



# ELMWOOD SCHOOL



## Junior School

CURRICULUM 2018 - 2019

# SENIOR KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM

Elmwood's philosophy promotes the education of the whole person, emphasizing intellectual, personal, emotional and social growth. Our mission is to inspire and develop each girl to reach her full potential. All aspects of our School are guided by the framework of the IB PYP, an internationally recognized programme.

The Junior School is a beautiful, light-filled building that has been designed for the developmental needs of elementary aged children. Flexible furnishings and breakout spaces support our dynamic programme. Small class sizes ensure that your daughter will receive individualized attention ensuring that she develops her own unique abilities.

## PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) of the International Baccalaureate is an internationally recognized, inquiry-based approach to curriculum that fosters the innate curiosity and love of learning in every child. Children are invited to construct their own understandings of the world around them, guided by their peers and adults. The PYP is transdisciplinary and holistic, focusing on the total growth of the developing child, touching hearts as well as minds, and encompassing social, physical, emotional and cultural needs in addition to academic development.

This curricular framework allows us to not only cover the Ontario Curriculum (as laid out on the Ontario Ministry of Education website), but to also guide students to more conceptual learning through an inquiry-based model. Throughout the year, students in Grades One to Five will have six Units of Inquiry that will be taught through a number of academic disciplines, including language arts, science, social studies, math, physical education and the arts.

During each Unit of Inquiry, students will participate in problem solving, asking questions, as well as actively seeking explanations and forming hypotheses and generalizations. Inquiry-based instruction increases student engagement, while allowing students to connect with their interests. The concept-driven units lead to a better understanding of the subject matter because they are about more than just the basic facts.

The philosophy of the PYP is a commitment to structured, purposeful inquiry as the leading vehicle for learning. The PYP draws on research and best practice from a range of national systems with a wealth of knowledge and experience from international schools to create a relevant, engaging, challenging and significant educational framework for all children.



# SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL CURRICULUM

As part of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP), students will become familiar with the Learner Profile. The profile consists of ten traits:

- communicator
- inquirer
- knowledgeable
- caring
- balanced
- thinker
- risk-taker
- principled
- open-minded
- reflective

In addition, we aim to promote the following attitudes: appreciation, commitment, confidence, cooperation, creativity, curiosity, empathy, enthusiasm, independence, integrity, respect and tolerance.

These character traits and attitudes are part of the daily classroom dialogue and act as a common language throughout the school to describe the type of person we aim to develop. Through read-alouds, classroom activities, co-curriculars and assemblies, students will learn to identify when they are demonstrating these qualities. When problems arise in the classroom or amongst friends, the situation is approached using the PYP language and encourage the girls to do the same.

## THE IB PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME:

- Encourages international-mindedness in IB students.
- Encourages a positive attitude to learning by engaging students in inquiries and developing their awareness of the process of learning so that they become lifelong learners.
- Reflects real life by encouraging learning beyond traditional subjects with meaningful, in-depth inquiries into real issues.
- Emphasizes, through the learner profile, the development of the whole student—physically, intellectually, emotionally and ethically.

In addition to the Units of Inquiry, students receive explicit instruction in the core subjects of Reading, Writing, and Math.



## PROGRAM ESSENTIALS:

- Elmwood School uses the Everyday Mathematics programme, developed by the University of Chicago, throughout the Junior School. The programme matches or goes beyond the curriculum expectations outlined in the Ontario Curriculum.
- Students strengthen their mental math abilities through work both in-class, and through at-home practice. An online programme called ixl.com is used to complement the material delivered in class.
- Current research demonstrates that each student needs to have a list tailored to her understanding of spelling patterns. Each child has an Individualized spelling programme
- Handwriting is taught explicitly with cursive writing being introduced in Grade 2.
- Students in Grades JK to Grade 5 receive 40 minutes of French daily.

## SPECIALIST TEACHERS

Students also benefit from lessons with specialist teachers in Music/Drama, Information Technology, and weekly visits with the teacher-librarian in our school library.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Students will be using technology to support and enhance their learning, both through formal Technology classes taught by a specialist teacher and their regular classroom experiences. The Smartboard is used regularly to provide students with interactive learning experiences. Students have a chance to manipulate text and images, keep track of ideas and data and collaboratively create records of our learning. In addition, the students will learn to use a variety of applications on iPads and Macbooks to support their learning.

## LIBRARY

Students visit the library once a week to exchange books. The library program is heavily integrated with PYP units.

## MUSIC AND DRAMA

Students are introduced to the basic elements of music theory and drama, and they enjoy the ensemble experience of singing, making music and creating stories with their classmates. They become good listeners of different types of music, learn to express themselves creatively through music and drama, and communicate their feeling about the music they experience in the world around them. Much of their learning is through games, songs and folk dances that include singing and dramatic movement. Performance opportunities in assemblies, holiday concerts and musicals provide additional experiences.

