



LANCASTER COUNTY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Lower School: Grades K-6



Course Descriptions



The below course descriptions provide an overview of the content covered in kindergarten through grade 6 as well as curriculum resources and forms of assessment used to monitor student progress.

Kindergarten

The objective of the full-day kindergarten program is to build a solid foundation upon which students grow academically, physically, spiritually, emotionally, and socially. This is a critical year for the children as they transition from home or pre-kindergarten into the lower school setting and the program is designed to be academically challenging, as well as developmentally appropriate. A wide variety of materials stimulate students' curiosity, initiative, and inquiry in all areas of development.

Bible – Students are introduced to the major components of scripture - the stories of Creation, the Fall of Man, Redemption through God's grace, and Restoration to God's presence. Students explore the big picture of how God has been working through His creation and history to bring man back to Himself. Learning this big picture provides a foundation for the development of a biblical worldview and the application of God's love and grace into the student's daily life.

Language Arts – A balanced approach to literacy, including oral and written language is progressively taught. Students are taught to identify, produce, blend and segment individual sounds, and apply them to reading and writing. Over 50 sight words are taught along with reading strategies that give them a solid foundation for reading. Journal writing is used to help the students put their letter knowledge and writing into practice. Students learn to listen actively and communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

Math – The student is introduced to a wide variety of math concepts and skills, such as sorting, position, counting to 100, recognizing numbers to thirty-one, place value of tens and ones, time to the hour, value of coins, reading bar and pictographs, beginning measurement, patterning, geometric figures, and beginning addition and subtraction.

Science – The students learn about various animals and their habits and habitats. Weather, changes of the seasons, and plant growth/needs are also introduced and discussed. A study of insects, along with an observation of the lifecycle of a butterfly is explored.

Social Studies – Students learn about most holidays that are celebrated and the important people associated with them, such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., George Washington, and Abraham Lincoln. The students learn about community life as well as appropriate social skills and conflict resolution skills.

Art – An introduction to the basics related to color, line, and shape enable students to complete short projects as they learn how these concepts relate to their created artwork. The students will visually identify major artists and their respective artwork. Students will learn about the proper care and maintenance of art supplies used to complete projects throughout the school year.

Music – Instruction in this class prepares the kindergarten student for music reading and performance. Through singing, reading, moving, playing, echoing and activities presented within the course, the students will obtain the skills necessary to provide a foundation for music literacy.

Physical Education – Students rehearse locomotor and stability skills, learn manipulative skills and creative movement skills and developing fitness awareness. Students participate in the Fitness Gram and other skills tests.

1st Grade

First graders at LCCS experience the joy of reading books independently, develop an awe of God's world around them, and learn how to be good friends. This is an exciting year for these eager, high-energy children with sensitive hearts that are open to hearing God's Word.

Bible – Students continue to study the major components of scripture - the stories of Creation, the Fall of Man, Redemption through God's grace, and Restoration to God's presence. They begin to dig deeper into the characteristics of God through His plan, His Son, and His Spirit to build and shape a biblical worldview.

Language Arts – Children develop a strong foundation in reading through daily instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, and comprehension skills. Students participate in whole group lessons, small guided reading groups, interactive teacher read aloud to students, and independent reading. They strengthen their handwriting skills and learn to form strong and varied sentences to express ideas in writing.

Math – Students read, write, and count numbers up to 100, including skip counting while learning basic addition and subtraction facts, basic geometric shapes and fractions, measurement, money, and time. A strong number sense continues to develop as students work on place value and participate in numerous hands-on activities. They add and subtract 2-digit numbers using base ten blocks and number bonds.

Science – Students participate in hands-on activities relating to life science, physical science, the human body, and earth science. Various field trips complement the curriculum.

Social Studies – Children learn that history is God's story as they study our changing world, the first Americans and the Pilgrims, rules and laws, goods and services, and where people live. Students also learn how America began, with emphasis on America's godly heritage and American symbols. Students develop geographic skills such as reading a compass rose, keys, and using maps. Both fiction and nonfiction stories will be covered in connection with the language arts curriculum. Various field trips complement the curriculum.

Art – Students develop a basic art vocabulary by identifying and creating portraiture, still-life, and landscape using a variety of art materials. Students will learn about the proper care and maintenance of art supplies used to complete projects throughout the school year.

Music – Through singing, playing simple instruments, moving, writing, and a variety of other activities presented within the course, students demonstrate their growth in music literacy. As the student learns to match pitch and use expression while building singing and coordination skills, he or she is reminded to use the skills and talents to glorify our Heavenly Father.

Physical Education – Students rehearse locomotor and stability skills, learn manipulative skills, creative movement skills, and develop fitness awareness. Students participate in the Fitness Gram and other skills tests.

2nd Grade

Second grade students continue to build their academic foundation by mastering crucial reading and math skills that equip them for success in future years. Solidifying these skills in second grade helps students shift from “learning how to read” to “reading for learning” as they progress to third grade.

Bible – Students study the characteristics of God which leads to daily life application. As they establish how the traits of God, Jesus, and Holy Spirit are seen throughout scripture, students are challenged to put them into practice. There is a focus on the Redemption story and how God’s Spirit changes the heart which leads to a life of service and love towards others.

Language Arts – Students solidify phonemic awareness, phonics, and comprehension skills through explicit and systematic instruction in whole group and small group settings. They identify the elements of stories and explore various genres of literature. Writing stories and poetry helps students apply grammar rules and mechanics. Students continue to develop manuscript handwriting formation and explore cursive writing.

Math – Students use various materials and manipulatives while developing skills with money. They use place value knowledge up to the thousands place for addition and subtraction with regrouping. Students explore how to tell exact time, identify two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, and are introduced to fraction, measurement, multiplication, and division concepts. Students develop a variety of problem-solving strategies while practicing these skills.

Science – Students explore various topics and participate in hands-on activities relating to life science, physical science, the human body, and earth science. Various field trips and projects complement the curriculum.

Social Studies – Students discover government and communities, maps and world regions, natural resources, American heritage and heroes, and world cultures. Various field trips and projects complement the curriculum.

Art – Students continue to build upon the prior year’s art vocabulary while creating artwork that shows discernment. Students will identify the elements of art and use these elements in their individual work. Maintenance and regimented clean-up will continue to develop each student’s stewardship.

Computer – Students develop proper typing techniques by learning to identify each row and key on the keyboard. They learn to login to the school’s network and save projects.

Music – Instruction in music reading skills, expression, pitch matching, and knowledge of form or tone color through a variety of activities presented within the course equip students to demonstrate growth in these areas. The text and other materials provide the students with songs and activities to build singing and coordination skills as well as to introduce new concepts in music reading. As students learn to match pitch and use expression, they are reminded to use the skills and talents to glorify our Heavenly Father.

Physical Education – Students rehearse locomotor and stability skills, learn manipulative skills, creative movement skills, and develop fitness awareness. Students participate in the Fitness Gram and other skills tests.

3rd Grade

As students make the transition to third grade, their foundational skills enable them to process the more challenging topics presented in key content areas. Students develop the ability to think critically about the content and engage with one another and their world at a deeper level. It is an exciting time for students as they continue to develop their own personalities and biblical worldview.

Bible – God uses many people throughout scriptures in a variety of ways. Students explore the heroes of the faith and how they were instruments of change through His power. There is a focus on the Old Testament kings and leaders who inspire us to live a righteous life no matter our status. They uncover the truth that pursuing servanthood is a representation of Christ's love at work in their lives.

Language Arts – Students read theme-based stories in a wide range of genres. A strong emphasis on comprehension strategies promotes solid interaction with the text. Students utilize the writing process and incorporate grammar / spelling rules while continuing to develop their cursive writing skills.

Math – A variety of hands-on tools used to order, estimate, and regroup numbers through the thousands and hundred-thousands places continue to build a solid number sense. Students review multiplication and division, with a strong focus on memorizing these facts while learning three-digit multiplication and long division. Students also discover fractions and basic units of measurement.

Science – Through a variety of interactive activities, students strengthen their observational skills and begin identifying the complexity of God's creation through a life science study of plants and animals, states of matter and their properties, the solar system, and ecosystems. They learn about His order through a physical science study of magnets, light and sound waves, and the nervous / musculoskeletal systems.

Social Studies – A study of current and historical communities equips third graders to focus on how, when, and where local and global communities are formed as well as how they change over time. Students learn more about the people God created as they explore the various cultures. They spend time learning about governments, focusing on the U.S. government by comparing and contrasting it with international governments. There is also a focus on geography, economics, and map reading skills.

Art – Students will be introduced to new art materials and how they relate to the materials used in the previous grades. By applying these lessons to the elements of art while beginning to understand the principles of design, their art vocabulary will be expanded through in-class discussions related to artwork created by the masters. An introduction to jobs within the art community equips students to create projects related to these discoveries.

Computer – Students master the placement of the keys on the keyboard and create projects with new programs based on in-class demonstration.

Music – Class time is devoted to exploring and composing, listening and analyzing, singing and performing, as well as reading and interpreting a musical score. Specific components of 3rd grade music include expressive interpretation, learning to sing basic harmonic structures, and vocal / instrumental timbre from a wide variety of musical styles and genres. The study of the recorder is an integral part of learning the names of the treble clef lines / spaces, basic rhythm, reading a musical score, correct fingering / finger placement, caring for a musical instrument and playing together in an ensemble.

Physical Education – Students build muscular and respiratory endurance. They participate in low ropes activities, the Fitness Gram, and other skills tests. They learn the basics of football, softball, soccer, field hockey, street hockey, handball, indoor soccer, gymnastics, lacrosse, volleyball, frisbee, and track and field.

4th Grade

Students continue to solidify their skills in academic content and habits of a successful student as they begin to prepare for the transition to middle school. Students in grades four, five, and six transition between teachers for academic content to prepare them for the middle school schedule where students switch classes each period. Students navigate through many changes socially and emotionally during this stage and staff guide them through this process in a way that honors Christ.

Bible – Students study godly wisdom and the importance of bearing God’s image in the world. They focus on finding ways to practice the godly characteristics found in biblical stories. By studying this in context of the larger biblical story, students begin to understand their need to point others to a saving knowledge of God’s love.

Language Arts – Students read a combination of short stories and books, while implementing reading strategies and analyzing literature elements. Incorporating grammar rules and proper spelling structure improves students’ writing of fiction and nonfiction pieces.

Math – Students deepen their skills to order, compare, and estimate numbers by working with numbers through the millions place. Students practice multi-digit multiplication and long division with larger numbers. The relationship between fractions and decimals is studied and both are used to solve operations and story problems. Measurement and geometry skills increase and students use bar modeling in problem solving to provide the foundations of algebraic thinking.

Science – Students explore God’s perfect design in his creation of both humans and the earth. This is done through the study of the human body systems, as well as the layers of the earth’s atmosphere. Basic chemistry is introduced as students explore the states of matter and the transitions between the states.

Social Studies – Pennsylvania history / geography and United States regions / geography serve as the focus for instruction. Students learn about Pennsylvania’s land features, history, participation in historical events, and important people in government. United States geography covers the land and people of the five regions that make this nation so diverse.

Art – Expanding on the knowledge gained from earlier grades, students will continue to increase perspective on the principles of design. The students’ art vocabulary will include jobs and cultural references. Class projects explore various jobs in art and cultures from around the world.

Computer – Students continue to practice keyboarding skills to improve their overall speed and accuracy while using a multitude of programs to accomplish short lessons and exercises.

Music – Class time provides a more in-depth exploration, analysis and performance of the following musical elements: identification of syncopation and complex rhythms, harmony performance, and instrumental timbre as it relates to the small instrumental ensembles within a wide variety of musical styles and genres.

Physical Education – Students build muscular and respiratory endurance. They participate in low ropes activities, the Fitness Gram, and other skills tests. They also learn the basics of football, softball, soccer, field hockey, street hockey, handball, indoor soccer, gymnastics, lacrosse, volleyball, frisbee, and track and field.

5th Grade

Students continue to solidify their skills in academic content and habits of a successful student as they begin to prepare for the transition to middle school. Students in grades four, five, and six transition between teachers for academic content to prepare them for the middle school schedule where students switch classes each period. Students navigate through many changes socially and emotionally during this stage and staff guide them through this process in a way that honors Christ.

Bible – Students dive into the life and ministry of Jesus and explore how the Old Testament points to the Messiah. Following His life and years of ministry allows the students to see God’s perfect plan unfold. Comparing how Jesus lived for and led others guides the students to prioritize a life of service and stewardship.

Language Arts – Students read and respond to many authentic texts as they refine their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Students write for a variety of purposes and audiences, practice spelling words, learn vocabulary terms, and apply grammar concepts. Throughout all units, students engage in discussions and presentations in which they practice communicating their thoughts orally and actively listening to others.

Math – Students build number sense and problem-solving skills while gaining a firm foundation in fractions and decimals. Practice in larger multiplication and division allows students to calculate area and volume of various shapes and figures. Ratios, rates, and percentages allow students to solve real world problems. Understanding and interpreting information displayed on a coordinate plane and various graphs and charts rounds out the curriculum.

Science – Students explore God’s design for life by studying the life cycles of various organisms. In physical science, students explore the topics of force and work, simple machines, and electricity and magnetism. Students enjoy a unit on astronomy and study the relationships between the earth, the moon, and the sun.

Social Studies – From the early populating of the continent through European discovery, colonization, the War for Independence, and the birth of our nation, students discover the principles and experiences our nation was built upon. Through a wide range of activities including research projects, simulations, and analysis of primary sources, students understand the challenges and blessings that have contributed to the growth and development of our country.

Art – Students create artwork that expresses their point of view as a young Christian artist by learning how to manipulate new and interesting art material. The class will learn the role artists have on society and create projects that emulate this work. Vocabulary will reach its highest point and students will be expected to communicate with the teacher using the language they have learned.

Computer – Students will continue to improve their keyboarding skills with weekly typing exercises and tests. They learn about programs that they will use in middle school and create projects that enhance their educational experience.

Music – Advanced exploration, analysis, and performance of the following musical elements deepen the students’ experience: compound, asymmetrical and changing meters, review of harmonic elements, the introduction of countermelodies, and instrumental timbre within a wide variety of musical styles and genres.

Physical Education – Students build muscular and respiratory endurance. They participate in low ropes activities, the Fitness Gram, and other skills tests. They also learn the basics of the following sports: football, softball, soccer, field hockey, street hockey, handball, indoor soccer, gymnastics, lacrosse, volleyball, frisbee, and track and field.

6th Grade

Students continue to solidify their skills in academic content and habits of a successful student as they begin to prepare for the transition to middle school. Students in grades four, five, and six transition between teachers for academic content to prepare them for the middle school schedule where students switch classes each period. Students navigate through many changes socially and emotionally during this stage and staff guide them through this process in a way that honors Christ.

Bible – Comparing and contrasting the truth of scripture with various secular worldviews encourages students to undertake the important process of developing their own biblical worldview and making their faith their own.

Language Arts – Students read and respond to literature through genre-based book clubs and reading workshop activities as they refine their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills from a biblical worldview. Students write for a variety of audiences and purposes, practicing narrative, informative, persuasive, and analytical communication. Students engage in discussions and presentations by communicating their thoughts orally and actively listening to others. Students continue to build vocabulary through Latin and Greek roots-based studies. Through in-context and explicit grammar instruction, students hone their writing style and mechanics.

Math – Students review whole number concepts through multiple operations, fractions and decimals while being introduced to integers and algebraic concepts. They study geometry, focusing on area, volume, and measurement. Students use the coordinate plane and graphs to compare data sets while also working with ratios, proportions, percents, and probability.

Science – Students explore various areas of science from a deeper perspective, including cells and their functions, the characteristics and needs of living things, and genetics and heredity. Students engage in an ecological study that examines the impact humans have on the earth.

Social Studies – Students embark on a journey around the world as they study the geography and culture of the continents. Through a variety of learning activities and field trips, students interact with and experience the people and places they study, deepening their understanding of God's heart and plans for people all around the world.

Art – Students create artwork that expresses their point of view as a young Christian artist by learning how to manipulate new and interesting art material. The class will learn the role artists have on society and create projects that emulate this work. Vocabulary will reach its highest point and students will be expected to communicate with the teacher using the language they have learned.

Brass / Strings – Students start developing skills on various instruments from the brass and string families. Ensemble repertoire includes many styles including folk songs, sacred, classical, and popular tunes. Students are required to practice at home in between lessons.

Computer – Students will learn to identify the internal components of a computer and understand their use in the computer's operation. Typing skills will continue to be developed. Evaluation of their typing speed and accuracy will be part of their overall grade. Students will compare and contrast Microsoft Office with Google Apps. Projects related to both software packages will stress the need for students to have a diverse understanding of programs and how they relate.

Music – Class time is devoted to refining and strengthening musical components as a capstone for the lower school music curriculum and also as a foundation for middle school music. Students will learn to recognize, define, and interpret basic music elements, such as treble/bass clef note names, note/rest durations, time signature, and expressive markings. The culmination of this course is the participation in annual lower school concerts.

Physical Education – Students will learn to appreciate and care for their bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit. Each student is created in the image of God and possesses a variety of gifts and abilities which students must discover and strengthen. Students will be taught the importance of lifelong fitness and will be given the opportunity to perform a variety of activities. Students will participate in the Fitness Gram as well as other skills tests. Students will be introduced to a variety of sports and will learn proper technique, vocabulary, strategy and be given opportunities to compete.

Curriculum Resources

Bible – Bible, Jesus Storybook, Summit Ministries (Building on the Rock), chapel

Language Arts – Foundations, Kid Writing, trade books, Word Journeys, Zaner Bloser Handwriting, Heggerty phonics, Easy Grammar, Institute for Excellence in Writing, Rooted in Reading, guided reading groups, various leveled readers

Math – Singapore Math, Engage NY, IXL, small group instruction

Social Studies – Houghton Mifflin, Harcourt, Scholastic, Scott Foresman, Pearson, trade books

Science – ACSI Purposeful Design

Assessment Tools

Students participate in three assessment sweeps throughout the year (back to school, winter, and late spring) to help gauge progress in key reading and math skills. Data gathered through individual assessments and various group activities provide staff members with important information to guide instruction, arrange small groups, and influence recommendations for additional support. A report distributed after the sweep provides parents with the progress made towards research-based and national benchmarks.

Kindergarten – Individual one-minute fluency assessments ask students to identify letters or listen to a word and say the first sound that they hear (i.e. if students hear the word “cat”, the correct response would be the sound /k/). The goal of these assessments is to determine how quickly and accurately students can perform these skills which are precursors to reading fluently. Math skills assessed include number identification, saying the next number in a sequence, and identifying which quantity shows more.

1st Grade – Students complete both individual and group assessments for reading and math. Students complete activities that check their current levels in letter identification, decoding unknown words using appropriate letter sounds and identifying the sounds they hear in the provided words. A current reading and spelling level is used to guide instructional reading at school and independent reading at home. In math, student activities include number identification, providing the missing or next number based on the pattern provided, identifying which number of a pair is worth more, and math facts.

2nd Grade – Students complete individual reading assessments which examine oral reading and retelling skills as well as decoding unknown words. A current reading and spelling assessment determines both instructional and independent reading levels. Math skills assessed in group activities include timed math facts, time, money, measurement, and more.

3rd Grade – The assessments given to students in third grade establish current reading and spelling levels, measure oral reading and retelling skills as well as gauge students' ability to use context clues appropriately. Math skills assessed include timed math facts and various concepts / applications to identify areas of strengths and areas of growth.

4th, 5th, 6th Grades – The assessments given to students in fourth grade and higher gauge students' ability to use context clues appropriately and measure their current levels of vocabulary and comprehension skills. Math skills assessed include timed math facts and various grade-level concepts / applications. Each grade uses different assessments, but all cover basic skills that provide essential information for teachers to guide student instruction at the specific grade levels.