







## EXPLORING THE WORLD **AND BUILDING FOUNDATIONS**

Whether they're drawn to blocks or bugs, sports or space, SCH Academy's single-sex Lower Schools provide learning environments that encourage our youngest students to explore their interests freely without gender pressure or expectations. Classes incorporate a wide range of learning opportunities for individual thought and journaling, discussion in pairs and small groups, and collaborative work in teams. In addition, students are encouraged to build, make, do, and reflect on their work.

At SCH, students are valued and nurtured as the unique individuals they are. Each child's passions and special talents are celebrated and shared, contributing to the well-being and enrichment of the larger community.

Creative problem solving and self-directed learning are introduced early into the curriculum, enabling even our youngest students to develop confidence in themselves and their ability to find solutions. An emphasis on social-emotional tools parallels and supports our students' academic learning, enabling them to develop the communication, empathy, and cultural competency skills so critical to succeed in school and widely demanded in today's collaborative, global work environment.

By the time they move on from Lower School, our youngest students have developed a strong academic foundation, love of learning, and toolkit of relational skills that will enable them to manage the academic challenges and social dynamics of our Middle Schools.

### TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED LEARNING

While in Lower School, students become adept and thoughtful users of technology to help them create, communicate, document, and collaborate with classmates. Whether it's designing circuits with littleBits, building robots with LEGOs, or using an app on their school iPads to create animated slideshows, Lower Schoolers are learning to harness the power of technology to deepen and extend their learning.

### PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

Project-based learning experiences are integrated throughout the Lower School curriculum, helping students forge core skills for their future, such as effective communication, project management, critical thinking, and problem solving. Projects are often self-directed, allowing students to pursue their own pathways into a subject, and their open-ended nature challenges students to use their own creativity and collective knowledge in devising a solution.

### SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Through research-based programs such as Responsive Classroom, Lower School students learn about themselves and relationships as they build their social competencies and practice cooperation, collaboration, assertiveness, and empathy. Through daily discussion and practice, they come to understand the importance of compassion, integrity, thoughtfulness, resilience, and other values central to an SCH education.

### CONNECTING WITH THE OUTDOORS

From observing birds, studying leaf shapes, and learning how to read maps to stocking Wissahickon Creek with baby trout, Lower School students take regular advantage of their proximity to the Wissahickon woods and trails to learn from the outdoors. These experiences help build confidence and independence, and nurture a greater appreciation of nature and preserving the environment.

“WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT OUR KIDS ARE IN EXPERT AND CARING HANDS. THE TEACHERS APPRECIATE THAT TRUST BECAUSE IT FREES THEM UP TO DO WHAT THEY DO BEST AND WHAT THEY LOVE MOST—FOCUS ON THE CHILDREN.

~ SCH PARENT P'20, P'22, P'25, P'26







Becoming comfortable in nature and understanding its gifts and intricate processes are important lessons our students learn in Lower School. With easy access to the outdoors and the Wissahickon's varied habitat, our students come to see the outdoors as another classroom, one where they can get dirty while studying about the seasons,

native bugs and animals, and water purity. This regular exposure creates a bond with nature that students carry with them, enabling them to appreciate the importance of being good environmental stewards.