

Colwell Curriculum

The nursery school programme at Colwell is structured in such a way as to equip our students with the necessary skill set to transition smoothly into our junior kindergarten programme in our upstairs classroom. Children learn as they play, working towards building the basic framework in each of the five areas of development, which they will continue to build upon in junior kindergarten, senior kindergarten, and beyond. Research shows that children learn best when expectations are clear and consistent, and are guided by adults whom have an understanding of child growth and development, and of the learning process. The Junior and Senior Kindergarten programmes at the Colwell Nursery School are based on the expectations outlined by the Ministry of Education, in the curriculum document entitled The Kindergarten Program Ontario 2006. Curriculum documents define what children are taught in Ontario public schools. They detail the knowledge and skills that students are expected to develop in each subject at each grade level, as well as assessment, evaluation, reporting, teaching/learning approaches, learning expectations, and the roles of the teacher, the parent, and the child as a learner. The Kindergarten Program Ontario 2006 is based on the findings of the Early Math Strategy 2003 report and the Early Reading Strategy report released by the Ontario government.

The books and teaching materials used at Colwell Nursery School are those recommended by the Ministry of Education, and which can be found in their publication entitled The Trillium List . The Trillium List is a categorized listing of teaching materials, approved by the Ministry of Education for use in Ontario classrooms. Titles are listed under 3 main categories: Language, Mathematics, and Science and Technology. Colwell Programme Areas:

1. Language Speaking and Listening

- Daily opportunities in individual and group settings to: recount personal experiences, ask questions, listen and react to stories, communicate messages, follow instructions, join in songs, and choral responses and apply basic rules of participating in conversation.
- Opportunities to bring materials from home, related to our topic, to share
- Oral activities designed to promote speech development
- Daily enrichment activities in French and Spanish (words, phrases, counting, stories, songs)
- Special programming and referrals for speech and language problems or other learning or behavioural activities.

Reading

- Emphasis on books and reading for interest and information
- Themes planned around literature
- Reasoning and critical thinking developed through retelling stories, recalling information, expressing thoughts and feelings
- Attention to following written instructions
- Attention to understanding the conventions of sentences, including punctuation and capitals
- Use of phonics as an aid in learning new words
- Use of context to determine meaning
- Use of predictable patterns to assist reading and determine meaning
- Group reading: "chiming in"
- Small group repetitive story reading
- Daily story times

Writing

- Writing as a means of communicating ideas
- Early story writing to be encouraged through art work
- Early writing skill practice
- Understanding of simple, complete sentences/plurals
- Awareness of simple punctuation, capitals, and spaces between words

2. Mathematics

Daily reinforcement will assist in the development of understanding of mathematical concepts. Children will be encouraged to use suitable procedures to solve problems, and will be encouraged to use language to explain what was done.

Number and Numeration

- Counting, reading and printing numbers
- Demonstrating the one-to-one correspondence between numbers and objects when counting
- Demonstrating the meaning of numbers, and the conversation of numbers
- Manipulating numbers by adding and subtracting -concrete to abstract
- Understanding half as a part of a whole

Measurement and Estimation

- Comparing objects and using language to describe comparison
- Demonstrating an appreciation of time, days of the week and seasons
- Demonstrating an understanding of the value of coins
- Using metric and non-standard tools

Geometry and Spatial Sense

- Examining relationships of size, shape and strength
- Understanding spatial relationships
- Exploring and identifying two and three dimensional objects
- Identifying and sorting by different attributes
- Exploring symmetry
- Demonstrating spatial sense in relation to self and objects (beside, under, etc.)

Patterning and Algebra

- Classifying
- Putting in series
- Comparing patterns to real world
- Extending a pattern

Data Management and Probability

- Collecting information by counting, measurement
- Recording information
- Asking "wh..." questions (why, when)
- Using probability language (never, sometimes, always)

3. Science and Social Studies

Areas of investigation include:

- Laws of nature (gravity, capillary action)
- Similarities and differences
- Cause and effect through exploration
- Simple devices such as wheels, levers, simple scales
- The body and healthy living
- The environment - relationships between people and their environment, including living and non-living things, the natural habitat, responsible use of resources and recycling
- Community

4. Physical Education and Health

Daily physical education classes not only support physical health and development, but also promote greater success in academic areas. A variety of movement activities are chosen to coordinate with weekly topics. Healthy living and safety are emphasized throughout. Social and emotional health are extremely important components of personal development. Learning to respect the rights of others and to interact positively with peers and adults is stressed across the curriculum. Children learn self-control by learning to make decisions and take responsibility for their actions.

5. The Arts
Dance, drama, music, and visual arts are valuable tools to help express ideas and feelings. Children must be encouraged to create their own work, thus developing their abilities to communicate. Daily opportunities for this self-expression will promote the confidence and positive self-esteem necessary for children to share their values and concerns with others.

Reporting
Students have their development monitored and recorded. Informal discussions regarding progress are available at any time. More formal progress reports will be given for children attending daily. Communication between home and school is encouraged. Only when we are working together can we best meet the individual needs of each student.