



Small Class Program

Who we are drives what we do.

Welcome to Montcrest

This is our shared approach for the Small Class Program at Montcrest. It has been developed by listening, watching and understanding what makes Montcrest a unique place to learn and grow from the perspective of learners, teachers, and leaders.



The World Needs Different Thinkers

At Montcrest, we celebrate the unique gifts of every child. We aim to meet students where they are by providing individualized and specialized support. Montcrest teachers are dedicated to ensuring the success of each student and have the expertise to work with neurodiverse students.

Small Class, Big Ideas

We understand that not everyone learns in the same way. That's why our Small Class (typically 8:1; maximum of 10:1 student:teacher ratio) Program aims to teach those with specific learning profiles “how to do school” in a way that suits them best. This focused setting creates opportunities for:

- Multiple check-ins throughout the day;
- Systematic review of material;
- Personalized approaches to learning support;
- Increased participation in each class;
- Explicit Executive Function instruction.


As a student moves through our Small Class Program, these supports gradually fade away to foster growing independence with each transition, especially from grade seven to eight and beyond.




What's our approach?

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A commitment to these five areas:

 Experienced and Practised Special Education Teachers

 Unlocking Grade-Level Curriculum

 Structured, Evidence-Based Programming & Approaches

 Targeted Intervention

 A Safe Space to Grow and Learn Self-advocacy



Experienced and Practised Special Education Teachers

All of our Small Class teachers have special education training and experience. Each of our teachers has a passion for problem-solving when it comes to supporting unique learners. We also have the know-how. Our years of training and experience gives us a rich toolbox of learning strategies. We systematically help students try out those tools until they find the ones that best fit their way of learning.



Unlocking Grade-Level Curriculum

The Small Class Program balances support with independence and prioritizes core subject content to allow students to access their own conceptual understanding of grade-level topics. With the right learning tools in hand, Small Class students learn to equip themselves to access grade-level content. Small Class teachers and students work together to minimize the brain power consumed by learning challenges in order to maximize thinking and expression of studied concepts. Along the way, Small Class teachers strategically adjust pacing and output expectations to ensure each student is working at their just-right level of challenge.



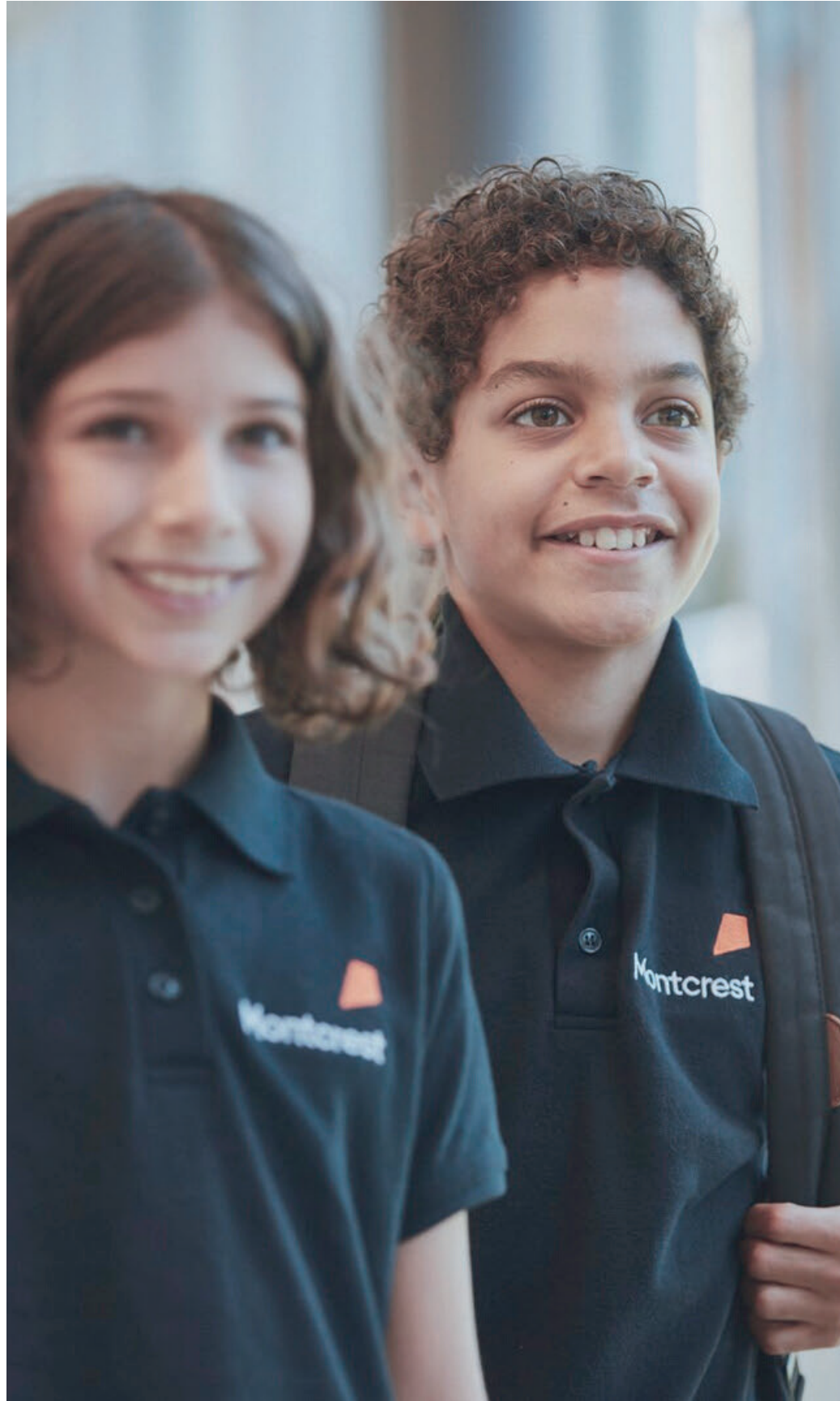
Structured, Evidence-Based Programming & Approaches

Along with equipping students with learning strategies, the Small Class strategically implements evidence-based learning programs that get results. Our special education team includes teachers trained in specific programs like Empower™ Reading (from grades 2 to 6) — developed by SickKids right here in Toronto. Programs like these systematically teach students in ways that decades of research show to be effective. These programs help us create and assess each student's Individual Education Plan and inform our own programming each step of the way.



Targeted Intervention

Our Small Class Program supports students still working towards mastery of core skills in Math, Reading and Writing. In addition to the training of our special education teachers, Small Class students up to Grade 5 have prioritized access to Montcrest's Learning Support faculty for small group instruction. Teachers and students work together to reinforce those skills and strategies in class.



A Safe Space to Grow and Learn Self-advocacy

The Small Class is a community where students can feel in control of their own learning. From that feeling grows confidence and the courage to take creative risks. Small Class students actively learn self-advocacy skills to implement or ask for what they need to do their best learning. Those are the skills that can help them succeed in any classroom and out in the world.

"You've got this"

Montcrest School

In other words, a reminder that you are here for a reason; you bring an unshakeable foundation of courage, self-reliance and get-back-on-the-horse-ness. Anything that comes your way is a challenge worth taking and whether they work or not, taking a risk here is not seen as a negative, rather inspiring others to attempt new ways to teach and learn.



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