

Successfully securing admissions for a young child at MSW means starting early. During periods of strong enrollment at the Montessori School of Westminster, such as those we've experienced for several years now, begin planning your child's education with us as your child turns one!

BEGINNINGS – A journey to Montessori education for two-year-olds

OVERVIEW

- Decide if independence and other attributes of Montessori education suit your child and you. Do the research. Attend an MSW *Open House* to learn more.
- Review the *Admissions page* of this website.
- Begin the process of admissions at least *one year* in advance.
- Make an appointment to attend a *classroom observation*.
- Submit an *application for enrollment* on or before January 1st for the next school year in order to have the best opportunity to secure your child's spot in the Beginnings program. We accept applications year-round.
- Schedule a *brief visit* to the school for you and your child to meet administrative staff and faculty.
- After March 1st, *Open Enrollment* begins. Candidates who've successfully completed admissions requirements should receive, sign, and return contract documents to MSW with the required non-refundable deposit.
- Expedite the admissions process by participating in our semi-annual *Parent-Toddler Program*.

DETAILS

Because the Beginnings program is generally a one-year program, its roster of students changes each year. **Sixteen students** are permitted in this program. Beginnings is directed by a Montessori-certified faculty member and experienced adult aides.

Parents have a choice of a full week or a three-day week for their children in this age group. Three-day week students attend on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. In addition to "how many days per week," parents can choose **morning hours only** or the **"extended day" option**. Your child can arrive for the start of the school day at 8:30 AM sharp and **stay until either noon, or 3 PM** for those electing the extended day option. Children of age two who spend afternoons at MSW are "nappers" and are provided a quiet, peaceful, supervised space for sleep. (We also offer before and after school care services that can extend your child's day at MSW from 7 AM to 6 PM.)

While your child needs to be two years old in order to begin attending the Beginnings program at MSW, some parents will reserve spaces for children turning two after our September start date by fulfilling the requirements of admissions and entering into a tuition agreement with the school in advance.

Attend an MSW **Open House**. Check the Visit page on this website to see dates and times. Online registration is available and is appreciated!

Schedule a classroom observation. During an observation, one or two parents (or, occasionally, a grandparent) will sit quietly on the “sidelines” in the classroom itself to see how the typical activities of students and staff take place. After about 45 minutes of quiet watching, the classroom guide (teacher) will take you to a quiet spot to chat for about 15 minutes. You’ll have your questions answered on the spot, and our staff member will learn about your child in the process. **Observations are scheduled by appointment during morning hours.** Call Suzanne Radcliffe, Director of Admissions, at 410.848.6283 to schedule or email her at radcliffe@TheMSW.org . Observations will begin in **mid-October** for school year 2017-2018.

Applications for enrollment are available via the school website or by request from the Office of Admissions. The fee for processing your child’s application is \$100. We also require a copy of your child’s birth certificate. We will acknowledge our receipt of your child’s application for enrollment and send you our “MSW Financial Packet,” a resource that lists the options we have structured for payment of tuition to the school as well as many other possible transactions that may take place during your child’s years at MSW.

A **brief visit** to the school is a required step in the admissions process. This 15-minute visit includes parent and child and takes place **after** the application for enrollment is received. The purpose of the visit is for our administrative staff, normally our Head of School, and the Beginnings program guide (teacher) to meet the candidate. Our expectations of your child are age appropriate; most children are somewhat timid entering a new environment even though Mom or Dad is there. During the visit, we will discuss important parts of the MSW program with you, such as the school-wide start of day at 8:30 AM, your review of the MSW Parent Handbook—a policies and procedures manual, and upcoming events that will help your child transition into MSW.

Open Enrollment begins on March 1st. Returning students and their siblings are allotted time through February to finalize the admissions process for the following school year, and then Open Enrollment begins for new students and their families. Soon after March 1st, candidates will receive, usually via US postal service (“the mail”), a formal decision letter. For successful candidates, it will include a contract with the school to be signed and returned along with a non-refundable tuition deposit. The contract will outline payment options for the remaining balance.

We do continue to accept applications for enrollment after we have reached capacity in the Beginnings program. Families sometimes face unforeseen circumstances that will cause them to withdraw their child. When that happens, we review our **waiting list**, a pool of applicants who have submitted applications and undergone the admissions process, to find the best replacement candidate for the classroom.

The **MSW Parent-Toddler Program** takes place two times each year, during fall and again in the spring. It is a six-week, Friday morning program for one toddler (ages 18 to 36 months) and one parent, and it provides a wonderful introduction to the school and Montessori method. The cost is \$150. Families who participate in the Parent-Toddler Program and then chose to enroll their child for school-year programs are **exempted from certain admissions requirements** such as the classroom observation and the brief parent/child visit. Details for registration in the Parent-Toddler Program are available via the school website or by contacting the Office of Admissions.