



**Beyond the Castle**

In the winter, students venture across Ontario for various hands-on, real-world learning experiences carefully curated for each grade level.

**Co-curricular Program**

**After-School Co-Curriculars**

School involvement and a sense of community are high priorities at the Castle. Middle School students may choose from a variety of after-school clubs, sports and activities. Students are encouraged to try new things, develop new competencies and make new friends.

**Take Time**

Every Thursday, we dedicate one “Take Time” hour for students to participate in a variety of activities and clubs across grades.

**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.

**Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

Trafalgar Castle School incorporates generative Artificial Intelligence into its curriculum to ensure its students remain at the forefront of technological advancements. We teach our students how to use AI tools while also engaging in critical thinking about the role and limitations of this transformative technology. We explore AI hand-in-hand with our students, through scaffolded, moderated and monitored learning experiences.

**Student Support**

**Homeroom**

At Trafalgar, we put our students’ well-being at the centre of all we do, with a focus on creating programming that supports self-awareness, self-direction, relationship-building and connections. Whether through prescribed Social-Emotional Learning Programming, like our partnership with Captain & Poets, or our in-house-designed lessons and activities, our Middle School Homeroom Time Program is an opportunity to learn and gather as a community.

**Dragon’s Den**

Dragon’s Den is a space for students in Grades 7-12 where they can get additional academic support. Staffed by one of our dedicated math teachers and included in tuition, Dragon’s Den is available for one hour after school four days a week.

**Tutorial**

Our Tutorial program is an opportunity for students in Grades 7-12 to meet with various subject teachers to review concepts, practice questions, or participate in remediation activities.

**Middle School Academic Programming**

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 each girl strive to reach her personal best.

Our Middle School program focuses on the fundamentals while responding to the changing emotional, social and academic needs of girls at this pivotal point in their development. Learning extends beyond the Ontario curriculum as skilled teachers guide each girl on a journey of growth and discovery.

**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 is giving our students access to leading experts in the fields of science and technology, allowing teachers to extend learning beyond our classrooms and into university lecture halls, research labs and wind tunnels.

**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



**Interdisciplinary Approach**

Our Middle School Program is grounded in a transdisciplinary approach, blending subjects like science, math, robotics and design technologies, science math and geography, or history and English language arts, to ensure a cohesive, comprehensive learning experience that mirrors the interconnected nature of knowledge and skills

in the real world. This method encourages students to draw connections across disciplines, centre future-ready competencies, such as critical thinking, empathy and systems thinking, and deepen their understanding of content.

### **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 Middle School Mathematics program lays the groundwork necessary for young minds to flourish. 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**

Our enriched Science curriculum builds the knowledge and the confidence girls need to achieve success in the world of STEAM. Teachers provide hands-on experiences to foster deep understanding and creative problem solving, taking students beyond the classroom in order to help them see the value and importance of science in their everyday day. Enriched experiences and access to experts deepens each girl's love of discovery and instills an essential positive attitude towards the sciences as they prepare for Senior School.

### **Robotics and Design Technologies**

Leveraging and extending such Future-Ready competencies of systems thinking and designing, along with creative thinking and innovating, middle school students envision, test and iterate solutions to real-world problems. Utilizing a variety of robots, such as LEGO Spike and Sphero, along with other applied technologies, like Micro:Bits, students expand their knowledge of coding languages while applying computational thinking strategies, such as debugging and tinkering algorithms. Each day they are developing solutions to authentic problems that reinforce and extend the new mathematics and science curriculums.

### **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.

### **Social Studies**

We believe in empowering students with a deep understanding of the world around them, including the systems and historical events that led to the present-day context of our world. Our program is designed to bring history and geography to life with hands-on learning activities, gamified experiences, insights from diverse guest speakers, contemporary resources and impactful field trips. Through this approach, we aim to inspire a generation of informed, curious, and engaged learners ready to navigate and contribute to the world with insight and empathy.



### **Traf Steps**

At Trafalgar, we recognize the integral role of emotional intelligence in fostering academic excellence and overall well-being. Using research from renowned psychologists, Lisa Damour, Carol Dweck and others, our Traf Steps program, specifically designed for students in Grades 7 and 8, places a strong emphasis on Social-Emotional Learning Skills (SEL). Central to our curriculum are pivotal components such as conflict resolution, self-compassion, confidence building, and the cultivation of a growth mindset. These elements are crucial for students to effectively navigate interpersonal dynamics, regulate their emotions, and approach challenges with resilience and adaptability.

Moreover, Traf Steps extends its focus to encompass vital academic skills. We provide our students with strategies for efficient time management, digital literacy, enhanced study techniques, and more, ensuring they not only excel in Middle School but are also prepared for the rigors and expectations of Senior School.

### **French Language**

Our French program is taught by Diplôme d'études en langue française (DELF) qualified instructors and aligns with current research and best practices in how students learn languages. In Grade 7 and 8, we build on the strong foundation of our early years program by further developing students' abilities in reading, listening, writing and speaking French. Continuous feedback and opportunities for self-reflection are integral to our teaching methodology. Students are encouraged to reflect on their learning journey, identify areas for improvement, and set personalized goals, fostering a growth mindset essential for language mastery. We incorporate real-life scenarios and practical applications of the language, which not only enhances engagement but also provides students with the context necessary for deeper understanding and retention.

### **The Arts**

Music, drama and visual arts are integral to our Middle School program as they provide avenues for students to build confidence, express a growing understanding of who they are, and experience joy in the creative process. We believe that the Arts are fundamental to student's emotional, social and academic well-being as they deepen relationships and build connections across the classroom, the school and the community. Students have varied opportunities to explore their passions inside and outside of the classroom.

### **Health and Physical Education**

We support the holistic growth and well-being of every student. Our Health and Physical Education program is aligned with the Ontario curriculum and goes beyond to provide more opportunities for students to engage in robust and dynamic activities. Low ropes, swimming and snow shoeing 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 compete against schools across Ontario. There are three seasons of competitive play.

### **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 students' love of learning. Outdoor education is an essential part of our program as students build leadership and resilience, learn to take risks and develop a strong sense of personal achievement.

### **Fall Camp**

Every September, students and faculty pack their bags and head off for a three-day overnight trip to a regional camp. At camp, students connect across all grade levels and strengthen the bonds of friendship and sisterhood that are so important at the Castle.