



## Q and A

### *How did your school begin?*

After teaching in a public elementary school for five years, Stephanie Kling was interested in implementing the Charlotte Mason philosophy in a smaller classroom setting. In 2006, a group of Crestwood families approached Stephanie about starting such a neighborhood preschool in her home.

Crestwood Day School began with three preschool-aged students in the fall of 2006. This school year, we have eighteen students enrolled, along with 3 teachers. We have a K4, K-1, and 2-3<sup>rd</sup> grade class. We take each year at a time, but we hope to grow along with our oldest class. So next year we will go up to 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

We believe that education is about more than training for a job, passing an exam, or getting into the right college. It's about finding out who we are and how we fit into the world God created. The teachers see their primary role as creating worshippers.

### *Who is Charlotte Mason?*

Charlotte Mason was a British educator in the early 1900s who wrote extensively to develop a philosophy of Christian education. At first, many of the people who implemented her ideas were home schooling parents.

Soon, groups banded together to form schools throughout England that were based upon her philosophy of education. She established a well respected teacher's college in England that included a small practicing school in which teachers learned to apply her principles of education. The primary reasons we draw heavily on her philosophy of education are the following: interwoven biblical principles throughout; comprehensive philosophy to include the nature of children, learning, knowledge, and the teacher; and a theory that was tested and used. We are aware of no other philosophy of education that has such depth in these three components.

### *What is the philosophy/methods of a Charlotte Mason education?*

Charlotte Mason believed that education was "an atmosphere, a discipline, and a life." She believed in making school more like home, with a safe environment that fostered creativity and a "gentle art of learning." She thought that lessons should be completed in the morning, so that afternoons can be spent playing outside.

Some of the main components of her philosophy are:

- using "living books" instead of dry, factual textbooks
- using narration as a means of evaluating a child's thinking and remembering
- having short lessons which help train children in the habit of attention
- an emphasis on nature study as a way to learn more about God's creation
- a study of French
- a great deal of time should be spent outdoors
- exposing children to art, music, Shakespeare, poetry
- learning different handicrafts like sewing, weaving, and knitting
- a love of God brings a love of learning

For more about a CM education, see page titled, "What is a Charlotte Mason Education?"

## How can I find more about Charlotte Mason and her philosophy of education?

Stephanie highly recommends reading *When Children Love to Learn: A Practical Application of Charlotte Mason's Philosophy for Today* by Elaine Cooper. Other helpful books are: *A Charlotte Mason Companion: Personal Reflections on the Gentle Art of Learning* by Karen Andreola and *For the Children's Sake: Foundations of Education for the Home and School* by Susan Schaeffar Macaulay.

Helpful websites:

<http://www.amblesideonline.org/>

<http://simplycharlottemason.com/>

## Do you accept students of different faiths?

Yes, CDS does not require any student or parent to sign a statement of faith, as long as there is clear understanding and support of the school's commitment to Christ-centered education. Teachers, staff and board members are all required to sign a statement of faith.

## What does a typical day look like?

All of the children attend school from 9am to 1pm, Monday through Wednesday. The older class also attends on Thursdays from 9am to 2pm. During this time, our day is filled with short lessons that include: Bible, Poetry, Reading, Handwriting, Copywork, Science, History, Nature Study, Math, Writing, and Handicraft. Fridays are used as a day for families to reinforce learning at home. We love how this allows children plenty of time to play outside and pursue personal interests.

If you're interested in coming to visit our school, please e-mail Stephanie at [stephanie@crestwooddayschool.org](mailto:stephanie@crestwooddayschool.org)

## How do students learn what is necessary with shortened days?

We maintain extremely low student-teacher ratios. Teachers are able to spend more one-on-one time with the children, differentiating instruction to fit their needs. Learning is more about quality than quantity. With smaller classes, we are able to cut down on wasted time during our school day. We also require that parents commit to a very high degree of involvement in their child's education.

## How is CDI different than a classical school?

During the time that Charlotte Mason was an educator in England, the classical method was the only method used, so you will find many similarities among the two philosophies.

The Simply Charlotte Mason website gives a good comparison of the two types of education:

- Both advocate living books, though Classical tolerates textbooks more than CM does.
- Both use narration, and several other methods are compatible between both.
- CM places an emphasis on a generous education that includes music and art more than Classical does.
- Classical can be described as rigorous and systematic, while CM takes a more gentle approach and allows for more flexibility; this difference is seen especially in the younger grades. For example, Classical introduces writing composition earlier and studies it as a subject; while CM depends on oral narration and a smooth transition into written narration in later grades without studying composition as a separate subject. Second, Classical encourages more parent explanations/ instruction and distilling of information than CM does. Third, Classical advocates studying grammar at an earlier age than CM does.