

# *The Aquinas Montessori School*

*A Montessori Children's House and Elementary School*

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Dear Parents,

We are happy to respond to your inquiry about *The Aquinas Montessori School*. Enclosed with our cover letter is a brochure, *What Is Montessori?*, which outlines our educational philosophy and will give you insight into the kinds of activities in which our children are involved, an insert with typical questions and answers about Montessori approach to learning, a comparison of Montessori and traditional education, an application for enrollment and the current tuition schedule.

There are two **primary** classes at The Aquinas School. Children in each primary class range in age from 3 to 6 years. Morning arrival begins at 8:30 AM, Monday through Friday. Children in the half-day primary class are dismissed at noon. Children in the full-day primary class and elementary classes remain for lunch and an afternoon session until 3:00 PM. Before and after-school care is available from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM for children of all ages.

The **elementary** level consists of four classes, which will continue the development of the child, two classes for children ages 6 to 9, and two class for children ages 9 to 12. The curriculum at these levels is expanded as widely as possible to enkindle interest in every area of culture, mathematics, geometry, language, history, geography, botany, zoology, earth science, chemistry, physics, art, music, computer skills, crafts, drama and physical education. The elementary children also participate in the Junior Great Books Program. Our purpose is to lead these children toward Dr. Maria Montessori's goal of "*cosmic education*, which is a complete vision of reality and man, and an ability to interpret both of them in their essence, nature, and reciprocal relationship." The work at each age group represents a continuous program, so those parents enrolling their children should be committed to allowing them to complete each three-year cycle.

Our principal Montessori teachers hold an AMI (Association Montessori Internationale) diploma in addition to their undergraduate or graduate degrees, and have completed a year of studies enabling them to understand the needs of children of this age, and to present effectively the programmed, self-correcting materials that Montessori designed. And we are affiliated and recognized by the Association Montessori Internationale. A language teacher presents Spanish to the primary children who are in the sensitive period for developing language skills. The elementary children with this background learn to converse, read, and write in Spanish. Latin is introduced during the third year in the lower elementary class and continues through the upper elementary level.

The school year is from September to June following, in general, the calendar for Fairfax County Public Schools. The Aquinas School also operates a Montessori summer day camp program for children, 3 to 9 years, during June and July. The Aquinas Montessori School was established in September 1965 (and we now have the children of former students with us!). We have had an annex in Old Town, Alexandria, since 1987. Two primary classes are held in the educational building of Washington Street United Methodist Church.

We hope this information will be helpful. Please call the school for an appointment to observe one of the classes and speak with our administrative staff, who will show you around the school and discuss the possibility of entrance.

Sincerely yours,

Kathleen H. Futrell  
Director