



PALM BEACH DAY ACADEMY LOWER SCHOOL

PRE-PRIMARY - GRADE 3 Curriculum Guide



PALM BEACH DAY ACADEMY

Established in 1921, Palm Beach Day Academy is a co-ed independent day school serving 575 students from two-year-olds in Pre-Primary through the eighth grade. Students at PBDA experience a school culture that expects and honors personal effort, achievement, and character. Our dedicated faculty cultivate academic confidence in our students that allows them to think critically, show compassion, and adapt to the challenges of an ever-changing world.

Our mission for students at every level is to provide a best-in-class education in an academically challenging and compassion-rich environment that guides each child toward personal excellence in mind, body, and character. We honor our students as individuals and meet them where they are in a learning environment that is both challenging and supportive. We model and teach traits such as integrity, honesty, and responsibility to encourage our students to pursue lives of meaning.

A peek into our LOWER CAMPUS PROGRAM

A **two-teacher team model** from Pre-Primary through Second Grade allows for differentiated instruction to meet each student where they are and support their growth as a vital member of PBDA's classroom and school community.

Our Lower School follows a **six-day schedule**, providing blocks of instructional time in the classroom for core subjects while affording the opportunity for an innovative and comprehensive curriculum that includes literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, Spanish, visual arts, performing arts, library/media, technology and innovation, and physical education.

Students are taught the **foundational skills of public speaking** starting as early as Pre-Primary, setting the stage to successfully craft an argument, speak persuasively, and eloquently share and defend their opinions.

Learning opportunities that allow students to further develop their social-emotional skills **outside of the classroom** include frequent community gatherings, community service opportunities, field trips, and school "Flag" assemblies.

We believe in the **power of movement**. Students are given ample time and room outdoors each and every day to discover their bodies and the world through movement.



PRE-PRIMARY (AGE 2)

The **Pre-Primary program** provides an environment designed to engage our youngest learners during their first school experience. With the goal of instilling a life-long love of learning, our teaching teams carefully plan classrooms that encourage exploration, problem-solving, and collaboration. Our experienced Pre-Primary teachers recognize that a child's understanding of the world around them develops through play and therefore, a bounty of hands-on opportunities to engage with varying materials serves as the backdrop of our two-year-old program.

Our Pre-Primary program values the home-school connection and emphasizes the importance of social-emotional growth. Confidence and independence are instilled as each classroom's two teachers work as partners alongside students to guide them through unique learning experiences. Using thematic units to drive experiential learning, our program heavily focuses on concept formation and language development. Opportunities to work cooperatively with others abound, students begin to demonstrate respect for themselves, others, and the environment.

Students in Pre-Primary have the option to attend either our five-day full-day or five-day half-day program.



PRIMARY (AGES 3-5)

Our **Primary program** emphasizes the importance of early education through teaching practices focused on engaging the whole child. Students are exposed to a curriculum designed to challenge them cognitively, strengthen them physically, and respond to them socially and emotionally. The program, which serves children ages three to five, acknowledges that students develop at different rates and in different ways and, as such, individualized instruction meets each student where they are each day. A strong emphasis on developing independence, confidence in one's abilities, a positive attitude toward learning, and appropriate prosocial behavior with adults and peers helps guide these formative years prior to Kindergarten.

PBDA's Primary Program emphasizes concept formation in the areas of language arts, math, science, and social studies. Students are exposed to direct instruction to begin to develop specific skills such as letter identification and number sense; however, a large focus is placed on the development of intellectual curiosity and imagination. Students are consistently provided with non-instructional play-like experiences to foster development of academic skills.

Students in Primary have the option to attend either our five-day full-day or five-day half-day program.



KINDERGARTEN

The **Kindergarten program** addresses the academic, social-emotional, and physical needs of 5- and 6- year-old learners. The foundation of our Kindergarten program creates a safe and nurturing classroom environment that fosters independence, promotes positive attitudes toward learning, and establishes early student skills. Our child-centered curriculum focuses on further developing social and language skills, as well as mathematics and literacy skills through differentiated activities and hands-on experiences. Throughout the year, Kindergarteners explore the themes of communities and relationships through partnerships with local museums which allow our students to begin to develop an understanding of the world around them. Core values of cooperation, collaboration and respect for others are at the forefront of the Kindergarten experience at PBDA.



FIRST GRADE

The **First Grade program** continues to build independence academically, socially, and emotionally. Differentiated instruction meets the students where they are and supports their growth as vital members of the classroom and school community. Students are encouraged to be independent thinkers while still respecting others' ideas. They are provided with ample opportunities to take pride and ownership of their own learning by participating in Student Expert Teaching Talks (S.E.T. Talks), publishing a boxed set of a realistic fiction book series, and creating their own green screen project. The core of the program enables our students to grow as lifelong learners, critical thinkers, and empowered leaders who show kindness and approach any situation with confidence and a growth mindset.



SECOND GRADE

The **Second Grade** curriculum encourages students to explore the world around them with inquiring minds by providing opportunities to learn more about themselves, their school, and the local community. As students gain confidence as learners and thinkers, the Second Grade program empowers students to take ownership of their learning through student-led research projects. Through our Entrepreneur Day Program, students become entrepreneurs by forming their own business plans before creating and selling their products to the school community. Public speaking skills continue to develop throughout the year as students present their culminating projects.

Second-grade students also lead the Green Team initiative which supports the greening efforts throughout the Lower School.



THIRD GRADE

The **Third Grade** is a capstone year for students on the Lower Campus and serves as a year of great personal and academic growth. As a distinction from prior grades and in preparation for the classes on the Upper Campus, our third grade utilizes a one-teacher model. Students serve as leaders within the school community as they lead announcements during Flag Assemblies and shine during the Third Grade Musical Performance. Students have the opportunity to make valuable contributions to the larger community as they participate in a variety of meaningful outreach service activities.

Within the classroom, teachers work closely with students to help guide the development of their critical thinking and collaborative learning skills while encouraging them to maintain a growth mindset. The students' confidence and empowerment grows throughout the year as they gain an understanding of their potential and the importance of being a positive force in the world.



LANGUAGE ARTS

Our Language Arts program focuses on fostering a love of reading and writing. Beginning in the Pre-Primary and Primary classrooms, our curriculum provides ample opportunities for students to play with language through fingerplays and rhyming before advancing into direct instruction in letters and sounds.

Starting in Kindergarten and continuing through First Grade, students learn explicit reading and writing skills such as letter formation, sound mastery, and phonological awareness using a science-based, structured literacy, and multisensory approach. Students learn to make predictions, visualize, retell, infer, and respond to questions as they read. They grow as writers as they realize that letters and sounds work together to produce written text. Students utilize drawing and dictating to narrate linked events to tell a story in sequence. Teachers focus on the mastery of basic grammar and sentence structure skills.

As students progress to the Second and Third Grades, students transition from decoding words on a page to reading for meaning using fluency, expression, and understanding. Strong reading habits are developed by applying and building upon learned skills as they explore a variety of texts and respond to literature to build comprehension skills. Students become authors by developing their writer's craft; throughout the year, they generate topics, plan their work, write, revise, edit, and publish several written pieces including personal narratives, informational books, works of poetry, and persuasive speeches.



SOCIAL STUDIES

Our Social Studies program seeks to enhance PBDA's mission of developing global citizens. Building off of the school's vision that students will develop an understanding of their self-worth and their role in a changing world, our Early Childhood program explores concepts that connect students with their earliest experiences. Thematic learning focused on areas of interest help students gain a larger understanding of where they fit into the world. Studies with our youngest students start inward as they explore themselves and their emotions and then branch out naturally to include family, friendships, and their community.

As students progress into Kindergarten and First Grade, students dive deeper into concepts related to how communities live and work together. An early understanding of civics, economics, geography, and history is explored, and learning is integrated across all academic areas. A cornerstone of the Social Studies program begins as community partnerships – such as museum visits and engagement with community members – are developed to provide hands-on action-based learning.

As students progress into Second and Third Grade, a collaboration with businesses, museums, and various outdoor spaces grows. Students are encouraged to take ownership of how they can directly impact the world around them through various service projects. Our Entrepreneur Day program holds students accountable for developing a business plan and creating a product to sell to their peers and school community. Additionally, as a culmination of their time on the Lower Campus, Third Graders are challenged to create an outreach program that directly impacts the local community. The opportunities provided within our Social Studies Curriculum are committed to engagement with our town, county, state, national, and global communities in order to promote an understanding of our students' role as members of society.



MATHEMATICS

The Lower Campus Mathematics program builds enduring math knowledge through student discourse, hands-on activities, problem-solving, differentiation, and support when needed. Students learn to make connections that deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts and increase their ability to justify and explain their reasoning. Concepts build from Pre-Primary to Third Grade in each of the content standards: counting and cardinality, operations and algebraic thinking, numbers and operations in base ten, geometry, measurement and data, and numbers and operations-fractions. As students progress through the Lower School, the level of sophistication and complexity in math grows. Our teachers engage students in differentiated activities and encourage them to build a better understanding of mathematical concepts through individual and cooperative tasks and lessons.

Beginning in Pre-Primary and Primary, math units are explored in a relevant way to a young child's world. Through the use of hands-on learning and play, students have the chance to problem-solve and collaborate with their peers. As well, basic number recognition and counting are introduced.

In Kindergarten and First Grade, students gain a deeper understanding of numbers through a hands-on approach in whole-group mini-lessons, small-group activities, and individual practice. Students develop and build their number sense as they count and compare quantities, describe situations mathematically, add and subtract numbers, and describe objects.

In the Second and Third Grades, students work in differentiated classes to advance their computational skills and quantitative methods. Not only do students acquire more advanced skills in mental math, but they also learn how to explain the steps they used to solve a problem.



COMPUTER SCIENCE

We recognize that technology should act as a resource for students and therefore we integrate our Computer Science program across all disciplines. Our curriculum empowers our students to become creative, confident and engaged learners as we utilize technology to support academic growth. Our state of the art computer lab allows students to interact with iMac computers and iPads as they gain confidence in their technological skills. Collaboration with classroom and specialist teachers show students first-hand how technology can support the pursuit of knowledge and enhance the programming at PBDA.

Exposure to iPad applications in a developmentally appropriate way begins in Primary where students gain knowledge of how technology can support their learning while practicing skills and seeking information that supports thematic learning. From the start, students are taught the behaviors and habits of responsible digital citizens. Beginning in Kindergarten, weekly visits to the computer lab, keyboarding and mouse skills coupled with internet navigation introduce students to the world of computers. Technological confidence grows, and students begin to create, document, present, and publish their work. Through the use of iPad apps and websites, students explore digital art and coding in a way that builds upon the skills learned from year to year. Additionally, students are encouraged to express themselves and showcase their creativity as they work with text and images, study digital art and photography, as well as graphic design, animation, augmented reality, videography, and storytelling.

Students in K-3 operate in an environment of 1:1 iPads. The incorporation of Chromebooks begins in Grades 2 and 3 where students are introduced to programs within Google Suites where they utilize Google Maps, Google Docs, and Google Drive as they work to gather and organize information.



SCIENCE

Our Science program focuses strongly on exposing students to the world of science through hands-on experimentation, play-based learning, and student-driven experiences.

Starting in Kindergarten, students are given the opportunity to develop their critical thinking and observational skills while investigating topics regarding the physical, earth, and atmospheric sciences. Our robust curriculum, which is aligned with Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), allows for collaboration with classroom teachers and other specialists while also promoting student involvement so that the curiosities of students are met throughout the year. An emphasis on hypothesis building and data collection begins in the Second Grade as students start designing their own experiments based on their interests.

We believe strongly in the benefit that comes from educating our students about the natural world around them and we frequently incorporate Florida's natural ecosystems into the classroom through collaborations with local environmental education centers. These experiences provide early exposure to scientific concepts through active learning, thereby promoting student confidence, mastery, and environmental stewardship.

Students are encouraged to work collaboratively in small groups during their experiments and activities, and are given ample opportunities to practice presenting their experimental findings to their peers. Throughout the year, students complete various projects related to topics covered in the classroom, such as Kindergarten's Teddy Bear Picnic. These projects also work to align the science curriculum with that of technology and innovation.



INNOVATION

We strongly believe in the value of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) as a vital approach to education. Specialist teachers dedicated to Innovation, Science, and Technology communicated daily with classroom teachers to provide students with authentic opportunities to collaborate and solve problems.

The Merck Innovation Lab — equipped with robotics systems, a 3D printer, Green Screen Studio, Lego Wall, and much more — provides a dedicated space for students from Kindergarten through Third Grade to try their hand at video production, designing, scientific exploration, building, and tinkering. Students work through a progressive curriculum that incorporates the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) while integrating Technology, Engineering, Robotics, Mathematics, and the various science fields. Hands-on learning experiences promote creative and critical thinking, problem-solving strategies, communication, and collaboration.



VISUAL ARTS

Our Visual Arts curriculum seeks to foster self expression by encouraging students to explore the world around them through art. We provide an environment that allows students to plan, experiment, and problem-solve through the art process as they make decisions and learn from the experience of creating. At all levels, our Art program serves as an opportunity for students to naturally develop and hone their fine motor skills.

Students in our Pre-Primary and Primary Programs enjoy a visual arts curriculum that is naturally integrated into thematic learning. Classroom teachers recognize how learning is supported by exploration, and as such, painting, working with scissors and glue, and coloring all serve to enhance the students' development.

Weekly visits to the art studio begin in Kindergarten where our dedicated art teacher helps students develop their sense of individuality and appreciation for creative expression. A focus on exploring personal ideas and feelings about various age-appropriate subject matters through creating and discussing art sit at the core of our program. Elementary students explore different materials, art techniques, artists and art forms in a program that builds upon foundations laid in the previous grade level.

Observation and communication skills are incorporated as students' craftsmanship grows. As our artists refine their creative process, they are challenged to share their thinking and display a growth mindset toward their art pieces. Recognizing that creating can serve as an important resource toward developing conceptual learning, our artists are provided opportunities to integrate art into their daily academic learning. As such, our art program collaborates with each grade level to support the learning happening within the classroom.



MUSIC

We recognize the role music plays in academic achievement as music ignites the brain and body to work together to develop language and mathematical thinking. Providing an additional outlet for creativity, our Music program strives to instill a love of singing and music while developing our students' musicality and musical literacy.

Our Early Childhood Music program focuses on early exposure to music through songs, chants, and movement activities. Whole body integration occurs as students are encouraged to move to music and use their singing voices to express themselves. As students' musicality increases in Kindergarten and First Grade, the foundations of music, such as tempo, dynamics, pitch and rhythm, are integrated. Musical literacy is emphasized, and opportunities to read and compose music using notes and pitches are part of weekly music classes. Students are introduced to musical form and have their first structured exploration on Orff instruments. Our Second and Third Grade musicians extend their musical literacy by singing, speaking, playing and composing music with the pentatonic scale, whole notes, and half notes. An emphasis on developing an awareness of global communities takes on an important role as we explore world music through folk dances from various nations in all grade levels.

Our Music program recognizes the importance of student creativity and allows students to take leadership while making music. Students are given opportunities to showcase their musical skills as they perform at Flag Assemblies, participate in a winter concert and in a chorus program, and culminate their Third Grade year with a special musical.



LIBRARY

Nurturing a love of reading and fostering an ability to seek answers are at the heart of our Library curriculum. Starting in Pre-Primary, students are exposed to and encouraged to explore the world around them through various print forms such as picture books, poems, and novels. Our media center contains over 7,000 books to allow students to explore and link their personal interests with their growing academic knowledge. A dedicated librarian guides students as they select texts that capture curiosity and encourage a lifelong love of reading.

Students in Pre-Primary and Primary enjoy weekly visits from our librarian within the comfort of their classrooms. The curriculum at our Early Childhood level focuses on supporting the programs' science and social studies themes and highlights at an early age the role books play in learning. During read-aloud time with the librarian, our youngest students work on showing appropriate attention to stories, making predictions, and understanding the difference between fiction and nonfiction while being encouraged to make personal connections to texts.

Students in Kindergarten through Third Grade enjoy a dedicated library class in the Media Center where our librarian develops activities that both encourages them to dive deeper into the learning happening in the classroom while also explore their personal interests through reading. Our program introduces students to different types of text and genres through read-alouds and prompts them to evaluate character's feelings and think critically about text. Working alongside classroom teachers, special attention is given to the use of a library in seeking answers, and our Media Center becomes a vital resource for students as they complete projects supporting our academic programs.

Additionally, our Kindergarten and First Grade students learn how to identify areas of the library and are encouraged to browse and choose books to check out from our media center. As their library independence grows, students in Second and Third Grades use Follett Destiny to search for specific books and use the information obtained to find them within our library.



SPANISH

We recognize that early immersion in a second language provides enhanced concentration, stronger listening skills, improved memory and critical-thinking skills, and promotes empathy and understanding of other cultures. Our Foreign Language program seeks to follow the school's mission of developing an understanding of a student's role in a global community and creating citizens of the world. PBDA's Spanish program enriches our academic curriculum starting with our Pre-Primary students and continuing through Third Grade.

The development of a second language is supported for our youngest students by focusing lessons on the thematic learning happening within our Early Childhood classrooms. An emphasis on vocabulary development allows our students to engage with Spanish in a developmentally appropriate way and to create brain and body connections to words both in English and Spanish. Lessons are presented in a fun and engaging way through fingerplays, songs, and books. As their awareness of vocabulary words grows, our Elementary students' ability to integrate Spanish into daily classroom activities develops. Students interpret calendars, describe weather and seasons, express simple feelings, and verbalize personal information in role-playing scenarios. The transition from word recognition to independent conversation happens naturally as the curriculum builds upon previous learning from grade level to grade level.

As students continue in our language program, the ability to comprehend simple conversations and written sentences expands, and students are encouraged to complete reading and writing activities in group and individual settings to challenge their understanding of the Spanish language.

We recognize that language is the most direct connection to other cultures, and our learners at all levels enjoy learning about Spanish heritage in our immersive program. Collaboration and integration amongst all disciplines ensures the unique learning styles of all students are respected and nurtured.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Our P.E. program supports the school's mission of excellence of mind, body, and character as our coaches promote positive attitudes toward physical health as well as the importance of perseverance and teamwork. We recognize the benefit provided to students' academic learning when they are afforded moments of physical activity within the school day. Through daily P.E. classes, students are shown first-hand the role healthy activity plays in their daily lives.

Starting in our Pre-Primary and Primary programs, students work to develop early locomotor skills such as running, climbing, jumping, and hopping. Students are given opportunities to develop their balance, coordination, spatial awareness, and body control through games and activities developed by our coaches. Mastery of these skills in our structured P.E. classes helps develop body awareness and confidence in movement. Our youngest students learn how to play with others, wait their turn, and follow directions. Our coaches continue to provide opportunities to develop and refine motor skills in Kindergarten through Grade 3 while emphasizing the importance of good sportsmanship and supporting one's teammates. As personal skill levels increase with age, a robust curriculum ensures that the interests and needs of all students are met. Team sports, including rules and strategies for success, are introduced as students continue to practice working together and improving skill sets.

An important celebration of students' physical accomplishment occurs in our annual Field Day event, held every February. Students in Pre-Primary through the Third Grade are split into teams and cheered on by the school community as they compete in events that highlight their physical prowess and sportsmanship.



AFTERSCHOOL ENRICHMENT

At PBDA, educating the whole child means more than academic coursework. Our Afterschool Enrichment program, offered for students in Primary and above, provides engaging on-campus and off-campus options that supplement and enhance each student's experience in the PBDA classroom.

Enrichment activities provide a place for students to develop lasting friendships, work collaboratively as part of a team, acquire new skills or enhance existing ones, and most importantly, have fun. Each trimester, PBDA offers close to 50 different Enrichment classes for students to choose from. While the options differ with each trimester, classes seek to appeal to all interests and range from Karate with Systema Floyd and Beginner Chess to "Challenge Island" and piano classes.

Enrichment classes run approximately eight weeks at a time and are always held after school hours. Costs vary by class and are held once or twice per week, depending on the class. While a majority of the classes are taught on-site by PBDA faculty members, select activities incorporate external instructors and may be held at an off-site location.



The foundation of Palm Beach Day Academy's program is the education of our students in an **academically challenging and compassion-rich environment** that guides each child toward personal excellence of mind, body and character.

At all levels, our students will be:
Challenged to Excel
Empowered to Act
Prepared to Lead



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