



# ADMISSIONS PACKET



A NOTE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

We're so glad  
you found us.



Whether you're just beginning to explore Montessori education or you've been dreaming of it for years, I want you to know that you're in the right place. At May River Montessori, we believe that every child comes into the world with an extraordinary capacity to learn, wonder, and grow — and that our job is simply to get out of the way and let them do it.

Since 1987, families in Bluffton have trusted us with the most important years of their children's lives. That trust is something we hold carefully. Our classrooms are prepared environments filled with purpose, beauty, and the kind of calm energy that happens when children are genuinely engaged. Our teachers are guides — patient, observant, and deeply committed to each child as an individual.

This packet is yours to take home, read at your own pace, and share with anyone else involved in this important decision. You'll find everything you need to understand our programs, our admissions process, and what life at MRM really looks like. If additional questions come up after your visit, please don't hesitate to call us, email us, or stop by. There are no small questions here.

Thank you for visiting May River Montessori and considering our school for your family.

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*Susanna Myburgh*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SMYBURGH@MAYRIVERMONTESSORI.COM

## OUR HISTORY

Located in the heart of Bluffton's historic downtown, the school embodies our town's sense of small community. May River Montessori opened its doors in August 1987 to 17 young children who became the school's first students. In four short years, the school's growth exceeded the capacity of the original site.

Over the last three decades, the school has continued to grow through three relocations and over seven major additions and renovations to its current home. Throughout it all, May River Montessori has played a significant role in the social and educational environment of the growing Bluffton community.

The brainchild of two mothers, May River Montessori was built on relationships from the very beginning, and that hasn't changed. Hundreds of families have passed through our doors, and each of them has become a part of our heritage.

We believe joy is crucial—for a child's development, for learning and academic growth, and for life as a whole. It is our mission to help each student carry a flame of curiosity and a genuine passion for learning that will continue to burn brightly throughout their lives.



## PROGRAMS OFFERED

### TODDLER PROGRAM *(24 months–3 years)*

- **5-Day + Lunch Bunch** (Monday–Friday) 8:00 am–2:30 pm
- **5-Day** (Monday–Friday) 8:00–11:30 am
- **3-Day Program** (Wednesday–Friday) 8:00–11:30 am
- **2-Day Program** (Monday–Tuesday) 8:00–11:30 am

### PRIMARY PROGRAM *(3–6 years)*

- **Half Day (3 Year)** (Monday–Friday) 8:00–11:30 am
- **3 Year + Lunch Bunch** (Monday–Friday) 8:00 am–2:30 pm
- **Full Day (4–5 Year)** (Monday–Friday) 8:00 am–2:30 pm

### ELEMENTARY PROGRAM *(6–12 years)*

- **Lower Elementary, Grades 1–3** (Monday–Friday) 8:00 am–2:45 pm
- **Upper Elementary, Grades 4–6** (Monday–Friday) 8:00 am–2:45 pm

### AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM *for an additional fee*

- Available for Primary and Elementary students, 2:30–5:00 pm

## OUR VISION

Shaping future generations of world changers and peacemakers.



## MISSION STATEMENT

We inspire a love of learning, compassion, and acceptance within an authentic Montessori community.

- A Montessori education develops independence, self discipline, and respect for others
- Montessori allows the child to set the pace of learning
- Multi aged classrooms create an environment in which younger children are learning from older children along with a strong sense of community.

May River Montessori is a nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) corporation. Voluntary contributions to MRM, where no goods or services are received in turn, are tax deductible as defined by IRS guidelines.

The school is licensed by the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) and operates under the guidelines of the Department of Public Health (DPH).



# WHY MONTESSORI?

*A look at this unique educational model and why it might be right for your child*

## THE HISTORY OF MONTESSORI

Dr. Maria Montessori was the first woman to graduate from the University of Rome Medical School in 1896. As a woman she was deterred from becoming a physician. Working in the shadows led her to treat underprivileged young children. Using respect for the child as the foundation of her method, Maria Montessori created the “prepared environment.”

Materials were arranged on low shelves and provided a structured, proven path of learning, which allowed the child to develop at their own pace, according to their own learning modalities. Dr. Montessori said the years between birth and six are the formative years, which modern science has since validated. These are the years of the absorbent mind, the years in which intelligence itself is being formed. It is also the time that a child most easily learns attitudes, values, and the ground rules of human behavior. These years can be constructively devoted to helping them acquire good manners and habits, to take their place in culture. The importance of the prepared environment lies in its ability to provide the use of attractive, inviting, and developmentally appropriate materials, and to provide opportunities to explore the world of sensory, motor, and intellectual experiences.

The children developed an extraordinarily high level of intellectual and social ability using her approach.

Montessori was introduced in the United States in 1912. One of the earliest schools was established by Alexander Graham Bell. Today, the Montessori approach is taught in a great number of schools in the United States and throughout the world.



## IS MONTESSORI RIGHT FOR YOU?

Montessori education should not be chosen just because parents are seeking an alternative to the traditional classroom. Parents should choose Montessori because they believe in this approach. Please take time to understand the method, the environment, and how your child will need your support at home to thrive.



**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
Founder of the  
Montessori Method of  
Education

### AT MRM, YOU’LL SEE:

- Children choosing their own work
- Uninterrupted work cycles
- Mixed-age classrooms
- Teachers who observe before they instruct
- Hands-on, concrete learning materials
- A calm, purposeful classroom culture
- Children who help and teach each other

## The Montessori Difference

### Traditional

Teacher is the focus of the classroom

Mainly group instruction

One subject typically studied at a time, in allotted time, in a group

Same-age grouping

The teacher is in charge of lessons

Timed lessons, activities, and class schedules break up work flow

Child errors are usually pointed out by the teacher

Learning is reinforced externally by repetition and rewards

### Teacher has an unobtrusive role in the classroom

Teacher introduces activities to children and then lets them pursue their own interests, while observing their progress.

### Mainly individual instruction

Teachers work one-on-one with children in order to ensure that they fully grasp tasks and activities.

### Children select their own experiences, at their pace

Once children have seen the teacher demonstrate an activity at least once, they are encouraged to pursue that activity on their own, to work on figuring it out for themselves.

### Mixed-age grouping

Children of various skill levels work alongside each other, so that learning takes place at all different experience levels and is not limited by age.

### Children learn from each other

In the mixed-age environment, the opportunity exists for older children who have "mastered" activities to share their knowledge with younger children; learning is enhanced by this positive exchange of experiences.

### Child works as long as they want on chosen projects, enabling focus and concentration

Uninterrupted work times allow for a level of immersion that is difficult to achieve when lessons are timed and scheduled.

### The teacher guides children toward self-realization and self-correction

Through repetition of activities, children learn to identify and rectify their mistakes, encouraging awareness of their abilities.

### Child reinforces learning through repetition and feelings of success

The more a child works on a particular task or activity, the stronger they become, and the more confident they are in their abilities.

# MEET OUR ALUMNI



**Izzy Waz**

Attended May River Montessori 2011–2014

Graduate of Heritage Academy (2026)

Freshman at Auburn University, Sports Psychology Major

“*May River Montessori helped build a solid foundation for me both academically and personally. The supportive staff and environment taught me how to have fun while learning something new. At an early age I was taught how to treat others with kindness, use my manners, and how to be self-sufficient in and out of the classroom.*”

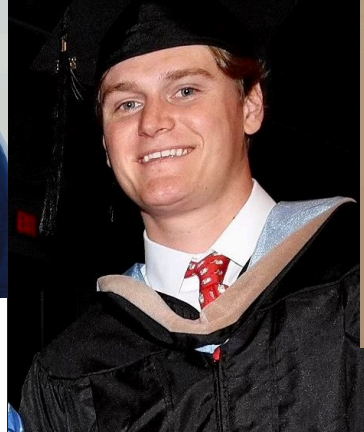


**Wells P Sharp**

Attended May River Montessori Toddler–6<sup>th</sup> Grade

Currently a Sophomore at Furman University

“*May River Montessori helped nurture my curiosity and independence, teaching me to embrace learning as a journey. Consequently, the foundation began at an early age fostering both creative and critical thinking. These pillars of learning helped me thrive in high school and now into my college years.*”



**Reece John Woods**

Attended May River Montessori Toddler through Primary Cycle

Citadel Graduate- Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Masters in Business Administration

“*May River Montessori was a vital foundation for my growth. It's where I learned to navigate social interactions and develop essential learning skills. Through play and collaboration, I discovered the importance of teamwork and communication. These early experiences shaped my curiosity and confidence, setting the stage for lifelong learning.*”



**Margaret Pearman**

Among the first Kindergarten graduates in 1989

Graduated from Tulane University with a degree in International Development and Italian Literature. Owns and runs Charlie's L'Etoile Verte, and paints almost daily.

“*One of my most prized take-aways from my Montessori beginning was learning how to treat others kindly. I have a strong sense of just how small each individual is in this big universe. Even more, I have been able to lead myself as an entrepreneur, and start every day with a new goal.*”



# PROGRAMS & EXTRACURRICULARS

**AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**  
2:30–5:00 PM  
for an additional fee

**EXTENDED OUTDOOR TIME**



**FARMER'S MARKET**  
Upper Elementary  
entrepreneurial program

**AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS**  
Nature Club with Moore to Life  
LEGO Club  
Spanish Club

**PORCH PARTY**  
A meet and greet for parents  
at the beginning of the  
school year



**PIZZA FRIDAYS**  
Upper Elementary fundraiser  
offering a special catered  
lunch

**EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**  
Soccer, Dance, Equestrian Club  
(additional cost)

**SILLY GOOSE PHOTOGRAPHY**  
Beautiful school pictures  
each year



**SPECIALS**  
Gardening, Art, Music

**SPRING PERFORMANCE**

**SUZUKI METHOD MUSIC**  
Lessons provided at an  
additional cost during the  
school day





# TUITION

*Investing in Your Child's Future*

May River Montessori is a nonprofit organization and is completely dependent on tuition as its principal source of income. We understand and deeply appreciate the commitment families make to invest in their child's education. The skills and love of learning your child develops here will serve them for a lifetime.



## TUITION PROTECTION FUND

Each family enters into a financial contract for the full academic year. In the event of a withdrawal, tuition obligations remain in effect. To protect against unforeseen circumstances, MRM's self-funded Tuition Protection Fund provides a claims process for qualifying withdrawals.

**Participation in the May River Montessori Tuition Protection Fund is required for all student accounts not paid in full by August 1 of each year.**



## 2026-2027 TUITION

Grades 4-6.....\$13,315

Grades 1-3.....\$12,995

Primary Full Day.....\$12,225

Primary + LB.....\$11,975

Primary Half Day.....\$9,975

Toddler 5-Day + LB.....\$11,975

Toddler 5-Day.....\$9,975

Toddler 3-Day.....\$7,945

Toddler 2-Day.....\$5,715

*Scholarship, volunteer credit, and state ESTF options are available.*

## PAYMENT OPTIONS

### Monthly tuition payments

are due every month on the 15th from July to May of the current school year

### Semester tuition payments

are due July 15th and December 15th of the current school year.

### Annual tuition payments

are due July 15 of the current school year.

## AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Guaranteed enrollment into the After School Program is done at the time of enrollment. After August 1, enrollment into the program is possible on a first-come, first-served basis and is limited by current availability. The fee is \$75/month/weekday.



# TUITION SAVING OPPORTUNITIES

We believe a May River Montessori education should be accessible to as many families as possible. Here are the ways we work to make that happen.

## VOLUNTEER CREDIT PROGRAM

Families who contribute to our school community through volunteer service are rewarded with a direct tuition credit.

- Complete **12 volunteer hours** between August 1, 2026 and April 30, 2027
- Receive a **\$600** tuition credit applied to the May 2027 tuition payment
- Hours must be logged through our volunteer management system
- Credit applies per family, not per child — partial hours do not qualify
- **All volunteers must complete a background check prior to serving during school hours**

## EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUND

South Carolina's state-funded school choice program offers \$7,634 per student for qualifying K–12 students. This can significantly offset tuition costs for eligible families.



**Scan here to learn more!**

- **January 15, 2026:** Applications for priority groups open.
- **February 9, 2026:** General applications open.

## MAY RIVER MONTESSORI FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Thanks to our generous community donors, MRM offers a limited number of **partial scholarships** for families with demonstrated financial need.

Applications are reviewed by the Scholarship Committee.

- Requires submission of tax returns and documentation of financial hardship.
- Apply **September 1, 2025–February 1, 2026** at [mayrivermontessori.com](http://mayrivermontessori.com)
- Decisions are announced March 1, 2026



# HELPFUL SCHOOL INFORMATION

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## DRESS CODE

### **TODDLER & PRIMARY**

Simple, comfortable play clothes are best for our Toddler and Primary students. Children at this age move a lot — they work on the floor, play outdoors, and explore through hands-on activities. Please dress your child in clothes that allow for free movement and independence, especially in the bathroom. Closed-toe shoes are required. Keep in mind that learning can get a little messy — paint, clay, and outdoor play are all part of the fun!

### **ELEMENTARY**

Students should wear comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing that supports active learning and independence. Clothing should allow free movement and be easy for children to manage on their own. Closed-toe shoes (such as sneakers) are required; flip-flops and backless shoes are not permitted. Clothing with offensive imagery, costumes, or distracting accessories is not allowed. For field trips, students should wear a designated spirit shirt or polo for easy identification.

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## POLICIES FOR INCLUSION

### **POLICY OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

May River Montessori welcomes children and families from diverse backgrounds and is committed to fostering a respectful, inclusive community. Our classrooms are thoughtfully designed to support children who are able to participate successfully within a Montessori group environment. At this time, MRM may not be the best fit for children requiring intensive one-on-one therapeutic or behavioral support services. Students entering the Primary Program must be fully potty-trained.

### **POLICY OF TOLERANCE**

May River Montessori values and respects the diverse religious and cultural backgrounds of our students. We welcome the sharing of cultural traditions in a spirit of understanding and respect. Our children may offer a song of thanksgiving before snacks and meals. We acknowledge holidays and birthdays within our school community, while also honoring each family's preferences regarding participation.

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## ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

Regular attendance is key to your child's success. When a child misses school or arrives late frequently, it can interrupt their learning and slow their progress. Every day, your child is building important concepts and absorbing values that form the foundation for lifelong learning. By prioritizing attendance, you help your child understand the importance of being present and engaged. Please make every effort to have your child at school each day and stay for the full day, unless they are ill. Together, we are helping children develop habits that will benefit them for a lifetime.

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## ORIENTATION

At the beginning of each school year, we hold an orientation period to help our Toddler and Primary children ease into their new classroom environment. This gradual introduction allows children to become comfortable with their teachers, classmates, and routines, setting a positive tone for the year ahead.



During this time, teachers and children get to know one another and begin building a sense of trust and community. Children are introduced to the classroom environment, learn how to choose and care for materials, and practice returning work to the shelves. They also explore the playground and outdoor areas while learning the safety guidelines that support independent, joyful play. Orientation week lays the foundation for a successful school year—helping each child feel at home, confident, and ready to begin their Montessori journey.

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# MAY RIVER MONTESSORI

## School Calendar

2026  
2027

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	AUGUST						
						1	<b>3-7: Teacher Workdays</b>						
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	<b>6: Back to School Night (Adults Only)</b>						
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	<b>7: Meet &amp; Greet: Classroom Visits &amp; Picnic</b>						
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	<b>10: First Day of School</b>						
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	<b>10-14: Orientation Week</b>						
30	31						<b>25: Parent Tea (8:30 AM)</b>						
							<b>31: Maria Montessori's Birthday</b>						

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	FEBRUARY						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	<b>15: No School - Presidents' Day</b>						
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	<b>20: Open House (10 AM)</b>						
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	<b>26: Early Dismissal: Teacher Workday</b>						
21	22	23	24	25	26	27							
28													

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SEPTEMBER						
		1	2	3	4	5	<b>7: No School - Labor Day</b>						
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	<b>18: Pinwheels for Peace</b>						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	<b>19: Porch Party (Adults Only)</b>						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26							
27	28	29	30										

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	MARCH						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	<b>1-2: Parent-Teacher Conferences</b>						
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	<b>6: Oyster Roast Fundraiser</b>						
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	<b>18: Parent Tea (8:30 AM)</b>						
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	<b>24: Spring Performance, K-6 (4 PM) (Tentative)</b>						
28	29	30	31				<b>25: Teacher Workday</b>						
							<b>26: No School - Good Friday</b>						

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	OCTOBER						
				1	2	3	<b>7: Early Dismissal: Teacher Workday; Toddler Beach Day (9 AM)</b>						
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	<b>8-9: Parent-Teacher Conferences</b>						
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	<b>16: Early Dismissal - Bluffton Seafood Festival</b>						
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	<b>19-23: Spirit Week</b>						
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	<b>20: Parent Tea (8:30 AM)</b>						
							<b>26-29 Learning in Bloom</b>						

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	APRIL						
				1	2	3	<b>12-16: No School - Spring Break</b>						
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	<b>26-30: Scholastic Book Fair</b>						
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	<b>28: Primary Performance (4 PM)</b>						
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	<b>30: Grandparents &amp; Loved Ones Day</b>						
25	26	27	28	29	30								

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	NOVEMBER						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<b>4: Parent Education Night (4 PM)</b>						
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	<b>7: Fall Festival Fundraiser</b>						
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	<b>11: No School - Veterans Day Parade</b>						
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	<b>23-27: No School - Thanksgiving Break</b>						
29	30												

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	MAY						
						1	<b>4: Parent Tea (8:30 AM)</b>						
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	<b>7: Early Dismissal - Primary Field Day; Toddler Water Day</b>						
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	<b>14: Elementary Field Day</b>						
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	<b>28: Early Dismissal (Last Day of School); K5 Graduation &amp; Elementary Bridging Ceremony (12:30 PM)</b>						
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	<b>31: No School - Memorial Day</b>						
30	31												

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	DECEMBER						
		1	2	3	4	5	<b>7-11: Scholastic Book Fair</b>						
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	<b>11: Primary-Elementary Winter Concert (4 PM)</b>						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	<b>18: Early Dismissal &amp; Toddler Winter Concert</b>						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	<b>21-31: No School - Winter Break</b>						
27	28	29	30	31									

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	JUNE						
		1	2	3	4	5	<b>1-2: Teacher Workdays</b>						
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	<b>7-30: Summer Camp</b>						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19							
20	21	22	23	24	25	26							
27	28	29	30										

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	JANUARY						
					1	2	<b>1-5: No School - Winter Break (cont.)</b>						
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	<b>4-5: Teacher Workdays</b>						
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	<b>6: School Resumes for Students</b>						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	<b>18: No School - MLK Jr. Day</b>						
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	<b>26: Parent Tea (8:30 AM)</b>						
31													

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	JULY						
				1	2	3	<b>1-2: Summer Camp</b>						
4	5	6	7	8	9	10							
11	12	13	14	15	16	17							
18	19	20	21	22	23	24							
25	26	27	28	29	30	31							

### LEGEND

- NO SCHOOL
- EARLY DISMISSAL (11:30 AM PICK UP)
- TEACHER WORKDAY (NO SCHOOL)
- SPECIAL EVENTS
- PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES
- ORIENTATION WEEK
- SCHOOL RESUMES FOR STUDENTS

### ORIENTATION WEEK: AUGUST 10-14

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Toddler:</b> One-hour orientation each day   | <b>Elementary:</b> Full days begin August 10   |
| <b>Primary:</b>   | <b>After-School:</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Students (3 years olds): 8:30 AM-10:30 AM</li> <li>• Returning &amp; New Students (4-5 year olds): 11:30am-2:30pm</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary returning students (4-5 year olds): May attend beginning August 10</li> <li>• Elementary: May attend beginning August 10</li> <li>• New 3 year olds: May begin August 17</li> </ul> |



# ADMISSIONS PROCESS

- 1 Campus Tour**

Attend a campus tour with your child(ren). Tours are held every morning at 9:30 AM and 10:15 AM and are led personally by Susanna. Morning tours are preferred so your child can see the classrooms in action. Afternoon tours are available if needed.
- 2 Apply Online**

Submit an application through our admissions portal along with the \$100 application fee per child.
- 3 School Records Request *(Grades 1-6 only)***

May River Montessori will request school records directly. Submission of records is required before scheduling a Shadow Day.
- 4 Student Visit**
  - Toddlers: A 15-minute morning visit with classroom teachers.
  - Primary: A 30 minute visit with classroom teachers.
  - Grades 1-6: A 30-minute after-school visit held from 3:15-3:45 PM with classroom teachers.
- 5 Classroom Shadow Day *(Grades 1-6 only)***

Your child experiences a half-day session from 8:30-12:45 within our classroom, engaging in the Montessori Work Cycle, connecting socially, and being observed by teachers to assess independence, social-emotional adjustment, and academic readiness
- 6 Contract Offer**

Extended if both family and school determine it is a good fit.

## Ready to take the next step?

We'd love to have your family apply. Visit [mayrivermontessori.com/admissions](http://mayrivermontessori.com/admissions) to apply today.