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Curriculum Statement

Head of School, working with the administration staff, is responsible for designing the school curriculum within the guidelines of the school's philosophy and objectives.

The ACS Cobham curriculum is based on American educational aims and therefore uses sanctioned materials (textbooks and teachers' guides) from the United States. These materials are created by major US educational publishers who work from very strict guidelines set by the State Department of Education. Our materials and curriculum reflect those used in the accredited independent schools in the US, thus allowing our students admission into the American system of higher education (universities and colleges).

We add to the core curriculum by taking the circumstances of our international student body and its particular situation into account. We create appropriate goals and related activities in order to meet specific needs of our students who are not involved in the core programme (ie International Baccalaureate).

It is the responsibility of the Head of School and his designated assistants (Principals) to develop an on-going programme of curriculum development to ensure that the school curriculum is up-to-date in its course offerings, textbook selection, university admission requirements and teacher training.

Statement of Philosophy

ACS International Schools is:

- A dynamic educational community made up of international students, teachers, supporting staff and parents
- Accredited by The New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

We offer:

- A secular, American based curriculum for students aged 2 to 18
- An American High School Diploma
- The International Baccalaureate Diploma
- Advanced Placement courses.

The success of our programme is based on:

- Teamwork, collaboration, and the broad participation of our community
- The pool of diverse ideas, experiences, and values which our community offers through the involvement of each individual
- A thorough awareness of educational programmes throughout the world
- Continuous learning and professional development.

We provide:

- Each student with the opportunity and support to reach their full potential
- Each family with effective guidance to pursue the next step in each student's formal education.

We believe that:

- All students can learn and each is a unique individual with equal potential to make a positive contribution to our school community
- It is important to instill an enthusiasm for life-long learning in each student along with the skills necessary to prepare for the challenges and changes which will be faced in their future
- Our students must develop the skills and understanding that will enable them to become responsible, contributing citizens of the global community
- Physical activity, a healthy diet, and well-informed decision-making are important for a healthy lifestyle
- Self expression is enhanced through the development of aesthetic appreciation.

We support our philosophy through:

- High standards of achievement and performance
- A developmental, student-centred approach to teaching
- A comprehensive and varied curriculum aimed at understanding
- A constructivist approach to learning and understanding through the development of critical and creative thinking skills
- Independent learning skills and self-reflection in the learning process
- Constructive feedback for learning
- Nurturing a strong sense of self-esteem, personal integrity, and a respectful, caring attitude toward others
- Developing an understanding of, and appreciation for, the philosophies of people from many different cultures
- Facing problems within a framework of fairness and shared values
- Nurturing a sense of responsibility for our environment
- Encouraging participation in fine arts through a variety of fine arts opportunities
- Teaching the principles associated with healthy living and encouraging participation in physical activity.

Lower School Statement of Philosophy

The Lower School teachers work together to provide a stimulating and positive environment in which children learn, grow and appreciate cultural diversities.

We believe in an inquiry-based approach to the process of learning that emphasises creative and critical thinking.

We recognise and address the broad range of developmental needs of children aged 2 to 10 years. We support these needs by assisting students in the transition from home to school, encouraging positive social interaction with peers and providing opportunities for students to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for life-long learning and successful social interactions.

We value the importance of maintaining close communications with families to promote the development of the whole child.

Introduction

In keeping with the school's stated philosophy, developing the whole child starts in the Lower School at the age of 2 in the Scramblers programme.

Our programme encourages continuous learning. It teaches students to develop the fundamental skills necessary for independent learning and successful problem solving. Teachers provide learning experiences which are appropriate to a student's age, learning readiness and stage of development. We take a developmental, student-centred approach to instruction that capitalises on each student's strengths and supports each student's weaknesses. The school fosters a warm, caring learning environment with freedom of expression and respect for others as key elements.

The academic programme consists of four core subjects: Language Arts – Reading and Writing; Mathematics; Science and Social Studies. Special subjects taught by specialists consist of Art, Music, Computers, Physical Education, French, Library, Dance and Movement, and People Skills.

We provide additional support for children who are learning English as an additional language. The Lower School resource teachers offer a collaborative, team-based approach to design and implement modifications that support student learning.

This curriculum provides an overview of the subjects studied at each grade level and gives information on the content of each course. The following table relates your child's age to our grade levels.

| Age | Entry Grade |
|----------|-----------------------|
| 2-3 yrs | Flopsy Bunnies |
| 3-4 yrs | Scramblers |
| 4-5 yrs | Pre-Kindergarten |
| 5-6 yrs | Kindergarten |
| 6-7 yrs | 1 st Grade |
| 7-8 yrs | 2 nd Grade |
| 8-9 yrs | 3 rd Grade |
| 9-10 yrs | 4 th Grade |

Foundation Years Course Overview

Flopsy Bunnies (R3), Scramblers (TYO), Pre-Kindergarten

The Foundation years support ACS Cobham’s philosophy with a commitment to a constructivist, child-centred approach to teaching young children. Our teachers are committed to developmentally appropriate practice, which provides the guidelines and principles that define and meet the educational and developmental needs and interests of our students. Two of the major theoretical principles that define our practices are that young children learn best when they actively construct their own knowledge, and that the young child learns best through play.

Play is correctly described as the ‘work’ of young children, providing them with the opportunities to explore and experiment, which are the key components of the construction of knowledge. Play allows children to develop their imaginations, become more creative, solve problems and examine and refine what they have learned.

Through the construction of knowledge, children are given opportunities to theorise, analyse, hypothesise and synthesise. They begin to grasp the consequences of actions, learn to persist in seeking solutions to problems and speculate about cause and effect relationships.

The landmark Childcare Act 2006 and the Every Child Matters outcomes underpin all that we do to help children stay safe, be healthy, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being.

The curriculum is organised into 6 areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional
- Communication, Language and Literacy
- Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World
- Physical
- Creative

All of these areas are equally important and delivered in an integrated way, through planned activities, games, play situations and with age appropriate equipment. A balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities, are presented in a range of contexts:

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Flopsy Bunnies | Ourselves | Forest | Dragons | Ocean |
| Scramblers | See the world through... | Traditional stories | Transport, Safety and journeys | Homes |
| Pre-K | Me, and my School Light/Shadow | Beautiful stuff – recycling | Rainforest | Celebrations |

We believe the development of a child from two to five lays the foundation for all future learning. Our teachers create safe and happy environments where children can become inquisitive learners and skilled problem solvers. The programme aims to provide young children with the best and most developmentally appropriate experiences possible in order to enable them to become lifelong learners, filled with curiosity about our world.

K-4th Grade Language Arts Overview

The **Language Arts** programme focuses on students acquiring the skills to read, write, speak and listen well, and to examine and process information using these interrelated skills. The programme is based on international and US Primary Literacy standards and benchmarks (see below) and grade level expectations.

The **Reading** programme is based on the following standards and benchmarks:

1. Reading Habits: Student's will acquire the habit of reading for understanding and enjoyment: Reading Quantity, Reading Behaviours, Discussing Texts and Vocabulary
2. Getting the Meaning: Students will demonstrate skills and apply strategies for reading a variety of literary genres and informational text: Accuracy and Fluency, Self-Monitoring and Self-Correcting and Comprehension
3. (K-2) Reading Process: Students will develop and acquire strategies for the reading process – Knowledge of letters and sounds, Phonemic Awareness, and Reading Words.

An assessment that measures student's reading levels, strategies and skills is used by all teachers from Kindergarten through 4th Grade. The Bonnie Campbell Hill Reading Continuum, which is US and internationally recognised, serves as a helpful tool for teachers to track individual's reading progress and is recorded and reported to parents.

The information collected from these assessments drives teacher's whole-class, small-group, and individual reading instruction through the year.

The **Writing** programme is based on the following standards and benchmarks:

4. Writing Process: Students will develop an understanding of the writing process and apply that understanding in all written work: Develop, organise and communicate ideas using appropriate voice; Assess own and peers' written work; Apply grammar and usage rules for precise word choice and sentence fluency; Develop control of Conventions
5. Writing Genres and Purposes: Students will write in a variety of genres for different purposes and audiences. The six writing genres: narrative, recounts, procedures, reports, explanations and expositions are taught in 1st-4th Grades through the First Steps Writing Programme. Writing assessment is documented through the BCH Writing Continuum.

All grades use the writing workshop model of instruction to teach specific units of writing. These units teach particular genres, processes or authors' craft technique. As in reading instruction, writing instruction takes place in the form of whole-class and small-group lessons as well as individual reading conferences. A key component of writing workshops is the use of authentic literature to model the element of writing being studied by the class.

Speaking and Listening activities are based on the following standards:

6. Speaking: Students will speak clearly, fluently and confidently to different people
7. Listening: Students will listen, understand and respond to others
8. Speaking and Listening: Students will participate in group discussions and interactions.

K-4th Grade Mathematics Overview

The Lower School's **Mathematics** curriculum is based on the school's adoption of the Everyday Mathematics programme (McGraw Hill) for Kindergarten through 4th Grade. Everyday Math was developed by the University of Chicago School Math Project in order to enable elementary grades to learn more mathematical content and become life-long mathematical thinkers. This is a spiralling curriculum as concepts are more fully understood after repeated exposures. The Programme goals are based on the US National Council for Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) standards and benchmarks and are organised by the following content strands which extend across all grade levels:

- Numeration and Order
- Operations and Computation
- Patterns, Functions and Sequences
- Algebra and Uses of Variables
- Geometry and Spatial Sense
- Measures and Measurement
- Reference Frames
- Data and Chance.

The Everyday Math lessons are based on the following components: Math Message; Math games; Math Boxes for review and skills maintenance; major instructional activities; ongoing learning and practice; and differentiation options. 1st through 4th Grade teachers allocate a minimum of 60 minutes per day for Everyday Math instruction as this is required by the programme to complete all the strands and units over the period of a year. Everyday Math in Kindergarten is a major resource but not the complete Math programme.

In Everyday Math, students start by developing easy strategies and then move on to more sophisticated methods of problem solving as they progress through the grades. They develop the following process skills: mental arithmetic skills and reflexes; estimation and number sense; problem solving and mathematical modelling; algorithmic and procedural thinking. Therefore, the games component is a vital part of the programme for both classroom and home use.

Everyday Math assessment is based on a continuum of beginning, developing and secure goals, which are presented to students and parents at the beginning of each unit. Each student is evaluated on these goals through a variety of assessment strategies and an individual checklist is sent home at the end of each unit. End of unit tests help determine how well the students have mastered the secure goals and how well they are progressing on the beginning and developing ones. The Everyday Math programme is very comprehensive and builds in differentiated instruction for a wide range of skills from students who struggle with math to students who need to be challenged mathematically.

Home links (1st to 3rd Grade) and Study links (4th Grade) from Everyday Mathematics are sent home throughout each unit to reinforce and support what is being covered in class. They consist of active projects and ongoing review problems and are sent home weekly. Everyday Math interactive parent presentations are provided annually by grade level teams and at parent coffees.

K-4th Grade Science Overview

Science in the Lower School builds upon the children's natural curiosity and inquisitiveness. Students develop scientific literacy and acquire scientific knowledge essential to understanding, so that they may become independent learners.

The Science programme is based on the school's adopted National Science Education Standards (NSES):

1. Science as Inquiry
2. Physical Science (Physical and Chemical)
3. Life Science
4. Earth and Space Science
5. Environment, Technology and Society.

Science in the 1st to 4th Grades is based on a balance of Earth, Life, Physical and Environmental Science. The curriculum provides students with experiences and training in observing, predicting, recording, experimenting, evaluating and communicating results. The programme emphasises a hands-on approach, with opportunities to interact as directly as possible with the natural world. This approach allows children to practice problem solving skills, develop positive science attitudes, learn new science content and increase their scientific literacy. Each grade level participates in one science fair during the year.

There is a Science Laboratory and a Science teacher, with weekly Science lessons built into the schedule. 1st to 4th Grades come to the Science Lab once a week to carry out an inquiry based investigation. The lessons in the Science Lab will then be followed up by further Science lessons in the classroom. Some of the lessons take place outdoors and make use of the extensive campus, including the pond and outdoor classroom.

Kindergarten classes teach scientific topics through integrated science and social studies units based on discovery themes, eg Penguins, Eggs and Insects.

K-4th Grade Social Studies Overview

The Lower school's Social Studies curriculum is based on schoolwide adoption of the National Council of Social Studies (NCSS) standards which consist of the following ten themes:

1. Culture: Sociology/Anthropology
2. Time, Continuity and Change: History
3. People, Places and Environment: Geography
4. Individual Development and Identity: Psychology
5. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions: Political Science
6. Power, Authority, and Governance: Government
7. Production, Distribution, and Consumption: Economics
8. Science, Technology, and Society
9. Global Connections: Sustainability
10. Civic Ideals and Practices: Citizenship.

Grade levels teach three to four Social Studies units per year built upon these NCSS themes, which serve as the vehicle for the development of skills and globally minded attitudes. In order to understand the local heritage of our host country, each grade has at least one unit based on an element of British life or culture. To honour our diverse student body and build internationally-minded thinkers, grade levels are developing units with links to one of the major continents in the world.

Unit Topics:

Kindergarten: Our life on campus, British Farm Life, Winter Customs and Traditions, Penguins in Antarctica, Creepy Crawlies in the British Countryside.

1st Grade: Everybody Eats Bread, mapping skills, a child's life in England compared to a child's life in Africa.

2nd Grade: Community building, Children at Work and School in Victorian England; India-Cultural Connections and Comparisons with England.

3rd Grade: Class Cultures and Identity, Indigenous Peoples: New Zealand and Australia, North and South America, Exploration and Innovation, Tudors in Britain.

4th Grade: European Geography, Sustainability, Introduction to Celts and Romans in Britain, Economics and Consumerism.

Work with these units is interdisciplinary and language arts plays an integral part. Students read and interact with non-fiction text for shared and guided reading and the writing genre pieces are sometimes related to the topics. In addition, the creative arts, library and technology, as well as People Skills classes make connections with the topics.

Our social studies units are enhanced by enrichment opportunities. At the Annual LS International Fair, over 30 country booths, organised by parents, promote an understanding of the cultures present at ACS. In addition, an exciting variety of projects, visitors and field trips foster active participation, critical thinking and appreciation for the topics studied. These include drama presentations, museum trips and presentations.

Flopsy Bunnies Course Descriptions

Communication, Language and Literacy

Our youngest children are given as many opportunities as possible to become skillful communicators. They learn how to use language to share thoughts, feelings and ideas, as well as listening and responding to others. The children enjoy sharing stories, songs, rhymes and games. As their vocabulary increases, the children make sense of the world through negotiating, questioning, describing and labelling.

Problem solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

In Flopsy Bunnies all mathematical experiences are related to their world and developed through playing, exploring and investigating everyday objects. Children discover that one thing can represent something else, and also begin to create and experiment with their own symbols and marks.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Children are encouraged to find out about their environment through movement, sensory exploration and interactions with other people. Young children make connections by repeating patterns of play. They find patterns, make comparisons, categorise and classify.

Creative Development

Children engage in concentrated imaginative play in which they extend their language and try out new ideas, feelings, relationships and movement. With the help of props, people and resources, children re-enact familiar scenes. They use 'many languages' to express themselves, such as dance, music, 2D and 3D art.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Flopsy Bunny children have a growing awareness of self. They begin to recognise personal characteristics and preferences, as well as discovering some of their own capabilities. Exploring emotional boundaries, young children develop self-assurance and a sense of belonging, through the consistent support of trusted adults.

Physical Development

This area of learning concentrates on the physical well-being of the children. They are encouraged to eat a healthy diet and drink water at appropriate times. Young children are acquiring physical skills and need a range of opportunities to take part in fine and gross motor activities, inside and outside the classroom. While discovering and learning about their bodies, they begin to make choices and develop an awareness of keeping safe. We want our Flopsy Bunnies to be active, rested and protected.

Enrichment

To enhance the curriculum, special visitors are invited to the school to present developmentally appropriate topics. ACS Cobham's large grounds are also used extensively to develop all areas of learning.

Scramblers Course Descriptions (1 of 2)

Communication, Language and Literacy

Communication, language and literacy permeate all areas of the Scramblers programme. This provides a stimulating environment in which communication and language skills can be nurtured and developed, thereby promoting visual, auditory and tactile experiences.

Learning will be achieved via a mixture of adult directed and structured play activities and delivered through cross-curricular and topic-based themes.

Problem solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

In Scramblers, we provide all children with broad and varied experiences in which mathematical language, skills and concepts can be created, supported and nurtured.

The children will have an opportunity to use and apply mathematical skills and concepts in everyday situations. Mathematics is not seen as a separate unit but rather as part of the whole curriculum and potential for developing mathematical awareness is built into many of the activities.

Confidence and enthusiasm will be supported through sensitive adult guidance, which will provide for open-ended questioning and the development of mathematical thinking and language.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Our programme offers children opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to make sense of the world. In addition, we aim to provide the children with firsthand experiences that encourage observation, exploration, prediction, problem solving, decision making and discussion. Young children use all their senses to learn about the world around them and make connections between new information and what they already know.

Physical Development

This learning area promotes enthusiasm, enjoyment and confidence in developing and using the physical skills of coordination, control, manipulation and movement. Young children's physical development is inseparable from other aspects of development, children learn through being active and interactive, within a variety of environments, both indoors and outdoors.

Physical Development is concerned with both fine and gross motor coordination and development. Fine motor development includes handling tools and objects independently with increasing control. Gross motor development encourages the child to travel around, under, over through balancing and climbing equipment to promote control, confidence and a concern for safety.

Creative Development

Creative Development allows the children to express their ideas and feelings and promotes the development of their imaginations. This area is concerned with art, craft, music, dance, role-play and all forms of imaginative work.

The children will have the opportunity to explore a wide range of materials and media, so they can begin to appreciate and understand the many possibilities of the arts.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

We aim to promote and develop children's self-esteem and responsibility, together with an understanding of their own experience and those of others.

In Scramblers, the children will be given the opportunity to form positive relationships in a setting that supports mutual respect and understanding, as well as celebrating and acknowledging cultural differences.

Our programme also aims to provide the children with first hand experiences that encourage observation, exploration, prediction, problem solving, decision making and discussion.

Scramblers Course Descriptions (2 of 2)

Enrichment

We invite special visitors and theatres to present relevant topics to our Scramblers special events on site.

French

The French programme involves the children in two 20 minute lessons each week. The focus is speaking and listening and children engage in interactive activities to enrich their auditory discrimination. These include rhymes, finger plays and action songs with regular singalong performances for parents.

Pre-Kindergarten Course Descriptions (1 of 2)

Communication, Language and Literacy

A variety of creative activities, such as language games, circle time and dramatic play strengthen children's verbal communication.

Children are offered a range of opportunities to develop good listening skills.

Children in Pre-Kindergarten expand and develop their pre-reading skills by practising reading-like behaviour, matching the flow of their own language with book illustrations and print. They also read pictures and/or text for themselves or listen to the teacher read. With opportunities to tell or dramatise their own versions of stories, they show comprehension of what they have read or heard. They discuss characters, setting and make predictions about story sequence. Children expand and develop their pre-writing skills by observing many examples of purposeful written language.

They extend the awareness that writing transforms thoughts, ideas and feelings into print symbols that communicate meaning. They are encouraged to become confident in utilising their own versions of writing, eg: drawing, scribbling and letter-like approximations. Emphasis is on the development of the children's confidence and willingness to try, rather than the development of their skills in performing.

Problem solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

Children develop a sense of number, number symbols and their meanings and expand on basic ideas and vocabulary through a variety of manipulatives, games, water and sand play and through discussions.

Activities in Pre-Kindergarten serve to introduce and broaden basic understanding of number concepts. The formal instruction of number begins in Kindergarten. Children explore and connect Mathematics to their everyday real life experience. Everyday Math is used alongside other resources and materials.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Children are encouraged to observe, discuss and discover for themselves their expanding world independently. They use multiple sensory abilities when gathering information. They examine natural objects, animals and phenomena in their classroom and outside in the environment.

Physical Development

Physical Development in Pre-Kindergarten is about improving skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. Physical Development has two other very important aspects; it helps children gain confidence in what they can do and enables them to feel the positive benefits of being healthy and active. Effective Physical Development helps children develop a positive sense of well-being.

To give all children the best opportunities for effective Physical Development, we offer activities that encourage physical challenges, both indoors and outdoors, giving sufficient time for children to use a range of equipment that can be used in a variety of ways or to support specific skills, while introducing the language of movement to children, alongside their actions.

A specialist teacher instructs and supports this programme.

Pre-Kindergarten Course Descriptions (2 of 2)

Creative Development

Children's individual creativity is valued. They are encouraged to respond imaginatively to areas including music, art, movement and dramatic play. Multi-sensory materials are available within each classroom to enable children to discover their creativity. By making choices, the children are encouraged to extend their individual creative abilities.

The art specialist works alongside the teacher throughout the year to support collaborative projects. For 30 minutes per week, children have the opportunity to work with a dance and movement teacher where they develop body awareness, rhythm and motor skills. A music specialist supports rhythm and psychomotor skills as well as activities for creative movement, percussion instruments and singing.

Personal/Social and Emotional

We teach the whole child, paying particular attention to the social and emotional growth of our students. Teachers build safe and happy environments where students become comfortable with their own individual play and learning styles. They begin to work cooperatively in small groups where they learn to respect and listen to others.

Enrichment

We organise workshops and performances from outside sources to enrich and enhance our curriculum. An example would be, a drama or puppet making workshop for the children from a local children's theatre.

French

Every week for 15 minutes, a French specialist encourages children to feel confident and enjoy the experience of learning another language and culture.

Kindergarten Course Descriptions (1 of 2)

Language Arts

Reading

The Reading programme is comprehensive and developmental (see Language Arts Overview). A major focus of the Kindergarten programme is to develop emergent reading skills through phoneme manipulation and auditory processing. Children must be aware of phonemes in order to grasp the alphabetic principle that governs our system of written language.

Teachers use the Bonnie Campbell Hill Reading Continuum stages of pre-conventional, emerging, and developing to assess students' reading skills and determine the appropriate strategies to guide them individually and in small groups. With the Development Reading Assessment (DRA) word analysis assessments, teachers are able to guide students through levels of the Sundance reading series as a major resource.

Teachers also read a variety of literature, e.g. big books and picture books, to their classes in order to build an understanding of reading related concepts such as print awareness, story sense and the parts of a book. A daily block of time with the classroom teacher is allocated for reading instruction; reading is also integrated into Social Studies and Science units and library time.

Writing

Reading and writing are mutually enhancing. An emphasis in Kindergarten is placed on creating a positive climate for language and writing. Students listen to stories, compose stories together and participate in discussions about stories. Children also learn the function of writing as they watch their peers and teachers respond to written messages and words. Children often begin by dictating/orally composing their stories to teachers and/or assistants who print and publish them.

Children are encouraged to progress through the early stages of emergent writing. At this age, there is a wide range of acceptable attempts at writing, and these attempts are always encouraged. In the emerging stages, children frequently represent their stories with drawings and words with only a beginning and ending sound. As they learn to read, they make generalisations about spelling patterns and sound-letter associations. Children gradually learn to create words and sentences.

Handwriting

The children learn to write upper and lower case letters, as well as numerals to 20.

Mathematics

The Kindergarten Mathematics curriculum is based on the following major strands of content and process skills:

- **Number and Numeration:** Key concepts in the general area of mathematics are introduced, including the recognition and correct formation of numerals between 1 and 20, ordinal numbers, place value, estimation and counting by 1s, 2s, 5s and 10s
- **Addition and Subtraction:** Students are introduced to the correct use of the plus, minus and equal signs. Using manipulatives, children do addition and subtraction problems to ten
- **Measurement:** The domain of measurement is introduced and comparisons are made using non-standard forms of measurement
- **Time:** The concept of telling time to the hour and half-hour is introduced
- **Graphing:** Students are involved in projects that enable them to recognise and make pictographs, bar graphs and real graphs
- **Problem solving:** Children explore mathematical relationships by using manipulative materials to identify concepts and to solve problems.

Teachers use the Kindergarten Everyday Mathematics programme core activities as a central resource for the curriculum. These include games and manipulatives such as number boards, attribute blocks, monthly calendars, class patterning, estimating clock time, coin exchange, and fraction stories. Students are assessed by the Everyday Math checklist and other tools.

Kindergarten Course Descriptions (2 of 2)

Social Studies and Science

The children develop an understanding of Social Studies and Science topics through the use of "Discovery themes". They explore topics such as the Early Childhood Community, The Farm, Holidays, Cultural Festivals, Penguins, Eggs, the Five Senses and Insects. This method allows for all aspects of the curriculum to be utilised. Reading, writing, dramatisation, cooking, music and art, as well as mathematics are used to engage the children in various hands-on projects. In both Social Studies and Science, the children develop the ability to observe, measure, interpret, and make predictions. Due to the international nature of our student population, emphasis is placed not only on America and Britain, but on other parts of the world as well. Field trips to a working farm and a children's theatre as well as guest speakers complement the Social Studies and Science curriculum.

Personal/Social and Emotional

The children are encouraged to develop the skills necessary for "group" living while, at the same time, a sense of independence is fostered in each child. Every child is valued as an individual and is nurtured in an atmosphere of mutual respect. The children are taught to recognise and appreciate the similarities and differences that exist in our student body.

Play

Play is an important element of the Kindergarten curriculum, in particular for the development of language, problem solving and creativity. Meaningful and constructive play gives children the opportunity to learn a variety of social skills and to practice and restructure existing knowledge.

1st Grade Course Descriptions (1 of 2)

Language Arts

Reading

The Reading programme is comprehensive and developmental (see Language Arts Overview). The focus is on the reading process for understanding as well as reading for enjoyment. Reading materials include a variety of literary genres and informational texts.

Students at this age may read and exhibit behaviours within several stages of the Bonnie Campbell Hill Reading Continuum: emerging, developing, beginning and expanding. They are instructed and assessed on oral reading, reading habits and attitude, reading strategies, comprehension and response, and self-evaluation. Through a variety of assessment tools including the Development Reading Assessment (DRA) and reading continuum, students are guided individually and in small groups by specific instructional strategies. Students use levelled texts from the Lower School levelled library as well as classroom libraries.

For whole-class instruction, teachers read aloud single texts to all students from a variety of genres, Signatures series (Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich), poetry, fiction and non-fiction trade books. To foster independence, teachers and the librarian guide students to self-select books at an appropriate level. A daily block of time with the classroom teacher is allocated for reading instruction; reading is also integrated into Social Studies and Science units and library time.

Writing

Reading and writing in a 1st Grade classroom are mutually enhancing. Reading instruction improves writing and writing instruction improves reading. Teachers provide blocks of time each week for writing activities which focus on students learning and using the writing process. Writing is also integrated into Social Studies and Science so students will write in a variety of genres for different purposes and audiences (see Language Arts overview).

The writing process is introduced and students are encouraged to generate and expand their ideas. Pre-writing activities include collaborative writing, drawing/illustrating, discussion, and dramatisation. At this early stage, the content of the writing is considered more important than accurate spelling and grammar. Revision techniques are introduced and children begin to publish their writing with the help of teachers.

At this age there is a wide range of acceptable attempts at writing. In the early stages, children frequently represent words with only a beginning and ending phonemes. As they learn to read, they make generalisations about spelling patterns and phoneme/grapheme (sound/letter) associations. Children gradually learn to create words, sentences, and paragraphs for different genres including narrative, procedural and informational reports and poetry. Published work is used to model different authors' craft and technique.

Handwriting

Children practice writing numbers and letters in upper case and lower case. Correct formation, size and spacing are emphasised during instruction.

Spelling

Our spelling programme is closely linked to reading and writing. In the 1st Grade, the focus is on developing spelling patterns based on consonant and vowel sounds. Inventive spelling, the process of phonetically sounding out words, is encouraged in early writing. The programme is based on phonemic awareness and sight words. Provision is made for students who need enrichment or review.

Mathematics

The 1st Grade Mathematics curriculum is based on the school's adoption of the Everyday Mathematics programme (McGraw Hill); (see Mathematics Overview). This programme is based on content and process standards, spiralling concepts, problem solving and concept reinforcement through games, and a continuum of skills.

1st Grade Course Descriptions (2 of 2)

The following units are taught in 1st Grade:

1. Establishing Routines
2. Everyday Uses of Numbers
3. Visual Patterns, Number Patterns, Counting
4. Measurement and Basic Facts
5. Place Value, Number Stories, and Basic Facts
6. Developing Fact Power
7. Geometry and Attributes
8. Mental Arithmetic, Money, and Fractions
9. Place Value and Fractions.

For each unit, teachers send home a letter outlining goals, a checklist of goals achieved, and regular home links for review and games.

Science

Science is taught by a science teacher in the science laboratory on a weekly basis.

The 1st Grade Science units are as follows:

- **What Do Scientists Do?** Learning how to observe, ask questions, predict, record and compare data
- **Teeth and Germs** Learning about personal hygiene and how to look after your teeth
- **Sound** Understanding the nature and physical properties of sound
- **British Plants** Identifying the parts of a plant and understanding what plants need to survive, especially at ACS Cobham campus
- **British Animals** Classifying and studying birds and animals at ACS Cobham campus as a habitat
- **African Plants and African Animals** Compared to British plants and animals.

Social Studies

The Social Studies topics are integrated into the whole curriculum with an emphasis on the Language Arts area. The units of study are Community Building, Bread as a Food in Cultures, mapping skills, a Child's Life in Britain compared to a Child's Life in Africa.

A variety of field trips which complement the 1st Grade curriculum, include the London Zoo.

2nd Grade Course Descriptions (1 of 2)

Language Arts

Reading

The Reading programme is comprehensive and developmental (see Language Arts Overview). The focus for 2nd Grade is building and developing fluency and comprehension strategies through a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts.

Students at this age may read and exhibit reading behaviours within several stages of the Bonnie Campbell Hill Reading Continuum: developing, beginning, expanding and bridging. They are instructed and assessed on oral reading, reading habits and attitude, reading strategies, comprehension and response, and self-evaluation. Through a variety of assessment tools including the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and reading continuum, students are guided individually and in small groups by specific instructional strategies. Students use levelled texts from the Lower School levelled library and classroom libraries.

For whole class instruction, teachers read aloud single texts to all students from a variety of sources including picture books, fiction (trade books) as well as non-fiction. For individual instruction, teachers and the librarian guide students to self-select books at an appropriate level. A daily block of time with the classroom teacher is allocated for reading instruction; reading is also integrated into social studies and science units and library time.

Writing

The writing programme focuses on students' learning through the use of authentic literature.

The writing process is emphasised and students are encouraged to generate and expand their ideas. Planning includes drawings/illustrations and discussion. At this stage, the content and fluidity of idea are considered more important than mechanics; however students are encouraged to revise and edit their own work. One-to-one writing conferences provide the opportunities to individualise instruction across all areas. Children have their own writing portfolios and receive help with editing, spelling and punctuation errors. Children share their writing informally and publish in a variety of forms. Writing is also integrated into all curricular areas so students will write in a variety of genres for different purposes and audiences (see Language Arts Overview).

Handwriting

Children practice writing upper case and lower case letters. Slant formation, size and spacing are emphasised during instruction. 2nd Graders are introduced to cursive writing.

Spelling

Children are taught how to spell through spelling strategies and patterns using weekly word lists.

Mathematics

The 2nd Grade Mathematics curriculum is based on the school's adoption of the Everyday Mathematics programme (McGraw Hill); (see Mathematics Overview). This programme is based on content and process standards, spiralling concepts, problem solving through games, manipulatives and a continuum of skills.

2nd Grade Course Descriptions (2 of 2)

The following units are taught (one hour each day) in 2nd Grade:

1. Numbers and Routines
2. Addition and Subtraction Facts
3. Place Value, Money, and Time
4. Addition and Subtraction
5. 3D and 2D Shapes
6. Whole Number Operations and Number Stories
7. Patterns and Rules
8. Fractions
9. Measurement
10. Decimals and Place Value
11. Whole –Number Operations Revisited.

For each unit teachers send home a letter outlining goals, a checklist of goals achieved, and weekly home links for review and games.

Science

Science is taught by a science teacher in the science laboratory on a weekly basis.

The 2nd Grade science units are as follows:

- **Bats** Understanding how bats live in diverse habitats where their unique structures allow them to meet their needs and the indispensable role they play in our eco-systems
- **Magnets** Understanding the nature and physical properties of magnetism and learning about magnetic interaction
- **Electricity** Learning about static electricity, series and parallel circuits, switches and becoming aware of the dangers of electricity
- **Light and the Eye** Understanding the nature and physical properties of light and learning how the eye functions.

Social Studies

The units of study are Community Building, Cultural Awareness, Victorian Times, Children at Work and School, India: Connections to England, culture. A variety of field trips and presentations complement the Social Studies curriculum which have included the Guildford Victorian School, the Milestones Museum and Learning through Action.

3rd Grade Course Descriptions (1 of 2)

Language Arts:

Reading

The Reading programme is comprehensive and developmental (see Language Arts Overview). The reading programme balances students' abilities to read for understanding as well as for enjoyment and exposes students to a greater variety of literary genres and informational texts.

Students at this age may read and exhibit reading behaviours within several stages of the Bonnie Campbell Hill Reading Continuum: beginning, expanding, bridging and fluent. They are instructed and assessed on types of texts and oral reading, attitude, reading strategies, comprehension and response, and self-evaluation. Through a variety of assessment tools including the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and Reading Continuum, students are guided individually and in small groups by specific instructional strategies. Students use levelled texts from the Lower School levelled library and classroom libraries.

For whole class instruction, teachers read aloud single texts to all students and model use of different strategies from a variety of sources including chapter books, the Signatures series (Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich), fiction (trade books) and non-fiction. For individual instruction, teachers and the librarian guide students to self-select books at an appropriate level. A daily block of time with the classroom teacher is allocated for small-group reading instruction; reading is also integrated into social studies and science units and library time.

Writing

Reading and writing often complement each other as students write about their reading and read to understand an author's purpose and writing craft. Writing is sometimes integrated into social studies and science so that students write in a variety of genres for different purposes and audiences.

Teachers provide blocks of time each week for Writing Workshop units. Each unit focuses on craft, genre or conventions. In addition, students follow the steps of the writing process: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. Students maintain a writing notebook in which they gather ideas and apply new skills.

Handwriting

Children continue practicing upper case and lower case letters in cursive style, with an emphasis on slant, size, legibility and spacing.

Spelling

Our emphasis in spelling is on learning to spell words which are used in daily reading and writing. Students learn to use word structure and meaning to aid spelling. Spelling patterns are reviewed. Provision is made for students who need enrichment or review.

Mathematics

The 3rd Grade Mathematics curriculum is based on the school's adoption of the Everyday Mathematics programme (McGraw Hill); (see Mathematics Overview). This programme is based on content and process standards, spiralling concepts, problem solving through games, and a continuum of skills.

3rd Grade Course Descriptions (2 of 2)

The following units are taught (one hour each day) in 3rd Grade:

1. Routines, Reviews, and Assessments
2. Adding and Subtracting Whole Numbers
3. Linear Measures and Areas
4. Multiplication and Division
5. Place Value in Whole Numbers and Decimals
6. Geometry
7. Multiplication and Division
8. Fractions
9. Multiplication and Division
10. Measurement and Data
11. Probability; End-of-Year Review.

For each unit teachers send home a letter outlining goals, a checklist of goals achieved, and daily home links for review and games.

Science

Science is taught by a science teacher in the science laboratory on a weekly basis.

The 3rd Grade science units are as follows:

- **Trees** Identifying trees native to Britain, understanding what function leaves, roots and trunks have and understanding how trees help the environment
- **Nutrition and the Digestive System** Gaining an awareness of what constitutes a healthy diet and identifying the various parts of the digestive system.
- **Simple Machines** Understanding how inclined planes, levers, wheels and axles and pulleys work and recognising that machines were invented to make work easier
- **Water** Understanding the unusual properties of water and why it is so vital to life on earth

Social Studies

Map skills are taught and developed throughout the year. Other units of study are Indigenous People in Australia and New Zealand, North and South America; Exploration and Innovation, and Tudors in Britain. Students develop skills such as reading for information, note-taking, placing events in chronological order, and comparing and contrasting. A variety of field trips and presentations complement the social studies and science curriculum including Tudor drama and the Treehouse Theatre.

4th Grade Course Descriptions (1 of 2)

Language Arts:

Reading

The Reading programme is comprehensive and developmental (see Language Arts Overview). The Reading programme balances students' abilities to read for understanding as well as for enjoyment and exposes students to a greater variety of literary genres and informational texts.

Students at this age may read and exhibit reading behaviours within several stages of the Bonnie Campbell Hill Reading Continuum: expanding, bridging, fluent and proficient. They are instructed and assessed on oral reading, reading habits and attitude, reading strategies, comprehension and response, and self-evaluation. Through a variety of assessment tools including the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and Reading Continuum, students are guided individually and in small groups by specific instructional strategies. Students use levelled texts from the Lower School levelled library and classroom libraries.

For full group instruction, teachers select texts from a variety of genre. These sources include chapter books, fiction (trade books) and non-fiction. For individual instruction, teachers and the librarian guide students to self-select books at an appropriate level.

Daily, a developmentally appropriate block of time is allocated for reading instruction; reading is also integrated into social studies and science units and library time.

Writing

Reading and writing often complement each other as students write about their reading and read to understand an author's purpose and writing craft. Writing is sometimes integrated into social studies and science so that students write in a variety of genres for different purposes and audiences.

Teachers provide blocks of time each week for Writing Workshop units. Each unit focuses on craft, genre or conventions. In addition, students follow the steps of the writing process: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. Students maintain a writing notebook in which they gather ideas and apply new skills.

The 4th Grade teachers additionally instruct the students in the 6+1 Traits of Writing, using the Write Source as a guide. These traits include ideas, organisation, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions and presentation. Teachers and students assess written work using rubrics that focus on these areas.

Handwriting

At this stage, there is a shift from individual letter formation to overall appearance and developing students' own style of handwriting.

Spelling

Our Spelling programme is closely linked to reading and writing and enhancing vocabulary. The emphasis is on learning to spell words needed in daily reading and writing. Students learn to use word structure and meaning to aid spelling. Spelling generalisations are reviewed and more sophisticated patterns are introduced. Students use a range of appropriate strategies to edit, proofread, and correct spelling in their own work. Students extend their vocabulary skills by exploring the meanings and parts of new words using Collins' Focus English Word Book.

Mathematics

The 4th Grade Mathematics curriculum is based on the school's adoption of the Everyday Mathematics programme (McGraw Hill); (see Mathematics Overview). This programme is based on content and process standards, spiralling concepts, problem solving through games, and a continuum of skills.

4th Grade Course Descriptions (2 of 2)

The following units are taught (one hour each day) in 4th Grade:

1. Naming and Constructing Geometric Figures
2. Using Numbers and Organising Data
3. Multiplication, Division; Number Sentences and Algebra
4. Decimals and Their Uses
5. Big Numbers, Estimation, and Computation
6. Division; Map Reference Frames; Measures of Angles
7. Fractions and Their Uses; Chance and Probability
8. Perimeter and Area
9. Fractions, Decimals and Percents
10. Reflections and Symmetry
11. 3-D Shapes, Weight, Volume, and Capacity
12. Rates.

At the beginning of each unit, a Family Letter is sent home outlining the learning goals and explaining the content of the unit. An individual Profile of Progress, which indicates the child's skill level in relation to the expected level of skill for the learning goals, is sent home at the end of each unit. Through the unit, Study Links are assigned as homework to review and reinforce concepts and skills taught in class.

Science

Science is taught by a science teacher, with the class teacher present, in the science laboratory on a weekly basis.

The 4th Grade science units are as follows:

- **Geology** Labelling the basic structure of the Earth, identifying igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rocks and conducting tests leading to mineral identification
- **Environmental Studies** Understanding the responsibilities humans have towards the planet and generating solutions which can be implemented in their daily lives to reduce carbon emissions
- **The Skeletal and Circulatory Systems** Labelling a basic diagram of the skeleton, understanding the importance of protecting the skull, and understanding the importance of regular exercise, a balanced diet and positive lifestyle choices to ensure a healthy heart
- **Insects** Identifying the different parts of an insect and understanding how insects adapt to their environment.

Social Studies

Our first unit of study exposes students to European geography and culture. Students use atlases, identify hemispheres, latitude and longitude, and distinguish varying landforms and geographic features. The second quarter focuses on environmental studies (in conjunction with science). Students look at environmental issues through the lens of the United Nations and debating important issues. The third quarter is a study of early British history during the Celtic and Roman Age. Students create citizens of the Roman Empire and travel around Britain in order to report back to the Emperor. The fourth quarter is a study of Economics and consumerism, where students work in teams to create businesses and gather market research, advertise and sell products to make a profit.

Field trips and presentations which complement the social studies and science curriculum include the National History Museum, Learning Through Action workshops, and first aid training.

Special Areas (1 of 5)

Art

The art programme involves children from Kindergarten through to 4th grade. Each class has one 50 minute lesson per week. Through recently adopted standards of attainment as set out by the Massachusetts Department of Education, the programme encourages children to observe closely, record their observations and express their feelings and ideas as well as enabling them to undertake a wide range of art, craft and design activities. Skills and knowledge are developed through individual and collaborative work in two and three dimensions, using a range of materials and processes, and through investigating the work of artists, some of whom have pieces on permanent display at the National Gallery.

Cross-curricular teaching enables children to express aspects of knowledge gained in science or social studies in an artistic form, thus enriching their learning experience. For example:

- Kindergarten children attend art class with a specialist. The Art projects, eg. farm, murals and leaf rubbings, shadow puppets, penguins, Picasso, clay nests and eggs, are based on Social Studies/Science units, seasons, cultural events and a variety of media
- 1st Grade students learn about plants in science. In art they compare the ways in which artists such as Monet, van Gogh and Matisse depict flowers and plants in their work. Resulting activities include drawing, painting, printing, collage and clay modelling
- 2nd Grade students investigate different shapes in math, and light and colour in science. In art they consider how artists such as Wassily Kandinsky use shape and colour in their work. They use complementary colours and geometric shapes to create abstract compositions
- 3rd Grade students study Water in science. In art they study seascapes and compare how artists such as Hokusai and Bierstadt convey the power of the ocean. They make pastel drawings, clay slab models, prints and collages of sea creatures
- 4th Grade students investigate the Celts and the Romans in Britain. In art they design and make Celtic jewellery in clay. They depict characters from Roman mythology and use glass tesserae to make mosaics.

Student artwork is displayed continuously throughout the year, providing a visible means of motivation, encouragement and recognition for all students.

Computer

The ICT programme involves students in 1st through 4th Grades for 50 minutes each week. The emphasis of the programme is on students developing their ability to use computers as a tool to enhance class based work.

As an introduction to computer use, students in 1st Grade learn how to access and operate software. Mouse control and a feeling of confidence with the computer is developed through open-ended educational software applications and educational websites. The ability to log in and access students' own files with a password, save and print work, find work saved previously, use tools within programs, follow instructions, and log out at the end of the lesson and prepare the computer for the next user are some of the skills covered. Word processing, multimedia drawing and painting packages and math programs provide the foundation for the use of computers as a creative and productive tool. An extensive range of interactive software is also used as a follow up to, or stimulus for, classroom based activities.

Students in 2nd Grade engage in more extensive use of hardware and software. Touch-typing lessons are introduced and continue throughout the year. The multimedia facilities of the computer lab are explored as students create slideshow presentations of some of their work. Software applications are used as an extension of classroom activities. The Internet is used as a resource to research topics being taught in the classroom and specific websites are used to reinforce Math and Literacy skills.

3rd Grade students use the computers primarily as a tool to enhance class based work. Word processing and editing skills, Internet research, the use of programs relating to topics taught in the classroom, and touch-typing form the core of work done at this level. The use of the computer as a multimedia presentation tool is encouraged by using Microsoft PowerPoint and other multimedia programs. AlphaSmart keyboards are used in the classroom for word processing and touch-typing practice.

Students further extend their use of facilities in 4th Grade. The use of DV movie cameras, digital cameras, webcams and the Internet allows students to view the computer lab as an extension of their classroom and as a means of producing work. Students are taught how to create a web page using iWeb, make a film using iMovie, compose songs using Garageband and create animated films using I Can Animate. All these projects are related to topics being taught in other subject areas. To further enhance the ICT curriculum students have access to a set of laptops for use in the classroom. The Students continue their touch-typing lessons and work throughout the year at improving these skills.

Special Areas (2 of 5)

Dance and Movement

Students in Pre-Kindergarten to 2nd Grade have one 40 minute Dance and Movement class period per week. The class emphasises the development of the body awareness, rhythm, and motor skills.

Through movement and dramatic activities the children are challenged to control their bodies as they move to manipulate objects, relate with the space around them, and cooperatively move with others. They are taught the perceptual skills of interpretation and critical reflection.

There is a strong correlation between a child's motor skill development and success with many other academic activities in school. The Dance and Movement programme enables students to develop a wide range of intellectual capabilities in and through a variety of disciplines, reinforcing the cross-curricular nature of learning with thematic and topic work.

French

The French programme involves children from Foundation years to 4th Grade. In the Lower School, each grade has two 30 minute lessons each week. Our Lower School French programme follows the ACTFL standards recently adopted throughout the school.

In the Lower School, children are first exposed to two main skills, Listening and Speaking, which have a prominent place in Language acquisition. The children are encouraged to listen, speak and interact with the teacher and one another, with an emphasis on good pronunciation and intonation. Focus is not only on communication, but also on understanding other cultures (discovering and comparing with their own). Two additional skills, Reading (word recognition) and Writing, are introduced in 3rd and 4th Grade. The children are first exposed to simple words and sentences and are gradually encouraged to use and adapt them to various contexts.

They are exposed to numerous topics and activities, with relevant links being made to what is studied in the classroom:

- **Pre K:** The children have one 15 minute lesson per week. The teaching is based on fun activities with puppets helping the teacher. The children are encouraged to repeat simple words (colours, instructions) and to sing along to French nursery rhymes. The focus is on listening and speaking, in a relaxed, fun and non-threatening atmosphere.
- **Kindergarten:** The children have one lesson of 30 minutes each week. The focus is on listening and speaking. The teaching is through repetition, singing and games (Tic Tac Toe, Simon Says, etc). There are various resources: flashcards, books, puppets and interactive boards. Whenever relevant and possible, some links are made with classroom activities and topics (farm animals, penguins and insects).
- **1st Grade:** The focus is on listening and speaking. Language is taught using various activities including rhymes, songs, simple mathematics games, story telling. They learn how to express simple opinions (likes and dislikes). The main topics are numbers, classroom objects, colours, animals, pets, my body, and the weather.
- **2nd Grade:** The focus is still on listening and speaking with the introduction of role plays (little conversations), calendar, mathematics games, songs, games with numerous resources (aural, visual), introducing descriptions of objects. The main topics are numbers, months, weather (calendar), classroom vocabulary (understanding and responding to simple instructions), French cultural awareness (geography), colours, my clothes, and sports.
- **3rd Grade:** Reading (word recognition) and writing are gently introduced. The main topics are me, my family, food, how to order and pay in a café. Calendar is on-going and reinforced from 2nd Grade. The children are exposed to more challenging role plays as listening and speaking are the prevalent skills, but also to simple written words that they can match to corresponding pictures/situations.
- **4th Grade:** The four major skills are practiced with Speaking and Listening being the most important. The focus is mainly on pronunciation and being able to recognise, remember, manipulate the vocabulary and adapt it to different contexts. The children have the opportunity to write simple sentences though little project work. The main topics are a review of basic classroom vocabulary (numbers, calendar), me, my family, and travel.

New topics are introduced each quarter but there is always some continuity opportunities to build on previous knowledge for pupils that have taken French for several years. Cultural awareness is raised through teaching about festivals and traditions as they occur.

Above all, we want the children to feel confident and enjoy the experience of learning about another language and culture. The aim is to encourage risk-taking in speaking, building self-confidence in a fun and non-threatening atmosphere where each student can learn and progress at their own level and ability.

Special Areas (3 of 5)

Library programme

The goal of the Lower School library is to support and enrich the implementation of all school curricula from Foundation years through to 4th Grade. The library strives to achieve this by developing a warm, welcome and stimulating learning environment, a comprehensive and extensive collection and a dynamic learning programme. The collection contains approximately 13,000 titles which have been selected to meet programme needs and student interests and reading abilities. It also includes an international book section of 300 titles in 16 different languages.

Classes of students from Pre K through 4th Grade visit the school library weekly for book exchange. Bi-weekly library instruction is provided by the librarian for 1st to 4th Grades which fosters a love of language and story, an appreciation of children's literature, the joy of reading, and the development of information study skills.

An exciting part of the library programme is an annual weeklong book fair which celebrates reading and children's literature. It hosts a roster of British authors and illustrators. Throughout the grades students will meet with storytellers, poets, author/illustrators and novelists of award-winning children's books. Students will also have the opportunity to purchase books signed by the guest authors.

As part of fostering a love of reading the Lower School library holds book sales during the autumn and spring teacher conferences. A children's author may also be present signing his/her books.

Four library computers permit students to research projects online as well as search the library collection for materials. The new online library software permits users to search the collection from either the classroom or the home.

Library hours are from 8:00am until 4:00pm daily except Wednesdays when the library closes at 3:30pm for staff meetings. Parents are always welcomed as borrowers or as volunteers.

Music

The Music programme in the Lower School involves children from Pre-Kindergarten through 4th Grade and uses the internationally recognised Orff and Kodaly concepts. Each class in 1st-4th Grade has two 40 minute periods per week. Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten classes have one period weekly.

The Music programme aims to help children develop an enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of music and group performance. Through a sequentially planned curriculum that provides experiences at various levels of singing, moving, playing and listening, children are encouraged to develop their own sense of musicianship. Using the complete range of Orff instruments, consisting of drums, xylophones and metallophones, students are actively developing physical, melodic and rhythmic skills.

From Pre-Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, students participate in a variety of musical activities involving creative movement, classroom percussion instruments and singing. Developing "inner-hearing" (an innate sense of tonality) is stressed, as are rhythm and psychomotor skills.

In 3rd Grade students begin playing the recorder as an introduction to group instrumental playing and reading standard music notation. 3rd and 4th Graders have the opportunity to join the Lower School choir and instrumental ensembles.

During the school year, each grade level presents an evening show. This is a showcase for the children to demonstrate their music skills, and for them to experience the process involved in working on a large-scale musical/dramatic performance.

Lower School Choir

The Lower School Choir is an optional programme offered to 3rd and 4th Grade students who like to sing and are willing to participate in a variety of concerts and assemblies in and outside of school.

The rehearsals are held once a week after school. Rehearsals involve developing music skills and the singing voice, and learning to perform a variety of songs in unison and simple harmony parts. Playing instruments, and using choreographic movements are a part of our practice time and performances.

Special Areas (4 of 5)

Instrumental Ensembles

Lower School students who play orchestral or band instruments have the opportunity to join ensembles, which meet after school or during the day.

Students in these ensembles are required to begin (or continue) private lessons on their instruments; the ensembles provide an additional opportunity to use those skills learned in private study, while adding the interest of group interaction. In the ensembles, students are introduced to the standard expectations of a performing group, such as keeping a common beat, following a conductor, and listening to other players in the ensemble. Teamwork and dependability are encouraged. The ensembles typically play in two to three concerts during the school year.

People Skills

3rd and 4th Grade classes acquire people skills as part of the lower school special area curriculum. People Skills teaches the skills children need to build healthy relationships with friends, peers, teachers and the world at large. The Circle Time method is used to raise self-awareness and to develop personal and social skills. Discussions are held in a circular formation that is non-hierarchical and facilitates cooperation. Areas such as respect, communication, conflict and problem solving, bullying and assertiveness are also covered. Children are encouraged to participate, practice and use these skills in everyday life.

Physical Education

Pre K and Kindergarten have one 50 minute class per week. 1st through 4th Grade students have two 50 minute classes per week. The Physical Education programme is designed to teach children to understand and practice healthy living. Students are encouraged to develop and maintain appropriate fitness levels through participation in various activities. Each child is given many opportunities to experience success. The activities help the child form a good self-image and cultivate the ability to play and work cooperatively with another person, a small group or in a large group.

The Pre K to 2nd Grade programme emphasises development of body awareness and fine and gross motor skills, safety, basic health concepts, and the ability to follow directions when playing simple games. The 3rd and 4th Grade programme continues to emphasise the skills learned in the initial years. Basic concepts and strategies related to team play are introduced and gradually expanded. During the Lower School years, all children are introduced to and participate in activities such as swimming, gymnastics, dance, track and field, orienteering, mini-rugby, soccer, basketball, volleyball, striking skills, manipulatives and parachute activities.

All students 1st-4th Grade are required to wear a standard ACS Cobham uniform (shorts and T-shirt) for Physical Education classes. All students pre-K to 4th Grade are required to have a change of shoes for indoor classes.

For health and safety reasons students are not permitted to wear jewellery during PE classes.

If a student is to be excused from PE a note (email) from the parents is required before the lesson.

For more details on rules and regulations during PE classes, please refer to the students beginning of the year pack, which should include a letter related specifically to Lower School PE.

Resource Centre

The Resource Centre offers support in literacy at a variety of levels depending on the needs of the child. The resource team collaborates with classroom teachers to put into place appropriate modifications to assist the child's learning. Resource supports classroom programmes as well as using its own in order to target children's needs. Children meet with a resource teacher either in small groups or in the classroom setting. Additional literacy support is offered through the use of the software program Lexia.

When a student requires additional support in order to meet his or her academic and/or social potential, we work as a collaborative team to design and implement modifications to support learning and growth. The Student Support Team (SST) includes the parent, classroom teacher, resource teacher, counselor and an administrator. The team will meet to identify the student's strengths, and discuss areas of concern. We may recommend further assessment by an Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist or other professional in order to agree the best programme changes. The team may also recommend that the family contract the services of an outside professional for therapy or intervention suggested in the reports.

Special Areas (5 of 5)

Classroom modifications are supported by the resource teachers in collaboration with the classroom teachers. Parents are informed of progress through conferences, telephone calls and written reports. Follow up SST meetings are also scheduled to monitor progress and adapt changes.

Additional literacy support is offered through the use of the computerised program Lexia. This program is designed to develop phonological awareness and sound-symbol correspondence. The interactive phonics-based activities help develop automatic word recognition and comprehension. Children who would benefit from using the Lexia program are withdrawn from French and are scheduled during those periods.

Guidance Programme

The Lower School has a full time counselor who oversees the school's guidance programme. This programme is available to help students, parents and teachers to have positive learning experiences. Students are encouraged to not only meet academic goals, but also to develop social and life skills and improve self-esteem. Assisting children to achieve their full potential is important to all lower school staff and we follow a team approach in working to accomplish this.

The guidance programme consists of a variety of services and activities, including individual, group and classroom guidance, parent and teacher consultation, information services and referral assistance to services in our greater community. There is also support available to meet transitional challenges faced by international students and their families.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

In Early Childhood (Flopsy Bunnies through Kindergarten) a language-rich classroom based programme is ideal. Specialised EAL support is generally not needed.

Students in 1st to 4th Grade who are learning English as an Additional Language will spend the majority of their day in regular grade level classes and support will be provided by an EAL teacher. The amount of time spent with this teacher will be determined by the student's level of proficiency in English. Levels of English proficiency are based on the EAL Continuum developed by Bonnie Campbell Hill: New to English, Early Acquisition, Becoming Familiar, Becoming Competent, Becoming Fluent, and Fluent.

EAL students will receive at least two lessons per week with an EAL teacher if their proficiency level is New to English through Becoming Familiar. The time spent with the EAL teacher is to reinforce English skills and core curriculum knowledge, and to provide emotional and social support for the student.

When a student reaches the Becoming Competent to Fluent level, he or she will be immersed in the regular programme with little or no pull out support. The EAL teacher will continue to work closely with the classroom teacher and the parents to provide the best learning environment for each child.

Lower School Learning Support: *'Building Skills through a team approach'*

Philosophy

The lower school learning support team strives to enable each student to access the curriculum to the best of his/her ability. The program aims to maximise each child's potential through teaching the skills and strategies required of life-long learners and contributing members of society.

Service Provision

In first and second grades, a pullout program is used to target reading, spelling and writing for students struggling in these areas. In-class and small group support is offered for students in 3rd and 4th Grade. In addition, resource teachers meet regularly with class teachers to discuss students and to plan for differentiation. Additional literacy support is offered through the use of the computerised program Lexia.

People Skills

The lower school department focuses on a team approach to problem solving. The Student Support Team (SST) works together to support children with academic, social, emotional and transitional needs. A structured process has been developed to help teachers and parents find strategies to assist students. This SST process begins with a concern about a student either from the classroom teacher or a parent. Once the parent and the teacher have discussed options, a referral is submitted to the lower school counsellor. The counsellor subsequently schedules a meeting with the parents, an administrator, the child's classroom teacher, a resource team member, and any other relevant professional who works with the child.

At the SST meeting, we discuss and agree upon a plan of action to benefit the student. This plan may include any of the following:

- Additional classroom options for accommodations and modifications
- Individual tutoring
- In-class or pullout resource lessons
- Outside referrals, such as for medical examinations, an educational psychological assessment, occupational assessment/therapy, speech-language assessment/therapy, and/or counselling.

Once a decision has been made, the team monitors the student's progress. A follow-up SST meeting may be scheduled to review and modify goals as necessary. If the learning support program cannot meet a student's needs, information on finding alternative school settings may be provided.