classroom. The one-caregiver, one-language approach allows both Spanish and English-speaking children to adjust to the classroom environment and learn the new language at their own pace. This approach further allows Spanish-speaking children to ease into an English-speaking environment without hindering any aspects of their learning. And not only is it easier to learn a second language at a young age, but it enhances a child's brain development and problem-solving skills.

Connection to Nature



A sense of caring and responsibility for the world around us begins at the very youngest age, as children notice even the most subtle details of their environment. Philly Montessori aims to be a low-waste school, and models care for the environment wherever possible — including engaging in our gardening and composting efforts. Philly Montessori teachers foster each child's natural sense of wonder by bringing nature into the classroom for children to work with, observe, and research. We believe that when a child has a positive connection to the natural world, they will grow up caring for and protecting the Earth.

Philly Montessori children spend time outside daily. By taking time to explore our environment, we hope to cultivate a deep-rooted love for the world around us.

Community Collaboration



We believe that community-based businesses are essential to our city. Being a locally owned and operated program, we strive to build a natural bridge between our classroom and community. We see ourselves as a natural gathering place — a contributing member of the “village” that it takes to raise a child. Throughout the year, we invite parents and caregivers into our classroom to join us in our daily activities or to share their culture, talents, or interests with the children. We bring Philly into our school, introducing our children to local artists, musicians, chefs, and skilled professionals who can share their knowledge and expertise. As the children get older, we also take the students into the community. The older they are, the more our students engage with the community, especially in their Kindergarten year.



PROGRAMS & SCHEDULE

TODDLER

The toddler classroom is designed for children aged 18 months to 3 years old. Maria Montessori referred to the period from birth to the age of 6 as “The Absorbent Mind”, drawing attention to the young child’s ability to learn large amounts of information at rapid rates. During this period, children behave like little scientists. They learn through experimenting with and manipulating the objects in their environment.

Philly Montessori’s Toddler classroom is thoughtfully designed with the Montessori principles of beauty, simplicity, and movement in mind. The furniture and shelves are designed to promote each child’s independence, and the classroom materials change throughout the year as the children change. The materials are designed to support the children’s developing areas of growth and build on their new interests, discoveries, and strengths. In this way, our classroom is not a static space, but rather a dynamic organism that meets the needs of each individual child within it. The classroom contains 5 major curricular areas: sensory, cognitive, language, social, and cultural studies. As is the Philly Montessori way, art, sensory play, and music are integrated into all these major learning areas. Following the Montessori spiral of learning, absorbing new information is never limited. Instead, children are encouraged to explore and to learn through interacting with their teachers, peers, and the environment.

Building toward toileting independence is an integral piece of the toddler curriculum, as such, small child-sized toilets, regular visits to the bathroom, and lessons on how to care for oneself are all incorporated into the Toddler routine.



TODDLER DAILY SCHEDULE*

We know that children are happiest when they follow predictable routines every day. This is a sample of the daily routine followed by our toddler classrooms:

Morning	Full Day	Extended Day
8 - 10:00 am Morning work cycle and group snack	12:15 - 12:45 Lunch clean up, toileting, transition to quiet rest time	3:00 - 4:00 Afternoon work cycle
10 am Gross motor play	12:45 - 3:00 Rest time, transition to full day dismissal or afternoon work cycle	4:00 - 6:00 Group snack, story time, open work and play, and enrichment activities
11:15 Lunch _____ 12:15 Morning program dismissal	3:00 Full day dismissal	6:00* Extended day dismissal *Extended day families may pick up any time between 3 - 6 pm

*Please note minor adjustments to this schedule may be made as needed based on the teachers' observations and the needs of the children.



TODDLER PROGRAMS:

Morning Program (8 am-12:15 pm)

The morning program is an integral part of our school as it is the time of day when all members of the classroom are together. Arrival for the morning program begins at 8 am, and all children should be at school by 8:15 am, and no later than 8:30 am. During the arrival period children have time to ease into their day by greeting their friends and teachers, hanging up their belongings in their cubby, changing into their indoor shoes, and then beginning the work cycle. The “work cycle” is a term we use in Montessori that refers to the time of the day where children freely engage with their environment and all that it has to provide.

During the Toddler Morning program your child will enjoy a two-hour uninterrupted work and play period, snack, one hour of gross motor play, and lunch. At Philly Montessori, we implement a two-hour uninterrupted work period, because we understand that young children simply do not enjoy multiple transitions, or being interrupted from their work and play.

During the work period, your child might be engaged in a number of self-directed, or teacher-led activities such as: preparing a healthy snack to enjoy with a friend, receiving a lesson in a group or individually with a teacher, choosing from any number of hands-on learning activities in the classroom, circle time, storytime, gardening, helping another classmate with a difficult task, enjoying stories or songs during circle time, or simply engaging in some conversation with a friend in the cozy corner!

At Philly Montessori, we know children love to MOVE! All Toddler classrooms have a movement area and gross motor play also happens on the PME campus playground, local parks, or in our beautiful indoor gyms.

The morning program is further enriched with weekly music classes led by a teacher from Mister John's Music. *All Philly Montessori students are required to attend school 5 days a week.*

Dismissal from the morning program is at 12:15 pm.

Full Day Program (8 am-3:00 pm)

During the Full Day program, Toddler children are invited to take a peaceful nap in their classroom. During nap time teachers read children stories, play restful music, and help children relax and fall asleep. As children begin to wake, they are invited for toileting practice, and then begin to ready their classroom for the next day. Over time, the toddler children learn how to water the plants, wash the dishes, wipe tables, and clear the floor of debris. These practices help give children a sense of responsibility and fulfill their innate desire for beauty and order in their environment.

Dismissal from the Full Day program is at 3:00 pm.



Extended Day (8 am-6 pm)

Our Extended Day program is a fun and enriching program! Children in this program do art and cooking projects, participate in coordinated gross motor activities, and take part in sensory play. They also enjoy time on our playground or in our indoor gym, gardening in our garden, and working and playing with their classmates and teachers in the classroom.

Philly Montessori uniquely offers an **all-day Montessori** experience in that children are always under the care of a [Montessori-certified teacher](#).

Dismissal from the Extended Day program is anytime from 4:00 pm - 6 pm.



TODDLER TUITION For the 2026-2027 School Year

Tuition is based on care provided from **September 9, 2026, to June 11, 2027**.

	*10 payments of:	Two payments of:	One payment of:
Morning (8 am-12:15 pm)	\$1,689	\$8,200	\$16,400
Full Day (8 am-3:00 pm)	\$2,307	\$11,200	\$22,400
Extended Day (8 am-6 pm)	\$2,832	\$13,750	\$27,500

- *Ten and Five payment plans incur a 3% service charge fee, which is reflected in pricing above.
- Payments are due on the first of the month, and a \$1,000 tuition deposit secures your child's space in our program. This deposit is applied to the last month's tuition payment.
- Other program Fees include: \$100 school dues, \$200 yearly supply fee, \$600 yearly registration fee, and grocery contribution for classroom snacks. On average, the grocery contribution is about \$200/family.
- *Founding families, one \$600 registration fee will be applied to both January-June 2025 and the 25-26 school year.
- All payments can be made conveniently through a **secured online portal**.



Programs & Schedule

PRIMARY

The Primary classroom is designed for children ages 3 to 6 years old. This mixed-age setting allows for fluid, personalized learning that meets the needs of each individual child in our classroom. Learning in a Philly Montessori Primary classroom is dynamic and hands-on, allowing children to make their own discoveries and follow their own interests within a structured framework.

The classroom and curriculum can be divided into 8 major curricular areas: Art, Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Math, Cultural, and Peace. Within each area, children learn through interacting with carefully designed self-didactic materials. To learn more about each curricular area, and the Montessori approach, we encourage you to peruse our website: <http://www.phillymontessori.com/>.

A WELL-ROUNDED EXPERIENCE

The Philly Montessori curriculum is rounded out with daily group meetings, storytimes, and gross motor play. Art and music are embedded throughout the classroom and are further reinforced through weekly classes with Mister John's Music and our own art teachers. Our students have opportunities to participate in after-school enrichment activities such as Spanish, Art, Dance, Sensory-Motor Storytime, Yoga, or Soccer Shots. Enrichment offerings may change throughout the year.



PRIMARY DAILY SCHEDULE*

We know that children are happiest when they follow predictable routines every day. This is a sample of the daily routine followed by our classroom community:

Morning	Full Day	Extended Day
8 - 11:00 Morning Work Cycle	12:15 - 1:00 Lunch	3:00 - 4:00 Group snack, storytime, work cycle, and enrichment activities
11:00 Gross Motor Play	1:00 - 2:45 Afternoon Work Time/ Kindergarten Class & Naptime	4 - 6:00 Open work and play, gross motor time, makers table, and group projects.
12:15 Morning Program Dismissal	3:00 Full Day Dismissal	6:00* Extended day dismissal

* Please note minor adjustments to this schedule may be made as needed based on the teachers' observations and the needs of the children.

Snack is always available for free choice during the morning program.



PRIMARY PROGRAMS

Morning Program (8 am-12:15 pm)

The morning program is an integral part of our school as it is the time of day when all members of the classroom are together. Arrival for the morning program begins at 8 am, and all children should be at school by 8:15 am, and no later than 8:30 am. During the arrival period, children have time to ease into their day by greeting their friends and teachers, hanging up their belongings in their cubby, changing into their indoor shoes, and then beginning the work cycle.

*The “work cycle” is a term we use in Montessori that refers to the time of the day when children freely engage with their environment and all that it has to provide.

In the Philly Montessori Primary classrooms, we implement a three-hour uninterrupted work cycle, snack, and one hour of gross motor play. We implement a three-hour uninterrupted work cycle because we understand that young children do not enjoy multiple transitions, or being interrupted from their work and play.

During the work period, your child might be engaged in a number of self-directed, or teacher led activities such as: preparing a healthy snack to enjoy with a friend, receiving a lesson in a group or individually with a teacher, choosing from any number of hands-on learning activities in the classroom, circle time, storytime, gardening, creating a painting in the class garden, or simply engaging in some conversation with a friend in the cozy corner.

Following the work cycle, the children enjoy a full hour of gross motor play at a local playground, on our East campus playground, or in the campus’s indoor gym.

The morning program is further enriched with weekly music classes led by a teacher from Mister John’s Music. *All Philly Montessori students are required to attend school 5 days a week.*

Dismissal from the morning program is at 12:15 pm.

Full Day Program (8 am-3 pm)

Following the morning work cycle and gross motor play, our class will begin to set up our tables for lunch. This is a collaborative process that has many meaningful layers: wiping tables clean, reciting a poem of thanks, and engaging in conversations, stories, and laughs while eating together. After lunch, each child is responsible for washing their own dishes if needed, and cleaning up their lunch space by wiping the table and sweeping the floor.



After lunch, children who rest move to the nap room, and those who do not have a quiet reading period before engaging in a second work cycle.

The second work cycle is a quieter time of the day with fewer children. At this time children engage in individual activities or have more personalized time with their teachers.

During the second work cycle, our Kindergarten-aged children have Kindergarten class with in-depth studies, advanced lessons, research, field trips, and group activities.

Dismissal from the Full Day program is at 3:00 pm.

Extended Day (8 am-6 pm)

Our Extended Day program is a fun and enriching program. Children are offered the opportunity to sign up for a variety of extra-curricular activities such as Spanish, Art, Dance, Sensory-Motor Storytime, Yoga, or Soccer Shots, and other offerings that may change throughout the year. They may also play in our outdoor playground, our indoor gym, garden in our garden, or spend time working and playing with their classmates and teachers in the classroom.

Dismissal from the Extended Day program is anytime from 4:00 pm - 6 pm.



PRIMARY TUITION For the 2026-2027 School Year

Tuition is based on care provided from **September 9, 2026, to June 11, 2027**.

	*Ten payments of:	Two payments of:	One payment of:
Morning (8 am-12:15 pm)	\$1,678	\$8,150	\$16,300
Full Day (8 am-3 pm)	\$2,266	\$11,000	\$22,000
Extended Day (8 am-6 pm)	\$2,729	\$13,250	\$26,500

- *Ten and Five payment plans incur a 3% service charge fee, which is reflected in pricing above.
- Payments are due on the first of the month, and a \$1,000 tuition deposit secures your child's space in our program. This deposit is applied to the last month's tuition payment.
- Other program Fees include: \$100 school fees, \$200 yearly supply fee, \$600 yearly registration fee, and grocery contribution for classroom snacks. On average, the grocery contribution is about \$200/family..
- All payments can be made conveniently through a **secured online portal**.



PARENT TESTIMONIALS

“Our daughters have been at Philly Montessori since they were toddlers, our youngest starting at just 17 months old. They’re now 3 and 5 years old and we couldn’t be happier with our decision to enroll them at PM. The teachers at PM have guided them with love and experience to become socially intelligent, creative, and capable kids who can’t wait to go to school every day. The Toddler teachers made toilet training easy and low-pressure and taught our girls foundational social and emotional skills. The primary teachers have supported our kids’ unique interests and we feel more than ready to send our now kindergartner into first grade next year.

We feel so lucky to drop our kids off at PM every morning; the teachers keep close communication with the parents so we always know what they’re up to—math, science, practical life, art, language, and culture in a beautifully curated environment—and they treat the kids with respect, kindness, and patience. We also reap the benefits of the school’s lessons at home and marvel at our kids’ abilities to focus on a task, clean up after themselves, take responsibility for their actions, and work to repair disagreements—all skills fostered by their teachers’ deliberate efforts at PM. We’re so thankful that we chose PM so many years ago, and will be heartbroken when our kids graduate from the program, but we’ll know that they had the best possible foundation thanks to their time at PM.”

- Cait & Alex, parents to Violet (3) and Olive (5)

“When it was time to choose a first school for our first child the task felt extremely daunting. Being two full-time working parents, we wanted to make sure we chose a school that was nurturing, bright, filled with love; allowing children to be their quirky and unique selves. We knew very little about the Montessori pedagogy and felt like child-centered/self-directed learning for three-year-olds was something that only an adult with magical thinking could conjure up...until we went to visit Philly Montessori. Upon arrival, my husband and I marveled at the way the children were engrossed in their own "work". They were focused. They were happy. They were QUIET! There was nothing about the environment that felt chaotic or frenzied. There wasn't a loud voice in the room. It was incredible to witness, and it felt right for our daughter. Philly Montessori really invested time and care in our daughter throughout her years in their care. They helped us to understand the kind of learner and processor she is, which allows us to be her greatest advocates today.

Our first child has since graduated from the Primary program and moved on to elementary school. We now have two more children in the school that are absolutely thriving. All three of our children are quite different in the way that they learn. This environment continues to impress us with the way that it supports each child and their specific gifts. We continue to feel that our decision to join this community 6-years ago was one of the best decisions that we have ever made for our family. Philly Montessori is a home away from home for our children. They feel happy and safe entering the doors every day, and we feel abundantly grateful knowing that they are being taught by the most caring, thoughtful, open-minded teachers.”

- Lana & Brian, parents to Willow (8), Poppy (5), and Dalyah (3)

“We...have been very happy from toddler time and potty training through to the primary class where the kids are raising butterflies and learning letters. The school’s underlying culture is respectful and thoughtful. This leads to children who care about how to help each other out and learn from each other. We are glad to be part of a school that values kindness alongside independence. It’s a great combination. Our son loves his teachers and his classmates and is so happy to return to school whenever a new term starts.”

- Sarah & Robert, parents to Owen (4)



“From the first info session we attended at Philly Montessori one of our immediate takeaways was how thoughtful the approach was at the school, from the curriculum to each child’s schedule to the progression of their learning. Every detail seemed to be thought through with a central focus on the whole child... Now that we have been part of the PM community for three years we cannot overemphasize how much joy and comfort we get in seeing how happy our son is at drop off every day. He shows so much confidence to both learn new skills and help younger children master works in the classroom. Recently we asked him about picking up early one day and he politely asked that we wait until the end of his afternoon work time, he didn’t want to miss anything going on in the classroom!”

- Christina & Ryan, parents to Wyatt (4)

“Our family's experience with Sheila and Philly Montessori was unlike anything we'd ever experienced in our previous years of educating our children. To this day, a cross-country move (and subsequently 4 new schools for our four children) and 6 years later, we can say without reservation that Philly Montessori is the most positive, empowering, and nurturing educational environment we've ever had the privilege of joining. Sheila is painstaking in her attention to every detail, from the staff she chooses to the communication she shares with families to the gorgeous yet utilitarian space she sets up for the children. She leads with the utmost integrity, strength, and tenderness. Our children's teachers were warm, smart, communicative, and passionate. If you are lucky enough to become a founding family of a school like we were, we encourage you to jump at the opportunity to join the Philly Montessori village. You will not regret it.

- Erica & James, parents to Shep (10) and Raff (7)

“We sent our son to Philly Montessori after attending open houses and school playdates. We love their curriculum and the life skills our son is learning in his everyday life. His independence and socialization since starting at PM are beyond anything we could have dreamed!”

- Jules and Doug, parents to Benji (19 months)

“Philly Montessori was our first experience with preschool for our kids, and they set the bar really high. We had a great feeling when we first met Sheila hanging the PM sign before even breaking ground for the new building and we immediately knew that was where we wanted to send our son. The PM community became an extension of our family and our kids thrived during their years there. The small classroom and attention from the teachers really made the difference. Our children transitioned to our local Public school district seamlessly thanks to the preparation from Philly Montessori.

- Sarah and Patrick, parents to James (9) and Henry (7)

“Philly Montessori literally changed how my children approached the world. They gained confidence and skills through the supportive environment and caring teachers. They knew how to help a young, shy child navigate the unknown and I have never felt so much trust in the leadership of a school. We created a community that was built on educating the whole child and also allowing parents to have opportunities for real connections.”

- Olive and David, parents to Noah (11) and Leo (7)

“Ryn is 11 years old now, and still looks back fondly on their time at Philly Montessori. They are a confident and independent kid and still benefit from the solid base of foundational skills they picked up at PM. They still have a deep and meaningful relationship with teacher Terri. We are glad that Ryn began their learning journey here.”

- Karyn and David, parents to Ryn (11)