

## Curriculum Overview

*“The education of children for God is the most important business done on earth. It is the one business for which the earth exists. To it, all politics, all war, all literature, all money-making, ought to be subordinated; and every parent, especially, ought to feel, every hour of the day, that, next to making his own calling and election sure, this is the end for which he is kept alive by God--- this is his task on earth.”*

*R. L. Dabney*

- Diagnostic-prescriptive teaching (ongoing testing and evaluation on every student, response patterns are analyzed and teaching is designed to remediate gaps in learning, rather than just total scores being recorded).
- Learning Stations (use of multisensory, hands-on, and self-correcting materials, in all subject areas, changing throughout the year, depending on what is being studied at the time and what skills need to be reinforced).
- Nature studies (nature walks at Veterans Park nature trails, field trips, gardening in our personal gardens on our school grounds, and nature collections brought into class for observation and touching, nature collages, and art projects will all be used to explore God’s world. Nature booklets will be created by the students. Activities used in Montessori, Charlotte Mason, and Waldorf schools will be employed).
- Writing (narrative writing as emphasized by Charlotte Mason will be started in the youngest grades, before being able to write themselves, they will dictate their stories to the teacher so that they can be written down. This might take place after a nature walk or listening to a story. These will be made into booklets that the children can decorate and keep. A love for writing one’s thoughts will be developed. In addition, throughout all the school years, writing skills will be directly taught. Correct grammar, punctuation, spelling, syntax, and cohesiveness of thought will be taught. Good writing is difficult and time-consuming to teach, but is of great value. Developing good writing skills also aids in personal clarity of thought for the student).
- Latin (beginning in the 2nd grade, textbooks designed for the young learner produced by Memoria Press, Vision Forum, and ACCS, the study of Latin and Greek is known to increase reading ability, reading comprehension, vocabulary knowledge, analysis of English word meaning, spelling skills, clarity of thought, discipline in qualitative thought, connectiveness with classical literature and history, improved ability to learn other languages, and results in increases in college entrance SAT scores).

- Phonics (the only research proven method for teaching reading/spelling skills and remediating or preventing dyslexia, curriculum and methodology used from Orton-Gillingham/Scottish Rite Hospital, Dettmer Phonics Program, Multisensory Teaching Approach, Slingerland, Saxon, Primary Phonics, and High Noon phonetic readers created for the purpose of teaching and reinforcing the phonetic aspect of the English language and to interest young readers in the value of reading for meaning).
- Great Books Discussion Method (a program requiring specialized training on the part of the teacher, using open-ended questioning, Socratic method, non-graded activities, use of logic to support student opinions, in reading, comprehending, and discussing classical literature).
- Great Books Literature (reading and being read to from a lengthy list of classics that have stood the test of time in the world of literature, reading for enjoyment, edification, and an increase in overall knowledge of our world and the great thinkers of the past).
- History and Western Civilization (integrated study of humanities will center around the Tapestry of Grace curriculum with in-depth study of the historical events, time periods, and timeline that have affected our society, its beginnings, growth, and present culture, curriculum to include original/primary source historical writings from the time period being studied in addition to lesson guidance from Veritas Press, Memoria Press, Francis Schaeffer, Vision Forum, ACCS, and the Society for Classical Learning).
- Philosophy and Logic (The study of these 2 disciplines will normally begin toward the end of 6<sup>th</sup> grade and continue through high school. According to the teaching sequence of the trivium, the child will begin to enter the logic phase of life, naturally, at about this time, desiring to know “why” things are the way they are, and demanding logical answers to deeper questions. This stage is difficult for most parents to adjust to, as their child leaves the trusting years of childhood--the grammar stage--and attempts to move slowly into adulthood. What appears as rebellion and arbitrary questioning is actually God’s plan for your child to develop into an adult. They may suddenly begin to question the Christian faith and have an “argument” for almost any situation. It is during this stage that decisions are made to follow Christ (or not), to decide what type of man or woman they will be, to crystallize their moral beliefs, and define who they are. Instead of fighting this stage, we will celebrate it and guide the child through the study of philosophy and logic. We will give the child the tools they need to come to personal conclusions about right and wrong, strengthen their beliefs, and give them a way to defend their faith. When doubts arise, we will be there with information and the logical process to follow to decide whether something should be believed or discounted. The use of original writings of great thinkers such as St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, and more recent authors such as Josh McDowell (e.g., “Evidence that Demands a Verdict”) and C.S. Lewis (e.g., “Mere Christianity,” “Screwtape Letters”) will be used to delve into Christian apologetics. Formal study of the art/science of logic will be taught. Texts for this study can be from the publishers Memoria Press and Veritas Press. During the high school years, we will also study the comparison of different religions and ideologies, so that the

child will become well-rounded and understand various belief systems, so as to better understand their own beliefs and to relate to all peoples they may meet in the future.

- Math (we will not go as fast as some curriculum, nor arbitrarily use the curriculum that is a grade level higher than your child, as some schools do, but rather we will move slowly and thoroughly and have planned reteachings of past concepts throughout the educational process, drills, and precision teaching of the skills needed to progress in mathematics, using the Math U See curriculum and Montessori-style manipulatives).
- Science (multisensory, hands-on, program, entailing the use of real life scenarios in the study and use of science, study of great scientists of the past, the role the Christian faith played in developing the scientific method---God is a personal and omniscient God, God created the world with a plan, bringing order out of chaos, thus the natural world can be predictable, can be discovered, can be studied, patterns can be seen, and His world can be understood. We have a responsibility to know all we can about God's world, and work to protect it, and to use it for His glory and the betterment of our fellow human beings. All aspects of science will be studied---physical sciences, biology, and chemistry).
- Music and art (appreciation of the arts will be an integral part of the curriculum---this will include the study of famous artists and artistic styles, creation of one's own artistic productions, and the study of the history of music and art. In addition, music therapy will be employed).
- Bible (Bible instruction will take place, naturally, during instruction of the history of our world and in the discussion of philosophy. Teachers will also be encouraged to include Biblical instruction and Christian discussion during any and all subjects taught, to understand that all truth is God's truth and that one's Christian faith is all encompassing and not to be compartmentalized. In addition, Christian precepts and discussion will be included at times when the child may be having an emotional or behavioral issue. Additional time will be set aside to study the scriptures directly, provide for discussion concerning the concepts presented in Scripture, and attempt to understand the Christian faith. The Bible itself will be used as the original source for instruction, but also Bible curriculum and study guides may come from Memoria Press, Veritas Press, and Vision Forum publishers).