



Aberdeen Hall - Kindergarten Curriculum Overview

Language Arts: The purpose of the Language Arts program is to develop strong communication skills. The children are engaged in formal and informal reading, writing, speaking and listening activities every day. These activities more than cover the BC prescribed learning outcomes for Kindergarten and stretch well into the Grade One outcomes in many areas. Assessment is ongoing through daily observations, discussions, work completed as well as through dictation test results. Homework generally consists of practising the sounds in their sounds book every day, the sound sheet, daily reading and eventually, dictation, key word and wordbag practice (these will be explained in detail when they begin).

Jolly Phonics:

- The Jolly Phonics Program is a multi-sensory approach that has been used successfully at the school for the last couple of years.
- Roughly four new sounds are introduced each week, beginning with the initial sounds and then progressing to digraphs (eg. ch, sh, ai, ie, oo, etc.), blends and alternate vowel sound spellings (a_e/ay, i_e/igh, oy, u_e/ew, o_e/ow).
- The routine for introducing the sounds is the same each time:
 - a story introduces the sound and an action accompanies the sound
 - thinking of words that begin with the sound
 - listening for the sound in words (beginning/middle/end)
 - matching worksheets and lots of oral work
 - letter formation: air writing, writing on partner's back, on whiteboards etc.
 - printing practice sheets
 - homework sheets lets you see the action and correct letter formation and gives practice with fine motor skills such as printing the letter and coloring the picture
 - a sound card is glued in their sounds book and all sounds should be practised every night (where possible) with the action to reinforce them ***please have your child say the sound rather than the letter name (eg. 'sss' instead of 'ess') as this greatly improves blending and word-building***
 - blending sounds together to read and make simple words: please use the sheets of sound cards provided in the communication bag at the beginning of the year. These should be cut up into flashcards as the sounds are taught and used regularly to "crash" sounds together to make and read words (eg. sit, nap, hen etc). Try to encourage your child to make the words and also to read them back to you.
- Dictation: once we have covered the first two sets of sounds, we will begin dictation. Every Monday a dictation book will be going home with a list of sounds and/or words to practise for a dictation test in class on Friday. To help your child practise this please read the word (or sound) to

your child without letting him/her see it. S/he should write the sound or word down in the book. You can help them to identify all the sounds in the words, by putting up a finger one at a time for each sound that is heard (eg. c-a-t: 3 fingers up; t-r-ai-n: 4 fingers up). Try to do this twice a week. At first your child may find this very difficult and may often miss out the middle sound. This is normal and with lots of repetition will become easier for them.

- Wordbags: once we have done more blending in class, your child will be bringing home a plastic ziploc containing words twice a week. Your child should read these to you and then return them in the communication bag to get a new set.
- Please don't worry if your child is too tired to do all of this each night. Simply put them to bed early and do it the next night.

Reading:

- This year we are introducing a new reading scheme called 'The Oxford Reading Tree (ORT)'. This is a highly effective, comprehensive and progressive program which I have used in the past. Please refer to the earlier letter about the program for more details.
- A new book will go out on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Some will be books belonging to the scheme, others will be separate phonics-based books. You will receive a reading record for each ORT stage as well as a list of key words that are to be learnt for that stage. Please record the date and a short comment about how your child enjoyed/coped with the book next to the title as you read them with your child. The keywords should be practised regularly, a few at a time until they are mastered.
- Stage 1 begins with books that do not contain any words. There is an extended story for you to read to them as well as questions that encourage your child to: discuss the story, make predictions, make links to their own lives, sequence the events in the story, empathize with the characters and check for understanding. The books then progress to a few words, followed by short sentences. Further in the stages, the extended story disappears and your child reads the whole story themselves. All books use a combination of the targeted key words as well as phonetically decodable words. Memorizing the story and using the pictures are valid reading strategies to obtain clues used for decoding and should not be discouraged. You can also ask your child to point out specific key words and begin to sound out regular words that use the sounds we have learnt so far. Give your child time to work out words themselves as some take longer than others. When giving help try to draw attention to the size and shape of the words as well as the sounds contained within them or give them some contextual clues to help them decode.
- **It is essential that communication bags are looked at every day at home and returned with the reading books each day to class as our reading groups are filled to their maximum so we require all the books for the next group. Please keep your child's reading book, reading record and sounds book in the communication bag at all times. Eventually, a dictation book and word bags will also need to be kept in it. Everything else may stay at home to be used for practice there.**

Writing:

- The writing process starts with drawings in which we are trying to encourage more and more detail. There is a lot of focus on body position and background details in order to draw out ideas to be used in future writing.
- At the moment the children are being given a topic for which they are to draw a picture and then a sentence to copy. At this point the focus is on the process of using a lined book for writing, setting up work neatly, skipping lines, using finger spaces between words, using correct letter formation and using capitals and periods. As their confidence in their writing abilities grows and more sounds are taught we will begin to encourage independent writing. Throughout the year, we will practise a

variety of forms of writing including letters, posters, instructions, poems, reports, imaginative stories, descriptive writing and personal accounts. By the end of Kindergarten your child will be writing independently, using a mix of phonetic spelling and key word knowledge.

Math: The purpose of the math program is to develop problem-solving skills, the understanding of numbers, operations, measurement, geometry and graphing as well as to foster a sense of accomplishment and success with mathematics. The program entails a combination of mental activities, written activities, as well as the use of manipulatives in practical work. Assessment is ongoing through daily discussions, observations and work as well as through periodic check-ups after each topic. There is no formal math homework given, though informal practice in the form of daily encounters with numbers, shapes and measurement at home will help your child pick up concepts more easily. The following topics covered fully address the new BC prescribed learning outcomes for Kindergarten and extend well beyond this into the *Grade One* outcomes:

- Sequencing, recognizing, forming, representing and comparing numbers to 10
- Sorting, building and describing 3D objects and 2D shapes
- Comparing two objects based on length, mass or volume (Measurement)
- Simple Addition and Subtraction to 10
- Identifying numbers to 20 and counting to 100
- Graphing and data handling
- Counting by 2's, 5's, 10's
- Money
- Time

French: We have begun the implementation of a new revolutionary approach to French language instruction called *Histoires en action! pour les tout petits*. The program is based on the use of story, music and dance to teach French. It also employs the *Gesture Approach*, a technique that uses hand signs to help students learn and remember the carefully selected vocabulary. Once gestures are taught, children are expected to speak chorally **with** the teacher at all times while the teacher gestures. This greatly enhances their attainment of conversational fluency. There is equal, strong emphasis on the development of all four language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) through this program, although reading and writing are necessarily developed later in Kindergarten. Activities are varied so that children have the opportunity to work individually, in small groups and as a whole class. Assessment will be on-going, through observations, spontaneous interactions in French with the students, performances and written 'cahier' work. The unit for this year is 'La Poule Maboule'. Through this unit, the children will also cover vocabulary related to numbers, colours, the alphabet, the family and clothing.

Science: Our science program will focus on developing observation and experimentation skills using a hands-on approach. We will be developing our interest in the natural world and ways in which we are able to interpret it. The units we will be exploring this year will be:

- **The Five Senses:** We will learn about each of the five senses and how we use each one to observe different aspects of our world. We will also begin learning how to share our findings with others.
- **Earth and Space Science:** While studying rocks, soil, water, weather and the seasons, students will demonstrate their ability to observe their surroundings and describe features of their immediate environment.
- **Physical Science:** We will be looking at the properties of materials, including colour, shape, texture, size and weight. We will identify materials that make up familiar objects and we will study the five R's of the environment (rethink, refuse, reduce, reuse and recycle) as we consider our own environmental choices and their impact.
- **Life Science:** We will be studying the characteristics of living things. In particular, we will do a unit on the features of local plants and animals and learn how to compare them.

Social Studies: This course will focus on the development of social skills and the awareness of one's actions. We will also be gathering information from our personal experiences, oral sources and visual representations in order to present information (orally and visually) to describe ourselves and our communities. The units we will be studying this year will be:

- **Governance:** We will look at our individual role and responsibilities as a member of the classroom and school community as well as identifying the purpose of classroom and school expectations.
- **Identity, Society and Culture:** We will be looking at groups and places (including family) that are important parts of our lives in order to demonstrate an awareness of the concept of change. We will identify similarities and differences among families and traditions both within our school community and around the world.
- **Economy and Technology:** We will identify individual human needs and explore work done by members of our community. We will identify examples of technologies used in our everyday life.
- **Human and Physical Environment:** As we will be working on our plant and animal unit in science, we will make connections to social studies by identifying characteristics of different local environments. We will learn to demonstrate responsible behaviour in caring for our immediate environment.

Art: Throughout the year, we will often utilize the topics we are studying in Science, Social Studies and Language Arts as our subject matter for art projects. We will learn to identify the elements of colour, shape, line and texture and the principal of pattern in images and in our environment. We will develop recognition of the expressive qualities of individual visual elements and create images emphasizing one or more elements and principals. We will examine the works of a few different artists as well as explore different media in our art projects.

Health and Career Education: The purpose of this program is to enable students to become thoughtful, caring individuals who plan and reflect, make informed choices, and take responsibility for their own personal and career development in order to become well informed, participating members of the community. The following topics are covered:

- Character Counts pillars: responsibility, respect, fairness, citizenship, trustworthiness and caring
- opportunities to make positive choices
- identifying sources of support at school
- identifying personal skills and interests
- identifying jobs and responsibilities at home and at school
- identifying thoughtful, caring behaviors in healthy relationships and demonstrating appropriate ways to express feelings
- identifying practices that contribute to health
- differentiating between safe and unsafe substances
- differentiating between appropriate and inappropriate touches
- saying "no" to strangers
- identifying and avoiding dangerous situations (home, community, school, road)
- accessing emergency services