



London
Christian
Elementary
School

JK Curriculum

Updated June 2015

Our Mission and Vision

Our Mission

London Christian Elementary School is an interdenominational Christian School established for parents seeking to provide their children with a Christ-centered elementary education. Empowered by the Holy Spirit and partnering with the home and the church, the school aims to educate children in a vibrant and creative environment, enabling them to grow in their understanding of God and His world, equipping them for discipleship in all areas of life.

The school recognizes the unique giftedness of every student and respects each child as an image bearer of God. Therefore, the school strives to develop the individual talents and abilities of all students for the purpose of building Christ's community

As dedicated professionals and servants of Christ, the staff is committed to pursuing excellence within a caring educational environment. Through the curriculum teachers encourage students to explore Creation, to reflect on its wonder and brokenness, and to make responsible choices with the gifts God has given them

Our Vision

To educate children, equipping them for a life of faithful, Christian discipleship

Our Purpose

Our goal is to work with parents to encourage their children to be faithful Christian disciples. We do this by assisting students in developing:

Their knowledge and understanding of God and his world, equipping them for lives of love and service in all areas of life

A personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour

A commitment towards joyful service to God and one's neighbour

A personal responsibility of individual talents and abilities

A healthy self-esteem as a child of God

Positive and caring relationships with fellow students and teacher

Our Educational Creed

On the foundation of God's infallible Word, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as explicated in the ecumenical creeds and the confessions of the Reformed tradition, we affirm the following summary of the mission of the Christian school.

Community

The Christian school, as an enterprise of the entire community, enables and equips all of its children to serve the Lord, to love their fellow human beings, and to care for God's creation. The school community provides an environment of love and care within which students are nurtured. As an indispensable partner with the home and the church, the Christian school leads children to live according to biblical wisdom.

Staff

Staff members of the Christian school, living in joyful fellowship with God, model the love of Christ to children. Empowered by the Holy Spirit and dedicated to the highest standards of excellence and professionalism, Christian teachers view their work as a vocation. The calling of a Christian school teacher is to pass on the wisdom of the Christian tradition to students and to help them understand and apply the transforming power of the gospel to contemporary society and culture.

Students

Children are God's image bearers, entrusted to parents and the Christian community as his gifts. The Christian school encourages students to develop their gifts in response to God and in loving service to fellow human beings. Students are led to know God and to respond to him in every dimension of the creation and in every aspect of their lives.

Curriculum

The Christian school curriculum is developed and organized so that children may come to know God more deeply and richly and live for him more faithfully. Since human experience in all its rich variety is a good gift from the Creator who remains involved in his world, the Christian school curriculum explores all dimensions of creation. God's design for the creation and his will for human society and culture must be understood and obeyed. This is the way of godly wisdom. Students are taught to recognize the brokenness that sin brings to God's carefully designed world and are challenged to bring the healing power of Jesus Christ to a fallen world.

Areas of Study

So, what is Christian about our school's curriculum? Here are some of the main areas of the curriculum and how they are unique to a Christian school.

Language Studies

Language is a gift from God and it is how God communicates with us. We use language to communicate to others and to respond to God. Learning how to use language is the foundation for learning all other areas of the curriculum. At LCES, students are taught structure of language, both in English and French (Grades 1-8). They are taught to listen thoughtfully, speak articulately, read with a critical eye, and use their imaginations to write creatively.

Math

Math is more than a series of random numbers. Did numerical order just happen, or did our Creator intend order to be present in all creation? When students study mathematics, they not only learn mathematical functions at the appropriate grade levels, they also discover how God created order in the universe.

Physical Education

We serve God by using our bodies, and so we endure a certain fitness level to carry out our service. All students have formal Physical Education classes twice a week, and most students participate in intramural activities during school recesses. We also have a vibrant inter-school sports program. Our older students play on a variety of teams and participate in the Catholic School league as well as the Woodstock District Christian Schools league. We encourage all our students to be physically active, both in school and at home.

Health

Students become aware of how their bodies function and how to take good care of them. Age and grade appropriate lessons explain how God created us to interact with each other in Christ-like ways. Social skills and emotional health are also taught and reinforced through weekly, interactive lessons.

History

God's people have a story and we are part of that story today. As students unfold the facts of history, they discover that God has been in this world for centuries. How did we get here, and what role do we as Christians have today? How can we as Christians make a difference? Those are all questions students come to understand and experience as they study together.

Fine Arts

As God's children, we have been made in the image of a creative Father. At LCES, students are given an opportunity to explore and develop their artistic side. Through regular music classes, they don't just learn the structure of music, but are also given opportunity to sing and play instruments. For example, the primary and junior choirs gather each week to praise God with their voices. In the later grades (grades 6-8), students choose an instrument and, with the help of the music teacher, they will spend the next three years playing that instrument in the school band.

Bible

Not only are biblical principles woven through all curriculum areas, but Bible is taught every day at LCES as a separate subject. Students study the Bible as a textbook in older grades, and in the younger grades they experience Bible stories as part of their curriculum studies.

LCES and the Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education in Ontario administers the system of publicly funded elementary and secondary school education in. The ministry promotes publicly funded education in Ontario which is focused on three goals: high levels of student achievement; reduced gaps in student achievement; high levels of public confidence in public.

As a private, Christian school, London Christian Elementary is not formally under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. However, we choose to parallel the ministry curricular expectations in our approach and design. We actively review the ministry's guidelines and ensure we are following the same topics of study. While the topics of study are similar, how we approach them is different. As Christians, our starting part is different because our faith allows us to see everything through the lens of who we are as Christians and this comes through clearly in our curriculum.

We continue to learn from, grow with and adjust curriculum to meet the needs of our students and ensure high academic standards.

Curriculum Area: Art

Perspective

God is the master artist; our world and the surrounding universe abounds with examples of the beauty he created using line, texture, shape and colour. God made people in His own image and gave them the ability and desire to experience and respond to creation through art. Responding aesthetically is one way in which people are called to glorify God and serve others while also enriching their daily lives.

At London Christian Elementary School, education in the visual arts is essential to the students' spiritual, intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth. Through the study of art, students develop an appreciation and awareness of God's creation. Art experiences allow students to respond to their Creator in constructive and creative ways. Students not only develop the ability to think creatively and critically, but also develop physical coordination and the ability to work both independently and with others.

Study of the arts broadens the students' horizon in many ways. Through art, students develop the ability to communicate in various artistic media, and learn that art has been used in history as a media for recording and communicating ideas and feelings. Through the study of art, students learn about artistic traditions of their own and other cultures.

The visual arts curriculum is intended to help students develop their God-given ability to communicate with God and others through visual images. In learning to express themselves in visual ways, students sharpen their aesthetic awareness and their powers of observation. In developing their ability to analyze and describe works of art of their own, of others, and from various periods and styles, students will learn to understand and appreciate a wide spectrum of art works. In experimenting with a variety of art media, students are challenged to develop a deeper appreciation of this gift from God.

Topics of Study

Elements of design: line, colour, shape, texture and space

Objectives

By the end of JK, students will be able to:

- Recognize their creativity as a gift from God.
- Explore with different materials to practise and discover their own creativity.
- Begin to share their artwork with others.
- Use a variety of (new and familiar) tools and materials in creating artwork.
- Express responses to visual art forms by making connections to their own experiences or by talking about the form.
- Use elements of visual art such as line, colour and shape
- Look for elements of visual art in creation (e.g. fall tree is colour, line, shape)

Curriculum Area: Bible

Perspective

How should Bible be taught as a subject so that it retains its integrity? The Bible is God's Word to his people. It is God's inscripturated revelation and a rule for faith and life accepted by a covenant community. Most children who study the Bible in Christian schools belong to a community in which the Bible is already an important part of their experience. This needs to be noted because of two possible temptations for those who teach Bible in the Christian school. Some teachers, filled with evangelistic zeal, may use the teaching of Bible as a mission opportunity, turning each lesson into an occasion for eliciting a faith-commitment from students. Here the academic focus is lost. Other teachers may emphasize the academic character of the discipline so strongly that a somewhat objective" treatment of the Scriptures results. This can happen when the teacher treats the Bible predominantly as a literary or historical document rather than as a living Word from the living God to his people. In this situation, the teacher fails to connect the Bible with children's daily lives, and they may soon view Bible study as having little personal value or relevance. How can Bible be taught so that commitment, academic focus, and application are kept in balance? Since Bible is a subject among other subjects in the curriculum, perhaps similar subjects could provide models for teaching Bible.

Topics of Study

Beginning of the World, God's Special Family, God's Plan for His Family, Christmas, God's People Listen to Him, Jesus Begins to Teach, Stories About Jesus, Jesus Tells Stories, Jesus Teaches His Children How to Live, Good Friday/Easter, The Church: God's New Testament Family

Objectives

By the end of JK, students will be able to:

- Learn that the Bible was written so we may know God and ourselves
- Recall Bible Stories
- Understand that the Bible is God's word and every story is true or teaches us a truth (e.g. the parables)
- Imaginatively respond to Bible stories (e.g. drama, art, crafts, song)
- Develop attitudes of love and trust toward God, others and self
- Respond to God's call for repentance, faith, discipleship and praise
- Begin to understand that the Bible applies to daily life
- Participate in prayers, singing Bible songs and learning scripture
- Develop a sense of wonder and awe about God and his world
- Begin to ask questions about God

Curriculum Area: Technology

Perspective

Our key principle for the integration and use of computer technology in the school: Computer technology should be used only if it helps the school to achieve its vision and mission. Computer technology can be defined as the educational use of computers to attain the goals of LCES. As an area of study, computer technology is integrated into the curriculum, providing students with new ways of learning, doing and understanding subject areas.

Computer technology will be used to enhance the education of students, preparing them to be lifelong learners and enabling them to be effective servants of Christ in contemporary society. Many areas of living and learning are presently affected by computer technology. As Christian educators, we recognize this and take advantage of computer technology as one means by which we can manage God's creation and give Him glory.

Topics of Study

Mouse, interactive whiteboard pen

Objectives

By the end of JK, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an awareness of the safe use of technology
- Investigate and use the classroom computer and interactive whiteboard
- Begin to navigate computer programs using the mouse and interactive whiteboard pen

Curriculum Area: Health and Social Skills

Perspective

Christians believe that God created each person as a whole being. The Genesis 2 account of creation says that the Lord God formed man from the dust, breathed into him the breath of life, "and the man became a living being" (verse 7). The Bible does refer to various aspects of the person-such as the mind, body, soul, spirit, or heart-but the stress is on the unity of the whole being. The various aspects of a person - the intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, and physical - are interdependent. In the New Testament the apostle Paul, writing to Corinthian Christians, supports this point of view. Some Corinthians, influenced by their pagan culture, apparently believed that gluttony, drunkenness, or promiscuous sexual activity did not affect their "spiritual" life. Paul counters by strongly denouncing this attitude (1 Corinthians 6: 12-19).

What is the significance of this Christian view of the person for education? It means that health education cannot be treated as incidental to the curriculum. Rather, it must be an integral part of the curriculum at every level. Physical fitness, nutrition, personal health, emotional health, the functioning of body systems – all strands of the health curriculum - affect the whole child. We must recognize that since healthy living affects us in our totality, health education plays a solid role in developing children and equipping them to serve God in the world.

God has given human beings the task of caring for creation. This task includes being caretakers of themselves and others. Our health curriculum helps students fulfill their God-given responsibility. The Christian view of a person's responsibility to care for himself or herself in order to honor God runs counter to the prevailing view in North American culture. Our culture says that what we do with our body is an individual matter. Sports and fitness are often used for self-glorification, elevating the body to a higher status than it warrants. At the same time, abuse of the body through addiction, inattention to nutrition or lack of exercise is also common. In a culture such as this, spelling out how we honor God with healthy living and nurturing Christian attitudes toward ourselves and others are crucial for the Christian community.

Christians are called to reflect God's love in all their relationships. The social health strand of the health curriculum assists students to develop mature Christian attitudes toward others. They also learn interpersonal skills necessary for getting along with others. Thus students are led to become contributing members of their communities. To answer our deepest needs, God created us to live in relationship with Him and others.

In summary, our health curriculum seeks to teach students how the lordship of Christ results in healthy living. For only as students acknowledge their accountability to God and form their lives according to his Word, are they able to become all their Creator wants them to become and live lives of thankfulness and service.

Topics of Study

Social Skills: Empathy Training, Emotion management, Problem Solving, Manners

Health: Healthy Living

Objectives

By the end of JK, students will be able to:

- Display a positive attitude towards self and others
- Demonstrate independence and a willingness to take responsibility in learning and other activities
- Identify and use social skills and problem solving skills in a variety of social contexts
- Demonstrate an awareness of health and safety practices for themselves and others and a basic awareness of their own well-being

Curriculum Area: Language Arts

Perspective

Language communication is an incredibly significant and beautiful gift of God. We therefore nurture respect for language and a concern for integrity in its use. The Bible decries language that violates love, truth or justice. The apostle Paul warns against unwholesome talk, adding that we should use language to benefit others and build them up (Ephesians 4:29). The Bible gives us norms for language use: truthfulness, considerateness, fairness, appropriateness, clarity, conciseness, and aesthetic vitality. These norms provide a framework of responsibility and freedom within which we unfold and use language with gratitude and wonder. Regrettably, sin and ignorance often cause people to use language to remake the world in their own image, for their own self-interest.

Language learning is intended to help students:

- To use language with integrity, both functionally and creatively, in order to praise God and serve others: to listen thoughtfully, speak clearly and read critically, and write imaginatively
- To develop communication skills that clarify thought and feeling, and thus contribute to building relationships in community
- To realize and experience how to use language to deepen personal and communal perceptions and insights, and thus to become constructive and reconciling agents in their communities

(As taken from Steppingstones to Curriculum by H. VanBrummelen)

Topics of Study

Language Art topics are linked to the monthly JK inquiries.

Objectives

By the end of JK, students will be able to:

- Communicate by talking and listening to others for a variety of purposes (e.g. Communicate needs, paying attention to the speaker, taking turns speaking in a group, ask questions, express what is in their hearts at prayer time)
- Demonstrate understanding and discernment of a variety of written materials (e.g. stories, poems, informational materials, Bible stories).
- Learn and practice pre-reading skills, print concepts and beginning reading strategies.
- Develop phonemic awareness (the awareness that language is composed of small units of speech called phonemes).
- Communicate thoughts and feelings using writing strategies.

The following are taught throughout the year:

Guided Reading: picture walks, recall main idea, retell, sequence story, title, author, illustrator, predictions, comprehension, fact vs. fiction, dramatize story

Selected Reading: begin to track words left to right, context clues, reading buddies

Writing: identify alphabet letters, draw picture stories, dictate stories, work from left to right, printing letters, begin to use 'kid printing', begin phonetic spelling

Working with words: letter names, letter sounds (all the consonants and short vowel sounds), rhyming, segmenting words, begin to read and spell small words

Curriculum Area: Mathematics

Perspective

God created this world. "For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together" (Colossians 1:16, 17). Our universe is a structured unit. God created this world in an orderly fashion to serve him, and he continues to uphold and direct his creation. "Your faithfulness continues through all generations; you established the earth, and it endures. Your laws endure to this day, for all things serve you" (Psalm 119: 90, 91). God's laws are dependable, because he, in his constant faithfulness, embedded these unchangeable laws into his creation.

God has established a diversity of laws within creation. The special foci of mathematics are two distinct aspects of God's creation structure: the numerical and the spatial. Because of these special foci mathematics has a limited but essential place in the structure of knowledge. There is nothing in this world in which number does not play a role. Mathematics is one science out of many that man has formulated about God's dependable world. Mathematics has an expanding influence in today's society. Mathematics is an extremely useful tool in physics, biology, psychology, economics, sociology, and other sciences. Its structures serve as models for many seemingly unrelated problems. However, the real world is far more complex than any mathematical model. Mathematics is limited. By itself, it cannot depict the full diversity of God's creation.

If students see this vision-that mathematics studies a part of God's creation structure-they can learn to appreciate how mathematics may be used to fulfill their cultural mandate as Christians. Students will be better prepared to serve the Lord in all areas of life. They can construct buildings and bridges, analyze movement of objects, interpret statistical surveys, study the migration of birds, take care of their personal finances, plan a cross-country trip, concoct that special recipe, and design a backyard garden. Mathematics can give them a deeper understanding of creation, and a greater willingness to serve their creator, also in the area of mathematics.

Topics of Study

Counting, number recognition, geometry, patterns, data collection/display/interpretation

Objectives

By the end of JK, students will be able to:

- Use concrete materials to explore and investigate counting, quantity and number relationships.
- Count using 1:1 correspondence
- Recognize numerals up to 10
- Count orally to 15
- Measure and compare.
- Practice spatial sense and geometry.
- Identify the following shapes: circle, square, triangle, rectangle, oval, diamond, star, heart, pentagon, hexagon
- Recognize and use patterns.
- Collect, display, and interpret data.

Curriculum Area: Physical Education

Perspective

Our starting point in physical education is that man, created in God's image and renewed in that image in Jesus Christ, has to glorify God in his body. *"You are not your own; you are bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body"* (1 Cor. 6:20). We cannot separate the spiritual, emotional, academic and social aspects of life from the physical. *"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?"* (1 Cor. 6:19). With our whole being, with our total character, with all our abilities we are called to serve God in this world.

In physical education we study the movement of the body and we practice skills to acquire and maintain physical fitness. The physical health of the body influences emotional health and mental abilities. Studies indicate that the coordination of body parts influence learning abilities. Therefore the discipline may not be an appendage to the curriculum; it should have a significant place in it. The key concepts of physical education involve those of movement and motor proficiency. Its primary focus may not be character development or leadership ability or improved social relations, though the physical education program, if taught properly, can be a positive factor in each of these areas.

Every child should learn the importance of the body and how to use it as an instrument that is affected by and in turn affects the other elements of his or her total being.

Physical education is fundamentally learning time. The stress in physical education is on the use of physical activity as a developmental medium in which the prime goal is not the activity itself, but rather the achievement of personal potentials through the activity. Physical education is education of, and education through, the physical. Physical education is a planned program of personal movement experiences that develops the body as a means rather than as an end. Physical education is concerned with the knowledge and understanding that occurs to the human being through muscular activity; how the human being can control and utilize this phenomenon for service to God; what the relationship of this movement is to other parts of God's creation; and how this movement forms the human being.

Topics of Study

Traveling Skills/Activities, Stability, Jumping and Landing, Creative Movement, Folk and Novelty Dances, Rolling, Bouncing, Throwing and Catching, Kicking, Striking, Cooperative/Low Organizational Games, Theme Activities

Objectives

By the end of JK, students will be able to:

- Appreciate how God has made our bodies to move and work.
- Participate in creative movement and other daily physical activities.
- Begin to demonstrate control of large muscles with and without equipment (e.g. climb and balance on playground equipment, roll, throw and catch, parachute activities).
- Begin to demonstrate balance, ease and flexibility in locomotor movement (e.g. run, jump, hop, walk, gallop).
- Engage in cooperative play in a variety of games and activities.

Curriculum Area: Science and Social Studies

Perspective

The goals of teaching and learning science include:

1. Investigate physical and living things as part of God's plan—To examine the physical and biological aspects of daily phenomena in experiential, hands-on ways; To survey the basic concepts, structures and theories of science; To investigate the complexity and unity of the scientific aspects of reality with wonder and delight, as well as with perseverance and humility, To recognize that the world is an ordered and consistent creation reflecting God's law and science is not religiously neutral—scientific activity is directed by scientist's worldviews and values.
2. To identify and experience God's unique calling for humans to develop science and technology as cultural activities that honour God and His creation—To understand and use science and its applications responsibly; To recognize the important but limited place of science in society and develop a critical understanding of issues related to science; To consider how brokenness in the world can be restored, at least in part, because through His grace, God allows us to develop and use scientific investigation and application responsibly.

(As taken from Steppingstones to Curriculum by H. VanBrummelen)

Social Studies is the study of cultural formation. It explores the factors that shape cultures, countries, communities and individuals. Social Studies explores how God calls us to live within today's culture:

- In Genesis 1:28 God calls people to work together with Him to develop His world responsibly and to care for it wisely (The Cultural Mandate). (Creation)
- We respond to this command both obediently and disobediently throughout history. (Fall)
- God uses us to change His world, bringing it towards His original plan. (Redemption)

As students grow in their understanding of culture within God's world, they are challenged to act responsibly to God's calling and to mature in their response to that calling.

Topics of Study

God Made Me Special, Thank You God for Fall, God Helps Animals Prepare for Winter, Thank You God for Weather, Thank You God for Spring

Objectives

By the end of JK, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate and awareness of the God-made and human-made environment through hands-on investigations observations, questioning and sharing of findings.
- Demonstrate and awareness of the characteristics and functions of some common materials and use these materials safely.
- Demonstrate and understanding of and care for God's world.