

# The Stanwich School



*curriculum guide*  
**PRIMARY HOUSE: GRADES K-3**

# *primary house* CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

## LANGUAGE ARTS

Children learn in small groups of 4–6 students with early personal emphasis in reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary and spelling. Kindergarten through Grade 3 students are taught how to gain meaning from what they read and how to express themselves in writing which allows them to create well-crafted and interesting responses to reading, stories, reports and essays. By Grade 3, students are expected to craft a 5 paragraph essay and narrative piece.

## MATH

Small group work helps teachers observe each child's grasp of fundamental skills and concepts, building a foundation for more complicated applications in upper grades. Children develop a strong number sense and problem solving skills through manipulative rich, activity based lessons.

## SOCIAL STUDIES

Beginning from the student's perspective of "self," children explore their participation in the world community. Primary House students examine communities of the school, town, state, country and the world through cooperative learning groups, field experiences, and guest speakers.

## SCIENCE

Hands-on activities beginning in Kindergarten are designed to cultivate scientific curiosity, explore the scientific method and the areas of physical, life and Earth science. Students explore and investigate scientific questions and concepts through cooperative experiences and research projects, including PowerPoint presentations in Grade 2 and 3.

## PUBLIC SPEAKING

Poise and confidence are developed through frequent opportunities to speak in front of groups in Morning assembly, in the classroom and in dramatic programs throughout the year at each grade level. Children are directly instructed in elements of public speaking such as voice projection, body placement, eye contact, appropriate use of visual aids, and appropriate questioning and answering skills.

## PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents and families are considered essential partners. In addition to encouraging their children to embrace a character culture and academic learning, they participate in a variety of fun events at school.

## VALUES AND ETHICS

Stories, activities and family projects are used to study The Stanwich Seven and how the values of Commitment, Compassion, Wisdom, Honesty, Courage, Forgiveness and Joy are present in our daily lives. Building personal character and developing a strong moral and ethical foundation are integral parts of the school's mission. The Stanwich Heart is present throughout the day as children strive to "Be the best you can be, help others be their best and make God's world a better place."

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

Children, faculty and families participate together in community service activities on a monthly basis in a meaningful way. The children engage in regular acts of kindness and generosity that help them realize that one person can make a difference and make God's world a better place. In this way the children experience true compassion and develop an awareness of the needs of others.

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE

French is introduced through a semi-immersion program with dialogue, music and plays. The students perform songs and dramatic plays in French with English narration. It is incredible to listen to children, "pat, derriere, pat, derriere" as they prepare to dance the Horah for the holiday story of Hanukkah, and sing about the "anges" in *Angels We Have Heard on High*.

## ART

Master artists and their works are central to the cohesive and comprehensive introduction to the elements of art and principals of design. In grades 1 to 3, Primary House students visit the art room in half-classes where both nature and the imagination are sources of inspiration for student art in painting, sculpture and collage.

## LIBRARY

Twice weekly visits to the library build literacy skills and expose students to a wide range of print and non-print media. From listening to stories read aloud to using materials for research, Primary House students are taught to use library resources for learning and pleasure, and to develop a lifelong love of books and reading.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 enjoy a varied physical education program. For these younger students, the program emphasizes the acquisition of skills and the building of strength, balance, coordination and endurance. In addition, the program is designed to give Primary House students a sense of fun and to promote positive social interaction among students.



# primary house CURRICULUM

SUBJECT	KINDERGARTEN	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3
LANGUAGE ARTS	<p><i>Reading:</i> Sound and symbol relationships, phonemic decoding and sight vocabulary approach using controlled readers, library books, poems, story charts, and nursery rhymes. Reading taught in small groups with attention to individual enrichment and remediation, including a progression from early readers to chapter books.</p> <p><i>Spelling:</i> Developmental stages of spelling, phonetic to conventional approach, using sound and symbol representations.</p> <p><i>Writing Process:</i> 5 Step Writing Process Approach used in creative and expository writing, in addition to phonemic daily dictations. Develop full sentences with punctuation, connecting a series of ideas.</p> <p><i>Handwriting:</i> Guided instruction daily of manuscript writing—copy and dictation exercises taught in a multi-sensory approach, Handwriting Without Tears.</p> <p><i>Oral Language:</i> Develop listening and presentation skills through classroom recitations, plays and public speaking during daily assemblies.</p>	<p><i>Reading:</i> Phonetic approach using controlled reader and familiar sight vocabulary—varying levels of modern and classical literature. Reflections in reading response journals, group discussions and creative activities contribute to building strong comprehension skills.</p> <p><i>Spelling:</i> Expanded program includes phonetic review, word families and frequently used words. Accountability through end of week spelling reviews and tests and general usage in written work.</p> <p><i>Writing Process:</i> 5 Step Writing Process Approach—expository and creative well developed five sentence paragraph writing—daily key words—punctuation—capitalization—grammar: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs.</p> <p><i>Handwriting:</i> Daily instruction using a multi-sensory approach in manuscript writing, including individual and guided practice, Handwriting Without Tears.</p> <p><i>Oral Language:</i> Students continue to develop listening skills through classroom and assembly discussions and presentations. Ability to express thoughts clearly and confidently is encouraged in individual responses and assembly public speaking.</p>	<p><i>Reading:</i> Predicting plot—summarizing—comprehension (literal and inferential) character analysis. Reading is taught through classics and modern literature in small groups using response journals, class discussion, projects and plays to enrich understanding.</p> <p><i>Spelling:</i> Weekly study of words based on phonetic groupings—combined with high frequency words—introduction of dictionary skills—syllabication—phonics review.</p> <p><i>Writing:</i> 5 Step Writing Process Approach—introduction to research writing mechanics—grammar—expository and creative writing—letter writing—review of solid paragraph writing.</p> <p><i>Handwriting:</i> Introduction of cursive writing—Handwriting Without Tears method involving daily lessons and practice.</p> <p><i>Oral Language:</i> Students participate in daily assemblies and class discussions with may individual opportunities to speak in front of an audience.</p>	<p><i>Reading:</i> Comprehension development—literal, interpretive and evaluative—modern and classical literature. Students enjoy story circles and discussions which enhance and broaden their understanding. Response journals and individual and group projects encourage creative and divergent thinking.</p> <p><i>Spelling:</i> Megawords/high frequency words—sentence dictation make up a weekly focus. Students are held accountable for learning spelling in weekly tests and quarterly reviews.</p> <p><i>Writing:</i> 5 Step Writing Process Approach—5 paragraph essay—expository, creative and narrative writing—research papers—grammar: parts of speech: noun, verb, adverb, adjective and pronoun. Daily writing includes sequential topic development and exposure to creative stories and poems.</p> <p><i>Handwriting:</i> Review of cursive writing using the Handwriting Without Tears approach and further application and practice in daily work.</p> <p><i>Oral Language:</i> Students demonstrate confidence in public speaking at daily assemblies and formal presentations to classmates and parents.</p>
MATH	<p>Stern blocks approach—Venn diagrams—place value to 100—thinking strategies for addition/subtraction—computing two and three-digit numbers without regrouping—mental computation—calendars—telling time to hour, half-hour and quarter-hour—money—simple fractions (halves, thirds, &amp; fourths)—measurement with Non-standard/standard units—temperature—problem solving using different strategies and logic—manipulatives—symbolic representation—addition/subtraction facts to 10—real-life problem solving. Math taught in small groups and a variety of hands—on manipulatives including geoboards, tangrams, unifix cubes, counting boards, scales, rulers, geometric shapes, and clocks.</p>	<p>Place value to 1,000—addition/subtraction—regrouping/renaming—computing two and three—digit numbers with regrouping and renaming—introduction to multiplication—time to the hour, half-hour and quarter-hour—addition/subtraction of money with dollar sign—simple fractions—fractions as part of a set and part of a whole—real life problem solving. Math is taught in small groups with daily individual practice. Students learn using concrete manipulatives, visualization and exploration.</p>	<p>Addition/subtraction facts to 20—renaming in addition—borrowing in subtraction—place value to 1 million—rounding to 1,000's—time to the minute, hour, and elapsed time—calendars—making change/money—multiplication/division facts 0–9's (memorized)—measurement—bar/line graphs—graphing coordinates—geometry (congruence, perimeter, area, symmetry)—fractions as part of a whole/set—real-life problem solving. Math is taught in small groups with many hands-on materials. Individual challenge problems develop critical thinking. Daily assignments provide for remediation and enrichment.</p>	<p>Place value (large numbers)—multiplication (up to three digits)—long division—fractions (equivalence, addition, and subtraction)—decimals—graphs—geometry—real-life problem solving—measurement—area—perimeter—volume/ standard and metric. Students are taught in small groups where individual needs and enrichment can be addressed.</p>
SOCIAL STUDIES	<p>All About Me—Harvest Time Fun—Being Thankful—International Celebrations—Black History—Famous Heroes—Geography—Mapping—The Farm—Habits: Ocean, Desert. Related literature, field trips, projects, parents and guest speakers enhance each unit.</p>	<p>Concept of community from school to local town—workers and places in a community—state government, U.S. government, and U.S. presidents—comparison of local community to international community. Field trips to many local community agencies bring the concept of community workers to life. Guest speakers, videos, projects and celebrations in addition to the grade one play enrich the social studies program.</p>	<p>The study of Connecticut—Mapping—Arrival of Pilgrims—Government—Study of Native American Tribes (Kwakiutl, Cheyenne, Navajo)—Westward Expansion/Pioneers. Students enjoy simulations, related books and projects in addition to enactments of specific historical events.</p>	<p>Study of regional growth of American Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Southwest and West—Simulations: See the USA and Lewis and Clark. Research papers, PowerPoint presentations and simulations enrich the learning experience and strengthen student presentation skills.</p>
SCIENCE	<p>Healthy Habits—Changes—Measurement—Light/Shadow/Color—Space—Life cycles—From Seed to Plant. Big Books, experiments, discovery process, and field trips enrich each experience.</p>	<p>Senses—Magnets—Weather—Environment—Body and Nutrition Class experiments, research, related literature, field trips, Big Books and guest speakers develop the units in creative and memorable ways.</p>	<p>Seashore—Trees—Water—Water Cycle—Vertebrae—Rocks—Minerals—Ecology—Honey Bees. Hands-on experiments, field trips and related literature enrich each unit of study.</p>	<p>Simple Machines—Sound and Light—Solar System—Human Body—Electricity—Rainforest. Field trips, classroom experiments and guest speakers enhance the topics.</p>
PERFORMING ARTS	<p><i>Movement/Music/Drama:</i> Taught in French (K–3)—Semi-immersion program which exposes children to French through dialogue, songs and stories.</p> <p><i>Vocal Music:</i> Classical, modern and folk songs in many languages—vocal skills—rhythm—melody—harmony—timbre—form and expression—Orf instruments.</p> <p><i>Creative Movement:</i> Non-locomotor/locomotor movements—yoga—body shaping—spatial awareness—elements of space, time and force—individual problem solving—cooperative problem solving.</p> <p><i>Drama:</i> Basic stage technique—memorization skills—early character development—creative dramatics and improvisation/role playing—public speaking.</p> <p><i>Performance:</i> Thanksgiving—Holiday—Charter Day—Grandparent Afternoon—Annual Kindergarten Program (for example, <i>It's a Small World</i> International Song Fest in 5 languages).</p>	<p><i>Movement/Music/Drama:</i> Taught in French (K–3)—Semi-immersion program which exposes children to French through dialogue, songs and stories.</p> <p><i>Vocal Music:</i> Classical, modern and folk songs in many languages—vocal skills—identification of notes—analysis of the shape and direction of a melody—Orf instruments.</p> <p><i>Movement:</i> Non-locomotor/locomotor movement combinations—yoga—body shaping—spatial awareness—elements of space, time and force—cooperative problem solving.</p> <p><i>Drama:</i> Basic stage technique—memorization skills—early character development—creative dramatics and improvisation/role playing—public speaking.</p> <p><i>Performance:</i> Thanksgiving—Holiday—Charter Day—Grandparent Afternoon—Annual Grade 1 Play (for example, <i>Peter Rabbit</i>).</p>	<p><i>Movement/Music/Drama:</i> Taught in French (K–3)—Semi-immersion program which exposes children to French through dialogue, songs and stories.</p> <p><i>Vocal Music:</i> Classical, modern and folk songs in many languages—steps and intervals—melodic and rhythmic skills—Orf instruments—reading music—beginning emphasis on eye and ear coordination.</p> <p><i>Drama:</i> Basic stage technique—memorization skills—early character development—creative dramatics and improvisation/role playing—public speaking—theatrical production in French.</p> <p><i>Performance:</i> Thanksgiving—Holiday—Charter Day—Grandparent Afternoon—Annual Grade 2 Musical (for example, <i>Pinochio</i> performed in French with English narration).</p>	<p><i>Movement/Music/Drama:</i> Taught in French (K–3)—Semi-immersion program which exposes children to French through dialogue, songs and stories.</p> <p><i>Vocal Music:</i> Classical, modern and folk songs in many languages—steps and intervals—melodic and rhythmic skills—Orf instruments—reading music—basic eye and ear coordination.</p> <p><i>Drama:</i> Developing stage techniques—memorization skills—character development—creative dramatics and improvisation/role playing—public speaking.</p> <p><i>Performance:</i> Thanksgiving—Holiday—Charter Day—Grandparent Afternoon—Annual Grade 3 Musical (for example, <i>The Sound of Music</i> performed in French with English narration).</p>
FINE ARTS	<p>Elements of art—drawing—painting—sculpture/clay—collage—self-portraiture—study of Georgia O'Keeffe, Jackson Pollock, Eric Carle, followed by student application of their techniques.</p>	<p><i>Visual Arts:</i> Elements of art—Vincent Van Gogh—landscape painting—Chinese brush painting—mixed media sculpture—study of Paul Klee, Frida Kahlo and Henri Rausseau, followed by student application of their techniques.</p> <p><i>Art History:</i> “Learning to Look:” Late 19th Century European Painting and Sculpture.</p>	<p><i>Visual Arts:</i> Elements of art—fish prints—Native American art, blanket making and mask making—study of Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse, followed by student application of their techniques.</p> <p><i>Art History:</i> “Learning to Look:” American Art from Colonial Times to 1890's.</p>	<p><i>Visual Arts:</i> Elements of art—one point perspective—still life—life-size biographical busts—study of Claude Monet and Wassily Kandinsky, followed by student application of their techniques—biographical busts collaboration with Library.</p> <p><i>Art History:</i> “Learning to Look:” American Art from 1850's to 1900 (Westward Expansion).</p>
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	<p>Non-locomotor/locomotor skills—balance—spatial awareness—gross/fine motor skills—emphasis on agility and speed using Dutch coordination drills—cooperative games—parachute games—rhythmic activities—listening—directional games.</p>	<p>Non-locomotor/locomotor skills—balance—spatial awareness—gross/fine motor skills—emphasis on agility and speed using Dutch coordination drills—cooperative games—hill and step-training—aerobics—rhythmic activities—parachute activities—listening and directional games.</p>	<p>Non-locomotor/locomotor skills—balance—spatial awareness—gross/fine motor skills—emphasis on agility and speed using Dutch coordination drills—cooperative games—hill and step-training—aerobics—rhythmic activities—parachute activities—hand-eye and hand-foot coordination—listening and directional games.</p> <p><i>Cardiovascular Fitness:</i> Track—skipping—sprinting—aerobics—step-training.</p> <p><i>Introduction to Games:</i> European Handball—Soccer—Street Hockey—Basketball—Kickball—“I” Ball.</p>	<p>Non-locomotor/locomotor skills—balance—spatial awareness—gross/fine motor skills—emphasis on agility and speed using Dutch coordination drills—cooperative games—hill and step training—aerobics—rhythmic activities—parachute activities—hand-eye and hand-foot coordination—listening and directional games.</p> <p><i>Cardiovascular Fitness:</i> Track—skipping—sprinting—aerobics—step-training.</p> <p><i>Skill Development:</i> European Handball—Soccer—Street Hockey—Basketball—Baseball—Softball—Swimming—Lacrosse—Track &amp; Field.</p>
TECHNOLOGY		<p>Publication software for students to create story books—word processing and math software to enhance curriculum—teacher directed research—multimedia presentations.</p>	<p>Word processing and math software to enhance curriculum—teacher directed research—multimedia presentations.</p>	<p>Word processing and math software to enhance curriculum—teacher directed research—using online encyclopedias—multimedia presentations—keyboarding and word processors using their own personal AlphaSmart—introduction to PowerPoint: Students develop PowerPoint presentations.</p>
LIBRARY	<p>What is library? What is a librarian?—Circulation procedures—care of books—library behavior—roles of author and illustrator—listening and discussion skills—interpreting illustrations and recalling details—predicting outcomes—differentiating between fiction and non-fiction—exposure to a wide range of written materials—in-depth author studies—developing a love of reading books.</p>	<p>Circulation procedures—care of books—library behavior—identification of parts of a book—differentiating between fiction and non-fiction—identifying genres—listening and discussion skills—recognition of authors and illustrators—comparing and contrasting stories—storytelling—developing a love of reading and books.</p>	<p>Circulation procedures—care of books—library behavior—selecting books independently—basic library organization—attending to longer and more complex chapter books—listening and discussion skills—comparing and contrasting stories—identifying themes and points of view—storytelling—exploration of chapter books—locating and using periodicals—use of electronic card catalogue—developing a love of reading and books.</p>	<p>Advanced library organization—introduction to Dewey Decimal System—identifying the attributes of different genres—dependent reading across genres—locating and using reference materials—basic research techniques—using print and non-print media for research—author studies—elements of a well-written story—storytelling—exploration of chapter books and periodicals—biographical busts research and writing project—developing a love of reading and books.</p>



## The Stanwich School

257 Stanwich Road  
Greenwich, CT 06830  
203.542.0035  
[www.stanwichschool.org](http://www.stanwichschool.org)