



LOWER SCHOOL, GRADES K - 5

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The learning environment in the Lower School is designed to address the emotional, intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual needs of each child. The development of decision-making skills and social skills is fostered in an affirming atmosphere. Various grouping techniques and strategies are used to enhance learning. As students progress through the grades, they assume greater responsibility for independent work and for effective participation in cooperative group endeavors. Students receive classroom instruction in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. In addition, students receive instruction from special area teachers in art, Christian education, music, physical education, Spanish, computer lab, science lab, and library. The curriculum is further enhanced through relevant field trips, guest speakers, and participation in community cultural events and outreach programs. Students attend Chapel and Eucharist services each week.

Language Arts

The language arts program fosters the development of effective reading, writing, listening, speaking, and research skills. A traditional phonetic approach, supported by good literature is the core of the reading program. Students are instructed in reading comprehension skills, vocabulary development, sequencing, drawing conclusions, predicting outcomes, word analysis skills, and spelling. The language arts program encourages and cultivates appreciation and enthusiasm for literature and provides a variety of opportunities for oral and written expression. Students are taught to write through enjoyable structured activities with

emphasis on the use of appropriate grammar and effective writing process strategies. Students are exposed to a variety of different writing styles and genres. Book reports, individual and group projects, and library classes encourage independent reading and provide opportunities for students to practice skills. Students develop speaking skills by participating in poetry and verse recitations, and grade level programs. Author visits and computer software programs supplement the curriculum.

Mathematics

The math program helps students understand that math is useful and important in daily living. Math concepts taught include traditional arithmetic skills, computation, and problem solving. Concepts are introduced, revisited, and mastered through repeated exposure. Word problems, mental math problems, games, software programs, and the use of manipulative materials are key components of the math curriculum.

Science

The science program provides students with a solid foundation of knowledge about life, earth, physical, and health sciences. The program emphasizes scientific and critical thinking processes to help students become more effective problem solvers. Students participate in a weekly science lab that correlates with classroom instruction. Relevant field trips and guest speakers inspire students and help them understand concepts taught in the classroom.

Social Studies

The social studies program assists students in developing an understanding of the world around them through the exploration of history, geography, government, communities, and cultures of the world. Students integrate and share their knowledge through a variety of individual and group projects. Relevant field trips, guest speakers and participation in on-campus cultural events such as Colonial Day and International Day enhance the curriculum.

Art

The art program is designed to build a climate in which purposeful endeavors, search and inquiry, individuality, and creativity thrive. Students are exposed to various elements of art, mediums, and principles of design. The program is supplemented by relevant activities that include field trips and participation in community art events. Students receive formal art instruction once a week.

Christian Education

The Christian education program provides each student with a means to practice faith in daily living and builds a foundation for a lifelong spiritual relationship with God. Christian education classes, taught by the Chaplain, are provided at every grade level. Students participate in outreach programs throughout the year. The school community worships in the sanctuary for Chapel services on Wednesdays and Eucharist services on Fridays.

Music

The music program allows students to experience music on three levels: responding, perceiving, and producing music through voice and instruments. Students' talents are showcased through annual grade-level music programs and individual performances during Chapel and Eucharist services.

Physical Education

The physical education program focuses on developing motor skills and acquiring socially acceptable ways to interact with others in a physical activity. The development of specialized skills and strategies for team sports becomes the focal point of the program in upper elementary grades. All students, beginning with first grade, participate in the Presidential Physical Fitness program.

Spanish

The Spanish program incorporates methods and techniques that emulate first language acquisition, allowing students to learn Spanish in the same natural way they learn English. Students begin with basic vocabulary and progress in later grades to conversational Spanish and reading and writing skills.

Technology

In computer lab, students are introduced to basic computer skills and progress to proper keyboarding techniques, file management, word processing, and advanced research skills. Students are instructed in relevant Internet activities and various presentation software programs. In fourth and fifth grades, portable laptop computers are available for student use.

Resource Program

A resource teacher is on staff to provide additional skill reinforcement for students in lower school grades.

Field Trips

Field trips are scheduled throughout the year by the classroom teachers to enhance the curriculum of the particular grade level. Activities include visits to local governmental agencies, museums, art galleries, concerts, plays, wildlife refuges, and environmental areas. The cost of all trips is included in tuition.

Class Trips

The fourth and fifth grades have an opportunity to participate in annual class trips which are planned in conjunction with the curriculum for that grade level. The fourth grade travels by bus for a day trip to the Kennedy Space Center. Fifth grade students travel by bus to St. Augustine for a two-day stay. Parents are advised of the cost of these trips in advance.

