LOWER SCHOOL 2021-2022 CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

MUSIC
PREKINDERGARTEN:
Prekindergarten students are introduced to the basic elements of music through singing, recognizing and creating rhythms, ear training, music theory, movement in dance, and the use of instruments.

KINDERGARTEN:
The kindergarten music curriculum encompasses music history, theory, Orff and Kodaly techniques, and fundamentals of movement and drama. The study and practice of pitched and unpitched percussion instruments are used to implement basic elements of music, improvisation, and creativity.

PRIMER:
The primer music curriculum encompasses music history, theory, Orff and Kodaly techniques, and fundamentals of movement and drama. The study and practice of pitched and unpitched percussion instruments are used to implement basic elements of music, improvisation, and creativity.

1ST GRADE:
First grade music students sharpen their skills of creativity, composition, and performance through playing instruments, studying various genres of music, and rhythmic and melodic improvisation. In first grade, students present a musical based on an interdisciplinary study. There is an optional Lower School orchestra.

2ND GRADE:
The second grade music curriculum encompasses music history, theory, Orff techniques, and the study of the symphony orchestra. In second grade, students present a musical based on an interdisciplinary study. Through a 10-week study, all second grade students are introduced to a stringed instrument (violin, viola, or cello). There is an optional Lower School orchestra.

3RD GRADE:
The third grade music curriculum encompasses music history, theory, Orff techniques, and the study of the symphony orchestra. In addition to the barred instruments learned for Orff techniques and the soprano recorder, third graders also learn how to play tone chimes. Each student is challenged to develop skills on her own level. Students present a musical based on an interdisciplinary study. There is an optional Lower School orchestra and chorus.

4TH GRADE:
The fourth grade music curriculum encompasses music history, theory, and Orff techniques. In addition to the barred instruments learned for Orff techniques, the soprano recorder, and the tone chimes, the fourth graders also learn how to play handbells. Each student is challenged to develop skills on her own level. Students present a musical based on a classic literary work. There is an optional Lower School orchestra and chorus.

LANGUAGE ARTS
PREKINDERGARTEN:
The prekindergarten language arts curriculum promotes year-round development of oral language. We begin the year with the most basic of reading and writing concepts on phonemic awareness activities that include rhyming, blending, and segmenting. The year continues with learning letter sounds, names, and formations of the letters of the alphabet. Comprehension skills are enhanced through books read aloud to the class, retellings, reenactments of stories, and book reviews. During this time, vocabulary development emphasizes vocabulary development to develop language and transfer it to conversations. Written expression amplifies oral language development through story dictation. Then students begin to write more independently, and spelling progresses from inventive to phonetic. Additionally, lessons in handwriting stress the correct formation of both upper and lowercase manuscript letters.

KINDERGARTEN/PRIMER:
The kindergarten and primer language arts curriculum includes phonics, reading, writing, handwriting, and spelling activities. Reading is taught using word walls, big books, plays, poetry, fiction, and nonfiction texts. Independent reading is encouraged by learning to self-select “just right” books, partner reading, and home reading with an adult. Focus is placed on decoding, sight-word recognition, fluency, and comprehension. Written expression is practiced through daily journal writing, creative writing, compiling class books, and storytelling. Weekly phonics lessons explore the study of sounds, consonants, vowels, and rhyming. Proper handwriting formation of uppercase and lowercase manuscript letters is introduced.

1ST GRADE:
The first grade language arts curriculum includes phonics, reading, writing, poetry, handwriting, spelling, and punctuation activities. Reading is taught using word walls, big books, plays, poetry, fiction, and nonfiction texts. Reading is encouraged by learning to self-select “just right” books, partner reading, and home reading with an adult. Focus is placed on decoding, sight-word recognition, fluency, and comprehension. Written expression is practiced through daily journal writing, creative writing, compiling class books, and storytelling. Weekly phonics lessons explore the study of sounds, consonants, vowels, and rhyming. Proper handwriting formation of uppercase and lowercase manuscript letters is introduced.
LOWER SCHOOL 2021-2022 CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

LANGUAGE ARTS, CONTINUED

expression and the mechanics of writing. The primary goal is to write in complete sentences with sequential thoughts. Spelling is directly taught through a phonetic, rule-based approach. Proper handwriting formation of uppercase and lowercase manuscript letters is reviewed and practiced.

2ND GRADE:
In second grade, readers move beyond learning to read towards reading to learn. Our language arts curriculum includes reading, independent writing, cursive, spelling, grammar, and punctuation activities. Reading lessons emphasize choosing “just right” books, reading with fluency and expression, and developing comprehension skills. Writing lessons promote skills in creative expression and mechanics. Students learn the process of collecting ideas, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Students practice personal narrative, fantasy, poetry, how-to writing, realistic fiction, and nonfiction research report writing. Second grade students develop as creative writers through a variety of structured and unstructured writing experiences including journal writing, poetry, personal experience stories, letter writing, descriptive paragraphs, informational writing, fiction, and persuasive writing. The girls learn the steps of the writing process including choosing a subject, brainstorming ideas, writing a first draft, proofreading and revising their writing, and publishing a final copy. Throughout the year, the second graders assume increasing independence as they progress through the variety of writing experiences presented. Students learn spelling through a phonetic, rule-based approach. Handwriting lessons review the proper formation of manuscript letters and introduce the formation of lowercase cursive letters.

3RD GRADE:
The third grade language arts curriculum uses a workshop approach to teach and explore reading, writing, poetry, word study, grammar, and writing mechanics. Advanced reading comprehension skills are emphasized through peer and teacher conferences, the writing and sharing of responses to texts, and class discussions. A variety of literary genres are examined. Writing mini lessons promote skills in both creative expression and the technical aspects of writing mechanics. The opportunity to experience the elements of the writing process through different genres is provided. Increasingly complex spelling rules are directly taught in interaction with reading and writing, and cursive handwriting lessons review the proper formation of the letters.

4TH GRADE:
The fourth grade language arts curriculum uses a workshop approach to teach and explore reading, writing, poetry, word study, grammar, and writing mechanics. Reader’s Workshop strives to engender in young readers critical-thinking skills, strong comprehension skills, and a boundless love of reading. In Writer’s Workshop, students author narrative pieces and poetry. Using the writing process, they compose, revise, edit, and publish works based upon a well-grounded understanding of the structure and craft necessary for good writing. Word study continues their ongoing, rule-based spelling instruction and expands upon it by the study of vocabulary.

TECHNOLOGY

OVERVIEW
The Hockaday Lower School technology program’s primary goal is to prepare our girls by helping them develop creativity, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking while using technology. These skills, along with research and information literacy, digital citizenship, coding, and a basic understanding of technology concepts, systems, and operations are integrated into the curriculum in meaningful and authentic ways. Students learn how to use various technology tools to help them achieve their learning goals.

PREKINDERGARTEN, KINDERGARTEN/PRIMER:
The focus at this age is to introduce younger students to technology by engaging them in a variety of learning activities. Students document and reflect on their learning using a digital portfolio and are also introduced to basic coding concepts.

1ST GRADE AND 2ND GRADE:
The focus in first and second grade is to build on the skills learned in kindergarten and primer. Technology is integrated in various ways, including using 3D design, creating projects using Green Screen, and creating documents and multimedia presentations. Coding continues to be taught using a variety of tools, including Beebots, ScratchJr, and Code.org.

3RD GRADE AND 4TH GRADE:
During third and fourth grade, students continue increasing their proficiency in multimedia presentation skills. They learn to evaluate and select appropriate websites for research, and they use these along with library databases. Using Mystery Skype to communicate with students around the world, creating digital projects about Texas battles, and working with iPads to share their learning about the science of how popcorn pops are several ways technology is integrated in the upper elementary grades. Students also begin learning more advanced coding concepts using Scratch, a block-based visual programming language developed by MIT.
LOWER SCHOOL 2021-2022 CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

MATH

PREKINDERGARTEN:
Through manipulation of tangible objects, mathematics becomes relevant, useful, and exciting for prekindergarten students. Throughout this level, the focus is on developing readiness in the following areas: spatial relations, classifying, comparing, shapes, patterns, graphing, numbers, and counting. Class instruction also incorporates a wide variety of games and manipulative materials which help students internalize mathematical concepts.

KINDERGARTEN/PRIMER:
Although a wide variety of materials are chosen for instruction, emphasis is on the understanding of fundamental mathematical concepts, exposure to new concepts, and problem solving. Through activity-based instruction and exploration using manipulatives, the kindergarten/primer math program provides both an introduction to and a continuation of the development of a foundation in the following mathematical concepts: numeration, sequencing, graphing, fractions, spatial relations, addition and subtraction, measurement, money, and time. Proper formation of numerals is introduced. Calendar math is a daily activity that reinforces all concepts.

1ST GRADE:
The first grade students continue to develop their understanding of classification, counting, patterning, and estimating. Students work toward addition and subtraction fact fluency. Building procedural fluency and strategic competence for multidigit addition is emphasized through small group work and games. New skills in place value, measurement, money, time, fractions, and geometric shapes are taught at a more advanced level this year.

2ND GRADE:
In second grade teachers reinforce multidigit addition and subtraction skills through guided practice. Students will use a variety of strategies to learn multiplication and division facts, as it is important for students to learn that there are multiple ways to solve problems. Introductory lessons with manipulatives allow students the opportunity to develop a concrete understanding of a concept before abstract problems are presented. Second graders use games, cooperative work, and technology to help them increase their critical-thinking skills. Students utilize their number sense to solve a variety of number stories, logic problems, and algorithms. Other concepts covered include place value, time, money, geometry, graphing, fractions, and measurement.

3RD GRADE:
Our curriculum emphasizes in-depth mathematics through real-world problem situations, modeling, conceptual language, and small group discussions to help students build mathematical ideas that make sense to them. The program continually elicits thinking, provides support to move students to understanding, and ends with extended fluency practice and application. In third grade we begin with a review of multiplication and division facts followed by place value. Other units include multiplication of whole numbers using different algorithms, solving equations and word problems, measurement, fraction concepts and operations, decimals, and geometry.

4TH GRADE:
In fourth grade mathematics, students apply their math skills to become abstract thinkers. The girls are expected to master multistep multiplication and long-division algorithms. Students will also discuss how algorithms relate to one another and why answers are reasonable to demonstrate the flexibility of math. Percentages and the coordinate system are more formally introduced, while fractions, decimals, and elapsed time are expanded. Geometry, graphing, and logic activities are also included throughout the curriculum. Students are encouraged to stretch to their highest potential by completing problem-solving activities and number-sense challenges offered in every unit.

SOCIAL STUDIES

OVERVIEW
The social studies curriculum in the Lower School takes a student on a journey, from learning who she is and where she stands in the world to exploring far-away countries. She studies the past and how it relates to the present. The theme of citizenship is taught at all grade levels. Students learn about being a member of the classroom and school community and what it means to be a global citizen. The study of citizenship, ancient civilizations, and archeological artifacts introduces students to different forms of government and economic systems, and later to our own form of government and economy. Students learn to write reports and take an interactive approach to their learning through reading, class discussions, simulations, interviews, and research. Geography skills and activities related to current events are also included in every social studies classroom in the Lower School. Additionally, math, reading, science, other language experiences, music, cooking, art, and field trips are integrated with social studies units to provide additional opportunities for deepening understandings of basic skills and concepts.
SOCIAL STUDIES, CONTINUED

PREKINDERGARTEN:
Our prekindergarten social studies program integrates the concepts of citizenship, global education, geography, and community. Our youngest students become good citizens by assuming responsibility for their own actions, taking turns, and respecting new friends’ ideas and opinions. They learn how to recognize and regulate their emotions and express their feelings through language skills. Through our global education foundation, the students understand the beginnings of cultural heritage and traditions. Learning to appreciate and respect the likenesses and differences they see in the world around them is an important first step at Hockaday. They learn about diverse cultures by singing songs, reading stories, and listening to music. We encourage our youngest students to appreciate the values and beliefs of their own culture in addition to embracing the idea of learning about other cultures. Prekindergarten students are introduced to maps and begin to demonstrate an awareness of geography concepts. Through learning about the local Hockaday community, the prekindergarten social studies program helps our students to develop a knowledge and appreciation of our broader global community and the varied cultures and religious traditions that make our world rich in diversity and inclusion.

KINDERGARTEN/PRIMER:
The kindergarten and primer social studies program looks at the relationships of the individual girl in ever-expanding circles. Discussion and activities begin with a focus on citizenship and a student’s relationship to other individuals, her family, her neighborhood community, and the world at large. Map skills are introduced, as well as the names of the continents and oceans. By studying holidays around the world and the cultures of different foreign countries, the goal is to develop an awareness of interdependence of all people with one another and with their physical environment. The curriculum is designed to enhance interdisciplinary studies and often includes dramatic activities, cooking, art, and field trips.

1ST GRADE:
The girls begin to learn about global citizenship though a study of maps, globes, and continents. Continuing their study of citizenship, first graders begin to look more closely at reasons why communities are important. The importance of sharing and cooperation is illustrated through a unit on the variety of homes that families choose to live in, with a focus on mapping skills. The study of ancient Egypt provides an introduction to ancient civilizations, focusing on its religion, culture, and geography. By participating in activities such as the musical Tales of Temples and Tombs, students develop an awareness of and appreciation for other cultures. A unit study of the geography and wildlife of the polar regions culminates with students researching and creating a model habitat for an arctic animal. The computer lab enhances learning as students create a 3D model of a compass rose and an arctic animal. Students create maps, using their knowledge of scale, symbols, and legends. Time for Kids and newspaper articles provide a developmentally appropriate opportunity for study of current events.

2ND GRADE:
Second grade students explore ancient Greece, the environment, the United States, and economics. In the fall, students investigate Greek mythology, architecture, and democracy. This unit culminates with a Greek Festival, including a storyteller. Then students transition to our country’s states and regions. Students use a variety of tools to gather, evaluate, and use information to create reports, projects, and multimedia presentations. In the spring, the girls participate in an award-winning business unit through which they experience our American economic system and learn about financial literacy. They form their own company, apply for a business loan from a local bank, purchase supplies, make their product, and sell to parents. Technology, map skills, and current events are integrated into these units throughout the year.
SOCIAL STUDIES, CONTINUED

3RD GRADE:
Gaining global awareness is an overarching goal of the third grade social studies curriculum. The girls learn about themselves, their individual heritage, citizenship, events and human interactions from the past, and current events. They cycle through several units of study - geography and map skills, Pilgrims who arrived in the New World in 1620, immigration and family ancestry, research skills centered around countries and cultures, Lewis and Clark, pioneers during the westward expansion of the 1800s, and entrepreneurship. Through discussions, role-playing, field trips, books, and WebQuests the girls learn about the world in which we live and how it affects their own lives. As the girls’ understanding of geography and ability to interpret maps grow, they continue to use Google Maps, Bing Maps, and Google Earth to increase their understanding of the physical world in which we live. Technology, citizenship, research, writing, and geography skills are integrated into each unit to increase the girls’ depth of knowledge and understanding of our world.

4TH GRADE:
In fourth grade social studies, the students embark on a learning adventure that integrates citizenship, geography, map skills, research, writing, technology, and presentation skills as they expand their circle of knowledge to learn about the state in which they live. Students begin the year by examining the seven diverse regions of Texas. Through collaborative research, the girls seek a solution to a “real life” dilemma facing a fictional company relocating to Texas. With a solid understanding of Texas geography, the girls then begin their study of the vibrant history of Texas from the earliest inhabitants through the Texas Revolution. Through role-playing, skits, monologues, and project-based activities, students are drawn into an environment that invites and rewards curiosity and requires students to consider “big thinking” questions such as, “How do the events that happened in history affect my life today?” The past is further tied to the present by debating age-appropriate issues raised in Scholastic News and other publications. Examining both sides of an issue and using evidence to support opinion are key concepts covered.

WORLD LANGUAGE

PREKINDERGARTEN, KINDERGARTEN/PRIMER:
In the early childhood world language program, students are exposed to both Spanish and French. Through songs, brief dialogues, role-playing, stories, puppets, and games, the children experience the language in a fun, joyful, and engaging setting. Exploration of French and Spanish culture forms an eager curiosity about the world and creates a love for learning new languages.

1ST GRADE:
In the first grade, students begin a focused study of their world language of choice, either French or Spanish. Aural (listening) and oral activities continue to expand communicative skills and build a strong foundation of high-frequency vocabulary. Through songs, dialogues, role-playing, stories, puppets, and games, the students learn in a joyful, fun, and engaging setting. An introduction to Spanish- and French-speaking countries and cultural traditions creates a love for language learning and increase a desire to discover the world.

2ND GRADE:
In the second grade, students extend their linguistic base with fun, creative individual and group participation projects. Question/answer oral practice, role-playing, rhymes, poems, mini-skits, dialogues, and culturally authentic games enhance the student’s confidence while speaking the target language in a nurturing atmosphere. Projects are recorded and posted on the students’ Seesaw digital file for parent and student enjoyment. Learning sound/letter correspondence at this level prepares students for basic word recognition and beginning reading skills. Attention to pronunciation and intonation is emphasized with the identification of the Spanish/French vowels and accents used in words. A cultural and geographical study of the French and Spanish countries coordinates with the second grade US geography social studies unit. The students’ global perspective expands as their knowledge base in geography and culture increases.
LOWER SCHOOL 2021-2022 CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

WORLD LANGUAGE, CONTINUED

3RD GRADE:
The students continue with the development of all language-learning skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture. The students respond comfortably to questions and directions in the target language and take part in daily spontaneous conversations and more in-depth calendar activities that are student led. In the third grade, students embark upon the highly anticipated group writing activity where they craft an original class play in the target language, memorize, rehearse, and perform their original work for the Lower School parents, students, and faculty. The students continue to note the similarities within the Spanish, French, and English-speaking worlds, as they learn more about the language, customs, traditions, manners, values, art, and music of the target culture. A variety of instructional practices are utilized to engage the students in high-value activities ranging from arts and crafts, skits, interacting with authentic resources, cooking, and creating original and diverse language outputs that demonstrate their growing second language proficiencies.

4TH GRADE:
The fourth-grade world languages curriculum continues with the development of all language learning skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture. Students in the fourth grade are developmentally ready to begin a more formalized approach to second language learning. The emphasis is now placed on basic grammar structures such as gender of nouns, formation of plurals, position and agreement of adjectives, subject-verb agreement, and conjugation of verbs. The students take on a leadership role in the Lower School as the principal presenters at our annual world languages holiday gathering. The application of pedagogical practices that utilize technology opens the doors to a wide range of activities where all the language learning skills are applied. The fourth-grade year culminates with a world languages dinner where students prep, cook, serve, and enjoy a meal that is authentic to their respective target culture of study. By the end of fourth grade, the students are equipped with useful, lifelong language acquisition strategies and are prepared to continue with more advanced studies of their elected language of study.

SCIENCE/STEAM

OVERVIEW
The overall goal of our Lower School Science curriculum is for students to expand their conceptual framework as they progress through the Lower School. The content and pedagogy reflect the goals which lie at the heart of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) through a three-pronged approach. First, students engage with real-world science by working with topics that spark interest, excitement, and an appreciation of the value of science in their lives. Second, through laboratory activities and reading and writing about science, students learn about the impact of their daily actions and decisions on the world. Third, students participate in hands-on/minds-on science and technology activities which help them develop new perspectives on how the world around them works. Early childhood science at The Hockaday School honors and affirms children's natural interest in the world around them through hands-on, age-appropriate explorations in physics, engineering, chemistry, and biology. The "Four Easy Pieces" science program engages first through fourth grade students in science by investigating concepts in a process that moves from the concrete to the abstract. Each year focuses on one of the classic elements: Earth/Solid (1st grade), Water/Liquid (2nd grade), Air/Gas (3rd grade), and Fire/Energy (4th grade). Within this progression, the topics covered in each year are examined through the lens of physics, engineering, chemistry, and biology. Additionally, at every grade level, a variety of activities support the development of spatial awareness and reasoning, as well as introduce students to the diverse careers they could pursue in these areas.

PREKINDERGARTEN:
Prekindergarten science activities introduce students to scientific study through the investigation of topics relevant to their daily lives. In prekindergarten science, students learn that their five senses make experiencing the world we live in possible. Students get their hands wet during the much-loved water unit as they explore making water move, adhesion and cohesion, and floating and sinking. Water bubbles and soap bubbles are compared and contrasted, and students design their own bubble wand which is then 3D printed for them to take home. A building unit helps develop spatial and reasoning skills. In the springtime, the natural world is brought into the classroom when students study the humble opossum, seeds, plants, and pollinators. Throughout the prekindergarten science year, students are encouraged to observe, write, count, and express themselves through both verbal and written forms of expression.
2ND GRADE:
In second grade, the focus is liquids. Using water, students investigate the physical movement of fluids, and develop their own definition of what a liquid is and how liquids behave. They build an understanding of the power and importance of buoyant forces. Through investigation, collaboration, and observation, students ascertain three facts: 1) that water can change forms; 2) that if water is frozen and/or ice is allowed to melt, the amount of matter remains the same; and 3) that water evaporates. Students act as environmental engineers and investigate water filtration/purification. Finally, we examine the role of liquids in living systems, both aquatic and terrestrial.

3RD GRADE:
In third grade, the elements of air and other gases are examined. We begin the year by looking at the air all around us and compare and contrast that essential mixture of gases with the solids and liquids we studied in first and second grade. Students delve into the details of phase changes as matter shifts from one state to another via the addition or removal of energy. Students gain an understanding of air pressure and the protective layers that form the earth's atmosphere. Our third grade STEAM unit focuses on simple machines and industrial engineering. In our chemistry unit, students learn about the most fundamental pieces of matter, atoms. In our biology unit, students investigate the role of gases in living things and the "ins and outs" of the respiratory system.

4TH GRADE:
In fourth grade, the final classical element fire, a.k.a. energy, is examined. For the physics aspect of energy, students look at the nature and application of different energy forms. Students of this age can comprehend one aspect of the energy story through the study of heat. It is appropriate, therefore, to explore how heat moves from one place to another and the critical role the sun plays in providing energy for all life on earth. Chemical energy is studied by investigating batteries and their role as a power source in an electric circuit. Our fourth grade STEAM unit focuses on electrical circuitry and electrical engineering. Finally, we investigate the biological connection to energy by studying the human nervous system and the transmission of information as electrical impulses through the body.

4TH GRADE CREATE, COLLABORATE, AND INNOVATE:
The goal of CCI is to provide our students with the opportunity to imagine, design, and create solutions to small, personally meaningful problems in a hands-on, collaborative, and creative way. Team taught by Lower School science, art, and technology faculty, the course is an active, fully integrative STEAM experience. In the fall, the focus is on helping our students build various tinkering/making/prototyping skills, including but not limited to woodworking, building with cardboard, 3D design and printing, and working with electric circuits. In the spring, each student will develop, present, and execute a project—something she would like to design and create or improve. Students will document their process, participate in peer- and self-review, collaborate to share ideas and to develop solutions and develop resiliency and problem-solving skills as they experience the productive process of iteration.
ART/VISUAL ARTS

PREKINDERGARTEN:
Prekindergarten students create their art in a choice-based art studio. Choice-based art education regards students as artists and offers them real choices for responding to their own ideas and interests through the making of art. The art studio consists of media centers with new skills and practices introduced during each class. The students move between different centers as they make decisions regarding their own work.

KINDERGARTEN:
Kindergarten students create their art in a choice-based art studio. Choice-based art education regards students as artists and offers them real choices for responding to their own ideas and interests through the making of art. The art studio consists of media centers with new skills and practices introduced during each class. The students move between different centers as they make decisions regarding their own work.

PRIMER:
Primer students create their art in a choice-based art studio. Choice-based art education regards students as artists and offers them real choices for responding to their own ideas and interests through the making of art. The art studio consists of media centers with new skills and practices introduced during each class. The students move between different centers as they make decisions regarding their own work.

1ST GRADE:
First graders study the principles and elements of art through observational work, self-directed work, and tailored projects using a variety of media and processes.

2ND GRADE:
Second graders study the principles and elements of art through individual and group projects. Color-mixing and the study of line, shape, and wet/dry media in various forms reinforce concepts taught.

3RD GRADE:
Third graders study the principles and elements of art in conjunction with big-picture thinking, expanding the scale of the projects and the scope of the context in which they are created. Student-centered activities include an analysis of the creations as well as edits of their own artworks.

4TH GRADE:
Students continue to study the principles and elements of art in conjunction with big-picture thinking, expanding the scale of the projects and the scope of the context in which they are created. Student-centered activities include an analysis of the creations as well as edits of their own artworks.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

The Lower School’s social and emotional learning program is based on Hockaday’s four cornerstones of character, courtesy, scholarship, and athletics. With these four cornerstones as our foundation, the Lower School’s character education program focuses on six core values. The goal of our program is to create a culture in which our core values of respect, friendship, empathy, honesty, responsibility, and perseverance define who we are as a Lower School. These core values provide us with a common language, shared goals, a standard of behavior, and a way of being that promote a community of friendship and caring. They govern everyday teaching practice and find expression in every subject.

In order to build cohesion and merge social, emotional, and academic learning, the Lower School uses various tools such as Morning Meetings, weekly-led class meetings with the counselor, and mindfulness programming. Morning Meetings are an integral part of our character education program and are a powerful teaching tool that builds community. Weekly class meetings led by the school counselor reinforce “The Hock-A-Way” through literature, class discussion, and role playing. These activities provide the format that encourages active participation in the process of understanding and living our six core values. Additionally, students are taught a variety of mindfulness strategies to help them recognize and manage their thoughts, emotions, and actions.

Additional programming and courses have been designed to help students gain a better awareness of themselves as learners and as friends. For example, in third and fourth grade, students take a course called Mind Matters. Mind Matters is designed to give students experience in creative thinking, problem solving, making and learning from low-stakes mistakes, and collaborating with others. Students take part in activities that help them better understand themselves and their classmates and how their similarities and differences play a part in their interactions.
PHYSICAL EDUCATION

PREKINDERGARTEN:
The major focus is motor development. The girls work on balancing, sequencing, body and spatial awareness, laterality, kinesthetic awareness, directionality, and hand-eye and foot-eye coordination. At the same time, they learn the fundamentals of direction, patterns, speed, time, level, force, and effort. With safety as the number one component, time is devoted to locomotor, non-locomotor, and manipulative skills. Structured games are used to emphasize fair play, cooperation, and positive social interaction. Moreover, personal management is an important aspect of instruction. This includes safe and proper use of equipment, dressing in the appropriate uniform, listening to instructions, and practicing safe habits in the gym.

KINDERGARTEN/PRIMER:
The major focus is motor development. The girls work on balancing, sequencing, spatial and kinesthetic awareness, laterality, directionality, and hand-eye and foot-eye coordination. At the same time, they learn the fundamentals of direction, patterns, speed, time, level, force, and effort. With safety as the number one component, time is devoted to locomotor, non-locomotor, and manipulative skills. Structured games are used to emphasize fair play, cooperation, and positive social interaction. Moreover, personal management is an important aspect of instruction. This includes safe and proper use of equipment, listening to instructions, and practicing safe habits in the gym.

1ST GRADE:
The program expands upon previous skills and concepts including motor development, rhythm, locomotor skills, and non-locomotor skills. First graders will be introduced to fitness-based principles, such as cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength (upper body, lower body, and core), flexibility, and balance. Manipulative skills such as dribbling, kicking, striking, throwing, and catching are also emphasized. As activities become more group oriented, social skills are developed.

2ND GRADE:
The second grade is a transition year in the physical education curriculum. Refinement of motor skills becomes the focus. An emphasis on relating movement to skills such as dribbling, kicking, striking, throwing, and catching is continued in the motor-development program. The girls are now ready to apply basic motor and manipulative skills to individual and team activities. Second graders will expand upon their fitness-based principles, such as cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength (upper body, lower body, and core), flexibility, and balance. Cooperative activities and games provide opportunities to practice problem solving and sportsmanship.

3RD GRADE:
Third graders learn in greater depth the challenges and benefits of being physically literate. Students have opportunities to track their individual fitness, using their results as a tool to help them become self-aware of their personal fitness levels, areas of strength, and opportunities for growth. Motor skills, manipulative skills, and movement patterns are refined and combined in various individual, partner, and team endeavors. Sportsmanship is emphasized in all Lower School physical education classes, and third grade students learn to be competitive in game-like settings while demonstrating respect for others. Most of all, students are challenged to take ownership of their learning and pride in their performance. Third grade students participate in a swim rotation where the girls learn and refine all competitive strokes as well as sidestroke and elementary backstroke and play games like water polo, inner tube soccer and relay races. A focus is placed on learning how to be safe and efficient in the water. All aspects of the physical education curriculum emphasize and promote enjoyment, responsibility, cooperation, and confidence.

4TH GRADE:
Fourth graders learn in greater depth the challenges and benefits of being physically literate. Students have opportunities to track their individual fitness, using their results as a tool to help them become self-aware of their personal fitness levels, areas of strength, and opportunities for growth. Motor skills, manipulative skills, and movement patterns are refined and combined in various individual, partner, and team endeavors. Sportsmanship is emphasized in all Lower School physical education classes, and fourth grade students learn to be competitive in game-like settings while demonstrating respect for others. Most of all, students are challenged to take ownership of their learning and pride in their performance. Fourth grade students participate in a swim rotation where the girls learn and refine all competitive strokes as well as sidestroke and elementary backstroke and play games like water polo, inner tube soccer and relay races. A focus is placed on learning how to be safe and efficient in the water. All aspects of the physical education curriculum emphasize and promote enjoyment, responsibility, cooperation, and confidence.
Believing in the limitless potential of girls, Hockaday develops resilient, confident women who are educated and inspired to lead lives of purpose and impact.