



THE UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO

LABORATORY SCHOOLS



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Early Childhood
PROGRAM OF STUDIES

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Overarching Philosophy

The following statements and principles create the pillars of The University of Chicago Early Childhood division and inform all of our practices:

Mission Statement of The Laboratory Schools

The Laboratory Schools are home to the youngest members of the University of Chicago's academic community. We ignite and nurture an enduring spirit of scholarship, curiosity, creativity, and confidence. We value learning experientially, exhibiting kindness, and honoring diversity.

Laboratory Schools Diversity Statement

Diversity at the Laboratory Schools includes the thoughts and worldviews, identities and affiliations, aptitudes and aspirations, races and cultures, genders and sexualities, and experiences and economics of our students, families, faculty, administrators, and staff. Through their engagement with diversity, students will gain the preparation they need to live and lead in a complex world, with an inherent sense of inclusiveness and justice. The Laboratory Schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national or ethnic origin, age, status as an individual with a disability, protected veteran status, genetic information, or other protected classes as required by law.

Community Agreement for Early Childhood

We agree to be kind, thoughtful, and responsible members of the community. This encompasses every single aspect of a student's experience at school.

PEN Principles

- Education must amplify students' voice, agency, conscience, and intellect to create a more equitable, just, and sustainable world.
- Education must encourage the active participation of students in their learning, in their communities, and in the world.
- Education must respond to the developmental needs of students, and focus on their social, emotional, intellectual, cognitive, cultural, and physical development.
- Education must honor and nurture students' natural curiosity and innate desire to learn, fostering internal motivation and the discovery of passion and purpose.
- Education must emerge from the interests, experiences, goals, and needs of diverse constituents, fostering empathy, communication and collaboration across difference.
- Education must foster respectfully collaborative and critical relationships between students, educators, parents/guardians, and the community.

CASEL Framework

Self-Awareness: The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts. This includes capacities to recognize one's strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose.

Self-Management: The abilities to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations to achieve goals and aspirations. This includes capacities to delay gratification, manage stress, and feel motivation and agency to accomplish personal and collective goals.

Responsible decision-making: The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations. This includes capacities to consider ethical standards and safety concerns, and to evaluate the benefits and consequences of various actions for personal, social, and collective well-being.

Relationship skills: The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups. This includes capacities to communicate clearly, listen actively, cooperate, work collaboratively to problem solve and negotiate conflict constructively, navigate settings with differing social and cultural demands and opportunities, provide leadership, and seek or offer help when needed.

Social awareness: The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts. This included capacities to feel compassion for others, understand broader historical social norms for behavior in different settings, and recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

DEI Essential Questions

- How do we name and affirm our own and others' racial identities every day?
- What is the history of race and current role of white supremacy and systemic racism in our society?
- How do we challenge injustice and advocate for racial justice for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)?
- How do we embrace pride and joy in BIPOC racial identities?
- How do we highlight and uplift celebrations and accomplishments of BIPOC?

DEI Goals

Nursery

Students will...

- Understand, value, and develop language to name their own racial identities and begin to notice and name that of others.
- Honor all skin colors, address and affirm racial differences, and actively affirm blackness.

- Learn about and honor diversity in race, ethnicity, culture, and language.
- Understand that skin color is one, but not the only part of someone's race or ethnicity.
- Acknowledge and affirm how others identify, and respectfully express curiosity about differences.
- Understand that language, dialect, origin, traditions, food, etc. can all be parts of someone's race/ethnicity.
- Understand that people were and are still treated better and worse based on their race/ethnicity.

Kindergarten

Students will...

- Recognize that every person is an individual and that their race/ethnicity is only one part of who they are.
- Learn about the contributions of people of historically marginalized races/ethnicities.
- Understand that life is easier for some people and harder for others, based on their race/ethnicity.
- Engage in classroom-wide actions that address and challenge racial inequity and injustice.

Grades 1 and 2

Students will...

- Recognize that their own and others' experience of their racial/ethnic identity will be different in different contexts.
- Identify figures, groups, and events relevant to the history of racial justice around the world.
- Recognize that white supremacy and systemic racism affect their everyday lives.
- Take actions that reflect their responsibility to stand up to exclusion, prejudice, and injustice.
- Understand that other aspects of their identity affect and influence their experience of their racial identity.
- Organize and lead schoolwide actions that educate others about racial injustice and advocate for racial justice and equity.
- Understand the evolving history of race and injustices based on race/ethnicity.

Learning to Read in Early Childhood

Research shows that most children learn language in a social context. The University of Chicago Laboratory Schools values learning to read, write and speak as a continuous process. We teach literacy skills in a supportive learning environment using a collection of materials, processes, and strategies. We employ the principles of differentiated instruction to meet students' where they are in the literacy process. Research cannot identify one single approach to literacy instruction that will be effective for every learner because of diverse backgrounds, experiences, and learning styles. In the philosophy of John Dewey, and learning by doing, we value a continuous love of learning and adapt our instruction to new research on best practice instruction.

Literacy development at Earl Shapiro Hall has several components. These include development of receptive and expressive language skills for oral and written communication, decoding, building vocabulary, writing skills and reading comprehension. Each grade level builds upon the next on a continuum.

Assessment

Our role as educators requires that we attend to all aspects of our students' development, and all aspects of development overlap, interface with, and impact each other in countless ways. The purpose of assessment is to help teachers understand what students know then make meaningful decisions about teaching and learning activities. Students' progress in the academic and social and emotional realms is assessed and evaluated daily and on an ongoing basis. As children work, teachers adjust their instruction based on their needs.

We view the assessment process as a key ingredient of instruction, providing students with immediate feedback and allowing teachers to tailor instruction to specific student needs. This kind of approach, known as formative evaluation, is dynamic, interactive and ongoing. It may take many forms including listening to students read and discuss books, timed tests on math facts, watching children as they play and resolve conflicts, weekly spelling tests, reading inventories, play performances, project collaboration and problem solving. We also incorporate curriculum based assessments in pre-reading, reading, math, and writing skills and normative assessments in various content areas (AIMS Web Plus).

Content Areas

Progress Report Standards

Social Emotional Learning, Citizenship, & Approaches to Learning

Nursery 3

Self Awareness & Self Management

- With support, able to separate from a parent, to trust adults, and to be aware of others
- Displays a growing ability to care for his or her own needs and take responsibility for possessions.
- Shows developing small and large motor skills.
- Able to recognize and value similarities & differences in identity (the self)
- With adult support, learning to use strategies to cope with frustration
- Able to adapt to routines and rules of classroom.
- Able to represent ideas and experiences in a variety of symbolic ways including language, play, music, art, drawing, and story drama.
- Able to invest in an activity and stay with a task.
- Beginning ability to identify and name feelings

Social Awareness & Interpersonal Relations

- Comfortable with peers, able to relate to and interact with other children.
- Beginning ability to listen in small and large groups.
- Beginning ability to understand and respect the concept of consent
- Increasing knowledge about the world in areas that interest them, developing theories about how the world works.

Nursery 4

Self Awareness & Self Management

- Able to separate from parents, to trust adults, to feel comfortable and safe in school.
- Able to care for own possessions and classroom materials.
- Able to initiate play, have confidence to try out ideas, and stay with a task.
- Refining small and large motor skills.
- Increasing ability to pay attention to group discussion, listen to others' ideas and respond to them in the whole classroom group and small groups.
- Able to use words to express ideas and feelings, to solve conflicts by talking and to tolerate reasonable frustration.
- Able to understand and adapt to routines and rules of classroom.

Social Awareness & Interpersonal Relations

- Aware of others, cares about others, includes others in play, helps others, considers rights of others, experiences and appreciates belonging to a group, a developing appreciation for everyone's uniqueness.
- Able to recognize and value similarities & differences in identity (others)
- Understands and respects the concept of consent
- Responsibly expresses feelings and emotions
- Notices, recognizes and accepts own and others' expressions of feelings and emotions
- Engages in social stories
- Cares for own and other community members' emotions
- Acknowledges and accepts own and others' identities

Kindergarten

Self Awareness & Self Management

- Identifies emotions in self and others
- Recognizes own strengths and challenges
- Demonstrates self-confidence
- Demonstrates self-efficacy/belief that one has the capacity and skills to achieve goals

Social Awareness & Interpersonal Relations

- Self-regulates emotions
- Copes with emotions such as anger, frustration, disappointment, worries
- Uses flexible thinking
- Adapts to change
- Shows resilience and the ability to move on
- Follows rules and routines
- Manages transitions, e.g. from home, to gym, to new activity
- Controls impulses
- Understands personal space
- Sustains focus and attention
- Avoids and ignores distractions
- Follows directions
- Starts tasks independently
- Stays organized
- Perseveres through challenges
- Takes pride in work
- Participates in the kindergarten program
- Treats others with kindness and respect
- Shows empathy
- Appreciates diversity
- Recognizes other perspectives

- Stays open-minded
- Reads social cues
- Works and plays cooperatively, gets along with others
- Makes and keeps friends
- Reads social cues
- Reads emotions of others
- Communicates effectively, e.g., reciprocity in conversation
- Takes turns, shares, compromises
- Resolves conflicts independently most of the time
- Understands when to seek help and support from adults and peers
- Disagrees respectfully
- Apologizes respectfully

Grades 1 and 2 (in addition to Nursery & K Standards)

Self-Awareness & Self-Management

- Follows classroom routines and manages transitions
- Works independently, on task, and seeks help when needed
- Shows eagerness and curiosity as a self-directed learner
- Shows perseverance when challenged

Social Awareness & Interpersonal Relations

- Interacts appropriately with adults
- Interacts cooperatively with peers
- Engages in discussions and participates in lessons
- Responsible Decision Making
- Resolves conflicts appropriately
- Respects self, others, materials, and facility

Nursery Program

Guiding Principles

The aim of education in Laboratory Schools Nursery Classes is the development of all aspects of the child—intellectual, social, emotional, and moral--in the context of a multicultural community.

From birth, children are engaged in making sense of the world. Children come to school with much knowledge about the world and the potential and desire to continue making sense out of experience. At times, children need help from adults in making sense of what they encounter. As Family Life Educator Debbie Roffman has written, parents and teachers sometimes need to be “cultural interpreters” for children. This is particularly true in approaching and discussing difficult and complex topics such as adoption, death, injustice, segregation, sexual orientation, slavery and war. At Lab, we are an open, affirming community, and we do not shy away from topics such as these. Rather, we address them as they come up, at a level of discussion that is appropriate for young children. This involves helping children identify, express and understand their own emotions and the emotions of others.

Human beings learn in a variety of ways. One of the most significant ways of learning for young children is that of constructing knowledge. "People always reinvent whatever they encounter, by constantly making and revising mental models of the world." Children learn from each other as they co-construct knowledge together. Children learn best when they are actively engaged in meaningful activities.²

Each brain is uniquely organized and school should include activities that make it more likely that each child can find an area in which he/she can excel. Every child needs to have experiences of success. School should identify and use the innate strengths of every child.

Young children are beginning the process of understanding and representing their experiences through the use of art, music, drama, language, and play. Play is one of the most important "languages" that young children use to learn about and understand the world.

Children need to feel safe, secure, valued and understood in order to optimize learning. Learning takes place best in a caring community in which parents and teachers collaborate. An important goal of nursery school and kindergarten is for children to learn how to function in a group in which they can experience the joy of being and learning together. We seek to create a caring community that includes people from many cultures. We strive for a community in which each member is recognized, valued, and supported, and in which learning is seen as valuable and rewarding.

Developmental Description of Nursery School Children

Because children must be three by September 1 in order to enter our Nursery School, our nursery children range in age from three to five. Since children develop at different rates, the following description is meant to highlight significant areas of development but not to attach age norms to achievements in those areas.

Separation

Separating from parents or other caretakers and making connections with someone at school is often one of the major challenges for the three year old student. Depending on the child's temperament, family relationships, past experiences and current situation, this separation may or may not be a difficult task. Some children need a parent to stay for the first few days and sometimes longer. Even children who separate more easily from their parent may revisit the theme of separation throughout the nursery school years.

Dressing, toileting, caring for own possessions

We expect children to be toilet-trained before they enter nursery school. Occasionally, a very young child may need some extra help with this at the beginning of school. Almost all nursery school children learn how to care for their things at school. Many children need help with dressing to go outdoors particularly in the winter.

Friendships

Nursery School children differ considerably in their involvement with peers. Most children move from being more self-involved to discovering that the most interesting playthings in the room are other children. We have noticed a difference in this area between first-born and only children, and second- and third-born children. First-born and only children tend to begin school seeking more attention from the teacher, while second-born or third-born children more frequently come to school looking for friends right from the beginning. This is a difference that tends to fade over time. It is not unusual for a child to play by her/himself or next to but not with another child for a long time during the first year. During the two years in nursery school, we do many things to encourage children playing and working together at the same time respecting a child's right to approach relationships at his/her own pace.

Relationship to a group

Nursery school-age children are ready to be a part of a group and this is an important part of the nursery school curriculum. In nursery school we make sure that children have experiences being a part of small groups and the whole classroom group.

Relationship to teachers

Nursery school children differ in their approach to teachers. As mentioned above, we have noticed that first-born and only children tend to seek the teachers out more, particularly at the beginning of the year. Children with older siblings tend to spend less time focused on the teachers and more time with their peers. This is a difference that seems to disappear over time in nursery school. All children need the teachers' warmth, approval, caring and empathy.

Teachers have an important role to play in helping children learn who they are, what they like, what they are good at, how they can get along with each other, how they can put feelings into words, how they can manage in the world of school, and the importance of being a part of a community. Children also need teachers to provide

an environment in which the children's thinking is stimulated and supported and children can become "master players."

Handling conflict, anger, and frustration

Most three year olds have learned not to bite, kick, hit, or throw things when they are upset, but there are occasionally children who need more help developing internal controls and there are occasions when young children momentarily lose their ability to control themselves. All nursery school children need support in continuing to learn how best to deal with conflict, anger, and frustration.

Play

Pretend play is one of the most important symbolic languages of the young child and one that most young children pursue with passion. To be able to play well is an important developmental achievement of preschool children. They frequently begin as three year olds with simple scenes and stories in a small group or alone. By the second year of nursery school, children tend to be playing in larger groups with more complex themes and negotiations.

Disposition towards learning

Children this age continue to be very interested in exploring their environment, something they have been doing since birth. They are still very physical in this exploration but symbolic exploration and representation assume more importance as they go through their nursery school years. Allowed to take initiative, to have long periods of play, and to be provided an environment filled with possibilities and supportive teachers, the nursery age child usually approaches school with great enthusiasm each day.

Fine motor skills development

Fine motor skills continue to develop throughout the nursery school years. Nursery school contains many activities to help with fine motor development--cutting, painting, drawing, using the easels, building with small blocks, using a variety of manipulatives. It is important to note that the motor skills for effective written output are different from those needed to use a pair of scissors. Motor skills involved in the act of writing are called graphomotor skills and children may have good fine motor skills and at the same time have trouble with graphomotor skills.

Gross motor skills development

Nursery school children need many opportunities to be physically active. They profit from being able to run, climb and jump. They learn a great deal as they use their whole bodies. They need chances to use large muscles outdoors and inside.

Competencies

For Entering Nursery School

Children entering Nursery School at the Laboratory Schools usually have:

- a mastery of toilet training.
- an ability to separate from parents and invest in school with support from parents and teachers. The young three year old may need a parent to stay at school for some days at the beginning of school. The returning four year old may need extra support at the beginning of the year. Separation issues are revisited throughout the nursery school years.
- a beginning ability to take care of possessions with help.
- an increasing interest in and ability to be part of a group for a period of time.
- an ability to maintain socially appropriate behavior most of the time, particularly the ability to inhibit aggressive impulses toward other people.
- an ability to follow directions. Children ready for nursery school are willing to take direction from adults, rather than meeting adult direction with oppositional behavior.
- a developing ability to represent ideas and experiences in a variety of symbolic ways such as language, play, music, drawing, painting, and story drama.
- a developing ability to get interested in materials and other people.
- an ability to communicate in either English or another language.

Developed in Nursery School

- While in Nursery School a child is working on:
- the ability to separate from parents, to trust adults, to feel comfortable and safe in school.
- the ability to care for own possessions and classroom materials.
- the ability to be aware of others, care about others, include others in play, help others, consider rights of others, and to experience and appreciate belonging to a group.
- the ability to pay attention to group discussion, listen to others' ideas and respond to them in the whole classroom group and small groups.
- the ability to use words to express ideas and feelings, to solve conflicts by talking and to tolerate reasonable frustration.
- the ability to understand and adapt to routines and rules of classroom.
- the ability to represent ideas and experiences in a variety of symbolic ways, including language, play, music, art, drawing, and story drama.
- the ability to initiate play, have confidence to try out ideas, and stay with a task.
- developing small and large motor skills.
- acquiring beginning knowledge of numbers and print awareness

For Entering Kindergarten

Children entering Kindergarten in our school usually have:

- the ability to separate from a parent, to trust adults, and to be aware of others.

- a growing ability to care for his or her own needs and take responsibility for possessions.
- the ability to be comfortable with peers, relate to and interact with other children.
- the ability to listen in small and large groups.
- the ability to deal with frustration and handle conflict in constructive ways without becoming physically aggressive.
- the ability to adapt to routines and rules of the classroom.
- a growing ability to represent ideas and experiences in a variety of symbolic ways including language, play, music, art, drawing, and story drama.
- the ability to invest in an activity, stay with a task and engage in sustained, satisfying play.
- a beginning number sense and ability to count to ten.
- the ability to name some letters of the alphabet and write one's name.
- a familiarity with books, with listening to and telling stories, and an ability to use language to communicate.
- an increasing amount of knowledge about the world in areas that interest them.

Progress Report Standards

Literacy & Math

Nursery 3

- able to represent ideas and experiences in a variety of symbolic ways, including language, play, music, art, drawing, and story drama.
- shows beginning knowledge of numbers
- shows beginning print awareness
- increasing ability to pay attention to group discussion, listen to others' ideas and respond to them in the whole classroom group and small groups.
- familiar with books, with listening to and telling stories, and able to use language to communicate.

Nursery 4 (in addition to Nursery 3 standards)

- able to name some letters of alphabet and write own name.
- shows a beginning number sense and understanding of the meaning of numbers
- able to count to ten.

Kindergarten Program

Guiding Principles

In the tradition of the founder of our school, John Dewey, and progressive educators everywhere, our kindergarten classrooms are dynamic environments where children construct knowledge through their play, experiences, and social interactions. All the learners, adults and children, are active participants, problem solvers, planners, and the generators of ideas and projects. Instruction is based on the result of teacher inquiry as well as children and teachers' ongoing reflections as they observe what children are learning and doing. Teachers guide and encourage children's thinking by asking questions and providing resources to enable them to carry out their projects, investigations and ideas. We recognize in our students multiple intelligences and provide a wide range of activities, materials, and pursuits in order to support and nurture the many "languages" children use to express their ideas and interests. Therefore, our classrooms are filled with areas to engage in scientific experiments and observations, to practice the visual arts of drawing, painting, and sculpture, to pose and solve mathematical problems in contexts of daily living, to build with blocks and other constructive materials, to participate in a variety of literacy activities and to play.

Environment

The kindergarten classroom environment has a powerful impact on how children learn. Teachers intentionally plan the environment to allow opportunities for children to care for themselves and others. The classroom fosters interaction with people and materials, and it offers children developmentally appropriate choices for work and play. Self-help, self-regulation, initiative-taking, choice-making, communication, sharing, problem-solving, and relationship-building, among many other skills, are developed and strengthened when children are immersed in a well-designed classroom environment. There is an underlying order and beauty in the design and organization of the classroom environment and the materials within it. Every space in the room has an identity that reflects a purpose as well as the sensibilities of individual teachers and children who work and play in the space. Ideally, it can be shaped and reshaped, in both subtle and grand ways, as new interests and needs emerge. The children, the teachers, the parents, and the wider school community value and care for our classrooms.

Developmental Description of Kindergarten Children

Kindergartners are increasingly able to enter the classroom independently and start their day in a productive and efficient manner, following an established morning routine. They are more and more able to name and manage their own emotions and emotional output in a way that allows them to be productive members of the class. And they are learning to think beyond their own needs and beginning to understand and consider the needs of others. Furthermore, throughout the kindergarten year, the class works together to devise guidelines and strategies for dealing with the kinds of challenges that occur daily in a classroom. Teachers provide careful support to help students engage in problem solving with peers. They allow each child to present their point of view, help to ensure all parties feel heard, and then work to come to a meaningful and satisfactory resolution. By the end of

kindergarten year, children should be able to attempt problem solving and conflict resolution independently, and also know when it is appropriate to seek adult assistance.

Relationships

Typically, children arrive in kindergarten ready to build a deeper understanding of friendship. Making and keeping friends – or building and sustaining relationships – becomes a less egocentric endeavor for them as they define what it means to have and to be a good friend. The role of the child within a larger group is also one to be modeled and supported. At this age, entering the world of their peers is paramount in children’s development. Helping children to figure out how they can contribute to the classroom community, and having their contributions be valued and appreciated, is an ongoing process. The many ways that children can add to the life of the group can be broad, and we look for ways for each child to make a unique contribution.

Independence

Supporting the increasing independence and self-reliance of the child is an ongoing process in kindergarten. Children come to kindergarten with varying levels of comfort in their ability to function independently. Throughout the year, teachers create an environment in which children can function independently, organize themselves with increasing ease, and feel easily able to regulate themselves. The ability and decision of a child to initiate appropriate use of materials, to help a friend who needs it, or to manage their belongings are all opportunities for a child to feel more competent, capable and self-reliant. The ability to develop your own thoughts and to share them, whether with a friend, teacher or the group, is another part of the increasing independence of the kindergarten year.

Self-Care

Kindergarten children are increasingly competent at caring for their personal needs and belongings. Kindergarteners are able to dress independently, but occasionally need help managing zippers, buttons and shoelaces. Kindergarteners are able to manage the packaging of their lunch, are able to manage utensils, wipe their faces and clean up after themselves. Kindergarten students are able to manage and keep track of their personal belongings and backpacks.

Literacy

In Kindergarten, we believe that an integrated language arts program in which children use language in order to communicate and learn about their world is the most important and effective way to develop skills in speaking, listening, and emergent reading and writing. Our program builds on young children's curiosity and enthusiasm and is based on the understanding that young children learn best when they construct meaning in a context-rich environment. Kindergarten literacy instruction includes instruction in upper case letter naming and sound awareness, high frequency sight words, and segmenting sounds, which is taught through the writing workshop program. Foundational skills in phonemic awareness include rhyming (sat, cat), syllable segmentation (bath/tub), oral phoneme blending (c-a-t), and syllable and phoneme deletion (Say newspaper without the news

or pat without the “p.” Research supports that a strong foundation in phonemic awareness is the primary predictor of success in learning how to read and spell (Speech to Print, Louisa Moats).

Each individual child has strengths in the multiple areas of literacy and our program is designed to meet children at their levels and foster their strengths. In our print rich classrooms, children have ample opportunity to interact with books from the classroom library and listen to chapter and picture books being read. Children develop their expressive and receptive language skills at meeting time where they can express feelings, ideas, ask questions and listen to others. Our play rich curriculum gives children the ability to interact with one another, to express themselves and to develop their ideas in a natural, unstructured setting.

The children are encouraged to express their ideas on paper through drawing and writing. The kindergarten writing program encourages stretching out each sound and encourages the development of ideas and confidence in the ability to communicate through writing. Children write a variety of texts including lists, narrative, how to and persuasive writing pieces.

Fine and Graphomotor Skills

Kindergarten children have increased strength and dexterity in their hands and greater hand-eye coordination. They can manipulate small objects such as Lego and more easily fasten snaps, buttons, and work zippers; some kindergartners can tie shoelaces. During mealtimes, they appropriately use a fork and spoon and can open most containers and wrappers. Most kindergarten children use a more mature and natural pencil grasp when writing and drawing. They have developed the skills necessary to form basic strokes, such as lines and circles, as well as to write their name and copy the letters of the alphabet. They can successfully use scissors to cut paper.

The kindergarten curriculum continues to develop and refine these skills through various routines and activities, such as dressing for outdoor play; managing snacks and lunches; play with various building toys and manipulatives; rolling die, spinning spinners, and moving game pieces; as well as practice with a wide range of writing and art tools. Further examples include participation in writing workshop and letter of the day activities, in addition to practice with components of the Handwriting Without Tears curriculum.

Progress Report Standards

Language Arts

Phonological Awareness

- Identifies whether words rhyme
- Produces a word that rhymes
- Aurally segments individual sounds independently
- Identifies first sound in word
- Identifies last sound in word

Alphabetic Knowledge/Principle

- Names all upper- and lower-case letters.
- Says the most common sound associated with individual letters
- Writes initial, middle, ending sounds of words independently [use “monster” as example]

- Reads the “sight” words: the, a, and, I, in, is, it, to, he, that, was, of

Comprehension

- Retells beginning, middle, and end of a story
- Listens in group discussions
- Can answer questions on topic
- Conveys ideas effectively in discussion and conversation

Graphomotor

- Forms upper-case letters
- Uses functional pencil grip

Math

Numeracy

- Counts to 100 by 1s and 10s
- Recognizes numerals 0-20
- Writes numerals 0-20
- Orders numerals 0-20
- Counts out up to 20 objects
- Can compare quantities 12 and under (more, fewer, same)
- Solves addition and subtraction number stories (quantities 10 and under)
- Understands the concept of “half”
- Understands place value of 10s and 1s, up to 20
- Makes strategic estimates for quantities up to 100

Spatial Reasoning

- Recognizes and continues patterns
- Categorizes and organizes objects by attribute
- Understands and describes relationships between objects in space, e.g. between, next to, left, right, above, below, under, over
- Predicts how objects will look in new orientations, e.g. solving puzzles, block play, etc.
- Describes the defining properties of simple shapes

Measurement And Data

- Compares and describes measurable attributes of objects, e.g. longer, shorter, heavier, lighter, wider, narrower, taller, shorter
- Measures the length of objects using non-standard units
- Collects and organizes data, e.g. surveys, charts, graphs
- Interprets the results of data collected

Math Practices

- Explains mathematical thinking orally and with pictures
- Thinks flexibly and perseveres when solving math problems
- Understands and applies strategic thinking when playing games

Grades 1 and 2 Program

Language Arts & Literacy

Literacy development in grades 1 & 2 has multiple components, including development of receptive and expressive language skills for oral and written communication, decoding, building vocabulary, writing skills and reading comprehension. The literacy curriculum focuses on each of these components.

Philosophy

Language Arts and literacy learning consists of reading, writing (including spelling, grammar, mechanics, language usage and penmanship), listening and speaking. From the earliest days of life, children are learning to use language to construct meaning about and make sense of the world. Our goal in literacy instruction is to give students the tools to communicate and effectively interpret the spoken and written word. Language is powerful—students need to be taught to use and develop that power with care, thoughtfulness and responsibility consideration while being encouraged to find their own voices.

Reading

Children enter first grade with an already wide range of reading skills. We begin the year observing and assessing. In our reading instruction, we assess each student's skill level, then build on, support and extend what they are able to do throughout the year. We present children with a wide variety of age appropriate, engaging reading materials. Instructional practices are tailored to the needs and abilities of each child. Guided reading by the teacher, partner reading and time for individual reading are among the ways literacy instruction is organized during the school day. Our ultimate goal is to foster a love of reading and have each student experience success in mastering this important life skill. By the end of first grade we expect students to be secure in the skills listed under Progress Report Standards.

Writing

The first grade writing curriculum is differentiated to meet the needs of the wide range of developmental levels among our students. Writing is viewed as a form of communication. Students are encouraged to write frequently and as independently as they are able. Students write in different genres, in both fiction and non-fiction. In the process of writing, students generate topics, research when appropriate, record, reread, revise/edit, publish or share with others. This process becomes more refined as students move through the Primary and Lower Schools. Teachers support students as they write, and instruct students individually and in groups. The connection between reading and writing is highlighted. Students learn to reread as they write and learn to view published literature as a model for writing. The understanding gained through writing also supports the process of learning to read. We look at students' independent writing to determine what concepts are being transferred and what concepts need focused instruction. Samples of students' written work are reviewed periodically throughout the school year and teachers analyze these samples to assess individual progress.

Spelling/Grammar/Mechanics

Students learn to write using developmental spelling in kindergarten. We continue to support this in first grade, but gradually introduce conventional spelling as well. This instruction is done through phonics activities and through “word walls” that include high-frequency words. Students are encouraged to use phonetic/developmental and conventional spelling in their independent writing. Students gradually progress from writing single words to phrases and eventually begin to write complete sentences (first grade or beyond).

Handwriting

In general, most beginning first graders write using upper case letters and unlined paper. Students are taught handwriting using materials such as the Handwriting Without Tears program and teacher generated material. They review the upper case letters and are taught lower case letters. Additionally they are introduced to various types of lined paper. Gradually this knowledge becomes internalized and appropriate upper and lower case usage is transferred to their independent writing.

Listening/Speaking

Our goal is to create an environment in which children have the opportunity, and feel safe, to share ideas, events and things of importance through speaking and listening to one another. This includes developing the ability to recognize and express their own questions and/or comments in a manner conducive to our classroom community.

In first grade a strong sense of community is built among the children and their teachers. An important part of this is class meeting time. Meetings are used to discuss the upcoming day's schedule, to problem solve, to share experiences and to plan class activities. Teachers read aloud to their classes each day. To this end children;

- learn to express ideas and opinions, and to listen to other points of view.
- are encouraged to think about the story through discussion of plot, character, setting and motivation.
- are also encouraged to ask questions if they are not familiar with a word.
- discuss the word meaning and their own background knowledge and experience regarding the new word, or an event in the story. Children listen to the ideas of others to make connections and learn new vocabulary.
- listen to books on devices for enjoyment or to help them become familiar with a book they may encounter in formal reading instruction.
- are given an informal opportunity to share things that are special to them. They may share information about a particular event, project, or object as classmates listen and respond with questions and comments.
- have the opportunity to read stories they have written themselves. and respond to their peers' work. learn what it means to be a good listener or audience member.
- improve their ability to follow through and understand directions.
- listen to stories told by experienced storytellers/librarians.

Shared Activities and Experiences

To support our integrated approach to teaching language arts, we use common elements in our first grade classrooms. Common activities for first graders vary from year to year and may include guest appearances by speakers, authors, illustrators and grade level field trips. Emergent curriculum from special events, such as joint author studies and joint curricular activities, also encourage teacher collaboration. In general, common materials and shared experiences contribute to the construction of a common body of knowledge and skills integral to a successful first grade language arts program. Other activities and experiences include:

- classroom lending library of leveled books
- classrooms rich with environmental print
- use of phonics workbooks such as Explode the Code
- common reading and spelling assessment tools
- common library story times

Assessment

Continuous informal assessment at every level is a part of designing instruction to meet the needs of individual learners. By working with students teachers can pinpoint strengths of students and areas to grow.

AimswestPlus® is an assessment that provides national and local performance and growth norms for the screening and progress monitoring of phonemic awareness, letter sound knowledge, sight word reading, decoding, and oral reading fluency. AIMS is administered three times per school year in the Fall, Winter and Spring. Results of AIMS are used to design whole class and small group instruction informing instructional strategies and additional support students may need. Additional assessments in first and second grade include the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark assessment, spelling inventories, and other teacher created assessments that inform instruction.

Mathematics

Philosophy

The math program encourages students at the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools to enjoy mathematics and to master math skills they will need. Math teachers stress unifying ideas and connections between ideas. They see mathematics learning as a continuum rather than a sequence of separate, discrete blocks of material, and value the ability to formulate conjectures about mathematical principles, to verify those conjectures, and to apply previous knowledge to new situations.

The math faculty encourages students to develop confidence, independence, responsibility, and organizational and study skills. As they develop their mathematical skills, students are actively involved in presenting solutions to problems, participating in class discussions, utilizing technology that aids in problem solving, and exploring the relationships between concepts and applications of mathematical techniques in other academic areas. Students learn to write complete logical expositions of solutions and to present them to the class. Reading thoroughly and writing clearly are essential for success in math.

Building upon the foundation gained in nursery and kindergarten, students in first through fourth grade develop skills in math through many varied experiences with numbers and symbols. Students become mathematically literate and skillful in the application of mathematical concepts to their daily lives. Basic arithmetic is introduced. Students become facile with many numerical representations of the same number (i.e. $6 = VI = 8-2$). Students also learn to value mathematics through frequent math experiences that are related to other disciplines. For example, students may use graphing skills in social studies or encounter social studies issues in math class. In science class, students are introduced to graphing as a way to present the results of experiments in mathematical format. Finding multiple applications of the same math concepts, students measure time on clocks marked at five-minute intervals and they count money using nickels. They learn fact families to coordinate multiplication facts and division facts. Students begin to understand how to solve new problems as they encounter them in cooperative and individual settings. Students learn to use signs, symbols, and terminology in problem solving situations so the language of mathematics becomes natural and its logic clear. Finally, students develop mathematical reasoning as they make conjectures, gather evidence, and build supporting Arguments.

Our mathematics curriculum at all grade levels is based on the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Principles and Standards for School Mathematics and beginning in kindergarten, the UCSMP Everyday Mathematics Program. Together, the Principles and Standards and the Everyday Mathematics program provide a vision and a program to guide educators as they strive to develop mathematically literate individuals who understand the role of mathematics in their daily lives.

Progress Report Standards

Grade 1

Language Arts

- Writes independently
- Expresses ideas with supporting details
- Writes to convey meaning in self-generated topics
- Writes to convey meaning in topics generated by others
- Is able to read what he/she/they has written
- Constructs readable phonetic spellings
- Spells grade-level high frequency words accurately
- Uses spaces between words.
- Begins to use end punctuation marks appropriately
- Writes letters that are legible
- Begins to use upper- and lowercase letters appropriately
- Knows the names of lowercase letters
- Knows sounds of consonants
- Knows sounds of short vowels
- Knows sounds of consonant blends and digraphs
- Blends sounds into words
- Recognizes many grade level sight words
- Combines strategies for word recognition

- (e.g. illustrations, context, syntax, etc.)
- Reads with grade-level fluency
- Self-corrects by monitoring meaning
- Retells stories sequentially
- Recalls factual information

Math

- Counts accurately with one-to-one correspondence
- Writes numbers from 1 to 100
- Compares number values using greater than, less than, and equal to signs
- Identifies pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters, along with their values
- Calculates the value of coin combinations that include pennies, nickels, and dimes
- Accurately uses the number line or number grid as a tool for problem solving
- Uses an effective strategy for solving basic addition facts
- Uses an effective strategy for solving basic subtraction facts
- Identifies and describes regular polygons
- Makes and extends patterns with objects and pictures
- Identifies, completes, and extends number patterns
- Measures to the nearest inch and centimeter
- Reads a basic bar graph and interprets the data
- Writes most numbers from 1 to 100
- Identifies pennies, nickels, and dimes, along with their values
- Uses an effective strategy for solving basic subtraction facts
- Identifies number patterns to think about such as skip count, understand place value,
- Reads a basic bar graph and can draw basic conclusions about the data.

Grade 2

Language Arts

- Writes independently
- Expresses ideas with supporting details
- Writes to convey meaning in self-generated topics
- Writes to convey meaning in topics generated by others
- Is able to read what he/she/they has written
- Constructs readable phonetic spellings
- Spells grade-level high frequency words accurately
- Uses spaces between words.
- Begins to use end punctuation marks appropriately
- Writes letters that are legible
- Begins to use upper- and lowercase letters appropriately
- Knows the names of lowercase letters
- Knows sounds of consonants

- Knows sounds of short vowels
- Knows sounds of consonant blends and digraphs
- Blends sounds into words
- Recognizes many grade level sight words
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- Identifies number patterns to think about such as skip count, understand place value,
- Reads a basic bar graph and can draw basic conclusions about the data.

Content Areas

Language Arts

Language Arts consists of the subject areas of reading, writing (including spelling, grammar, mechanics, language usage and penmanship), listening and speaking. We believe that reading, writing, and speaking are essential to all learning. Our primary goal in literacy instruction is to provide the tools to effectively interpret and communicate the spoken and written word. Students will experiment with different writing genres and styles to increase their confidence through sharing their works with authentic audiences. Students passion and curiosity for language arts develops when they make connections through inquiry, discussion, research, and reading for pleasure. Language is powerful -- students need to be taught to develop facility with this power with care, thoughtfulness and skill. In doing so, they are encouraged and increasingly able to find their own voice. Diverse voices enrich their understanding of our world.

Math

Beginning in kindergarten, teachers use the Everyday Mathematics program of the UCSMP (University of Chicago School Mathematics Project) to help guide their curricular work. Kindergarten math focuses on problem solving, strategic thinking, and sharing thought processes with a growth mindset.

Science

The science curriculum in nursery school and kindergarten builds on the young child's curiosity, enthusiasm, sense of wonder and interest in the natural world. A fundamental goal of our program is to respond to and nourish these qualities through an approach that actively engages their interests and enhances their powers of inquiry, observation and reflection. All activities emphasize a hands-on, inquiry-based approach and are created in an integrated and interdisciplinary approach. Children ask questions about their world, seek information and answers to their questions from a variety of resources, make observations about the environment, predict outcomes based on their observations, and collect data. Classrooms have plants and/or pets, and opportunities to experience the pleasure and responsibilities of caring for them. In kindergarten all classes learn about life cycles by observing and studying the metamorphosis of the monarch butterfly.

Approach to Science in First and Second Grade

In First and Second Grade, teachers foster curiosity and excitement in their approach to teaching science. Science studies are often integrated across subjects and are a part of daily routines. Interactive, hands-on activities encourage children to ask questions and problem-solve, make connections with their prior knowledge, and communicate their understanding through notes, lists, graphs, illustrations, and technology. Many inquiry studies are initiated by the children and are inspired by their interests and questions.

In first and second grades, students will build upon the excitement and curiosity about science they developed in nursery and kindergarten. The activities in first and second grades are tangible and interactive in order to foster observational skills, curiosity, respect for evidence, objectivity, open-mindedness and the ability to think

critically. In each classroom, students engage in scientific inquiry that allows them to investigate, gather, and organize and synthesize information. In particular, children begin to develop an interest in understanding their relationship to their environment and then to communicate their understanding using a variety of methods (lists, murals, graphs, cycles). Students also begin to compare and describe objects in terms of attributes such as number, shape, texture, size, weight, color, and motion.

Processes

The approach to the study of Science is similar to Social Studies in that teachers and children formulate questions together and draw upon prior knowledge. Members of the classroom community initiate the process of investigation. The children are involved in and guided through the processes of gathering, selecting, and organizing information. As children practice these processes, they are learning to function independently as investigators and to work cooperatively in groups."

Raising Questions

- raising questions about the world and seeking answers through careful observation
- learning the importance of substantiating ideas by thoughtfully asking questions of themselves and others
- learning to articulate individual ideas
- learning to consider the ideas of others

Investigating/Gathering/Organizing Information

- making predictions and trying things out
- making and recording observations
- learning to draw pictures that portray some distinguishing features of what is being described describing and comparing by number, shape, texture, size, weight, color, and motion using hand tools, such as tape measures, rulers, thermometers, hand lenses, etc., for measurement and observation
- using a variety of multimedia, multi-sensory resources and the expertise of others learning to participate cooperatively in investigations and to recognize the value of the collaborative process
- beginning to use a variety of formats for sharing information such as lists, murals, graphs, cycles
- learning to use information to convey an idea

Synthesis

- learning to substantiate ideas by considering "How do you know?" questions
- integrating prior knowledge with new information
- demonstrating knowledge in a variety of ways developing a personal perspective and recognizing other points of view
- describing and comparing things in terms of number, shape, texture, size, weight, color, and motion

Experiences

- study of cycles (using seasons, calendar, apples, planting, weather, and life cycles of butterflies and amaryllis)
- links to reading through non-fiction books
- general awareness of our earth and environmental issues (recycling)
- characterizing living versus non-living
- Participating in field trips with a purpose based in scientific inquiry (i.e. museums, university laboratories, outdoor/natural investigation, maker space, virtual experiences)

Music

Music education at Lab is based on daily, joyful, active music making. Students first experience music through a child's first instruments--their body and their voice. In N-2 Music, students build a strong foundation in singing, movement, playing the Orff instrumentarium, and beginning literacy skills established in the Nursery-2nd grade. 3rd grade music continues to develop musicians through singing, playing, aural perception, visualization, rhythmic and melodic awareness, movement, part-work, and creativity and improvisation. 4th grade music continues in the same vein, with the addition of recorder instruction.

Song repertoire is inclusive, presented in multiple languages in culturally responsive styles and context. Students are guided through a multicultural cross-curricular program consisting of a variety of lessons based on both Kodály and Orff philosophies in a safe and respectful environment. Diverse musical experiences are integral to the Kodály and Orff approach. When students learn there are multiple ways to understand music, they also learn there are multiple ways to understand the world, which develops healthy identities and creates space for action and representation.

Grade-Specific Goals

All

Students sing and move in each lesson and learn rhythmic and melodic concepts in a sequential and child-developmental way. As new concepts are added, previous concepts are consistently being practiced. Each musical concept is explored through the following different musical skill areas:

Skills

- Listening and Inner-Hearing
- Partwork
- Solos
- Movement
- Reading and Writing
- Memory
- Improvisation
- Composition
- Form
- Instruments

Nursery

Nursery music is the first time students formally gather for music class and experience singing together as a group. Children recognize and affirm multiple identities and further develop their appreciation for their own identity. Song repertoire begins with simple songs and extends to movement-based games and activities.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten music is focused on discovering and experiencing joy in various music activities. Through songs, games, body movement, instruments and recordings, the children gain confidence and develop appreciation for their own identities and others.

Grades 1 and 2

In first grade music children become acquainted with a wide variety of instruments and composers, as well as with each other. A goal of first grade music is to continue to affirm identities and strengthen empathy of multiple cultures and ethnicities. When we hear something new or different, we celebrate it with respectful curiosity. Through singing games, chants, and compositions we develop the independent singer in short solo experiences. Our formal reading of iconic music notation begins as students read and write with the musical concepts they are learning. Second grade music is the year when the children launch into more in-depth music making and discovery of music literacy skills. Building on identity and diversity work in first grade, agency is now transferred to the students to take action, challenge inequities, and combat stereotypes. Starting with the simple rhythms and solfège acquired in first grade, the students will begin to read, write, and identify meters, more complex rhythms, and larger tone sets. Tuneful singing is consistently emphasized.

Progress Report Standards

All Grades

- Understands and follows directions
- Maintains enthusiasm or interest
- Uses instruments and materials appropriately
- Shows appropriate behavior in a variety of situations
- Puts effort into achieving appropriate skills
- Shows evidence of growing aesthetic sensitivity
- Respects efforts of others

Art

The Primary Studio Arts Program fosters each child's unique creative voice, while they express their ideas and build skills within a community of young artists.

The art studio provides the context for confident risk taking and exploration of a variety of materials and techniques. Possible media and techniques explored, includes: drawing, painting, shaping forms with clay, transforming recycled materials, mixing media, printmaking, collage and more.

The art space is a place where social emotional learning and honoring diverse voices comes naturally. Students will experience both a mirror that reflects themselves and a window that opens a global world view. Children will be exposed to a variety of picture books, artist studies and diverse cultures."

Through the study of art, students at the Laboratory Schools are encouraged to value and respond to their own perceptions, observations, emotions, and intuition. The Fine Arts Department works to ensure that at each level of our program, students not only build skills, but also become more comfortable and confident in meeting the challenges of aesthetic self-expression.

The fine arts teachers employ techniques that liberate and deepen our students' power of expression and challenge them to reconcile the powers of emotion and intuition with intellectual ability. In order to enable students to achieve success through creative effort, the visual arts teach basic concepts which form the foundation for more advanced study. In the dramatic arts, students discover a heightened sense of awareness by developing their sensory perception and powers of observation.

Through the aesthetic education at the Laboratory Schools, students find new ways to perceive their world. The Fine Arts Department believes that the appraisal of art helps our students find a relationship between themselves and the lives and art of other individuals and cultures. By teaching aesthetic literacy, teachers expand their students' awareness of the world and their relationship to it.

Grade-Specific Goals

Grade 1

First graders need to develop a sense of self-confidence and self-esteem as young artists. A willingness to take chances with new materials and engaging in challenging projects help to reinforce this unfolding process. Mistakes are not taken as errors but as a way of looking at the working process in a new way. Students are encouraged to achieve independence in the various creative media and to express ideas in a visual format. First grade projects alternate between a 2D and 3D format. Painting and drawing skills are routinely improved upon throughout the year; projects are both abstract and descriptive in nature. First graders are encouraged to improve fine motor skills and lengthen their ability to focus on their creative work. Students are expected to work independently by the end of the school year.

Grade 2

The second grade fine arts curriculum encourages students to achieve independence in working with various creative media and to express ideas clearly in a visual format. Second grade projects alternate between a 2D and 3D format. Painting and drawing skills are developed through observation, invented abstraction and fantasy. Color theory is introduced and students are expected to know how to use primary colors and to make secondary and intermediate colors. Three-dimensional perception and construction skills are enhanced through clay work and mixed media construction projects.

Second graders become increasingly aware of their world and need a context in which to express their inherent curiosity about the world in which they live. They also need to express the magical qualities of imagination and play within a developmentally appropriate setting. Exploration is the key to this process. Self-expression within

a group project defines these goals. A sense of cooperation within the group dynamic develops through this process.

The second grade art curriculum is structured to introduce and broaden understanding of art as having a function in societies, beginning in prehistoric times. It also directs students through age-appropriate goals to achieve independence in the various creative media with a sense of clear purpose and the ability to express ideas clearly in a visual format.

As a means of keeping the curriculum fresh and vital, a variety of new projects are created each year and some changes are often made on the established projects as each individual group of students approaches the task to be achieved with new and different points of view.

Visual communication

Introduce art as a means of communicating and expressing ideas, feelings, and historical information recorded through visual observation. This concept is illustrated with Art History, appreciation of artists' work and interpretation.

Ability to complete ideas

Develop an understanding of the process of creating a work of art through various steps of investigation, invention, and working through a variety of materials to achieve a completed project.

Visual vocabulary

Learn the language of art, such as:

- > Color: Primary, secondary, intermediate
- > Scale: Size comparisons
- > Line, shape, texture and pattern

Knowledge of materials

Develop motor skills (hand and eye coordination and dexterity with tools) and craftsmanship with a variety of materials. Students are expected to handle and maintain materials in a safe and appropriate manner and be responsible for clean up. "

Modes of expression covered

Drawing

Preparation and investigation sketches as well as drawings as final art work, drawing from imagination and from observation.

Sculpture

Clay, papier mâché, mixed papers and cardboard constructions, sculpture, emphasis on “volume versus flat” and issues of balance.

Collage

Simple shapes, patterns and texture with sand, fabric and a variety of papers.

Painting

Imaginary topics, still-life and storytelling (narrative) pictures.

Printmaking

Block printing with simple linoleum and mixed media shapes.

Progress Report Standards

Grades 1 and 2

- Demonstrates self-direction
- Follows class procedures
- Is attentive during class discussion
- Demonstrates patience and respect for others
- Shares clean up responsibilities
- Able to exert self-control
- Able to integrate and understand new concepts
- Is innovative in problem solving
- Is inventive in developing ideas and using materials
- Is self-evaluative within the work process
- Shows commitment to achieve personal best
- Shows evidence of developing skills
- Shows positive attitude toward own work
- Sustains effort
- Uses time wisely
- Works at a pace appropriate to personal learning speed

Library & Storytelling

Guiding Principles

Students in grades Kindergarten and up engage with the library every week. Activities include browsing and checking out books, library lessons, and oral storytelling. These sessions help students build community, inspire curiosity, and develop information literacy skills together. The primary goal is for students to explore the library, enjoy its resources, and develop their identities as readers, learners, and library patrons.

Oral storytelling is a fundamental part of our library program and a long-standing Lab School tradition. Librarians tell stories from memory, usually traditional tales from around the world, without books or props. Storytelling has many benefits, both for literacy skills and social/emotional development. Listening to stories enhances imagination, language acquisition, visualization, memory, attention, and cultural awareness.

Grade Specific Goals

Kindergarten and Grade 1

- enhancing imagination and visualization
- strengthening appreciation of rhythm and pattern in language
- developing memory and recall of sequence
- reinforcing logic increasing vocabulary
- enhancing listening and speaking skills
- strengthening reading and writing skills
- developing critical and creative thinking and problem-solving skills
- validating students' feelings
- providing a mirror of life's experiences
- helping students understand their cultural heritage and those of others

Grade 2

- enhancing imagination and visualization
- strengthening appreciation of rhythm and pattern in language
- developing memory and recall of sequence
- reinforcing logic increasing vocabulary
- enhancing listening and speaking skills
- strengthening reading and writing skills
- developing critical and creative thinking and problem-solving skills
- validating students' feelings
- providing a mirror of life's experiences
- helping students understand their cultural heritage and those of others
- strengthening understanding of the difference between fiction and nonfiction
- learning about library organization within each major section: fiction by author and nonfiction by subject
- learning about the major groupings of books in the library: picture books, beginning readers, chapter books, nonfiction, magazines, and biographies
- being introduced to the concept of a call number for locating a particular book

Computer Science

Guiding Principles

Second Grade Computer Science offers students their first formal introduction to algorithms and programming, computing systems, the impacts of computer technology, and the Internet. As they gain confidence with computers, children will develop dispositions and practices that support problem-solving, collaboration and creativity. Through debugging, both identifying errors and completing steps to fix these errors, they will learn how to manage frustration, develop perseverance and team-work skills that support cognitive growth and social-emotional development.

Second graders meet once a week for 45 minutes in the Computer Science (CS) Lab – a collaborative, hands-on learning environment where students learn with computers, iPads, and programmable robots. Sometimes learning challenges or puzzles are unplugged and occur without a screen.

In Second Grade CS, students will:

Learn and apply basic computer science concepts and vocabulary (such as hardware/software, input/output, sequence, algorithm, command, program, bug, debugging, loop, event, property, etc.) using block-based programming such as Scratch Jr. and Blockly. By the end of the year, second graders will use their developing keyboarding skills to code with a text-based programming language.

- develop computational thinking, problem-solving and critical thinking skills
- develop basic computer literacy skills such as proper mouse and keyboarding techniques, navigating devices and software (web browsers, iPad apps, websites, applications).
- develop digital literacy skills to safely navigate digital environments, learn what it means to be a digital citizen and practice digital wellness.

Keyboarding

Keyboarding is an essential skill that develops through proper instruction. We meet the students where they are developmentally, while also keeping in mind their small hand size. The keyboarding program uses touch-typing lessons that are educational, developmentally appropriate and engaging. Students are provided with continuous feedback on their progress every step of the way and built-in tools ensure that students are developing proper hand & finger placement. In these early stages, typing accuracy is more important than speed as children develop proper keyboarding habits and skills.

Keyboarding and mouse skills are introduced in first grade and continue during Second Grade CS. Students receive direct instruction at the beginning of the year to establish proper keyboarding habits and then may continue to develop their skills at home (optional).

Pair Programming/Buddy Programming

Activities in the CS Lab often use a pair programming approach to support a collaborative learning environment. With pair programming, two students (or programmers) work together as a team on one device. As pair programmers, each student takes a role. The “driver” uses the keyboard, mouse or touchscreen and controls the actions of the computer. The “navigator” gives directions, makes suggestions, thinks ahead to anticipate what comes next, and acts as the detective to look for problems (or bugs) in the program. Through the process, children learn to problem-solve, communicate, analyze and reflect.

Seven- and eight-year-olds are learning to take turns, compromise, and communicate with one another in kind and respectful ways. Developmentally, second graders do well with partner work as they listen and learn from

one another. They also have a growing sense of competence and confidence. Pair programming supports all of these skills.

Students also enjoy working independently (on their own device) where they have more flexibility, choice and can work at their own pace and skill level. Buddy programming allows for this. Once a collaborative relationship is established with pair programming, students know that they can continue to engage with their buddy. When students get stuck or frustrated, they know their buddy is sitting next to them, ready to help!

Physical Education

Guiding Principles

The Physical Education Program at the Laboratory Schools encourages students to develop physical skills, coordination, and fitness, and teaches them concepts related to health fitness enhancement. The physical education program's goal is to provide students with a foundation for a lifetime of healthful pursuits. Students from kindergarten through high school encounter a variety of units in order to experience a wide range of games, sports, and activities that address fitness needs, developmental processes, and personal interest.

The Kindergarten, First Grade and Second Grade PE curriculum promotes both gross and fine motor skill development through use of music, games and manipulatives like scoops, bean bags and parachutes. Also included are gymnastics and rhythmic activities body awareness, body control and rhythm. The joys of movement and play are important aspects of physical education at this level, and age appropriate activities are designed to develop fitness and fitness concepts.

Physical Education teachers pay particular attention to social development among students, taking advantage of teachable moments that occur in the normal course of playing and movement. Such issues like problem solving, cooperation and even taking turns are critical to a successful program, one which encourages full participation and fair play in a safe environment. Teachers also recognize the wide range of development during the early childhood years; lessons are planned to challenge students while providing equity for each individual. Use of a checklist helps to shape the curriculum while giving the teachers feedback as to their student's abilities.

Although fitness concepts (including nutrition) are part of daily lessons, students also prepare twice a year for a series of fitness assessments. Specifically these assessments focus on cardiovascular fitness (mile run), abdominal strength (curl ups) and upper body strength (push ups). The intent of this program is to increase health fitness consciousness among students and to obtain information about the general health fitness levels of our student population.

Strands

Development of:

- Neuromuscular skills: with which they can perform more competently in all activities. Specific activity skills are stressed so that coordination patterns will develop and carry over into many activities.

- Social and emotional skills through self-awareness, self-management, relationship building and social awareness to help effective participation in group situations. Emphasis is placed on such qualities as cooperation, leadership, team work, sportsmanship, responsible decision making and safety awareness.
- An appreciation for physical activity relating to team sports, individual skills, and social engagement.
- Cognitive skills in sport strategy, rules, and skill application. Promote knowledge of the health benefits associated with being physically active.
- Inclusion and equity skills within teams and competitive experiences.
- Self-expression and creativity within the curriculum

Progress Report Standards

Kindergarten

- Physical status enabling them to function more effectively in all activities.
- Neuromuscular skills with which they can perform more competently in all activities.> Specific activity skills are stressed so that coordination patterns will develop and carry over into many activities.
- Social interaction to help them participate more effectively in group situations.Stress is placed on such qualities as cooperation, leadership, team play, and sportsmanship.Safety awareness receives emphasis at all levels.
- Interest in physical activity so that satisfaction, fun, and a feeling of well-being result from learning and playing.Opportunities for self-expression and creativity are inherent within the curriculum.
- Knowledge of physical activities so that they may participate more intelligently, and of the health benefits associated with being active.

Grade 1

- Understands and follows directions
- Maintains enthusiasm or interest
- Uses equipment appropriately
- Shows appropriate behavior in a variety of situations
- Puts effort into achieving appropriate skills
- Respects efforts of others
- Is cooperative in group work
- Observes personal safety measures
- Conducts self so as not to endanger others
- Able to hop on 2 feet
- Able to hop on 1 foot
- Able to skip
- Able to gallop
- Able to side shuffle

Grade 2

- Understands and follows directions
- Maintains enthusiasm or interest
- Uses equipment appropriately

- Shows appropriate behavior in a variety of situations
- Puts effort into achieving appropriate skills
- Respects efforts of others
- Is cooperative in group work
- Observes personal safety measures
- Conducts self so as not to endanger others
- Able to hop on 2 feet
- Able to hop on 1 foot
- Able to skip
- Able to gallop
- Able to side shuffle
- Able to leap
- Able to grapevine

Learning and Counseling

Guiding Principles

The Learning and Counseling departments offer four dimensions of service to the Laboratory Schools' community:

- working together with faculty through mutual mentorship to develop and enhance classroom procedures and practices to foster effective instruction and inclusive classrooms. This collaboration is offered across all five schools.
- “pull out” -- direct service outside of classrooms to provide remedial support to further develop specific areas of learning challenge for individual or small groups of students.
- “push in” --direct service inside of classrooms to provide remedial support to further develop specific areas of learning challenge for individual or small groups of students, as well as support and mutual problem-solving with teachers.
- building bridges with parents, teachers, and outside specialists. Fostering collaboration across the team of adults supporting student development and success is a critical focus of all Learning and Counseling teams in each school.

In order to facilitate differentiated instruction, members of the Learning and Counseling teams in each school work with classroom teachers to provide support for the curriculum chosen by each grade level team. Going further into this collaboration with classroom faculty to address specific issues of differentiation, members of the Learning and Counseling faculty work with teachers in the classroom, focusing on special skills, small group instruction, or whole group instruction in partnership with the classroom teachers. For more serious issues and concerns, limited outside-of-class (“pull-out”) services are provided for those students who exhibit special cognitive or emotional needs that cannot be fully addressed through differentiation or push-in services.

Strands

The Laboratory Schools' Learning and Counseling departments work directly with children, parents, teachers, and administrators to promote healthy social-emotional development and academic success in all students. Our goals are to develop and support a life-long love of learning, promote self-advocacy, and provide instruction, strategies, and developmental guidance to assist all children.

The Early Childhood Learning and Counseling team consists of a Learning Coordinator, four Academic Specialists, and five Counselors. With faculty and parents as partners, we work to promote optimal social, emotional, cognitive, academic development in all Lab School students. Team members collaborate closely to address individual student academic and emotional concerns through group problem solving. We provide ongoing progress monitoring to ensure that students' needs are being met. They serve to educate the entire University of Chicago Laboratory Schools community about best practices in differentiating instruction and teaching students with learning differences.

Our learning support staff provide direct services to children employing both in the classroom and pull out assistance, as well as working with faculty to develop teaching/learning strategies. They help families understand and support their students' learning profiles.

The Learning Coordinator:

- serves the needs of students directly through assessment, observation, and consultation with teachers, academic specialists, administrators and parents
- facilitates the support that academic specialists provide which includes support for classroom procedures and practices, push in services, and pull out services.
- guides teachers in systematic monitoring of skill development for all students, and especially those who have received specialized interventions.
- conducts diagnostic learning screenings to pinpoint areas for intervention, and makes referrals for services that may include psychoeducational or neuropsychological evaluations, speech and language therapy, and occupational therapy.
- helps educate the broader Lab community about various learning styles and interventions.

Academic Specialists:

- collaborate with teachers, parents, and administrators to facilitate student learning through differentiated instruction
- provide in-class instruction for students, as well as guidance and coaching for teachers
- provide small group, individualized instruction in reading, written language, and math
- administer regular progress monitoring throughout the year to inform instruction

Counselors:

- work closely with teachers, parents, learning support staff, and administrators to understand and address the particular social and emotional needs of individual children
- follow a group of students throughout their stay in each division of the school
- regularly observe and interact with students in classrooms

- meet with individual children and small groups to address social and emotional needs
- provide whole class instruction in social-emotional learning for children
- makes referrals to and collaborates with outside professionals
- meet regularly with parents to provide support and guidance