

Junior School Curriculum Guide

Grades 1 - 4



Our Five Goals

of the Sacred Heart Philosophy of Education



Believe

A personal and active faith in God



Learn

A deep respect for intellectual values



Serve

A social awareness which impels to action



Connect

The building of community as a Christian value



Grow

Personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom

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Welcome



Welcome to Junior School!

The Junior School of the International School of the Sacred Heart welcomes girls from Grades 1 to 4. Your daughter will enjoy our unique facilities, both indoor and out in the heart of Tokyo. These include the naturally bright and spacious indoor learning environments of our classrooms, library, and gym, as well as our expansive outdoor playground, turf field, and tennis courts.

With small class sizes, our international team and I focus on developing the social, physical, emotional, spiritual, and cultural growth of our students in our rigorous and internationally minded English language curriculum. In the Junior School, your daughter will be intellectually stimulated by the strong language arts program focusing on literacy, as well as by the International Primary Curriculum focusing on science and social studies. Our unique Values education is respectful of our various religious backgrounds. Our program is designed to help each student realize her potential while developing relationships with other students and teachers to become a team member with an individual sense of purpose, capability and responsibility.

Our aim is to prepare and inspire each child for lifelong learning and our dedicated team supports each student throughout the day. In particular, English Language Acquisition, technology, and digital citizenship skills are integrated into the curriculum to enhance learning and creativity. In support of working parents, we offer an Extended Day Program, which unlike traditional daycare, is a continuum of the day offering structure and play, homework completion time, and arts and crafts.

At an intense and fascinating stage of her development, I am certain your daughter will bloom in these special years within our international community at the International School of the Sacred Heart.

Visit us, join us... the international education for girls in the green heart of Tokyo.

Ellen Yaegashi

Kindergarten and Junior School Principal



Growing with Courage and Confidence



Junior School Overview



Core Subjects

Language Arts

- Reading & Writing
- Listening & Speaking
- Spelling & Grammar
- Phonics

Mathematics

- Computations
- Measurement & Geometry
- Probability & Data
- Algebra & Patterns

IPC

- Science
- Social Studies
- Transdisciplinary learning
- Inquiry-based units

Foreign Language

Grades 1 and 2: Japanese



Grades 3 and 4:
Japanese or French

Specialist Subjects

Physical Education

Music

Art

Library

Other Subject Areas

Values

- Rights & Responsibilities
- Friendships & Relationships
- Japanese Culture

Well-Being

- Feeling Safe
- Safety Steps
- Respecting Others





Language Arts

Language Arts is an integral part of every subject in the curriculum, affecting children’s ability to form concepts, access information and to develop and maintain relationships. The ultimate purpose of the Language Arts curriculum is to teach students the language abilities they need to communicate effectively as individuals and as contributing members of society. In the Junior School, the focus of our Language Arts program is to further develop and extend reading and writing skills so that students become confident communicators who are able to build on the ideas of others.

Our Language Arts program provides rich and varied experiences in each of the four interrelated language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Grade 1 Curriculum

Building on skills developed in Kindergarten, Grade 1 students learn to:

- Recognize letter sounds, see letter patterns, and identify the basic features of words
- Sound out more complex vocabulary and comprehend the meanings of those words
- Read fluently, orally and silently, a variety of “good fit” books of various genres
- Discuss and retell what they have read, talking about main ideas, characters, plot, and setting
- Write pieces that describe and explain familiar objects, events, and experiences
- Use their understanding of the sounds of words to write simple rhymes
- Demonstrate an understanding of different types of texts, such as personal narratives, descriptive writing, poetry, and nonfiction
- Demonstrate an awareness of the audience and purpose of writing
- Write compositions, developing the writing process and polishing writing skills
- Listen and respond appropriately to oral communication
- Deliver brief oral presentations about familiar experiences or interests.

Grade 2 Curriculum

Bridging from Grade 1, the Grade 2 curriculum supports students to:

- Use strategies to locate information, retell stories, and make connections
- Develop accuracy skills by matching sounds to letter clusters and patterns
- Read fluently a variety of “good fit” books
- Build knowledge of vocabulary and recognize the meaning of words in context
- Deliver oral presentations about familiar experiences or interests
- Write pieces that describe and explain familiar objects, events, and experiences
- Demonstrate an awareness of the audience and purpose of writing
- Understand different types of texts
- Reread their own writing and use editing resources to revise and clarify meaning
- Write compositions following the writing process
- Accurately spell frequently used words, and make use of known spelling patterns to make plausible attempts at spelling unfamiliar words
- Write upper and lower case letters legibly with consistent size, slope and spacing.

Grade 3 Curriculum

Using the strong foundation established in Grades 1 and 2, the Grade 3 English curriculum focuses on developing skills to use language effectively. Students develop strong comprehension skills and gain confidence in their work, focusing on the following skills:

- Using resources to locate and sort information
- Choosing a variety of reading material at appropriate level
- Reading aloud with expression
- Responding and making personal connections with facts, characters and situations in literature
- Writing a variety of organized fiction and nonfiction pieces
- Using strategies to develop ideas, organization, word choice, voice, sentence fluency, conventions and presentation in their writing with guidance
- Following the writing process to publish writing
- Listening thoroughly and following oral instructions
- Listening attentively to teachers and classmates
- Actively participating in class discussions.

Grade 4 Curriculum

Culminating the Junior School Curriculum, Grade 4 students establish confidence in their communication through all areas of their language skills. They learn to:

- Use resources to locate and sort information
- Choose reading material at appropriate level
- Read aloud with fluency, expression and confidence
- Make connections between their reading and other books and authors
- Write a variety of organized fiction and nonfiction pieces
- Use strategies to further fine-tune their ideas, organization, word choice, voice, sentence fluency, conventions and presentation in their writing
- Follow the writing process to publish writing with greater confidence
- Listen to and follow multi-step instructions
- Listen attentively to teachers and classmates
- Actively participate in class discussions
- Use language to verbally express ideas clearly and appropriately.



Mathematics

The mathematics curriculum provides a rich, exploratory program in which skills are learned and applied. It is based on using a “hands-on” approach using concrete materials and emphasizes practical problem solving and deep conceptual understanding. At Sacred Heart, we aim to develop mathematical thinkers who can make connections to real life situations. Students apply their knowledge through practice, reflection, analysis and synthesis.

Mathematical investigations are incorporated into five strands: number concepts and computations, algebra and patterns, measurement and geometry, probability and data, and problem-solving.

Grade 1 Curriculum

- Understand place value of numbers from zero to 99
- Add and subtract up to two digit numbers with and without regrouping
- Count by 2's, 3's, 4's, 5's and 10's
- Recognize simple fractions such as one half, one third and one quarter
- Describe and compare measurements of length, width and height
- Estimate length, width and height
- Recognize the key elements of the calendar and place in sequence of days, weeks and months
- Tell the time at hours, half-hours and quarter hours using analogue and digital clocks
- Identify common 2D and 3D shapes
- Collect simple data and present this data using pictographs and simple bar graphs
- Recognize patterns based on simple criteria in a variety of contexts
- Copy, identify, continue and create simple patterns
- Complete a sequence

Grade 2 Curriculum

- Understand place value of numbers to 1000
- Add and subtract up to three digit numbers with and without regrouping
- Describe and calculate simple multiplication as groups of numbers
- Understand division as a form of sharing, such as eight shared between four
- Describe simple fractions such as one half, one third and one quarter
- Order money amounts in yen and carry out simple calculations
- Describe and compare measurements using informal/non-standard units
- Recognize the key elements of the calendar and place in sequence of days, weeks and months
- Gain fluency with digital clocks
- Recognize properties of common 2D and 3D shapes
- Specify the location of a position on simple diagrams and maps
- Predict the outcome of chance events
- Collect simple data and present this data using pictographs and simple bar graphs
- Solve simple open number sentences involving operations on whole numbers

Grade 3 Curriculum

- Read and write numbers to five digits
- Recall the basic number facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division
- Add and subtract up to four digit numbers with and without regrouping
- Multiply a three digit number by a one digit number
- Divide a two digit number by a one digit number with and without remainders
- Understand fractions and decimals
- Identify and extend patterns
- Solve simple open sentences involving operations on whole numbers
- Estimate and measure length, mass, capacity, and temperature in metric units
- Measure the perimeter and area of shapes using standard and non standard units of measurement
- Recognize, name and explore properties of 2D and 3D shapes
- Tell the time to the nearest minute
- Understand that some events are more likely to happen than others
- Extract information from tables, lists, data and written information
- Construct and interpret graphs

Grade 4 Curriculum

- Understand place value to 1,000,000
- Understand the relationships between multiplication, division, addition and subtraction
- Add and subtract with and without regrouping beyond 1,000
- Multiply by two digit numbers
- Divide by a single divisor using long division
- Add and subtract fractions
- Recognize, name, and explore properties of 2D and 3D shapes
- Determine elapsed time, forward and backward
- Find perimeter and area
- Understand when to use appropriate measurement tools
- Independently collect data and graph results
- Interpret graphs and tables
- Combine and compare graph data
- Express probability in fractional terms
- Describe the rule for a pattern sequence
- Identify what's missing in a pattern sequence
- Find distributive properties, e.g. $2x(3+4) = (2x3)+(2x4)$



International Primary Curriculum

The International Primary Curriculum (IPC) is an international program aimed at K3 to Grade 4 children growing up in the 21st Century. At Sacred Heart, the IPC encompasses Science and Social Studies topics that are developmentally linked to reflect growing complexity in thinking as children mature in our rapidly changing world. One important and overarching principle that defines the IPC is its objective to encourage International Mindedness in the student body. This can be defined further as engaging in learning that fosters intercultural learning, communication, global citizenship, and peaceful conflict resolution. Through student centered inquiry based learning, a love of learning is encouraged and the necessary key skills and personal qualities that enable children to be successful in life are introduced and expanded upon.

Grade 1 Units:

- **Who am I?:** An inquiry into who we are, where we come from and our differences
- **The Magic Toymakers:** Exploring the history of toys, and how the toys we use have changed over time
- **We Are What We Eat:** Discovering the different types and amounts of food our bodies need
- **Living Things:** An inquiry into the seven essential life processes: living things move, respire, sense their environment, grow, reproduce, excrete waste, and take in nutrition.

Grade 2 Units:

- **Different Places, Different Lives:** Exploring the similarities and differences between cultures and countries
- **Simple Machines:** An exploration of how simple machines make work easier by reducing effort, changing direction, and increasing efficiency in everyday tasks.
- **They Made a Difference: Significant Women:** Discovering the achievements of significant women from around the globe.
- **On Tap: Water in Our World:** An inquiry into the properties and uses of water, resource management and conservation

Grade 3 Units:

- **How Humans Work:** An inquiry into our body systems, food, hygiene and exercise
- **Vanishing Rainforest:** An exploration of the diversity of life in rainforests and the need for their conservation
- **Explorers and Adventurers:** Rediscovering the discoveries and inventions of significant historic explorers from a variety of cultures around the world.
- **Edo, Japan:** An inquiry into how people lived during the Edo period and how our lives compare in present day Tokyo

Grade 4 Units:

- **The Brain:** An inquiry into the anatomy of the brain, how we learn, and our different learning styles
- **Full Power:** Discovering the properties of electricity and learning circuitry.
- **Climate Control:** An inquiry into human demand for energy and its impact on the environment.
- **Active Planet:** Exploring how Earth's structure and plate tectonics play a role in rocks, Earth's formation, and the natural seismic activity that comes with it.

Well-Being at ISSH

The International School of the Sacred Heart promotes a safe and welcoming environment in which each student is valued, cared for, and respected. We feel strongly that, as a school, we fill a special institutional role in society as protectors of children. As such, it is of the utmost priority at ISSH to ensure that all children in our care are afforded a safe and secure environment in which to grow and develop, at school and beyond.

In alignment with this belief, we have developed a program in our Junior School to instill students with two major understandings: "We all have the right to feel safe all of the time," and "Nothing is so awful we can't talk about it." Students engage in lessons to learn about feeling safe, practicing steps to ensure safety for themselves and others, rules of safe and respectful touch, and other developmentally appropriate topics to ensure that they grow up feeling empowered in their own bodies and surroundings with a strong understanding of maintaining a safe and respectful school environment for themselves and others.





Languages

All students in Grades 1 and 2 study Japanese as the language of our host country, and then have the option of studying Japanese or French starting from Grade 3. The study of an additional language at Sacred Heart is integral to our commitment to International Mindedness. Students not only learn the skills to communicate in their language of choice, both through writing and speaking, but also develop cultural competencies as they delve deeper into the traditions and cultural background of the countries linked to their language of choice.

Japanese Language and Japanese Culture

Through the study of Japanese, the language of the host country of our school, students develop the ability to use the language effectively for purposes of practical communication, and also gain insights and appreciation of the Japanese people and culture.

The Japanese Language program in the Junior School provides two streams of instruction: Japanese as a First Language (JF), designed for native and highly proficient speakers, and Japanese as a Second Language (JS), designed for those learning Japanese as a foreign or additional language. In Grades 1 and 2, students in each stream strengthen the four areas of language learning (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) at a level appropriate to their Japanese ability. Starting from Grades 3 and 4, each of the two streams, JF and JS, are further divided into two levels, allowing for further individualized instruction based on proficiency. The Junior School Japanese curriculum provides a foundation in Japanese language and prepares students to continue their Japanese study at ISSH through Grade 12 if they so choose.

Regardless of their language selection students in Grades 3 and 4 engage in lessons about Japanese culture. Students discover the diversity of languages and cultures, reflect on their own language and culture, and learn to appreciate both similarities and differences.

French Language

Starting from Grades 3 and 4, students may select French as their foreign language. The French program introduces the French language to young children with particular emphasis on comprehension. Students are expected to:

- Build up lexical and communication skills that are adapted to their needs and interests
- Develop accurate pronunciation, articulation and rhythm
- Acquire a general awareness of French grammar and an understanding of how the language “works” through activities of observation and classification
- Develop an appreciation for French culture and traditional festivals, cooking recipes, songs and stories, family life, leisure activities

Students learn the French language as a whole process, gradually refining the different skills that make up the language process. Those skills, speaking, listening, writing and reading, are viewed as interrelated processes. However, given the age of the students and their early stage of learning, the emphasis is put on comprehension rather than production. Structure and vocabulary are presented in dialogues, songs, rhymes and poems, stories and exercises. As much as possible, classes are conducted in French.

English Language Acquisition in Junior School at ISSH

English Language Acquisition (ELA) classes are offered by the ELA specialist for those students whose first language or mother tongue is a language other than English. The school offers two ELA programs in Junior School:

- Standard ELA Program: Students who require support for academic English participate in ELA classes during language periods each week
- Modified Program: Students with limited English attend English language lessons during weekly language periods in addition to intensive pull-out and push-in support.

These programs are designed to provide both survival English as well as English for academic purposes. They are generally designed to meet the needs of diverse learners, and the number of classes provided per week will depend on a student's English language level. A student new to using English on a daily basis will often be placed in both programs at the same time. As their language develops they will then exit the modified program, and continue to receive in-class support when necessary.

Library

The K/JS Library is fundamental to the Language Arts and Foreign Languages curricula. ISSH promotes reading for enjoyment and pleasure, imbuing students with a lifelong joy in addition to facilitating all other school endeavors and opening doors to a tremendous wealth of creativity and ideas for the future. Knowledge of library and research skills enhances students' powers of observation, critical thinking, and growth in appreciation of other cultures and realization of the many opportunities and ideas in the world today. The Library, which also includes a makerspace, provides a vibrant environment in which students can read for enrichment and use information technology creatively and critically, encouraging development as lifelong learners.



Physical Education



The Physical Education curriculum is focused on developing lifelong fitness and healthy attitudes that benefit students. Students are introduced to and guided through physical activities that strengthen and enhance their understanding of physical health. Through exploring a variety of fitness and health disciplines, students learn the importance of lifelong fitness and well-being. Throughout these courses, students develop collaboration skills, rhythm, leadership, experience in a variety of sports, and knowledge of sports science. Each unit is designed to allow students to use their own interests, work with others, and use a range of technologies to support their learning.

Music

Music in the Junior School focuses on developing a love and appreciation of music through song, dance, movement and instrumental performance. Students learn the foundation of music literacy and progress towards fluency with standard music notation over the course of the program. They engage in musical games and activities which develop self-confidence and communication skills, and learn to discern patterns and develop memory through learning words, melodies, and proper technique for classroom instruments. Students also enjoy chances to exercise creativity through music. Above all, students realize that music is a natural human expression that celebrates the richness and beauty of the world around them.



Visual Art



The Junior School Art curriculum introduces students to a variety of creative experiences. The curriculum encourages personal expression using a variety of techniques and materials. Students are introduced to art of different cultures and the works of master artists, their lives, techniques and styles. Subjects taught in the grade level classes are integrated throughout the art curriculum. The Art program develops students' abilities to recognize lines and shapes, identify color groups and understand how they are made, use media and materials safely, and respond to prompts and express their personal feelings through their own artwork.

Values



The Values program addresses issues such as rights and responsibilities, friendships and relationships, and festivals of some of the world's major religions. The aims of the program are:

- To foster a spirit of love, forgiveness, patience, tolerance, compassion, respect
- To reflect communally/personally
- To share experiences with others
- To learn about God who loves each one of us
- To understand and embody the Goals and Criteria of all Sacred Heart schools
- To learn the history of the Society of the Sacred Heart
- To celebrate Sacred Heart schools' feast days
- To celebrate Catholic feast days: Advent/Christmas, Lent/Easter
- To understand and celebrate Japanese culture, holidays, and spiritual traditions
- To celebrate feast days of other religions

Throughout the Junior School, we emphasize "Be Attitudes": Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Your Best. The children are encouraged to be respectful of self, others and the environment. They are guided to be responsible and independent contributors to their class, family, school, and community. The children are expected to try hard to be their best in thought, action, and deed.



International School
of the Sacred Heart



Learn more about our Junior School curriculum here!

Interested in joining our community?
Apply today!



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