

Prospective Parent Q & A

What is the age range in the classroom?

Early Childhood - ages 3 to 6 (Pre-K, K)

Lower Elementary - ages 6 - 9 (1st - 3rd grades)

Upper Elementary - ages 9 - 12 (4th - 6th grades)

Middle School - ages 12 - 14 (7th - 8th grades)

By the end of kindergarten, are students reading on/above grade level?

Drummond Montessori adheres to the Common Core standards as a Chicago Public School.

Our expectation is that students are at or above grade level, and we work to ensure that students who are struggling with independent reading receive additional support to close their skill gaps.

What are student : teacher ratios?

Early Childhood - maximum of 27 students : 3 teachers (+ paraprofessionals where needed)

Lower Elementary - maximum of 27 students : 2 teachers (+ paraprofessionals where needed)

Upper Elementary - maximum of 30 students : 2 teachers (+ paraprofessionals where needed)

Middle School - maximum of 25 students : 2 teacher (+ paraprofessionals where needed)

Can you give an example of how multi-age classrooms promote learning for 3 yr olds?

3 year old children benefit academically from having older students in the classroom in many ways. 3 year olds watch the work of the older students and are enticed to do the more advanced lessons and learn more skills. They also develop an understanding of the foundational skill sets needed to complete more advanced work. Additionally, the older students benefit from opportunities to be leaders, guide, and peer teachers to the younger children.

What specials are offered?

Each day students participate in a Specials class. The specials consist of Music, Art, PE, or Dance with a specialist teacher.

On the parent survey, most things looked great, but it said the quality of facilities was “very weak.” Why do you think that is? Drummond was built in 1893; it is an old building that requires a great deal of upkeep. Additionally, it is not ADA compliant as we have three stories but do not have an elevator. A new outdoor environment was recently installed and parent survey results have increased as a result of this.

Is there an opportunity to allow prek3 students to meet their teacher prior to the first day of class? All registered families will have an orientation meeting with the Early Childhood teachers. Generally, teachers schedule opportunities for the families to come into the classroom prior to the first official day of school to drop off supplies, see the room, and meet the teachers.

Do they learn about different cultural groups and their contributions to society in the cultural component? Yes. At all grade levels, teachers expose students to different cultural

groups and their contributions as part of our commitment to global awareness and citizenship. In the Early Childhood classrooms, parents are encouraged to come in and share their cultural traditions with the students.

Is there a uniform/dress code? Drummond does not have a uniform, however, there are clothing guidelines that can be found in the Parent Handbook.

Once accepted into the early childhood program, can the child stay through 8th grade without needing to reapply? Once a child is accepted into Drummond Montessori at any grade-level, they do not need to reapply for each school year.

What should I be working on at home to prepare my 3 yo for a successful transition? The Early Childhood teachers will be presenting an orientation meeting for all new accepted families. At that time, they will talk about transitioning to school and some tips for best supporting your child in preparation for it.

Are there particular high schools that a lot of your students tend to go to? Our students go to high schools throughout the city. We work closely with Middle School students and their families to determine the best fit for each graduate. We have found that our students generally make a smooth transition into high schools, even bigger ones, due to the Montessori focus on independence, executive functioning skills, and collaborative learning.

Is there rest or nap in the schedule for 3-6 y/o? Our preK students do have nap time in the afternoon. Our Kindergarten students work on academic lessons with their lead teacher during this afternoon time.

Do Early Childhood students get homework? Early Childhood students do sometimes get a follow up assignment to complete at home around an area of study in the classroom. Generally, these are given weekly and tend to be more project-based or additional practice with a skill (like reading sight words) rather than traditional worksheets.

If our kids are in the EC program, is there an opportunity for 3 or 4 days a week? No, our Early Childhood program is a 5 day a week program from 8:20 am - 3:20 pm.

What do they do for recess if it is raining or cold outside? While we do have opportunities for gross motor activities indoors when there is severe inclement weather, we try hard to take students outside every day. If it is cold, they may have a shortened recess period, but the goal is to have opportunities in the outdoor environments each day.

During uninterrupted work time what does a 3yo do? Three year old children tend to work a great deal with the practical life and sensorial areas, refining their movements and exploring the hands on materials. Teachers will give lessons with these materials regularly and rotate activities on and off the shelves as the needs of the children change. They are encouraged to be

self-directed in their work choices and develop patience when a favorite activity is already being used.

Do you have before or after school programs? Yes, we offer before and after school programming for PreK through elementary grades. We partner with a program called Right at School. You can find out more about their programs and costs at <https://rightatschool.com/>. Right at School offers electives and teachers also sponsor clubs and activities for students. Drummond participates in CPSScore, a competitive athletic program through CPS.

Is there a cost associated with the school? What is the attendance policy? Is there a penalty if we accept a position and change plans before school starts? There is an annual \$75 student fee. The expectation for attendance is that your child will be at school from 8:30 - 3:30 each day. There is no penalty for accepting a seat and changing plans, though we discourage it for the benefit of the many families on our waitlist.

What programs are offered before/after school? Foreign language, piano, dance, violin, girl scouts? There are many weekly activities in our afterschool programming, which changes based on the level of interest of our families. This school year we have violin, girl scouts, rock band, guitar, chess, improv, dance, drama, and Spanish Language to name a few.

What are the dates of the academic year? Drummond follows the CPS calendar. The dates for the 2026 - 2027 school year can be found on the CPS website.

Do your classroom and school libraries have diverse books (characters/authors)? Yes, this is prioritized as part of our commitment to diversity and global citizenship. We have a full-time librarian to support literacy across grades.

How many EC classrooms are there? Drummond has 4 Early Childhood classrooms, 4 Lower Elementary classrooms, 3 Upper Elementary classrooms, and 3 Middle School rooms.

Did I understand that the kids are grouped into groups of 9? I thought 1:27? In our Early Childhood and Lower Elementary classrooms, we ideally have 9 students per age/grade level. For EC, that would be 9 three year olds (1st year students), 9 four year olds (2nd year students), and 9 five year olds (Kindergarten students)

Any plans for accessibility? Chicago Public Schools continues to look for a way to increase the building's accessibility.

Can you talk a little about the older grades (1-3 grade)? Would a 3rd grade student get bored? Lessons are given in small groups with students who show readiness for more advanced material. Teachers work closely with students at each grade level to ensure the right level of challenge for them individually. If a student in their third year in a program needs more advanced lessons, their current teacher will work with the teachers in the next level to find appropriate lessons for that child.

Even though Drummond is a magnet school, do you find that a majority of families come from a certain area? Drummond students come from across the city. We have students coming from the far south side all the way to the O'Hare area. We do not have a bussing system though, so parents need to provide transportation to and from school. Many of our older students take CTA buses and trains.

Is there preference for siblings? Once one child is enrolled at Drummond for the current year, the sibling may reapply for the following year. While siblings do get preference in the lottery, we cannot guarantee the spot.

Do kids in the classes stay together mostly for K-8? Is there a year you see high turnover? While we do not have much student turnover at Drummond, we do see that the transitions between programs (Kindergarten to 1st grade, 3rd to 4th grade, and 6th to 7th grade) are natural times for families to transition to other schooling.

How much homework is expected of a 3rd grader? Students in our Lower Elementary program accomplish a lot of work during the school day. They may have follow up practice based on the skills they are working on in the classroom (math facts, spelling, reading, etc.) These assignments may be paper or computer based. The follow up work is meant to support mastery of skills with additional practice; it is not meant to complete new tasks at home.

What is the protocol in handling allergies and gluten free? The Early Childhood programs eat lunch in their peanut-free classrooms. They also have protocols around allergies based around the children in the classroom each year. Separate individual protocols are in place when an older student is having lunch in the cafeteria. We work with families to determine best practices based on the student's needs. Additionally, we have a full time nurse at the school to manage any symptoms and administer medication provided by families.

Is lunch provided by the CPS lunch program? Yes, as a CPS school we offer free lunch to all of our students. For Early Childhood, school lunches are brought to the classrooms. For all other students, they may be provided school lunch in the cafeteria.

What school forms are required for preK3, such as dental, physical, vision, etc., and do they have to be done by a certain time, such as 3 months before or later for example? School forms will be sent to you as part of your registration packet. Students enrolling for PreK will need to have a medical form filled out with immunizations, etc. Dental and vision are only required for students entering certain grades; Kindergarten will be the first time these additional forms will be required. Deadlines for all registration forms, including medical, will be included in a comprehensive email sent to you following the acceptance process.

For any other questions, please feel free to reach out to:

EFKittle@cps.edu - Drummond Principal (All other CPS and school-related questions)