FIRST GRADE

PROGRESSION OF LEARNING

ACADEMY OF THE SACRED HEART

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DEAR PRESCHOOL AND LOWER SCHOOL PARENTS,

At the heart of the Preschool and Lower School educational philosophy lies a curriculum designed as a living, breathing framework—one that is both a reflection of our school's mission and a catalyst for student growth. This balance among disciplines is not incidental; it is a deliberate alignment intended to shape well-rounded girls who are prepared for the complexities of the world.

The academic experience is defined by a commitment to challenging experiences that inspire intellectual curiosity, problem solving, and a global mindset. We believe that true intellectual development occurs when students are challenged to think critically and engage with increasingly complex concepts.

The ***Progression of Learning*** is intended to provide families with an overview of our programs including the skills and concepts for the coming school year and a few hallmarks of the grade level. We hope this is a helpful tool in communicating and understanding the philosophy of our program and the expectations for the grade level.

Sincerely,

Shara Hammet
Preschool and Lower School Division Head



PRESCHOOL & LOWER SCHOOL INTEGRATED APPROACH TO LITERACY AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE

Literacy and written language instruction focus on content-rich, academically rigorous coursework aligned with evidence-based practices for reading comprehension. By implementing the Wit & Wisdom program by Great Minds, the PSLS curriculum builds content knowledge and literacy skills simultaneously. Rather than teaching reading skills in isolation, this research-based, module-driven approach immerses students in complex texts, fine art, and interdisciplinary science and social studies topics to foster deep reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills.

Key Features and Structure:

- Knowledge-Building Modules: Students gain deep background knowledge through four thematic modules.
- High-Quality Core Texts and Materials: Curriculum is anchored by rich, engaging, and award-winning literature, historical nonfiction, and fine art.
- Inquiry-Driven Framework: Lessons are structured around essential, focusing questions and follow a consistent "Wonder, Organize, Reveal, Distill, Know" progression.
- Integrated Literacy Approach: Reading, writing, and language arts are woven into a cohesive theme. This includes "Deep Dives" for vocabulary, syntax, and grammar, and aligned decodable reading practice.
- Academic Rigor and Complexity: The program provides highly demanding, quality instruction that fosters academic conversations, robust vocabulary development, and strong public speaking skills.



MATHEMATICS

Math curriculum builds deep conceptual understanding, critical thinking, and mathematical rigor from the start using the Singapore Math Methodology (via Dimension and Math in Focus). Prioritizing true mastery over rote memorization, the curriculum uses a deliberate sequence from Pre-K through Fourth Grade so students can apply foundational knowledge to complex problems.

Our approach relies on three core pillars:

- The CPA Progression: Students transition from hands-on, concrete materials (e.g., connecting cubes) to pictorial representations (e.g., ten-frames) before mastering abstract mathematical symbols.
- The Problem-Solving Framework: A holistic approach balancing concepts, skills, processes, metacognition, and positive attitudes.
- Mathematical Habits: Woven into daily activities, students learn to persevere, justify arguments, use tools strategically, identify patterns, and communicate with precise mathematical language.

Ultimately, we don't just teach calculation—we build the confidence, reasoning, and creativity needed to become lifelong problem solvers.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The Social Studies program is an integrative approach that incorporates civics, economics, geography, and history with designated social studies time allotted each week across all grade levels. Aligned with the mission and *Goals and Criteria* of the school, through curriculum and programs, students form the foundational skills that prepare them to participate respectfully and intelligently in society.

Hallmarks of the program include:

- Meaningful, tangible, and engaging learning opportunities.
- Strong foundation for inquiry using research, debates, discussions, and projects of all varieties.
- Access to multiple resources-including, but not limited to, books, images, speakers, and field trips.
- Students as digital citizens and global citizens.
- Informational, visual, cultural, and economic literacy.
- Partnerships and collaboration among faculty, enrichment teachers, and community organizations and resources.

OVERVIEW OF LITERACY CONCEPTS AND SKILLS INTRODUCED IN FIRST GRADE

Over the course of the year, First Grade students will be introduced to many literacy concepts and skills. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Words from left to right, top to bottom, and page by page.
- Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters and that words are separated by spaces in print.
- Recognize and name upper and lowercase letters of the alphabet.
- Recognize and produce rhyming words.
- Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words.
- Add or substitute individual sounds (phonemes) in simple, one-syllable words to make new words.
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of letter-sound correspondence by producing the primary or most frequent sound for each consonant.
- Associate the long and short sounds with the common spellings (graphemes) for the five major vowels.
- Read common high-frequency words by sight.
- Ask and answer questions about key details and text features in literary texts and informational texts.
- Retell and describe stories through the lenses of character, setting, and major events, using key details.
- Use illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.
- Determine the meanings and deepen understanding of unknown words and phrases encountered in texts.
- Describe connections between multiple pieces of information.
- Compare and contrast multiple books on the same topic.
- Explain major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information and identify the reasons the author gives to support points in a text.
- Make connections between words from the text and real-life experiences.

OVERVIEW OF WRITTEN LANGUAGE CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

Opinion Writing, Information Writing and Narrative Writing

- Write short narrative summaries with increasing independence, using key details from stories.
- Strengthen writing by adding details in response to questions and suggestions from teachers and peers.
- Write an original narrative about how books changed the life of a character that recounts appropriately sequenced events with some detail.
- Write informative paragraphs with increasing independence, using information from module texts, as well as participating in shared research by collecting evidence.
- Write an informative paragraph answering a question about an animal's unique feature and how the animal uses the feature.
- Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs and adjectives.
- Use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.
- Use details in writing that include sensory and feelings words, including adjectives in a narrative.
- Use frequently occurring adjectives to provide detail.
- Use verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future.
- Write opinion pieces that introduce the topic, state an opinion, give a reason for the opinion including text evidence, and provide some sense of closure.
- Produce and expand complete sentences including ending punctuation.
- Use frequently occurring prepositions.
- Use singular and plural nouns with matching verbs.
- Use personal, possessive, and indefinite pronouns.
- Use conjunctions such as and, but, or, so, or because in an opinion paragraph.
- Apply rules for capitalization and commas in a series in written pieces.
- Produce compound sentences by combining simple sentences.

OVERVIEW OF MATH CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

- Count, compare, and order numbers to 10, 20, 40, 120.
- Place value.
- Number patterns.
- Make number bonds.
- Ways to add and subtract.
- Make addition and subtraction stories, real-world problems addition and subtraction.
- Make fact families.
- Ways to add and subtract fluently.
- Addition and subtraction with and without regrouping.
- Get ready for multiplication.
- Explore solid shapes, use shapes to make pictures and models, seeing shapes around us.
- Use flat shapes to make patterns, use solid shapes to make patterns.
- Use a calendar.
- Tell time to the hour, tell time to the half hour.
- Compare length, compare more lengths.
- Use a start line, measure length, measuring length in units.
- Compare weights, measure weight, measure weight in units.
- Simple picture graphs, tally charts and picture graphs.
- Penny, nickel, dime, quarter.
- Count money, add and subtract money.

OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL STUDIES CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

In First Grade, students expand their social horizon from self-awareness to exploring the collaborative systems of school, family, and neighborhoods. They develop a deeper understanding of how groups function smoothly by examining structural roles, shared histories, economic choices, and spatial connections. Through hands-on exploration, students learn how cooperation, rules, and mutual respect help build a cohesive and supportive community.

Civics and Community

- Classroom Citizenship: Understanding the purpose of school rules, learning the consequences of actions, and practicing ways to get along as a collaborative classmate.
- School Roles and Responsibilities: Identifying various school workers (e.g., teachers, principals, custodians) and discovering how their individual duties support the school community.
- Leadership and Groups: Exploring what it means to be a leader at school and recognizing the different unique groups to which a student belongs.

History and Culture

- Family History: Exploring and interpreting how family structures, backgrounds, and personal traditions help shape an individual's identity.
- Generational Change: Investigating how daily life, schools, and family dynamics have evolved and changed over time.

Geography

- Spatial Mapping: Moving beyond basic drawings to understand spatial relationships and simple map layouts of familiar environments like classrooms and homes.
- Neighborhoods and Neighbors: Defining the difference between a physical neighborhood and the people (neighbors) who live within it, emphasizing positive community behaviors.

Economics

- Wants and Needs: Expanding on basic financial literacy by identifying what families fundamentally need to survive versus what they want.
- Goods and Services: Introducing how community members work together to produce goods and provide essential services for one another.

THE ENRICHMENT HUB

The Enrichment Hub on the ASH PS/LS parent portal provides an overview of the skills and concepts taught in our enrichment courses including religion, art, music, science, technology, library, physical education, innovation lab, and French.

Organized by grade level, the Hub also features virtual tours of our enrichment classrooms.

To View The Enrichment Hub, Scan Below:

SCAN ME

Highlights from First Grade*

Then and Now: Global Education and Community Engagement Field Trips • Beyond the Slide • Krewe of Creature Features Palette Art Show • Playgroup • Le Théâtre des Petits Coeurs, Little Hearts French Theatre • Mater Campus Innovation Lab Intramurals

**Subject to change*

ACADEMY OF THE SACRED HEART

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