



Fast Facts on Five Oaks Academy

If you're considering a Montessori education for your child and wondering what makes the Five Oaks Academy environment so special, we encourage you to read all of our materials, come take a tour and ask many questions. What we *can* tell you in brief is that Montessori should be a long-term commitment, as the curriculum is based on two and three-year cycles. What's more, a child's brain begins developing very early, so the time to offer your child the academic and social/emotional advantages of Montessori is *now*.

Here are some highlights about the Montessori philosophy and the benefits offered at Five Oaks Academy. If our school is the right fit for your child and vice versa, we're confident that enrolling him or her at Five Oaks Academy will pay dividends exceeding your expectations for years to come.

Montessori begins with a respect for the child as an individual. This educational method was consciously designed to recognize and address different learning styles and build upon each child's unique strengths. In addition to a challenging academic curriculum, Montessori focuses on the student's social and emotional development and needs. There is far more to an education than mastering facts. Children must feel comfortable, safe and loved before they can succeed academically.

Five Oaks Academy is a warm, supportive community of students, teachers and parents. Our classrooms are bright and inviting environments where children learn in a self-directed manner and are able to make choices within a structured framework and the guidance of teachers. We challenge and set high expectations for all of our students. They develop self-discipline and an internal sense of confidence, purpose and motivation. After graduation, they find that these attributes are stepping stones for college and beyond.



Montessori classrooms group multiple age levels together, which offers many advantages. Older students model desired classroom behavior to the younger students, thereby gaining leadership and mentoring skills while reinforcing their own learning. Likewise, younger students learn at a higher level when able to observe older peers working on more advanced lessons. Additionally, an inner motivation is developed as they begin to desire to receive the same lessons as their older peers.

Five Oaks Academy and the Montessori curriculum prepares children for an ever changing future. The Montessori curriculum immerses students in their lessons and connects the material to their lives, creating purpose for learning. Students do not simply memorize facts; they analyze information, think critically and apply their knowledge. Knowing *how* to learn is essential for the 21st century workforce.

Five Oaks Academy is accredited by the South Carolina Independent School Association (SCISA) both as a Montessori school and as an independent school. In fact, Five Oaks Academy is the only Montessori program in our geographic area serving children in grade levels Pre-Primary through Middle School that is accredited by SCISA.

Five Oaks Academy engages children in their learning. Our students learn through hands-on experience, investigation and research. They become actively engaged in their studies rather than passively waiting for the information to be delivered to them. This fosters a love of learning in our students. They learn to collaborate and to work together and strive for their personal best, rather than compete against one another for the highest grade in their class. Students follow a rich curriculum that exceeds state standards in every academic area. Additionally, they are given opportunities to explore their own interests and develop their unique strengths.

Montessori allows each individual child to take the time they need to explore a lesson so they can truly understand the material. One major tenet of Montessori education involves giving children a lengthy period, typically two and a half to three hours, of uninterrupted school work time. This time, called the Montessori Work Cycle, allows a student to select a work from the shelf and then work on it for a period of time that is specific to his or her needs. The time a student takes on a specific lesson will vary depending on how many times they have practiced the work, where they are in their journey towards mastering that specific work and the student's own natural ability in that specific subject area. Giving students uninterrupted work time allows students to work through questions and truly understand the material. Students feel an internal satisfaction once the work is completed and then they select the next task.

Montessori and Five Oaks Academy teaches children to take risks and learn from failure. In our classrooms, failure is not perceived as a negative; it is simply an opportunity to learn. We expect failure in some form from each student. Our teachers guide students in how to problem solve, persevere and learn from their failures. Our students are not afraid of making mistakes; they see them as natural steps in the learning process.

Five Oaks Academy fosters time management skills. Students begin the process of learning to prioritize and manage their time at an early age. Students learn to make choices during work time and learn the natural consequences of poor choices. At each program level, the time management demands increase. With the support and guidance of their teachers, students become self-guided and able to initiate and complete tasks on their own. This essential life skill helps our students manage challenging workloads in high school and beyond while still allowing them time for extracurricular activities and personal passions.

Five Oaks Academy is an international school. Our student body has representation from more than 37 countries. This unique school diversity coupled with the rich Montessori culture curriculum gives our students a global vision and perspective.

Five Oaks Academy instills an appreciation of the natural world. Ecological and outdoor education are an essential part of our students' lives. Each classroom has direct access to an outdoor environment, allowing students to work and learn in a natural setting. Children naturally become observers when they step out of doors, and they come alive when allowed to explore and make discoveries in their outdoor environment.

Students have many opportunities to explore our woods, winding nature trail, creek environment and garden. In our community garden, children have the hands-on experience of tending and nurturing a garden throughout the seasons. All ages participate and feel pride as they harvest the goods produced from their hard work.

Five Oaks Academy exposes students to an extensive Related Arts Curriculum. Spanish, World Music, Classical Music, Gardening, Creative Art, Art History, Strengths Training and Wellness are all part of our related arts curriculum designed to enrich the whole child as we strive for students that become well-rounded adults.

Five Oaks Academy offers After School Studios, an After School Program and Summer Camps. After School Studios are an optional one-hour activity for students to explore their special interests. Classes range from soccer, physical fitness and nature appreciation to art, writing and cooking.

The After School Program offers parents a place for their children, ages five and older, while they complete their work day, remaining open until 6:00 pm. Students can work on homework, learn new skills, play outside, sew, play boardgames, socialize with friends or just have fun in a relaxed and supportive environment.

Ask for details about the Summer Camp Program, which offers numerous week-long camps focused on a variety of fun and engaging themes and activities.

Five Oaks Academy supports the community and teaches compassion.

Students, parents, teachers and administrators come together to volunteer their time for regular community projects, such as Community Day and Adopt-A-Road Day. Drives are also held to support such charities as Ronald McDonald House, Wells of Love, Harvest Hope and more.

Five Oaks Academy celebrates traditions and customs from around the world.

Community wide events are held throughout the year (parents and family friends are welcome) to learn more about global cultures and celebrate them in a fun atmosphere. These include the International Tea and the International Festival. In addition to these community events, we host international speakers and performers throughout the school year for special classroom presentations. These events in conjunction with our rich cultural curriculum give our students a global vision of the world.

Five Oaks Academy welcomes parents on campus. Five Oaks Academy hosts numerous on-and off-campus events to include families. These include a Fall Festival, Montessori Mornings, Holiday Open House, Student Art Show, Fall Fete and an Alumni Workshop, among others. Parents are also welcome in the Primary outdoor classroom, on field trips, to assist in classroom cooking projects, as guest speakers and more.

Five Oaks Academy provides extensive parent resources. Parents can easily stay in touch via the Sycamore Parent Portal to access weekly newsletters, sign up for text alerts, check payment status, update student information and more. Parents also have the opportunity to attend the Parent Lecture Series which cover a broad range of not-to-be-missed relevant topics on Montessori, technology, and educational research, among others. Additionally, Montessori Parents in Action (MPIA) offers a small group format where parents can learn about and discuss different topics and book studies.

Primary Parent Workshops are also offered three times a year in which a teacher demonstrates and explains the lessons and sequence of specific subject areas. These workshops give parents a better understanding of the precise sequence of the Montessori Curriculum that Dr. Montessori laid out to move a child from the concrete to the abstract in each subject area. Primary workshops are geared towards parents of children aged two to six. **Other questions? Please ask us.**