

FAQs

at

The Caedmon School

Middle School Placement

*Where do our graduates
go from here?
...and how do they get there?*

Q. How is Caedmon involved in the process of finding the right school for its graduates?

A. Caedmon takes great care to help parents determine the middle school environment in which their child will thrive academically and emotionally, based upon the skills, personality, and learning styles that have blossomed during their time with us.

Fourth Grade

In the middle of the children's fourth grade year at Caedmon, their parents take part in a comprehensive workshop about the transfer process upon which they will embark the following year. They are provided with information on the entire sequence of events from initial search through final application, including test requirements, deadlines, and the role that Caedmon will play in the process. That same spring, the Head of School and the Educational Director meet individually with each family to discuss a broad range of schools that may be of interest to the family and suitable for the child.

Fifth Grade

By early September of the fifth grade year, the Head of School and the Educational Director meet again with each family to edit the number of schools being considered. As the search progresses, communication between parents and the Head of School is vital and continuous. Many parents touch base as often as once a week as they further refine their search and submit their applications. The ultimate goal of finding the right school for each child is successfully accomplished by maintaining continuous communication among all concerned parties. Caedmon's small size enables the educational administrators to remain extraordinarily involved with each family throughout the process.

Q. What does Caedmon do to prepare the children for the placement process?

A. From September through December of their fifth grade year at Caedmon, students take part in a weekly series of after-school workshops to prepare them for their role in the placement process. They learn how to

interview, and are given 2-3 practice interviews by adult staff members other than their teachers. They practice writing "on-the-spot essays" like the ones they will write during interviews. They receive personalized instruction on test-taking strategies, based upon the record of their annual standardized testing at Caedmon. This culminates in a realistic, "practice test" on a Saturday morning at Caedmon, in preparation for the actual testing.

Throughout the workshop series, the children learn to focus on their personal strengths, which will later enable them to relax under pressure and perform to the best of their capabilities.

Q. What are the advantages of transferring at the sixth grade level?

A. In New York City independent schools, sixth grade is a major entry point. Many schools enlarge their enrollment at this level and typically there are between 175 and 200 spaces available. Since there are fewer applicants for sixth grade than for either Kindergarten or ninth grade (the other major entry points), it is proportionately no more competitive at that time - and may even be easier to gain admittance.

At sixth grade, schools look forward to an infusion of new children to enrich their middle school athletic teams and arts programs, and to stimulate new classroom and community dynamics.

Developmentally, students who remain at Caedmon through fifth grade reap the full benefits of an environment focused exclusively on young children, free of the social pressures of adolescence. Upon graduating, they achieve the honor and earn the gratification of completing a rigorous and thorough academic program.

One final note: In regard to the actual placement process, Caedmon is able to provide the extensive assistance described above only to those families whose children are part of the graduating fifth grade class.

Q. What impact does Caedmon’s Montessori philosophy seem to have upon its graduates in middle school and beyond?

A. Montessori educational philosophy is characterized by an emphasis on independent thinking, organized study habits, intellectual and creative risk-taking, and conceptual understanding as the cornerstone of true knowledge. Caedmon elementary students augment these fundamental attitudes with rigorous, experiential training in writing, research, criticism, calculation, problem solving, and public performance.

An essential Montessori premise, embraced at Caedmon, is that of sequential preparation for the next level of study. By the time children reach the fifth grade, this includes being taught to take notes from a lecture, outline text material, prepare and edit research papers, organize long-term projects, study for content tests, and more.

As a result of such training, sixth grade admissions personnel frequently remark upon how well prepared Caedmon children are for the challenges of middle school. If the names of Caedmon graduates often appear on honor roles in middle and high school, and their creative work and sportsmanship frequently attract attention, it is because they habitually engage in learning with a confidence born of self-awareness and conceptual understanding - as well as academic skill. This is Montessori.

Q. Is there any one middle school that most graduates of Caedmon attend?

A. No. Caedmon is not, nor does it aim to be, a “feeder school” to any particular institution. New York City independent middle schools understand that Caedmon’s priority is finding the best school for each child. Caedmon is thus able to provide optimal access for our children to the entire array of academic opportunities.

Q. To what NYC independent schools are Caedmon graduates accepted?

A. Last year, Caedmon graduates were accepted to the following NYC middle schools: The Brearley School, Brooklyn Heights Montessori School, The Calhoun School, The Chapin School, Columbia Grammar & Preparatory School, The Dalton School, Friends Seminary, The Hewitt School, Horace Mann School, Manhattan Country School, Marymount School, The Nightingale-Bamford School, Poly Prep Country Day School, Spence School, Trevor Day School, Trinity School, United Nations International School, and York Preparatory School.

In addition, recent graduates have been accepted at the following special public middle schools: Hunter College High School, The New York City Museum School, The School of the Future, and East Side Middle School.

Q. Do Caedmon graduates continue to do well in later school experiences?

A. Caedmon graduates flourish at independent upper schools throughout Manhattan. Beyond that, Caedmon alums attend universities of every character and caliber, including, in recent years: Boston University, Cornell, Drew University, Emerson, Lehigh University, University of Miami at Ohio, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Northwestern University, Tulane University, Vassar College, Indiana University, New York University, Skidmore, Smith, Vanderbilt University, Wesleyan, and Yale.

Time and again, Caedmon alums have voiced the heartfelt conviction that their success in higher education was directly attributable to the firm foundation they received at Caedmon.

Q. To whom may I direct further questions regarding life after Caedmon?

A. Parents who are deeply engaged in their child’s

future are often susceptible to misinformation and rumor, resulting in anxiety or confusion that is entirely avoidable through direct communication with the proper individuals. Should you have further concerns about transitioning from Caedmon to middle school, we strongly encourage you to bring them directly to either the Educational Director or the Head of School. Keeping you well informed is an essential part of our efforts to bring your children successfully through Caedmon and on to their next academic adventure.

In Conclusion:

The Elementary Program at The Caedmon School is a proven, comprehensive preparation for continuing education in middle school and beyond. Once begun, it is most beneficial when children are allowed to complete the program and graduate from fifth grade.

It is a common myth that enrolling one’s child into a Kindergarten - 12th grade program will allow the family to settle in securely “for the long haul”. Statistics show, however, that such families usually end up transferring at the middle or upper school levels anyway. This is all the more reason to follow through with an elementary program such as Caedmon’s.

Switching academic and social environments in the middle of Caedmon’s program may address certain parental anxieties, but may also deprive children of the benefits of a total elementary school experience, such as: the continuity of academic evaluation, social bonding, progressively moving through anticipated levels of achievement, and the rewards of attaining the highest ranks within their community.

Caedmon is convinced that the best preparation for the competitive academic environment of middle and high school is one in which young children are individually challenged to master every necessary skill, while being allowed the intellectual time and the emotional space to enjoy learning.