

Junior School Academic Programming

Beyond the Castle Walls

At the Castle, friendship and learning come together outside the classroom and beyond the walls of the School. Field trips to explore the outdoors, visits with community partners, exciting speakers and live performances deepen our girls' love of learning. Outdoor education is an essential part of our program as students build leadership and collaboration, learn to take risks and develop a strong sense of personal achievement. Every September, students and faculty pack their bags and head off for a three-day overnight trip to a regional camp. Our students in Grades 4 through 6 attend for two days and one night. At camp, the girls connect across all grade levels and strengthen the bonds of friendship and sisterhood. Senior students take on the role of older sister, helping our younger ones feel included and appreciated. During camp, we introduce our international students to Canada's great outdoors and provide opportunities for Day girls and Boarders to get to know one another through organized activities, fun games and campfire stories. The highlight of camp is no doubt airbands when our exciting House competition takes on a musical note! In January, students enjoy four days outside the classroom participating in carefully designed experiences to foster leadership, independence and collaboration while incorporating elements of the academic program and a lot of fun. Every year, we watch as young minds are transformed by this experience that opens students up to a deeper understanding of real-world challenges, inspiring and emboldening them to make a difference in the world.

Co-curriculars

School involvement and a sense of community are high priorities at the Castle. Junior School students may choose from a variety of after-school clubs, sports and activities and are encouraged to try new things, develop new competencies and make new friends. All co-curriculars are designed to extend and enhance student learning while promoting collaboration, future-ready competency building and fun. A Sampling of this year's co-curricular activities includes Spanish Club, STEAM Club, soccer, Arts Club and more.

Technology

We believe technology is a powerful tool that students must learn to use effectively and responsibly. Across all grades, students draft, iterate, explore and share using technology to investigate, imagine, create, communicate, organize and collaborate. Students engage in computer programming, engineering and robotics through our academic and co-curricular programs. Digital literacy is a cornerstone of our approach, ensuring students are savvy, safe and ethical digital citizens. To enhance and transform learning, we thoughtfully integrate age-appropriate technology where it truly augments the educational experience. In Grades 4 through 6, we equip students with iPads and laptops, ensuring a seamless fusion of technology into learning activities. Our school uses the Edsby learning platform, as well as Google Apps for Education to foster an environment where students can flourish, connect and innovate in secure and productive ways. The Information Technology (I.T.) department provides school-level technology support for students and staff, ensuring all devices are in working order and all software used for classroom learning is vetted and adheres to data safety protocols.

We believe that students learn best in a warm and supportive environment where laughter and friendship live alongside small class sizes, a future-facing curriculum and excellence in teaching. Our team of caring and skilled educators sees the untapped potential within each learner and commits to helping every student strive to reach their personal best.

Our Junior School program focuses on the fundamentals while fostering creativity, critical thinking and a passion for knowledge. Learning extends far beyond the Ontario curriculum to prepare students for a future that's yet to be revealed.

Future Ready Competencies

How do you prepare young people for a future that doesn't yet exist? By developing in each one the skills, mindsets and character to tackle a rapidly changing world.

Traditional approaches to education focus students on finding the right answer. Future-ready students learn the value of asking the right question. Our Future Ready Competencies are taught both inside and outside the classroom to ensure Trafalgar students strive to become:

- Creative Thinkers and Innovators;
- Systems Thinkers and Designers;
- Critical Thinkers and Informed Decision-makers;
- Clear and Confident Communicators;
- Kind and Empathetic Community Members;
- Collaborative, Effective Team Members and Leaders; and
- Self-directed and Self-aware Learners and Unlearners.



Future Ready Partners

Leading schools understand that the future of education lies in meaningful partnerships with ethically responsible, innovative and creative thinkers.

Our work with Future Design School supports us to continually reimagine the future of education so that our classrooms, educators, programs and facilities continue to meet the needs of our future leaders, innovators and community members. Our partnership with Ontario Tech University gives our students access to leading experts in science and technology, allowing teachers to extend learning beyond our classrooms and into university lecture halls, research labs and wind tunnels.

Collaborative Classroom Model

Evidence shows that inquiry-based, collaborative approaches in addition to foundational and intentional skill-building in literacy and mathematics are integral to Junior School programs. At Trafalgar, our students in Grades 4 through 6 engage in our Collaborative Classroom model, where teachers partner to

deliver a rigorous and meaningful curriculum that challenges every student to achieve their full potential. The Collaborative Classroom model allows students to work in both larger and smaller group settings, supported by expert instruction geared to meet each student's unique needs. Teachers work as a team to provide expert feedback and individual instruction necessary for each girl to achieve her personal best and ignite her love of learning. Students collaborate in a variety of ways, including as a whole class, in small groups, across grades and subjects. This unique restructuring of the traditional classroom model is based on evidence that shows how inquiry-based collaborative approaches to teaching help students more effectively learn important future-ready skills such as collaboration, problem-solving and innovative thinking.

English Language Arts

Central to the mission of Trafalgar is our dedication to amplifying each student's voice. Research shows that communication skills are key determiners of career success. Our English Language Arts curriculum, informed by the Science of Reading research, aims to engage, support, and challenge students. This curriculum equips students to formulate and communicate their ideas effectively, enhances their understanding of word structures to facilitate vocabulary expansion, and introduces them to a wide array of texts to enrich their learning and comprehension. Through this program, students learn to express their opinions, thoughts, and insights with increasing clarity and confidence.

Our approach to English Language Arts is comprehensive, integrated across the curriculum to promote the continual practice, development and transfer of their skills. This holistic strategy aims to develop students into proficient communicators and critical thinkers, prepared to make a significant impact on the world.

French Language

French studies in the Junior School leverage the Accelerative Integrated Method (AIM) approach to language acquisition, supporting students to rapidly achieve oral and written proficiency rarely seen with conventional methods. This program introduces vocabulary with storytelling, gestures, drama, songs, dance, collaboration and repetition. AIM helps students learn and retain new words, syntax and grammar with this systemized approach. Our Junior School French program is taught by Diplôme d'études en langue française (DELF) certified instructors, aligning with the latest educational research and best practices.

Mathematics

We believe that every girl can be successful in mathematics when strong instruction and positive messaging combat the pervasive negative self-talk around girls and math, subtle messaging that often starts as early as Kindergarten. Using a customized program that blends principles of Singapore Mathematics with cutting-edge research, our Junior School Mathematics program lays the groundwork necessary for young minds to flourish. With a strong focus on core fundamentals and an instructional

approach that incorporates Dr. Jo Boaler's pivotal research on growth mindset and Marion Small's work on differentiated learning and deep understanding, we aim to propel each student to reach their personal best. We believe Mathematics must be integrated across the curriculum in relevant and real-life contexts. Targeted daily instruction and exploration opportunities are provided in five Ontario Curricular strands of Mathematics including number sense and operations; algebraic thinking, modelling and coding; data literacy and probability; geometric and spatial reasoning and measurement; and financial literacy.

Science and Social Studies

The world is rapidly changing in ways that are hard for children to understand. Our enriched Science and Social Studies curriculum helps students make sense of the world around them by encouraging them to make connections with their own lives. Taught through experiential opportunities and an inquiry lens, our Science and Social Sciences program encourages every girl to discover her voice and build her own personal understanding of meaningful topics. We emphasize relevant, real-world learning that allows each student to see herself reflected in a diverse and rich curriculum. In each unit, students are provided with frameworks of inquiry, research, systems thinking, exploration and design as they learn through hands-on, meaningful and relevant experiences.

Music and the Arts

Through the skillful teaching of vocal & instrumental music, drama and visual arts, students explore avenues to build confidence and experience joy in the creative process. We believe that the Arts are fundamental to each student's emotional, social and academic well-being as they deepen relationships and build connections across the classroom, the School and the community. Our Grade 4 through 6 choir is a nationally recognized.

Health and Physical Education

Our Health and Physical Education program contributes to our goal of holistic growth and well-being of every student. The program is aligned with the Ontario curriculum but goes beyond to provide more opportunities for students to engage in robust and dynamic activities. Low ropes, swimming and snowshoeing are just some of the opportunities provided to develop strength, coordination and resilience and develop the habits of mind and skills for a healthy and active life. We also participate in the Conference of Independent Schools Athletics Association (CISAA) sports league and play against schools across Ontario. Our Grade 4-6 athletic program promotes physical literacy, love of sport, and skill development using the long-term athlete development model. There are three seasons of play. Sports include basketball, cross country, soccer, swimming, track and field and volleyball.