

LOWER SCHOOL CURRICULUM GUIDE

2025-2026 ACADEMIC YEAR

— 1785 —

MFS

Moorestown
Friends School





MFS Lower School students engage in **hands-on learning** and student-initiated investigations through reading, writing, asking questions, conducting experiments, interviewing experts, embarking on field trips, and sharing their knowledge with each other. In a balanced program of language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science, our students learn early to think critically, solve problems, value new discoveries, and embrace academic challenges.

MFS also offers young minds a **rich and varied experience**, engaging them in visual arts, music, physical education, computers, coding, and library use and research. Lower School at MFS is a time of widening academic horizons - and, more importantly, **growing intellectual enthusiasm**.

Our youngest students are shaped by vital **Quaker principles of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship**. Guided by these values, Lower School educators support their students in the use of peaceful conflict resolution, restorative practices, and peer mediation. Service-learning projects take place throughout the year and at every grade level.

Through our interwoven commitment to academic rigor and spiritual and ethical development, our Lower School helps students develop both eager minds and open hearts.

Dear Beginnings and Lower School Families,

The Moorestown Friends Lower School academic program spans seven grade levels from preschool to fourth grade. Our academic program is guided by our Quaker values and research-based core programs to build essential skills. Throughout the Lower School years, students are asked to engage in inquiry, reflection, and collaboration with peers, guided by experienced teachers committed to the mission of the school. Students come to know themselves as people and as learners and they learn to value the uniqueness of others. Our goal for all students is to develop global citizens who go out into the world as resilient, compassionate problem solvers, enlightened by spiritual discernment, and drawing on the power of their intellect to make moral and ethical decisions. By the end of their Lower School years, students know themselves as learners and are able to confidently pursue their academic and personal goals.

This guide is designed to give families an overview of our Lower School academic program. Also included are appendices that provide more granular detail about our math, phonics, and spelling programs. There are additional opportunities throughout the year to learn more about each grade level through curricular nights and periodic communications from classroom teachers. Parent/guardian partnership is one of the cornerstones of the Lower School program.

We hope this guide, along with communications from the Lower School throughout the year, will provide families with windows into the learning taking place every day here at MFS!

In partnership,



Jenel Giles
Lower School Director

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What is Beginnings at MFS?

The Beginnings Program at Moorestown Friends School is a **three-year continuum of learning** - from preschool to prekindergarten to kindergarten - that is designed to gradually increase student skill sets, both academically and emotionally. The curriculum is both planned and responsive to students' interests and inquiries, often building on their interests. Teachers also introduce themes and materials to spark student curiosity and initiate studies.

The **Reggio Emilia approach** to teaching is used in both preschool and prekindergarten. This pedagogical approach is the result of an emergent curriculum which provides a child-centered experience where the children are capable of constructing their learning - collaborating and growing through interactions with their communities, and naturally communicating in a relationship-driven environment. Children are encouraged to express their ideas through "100 languages:" painting, drawing, building, dramatic play, sculpting, and much more.



Academics

We believe that learning is contextual, and that skills and information are the most meaningful when they are relevant to the developmental stage and inquiry of a child or group of children. Therefore, our work with literacy, math, and handwriting is woven into the fabric of our learning, and strives to meet children where they are. We bring important age-appropriate academic concepts to students within a curriculum that reflects the diversity of our community. Curricular topics and themes emerge both from student interests and teacher provocations.

LITERACY

The language arts curriculum gives students the **necessary tools to be actively literate students**. Through a balanced, literature-based approach, which combines systematic teaching of phonics and phonemic awareness with the use of authentic children's literature, students **develop a lifelong love of reading and writing**. Beginning in kindergarten, students are taught through a workshop format which includes whole-class and small-group lessons as well as independent work time. This format motivates students by giving them choice and the ability to **connect their reading and writing with their lives**. Through emphasizing independence, students develop the confidence to succeed and continuously stretch themselves as readers and writers. Teachers are able to match the teaching of reading and writing skills to the developmental needs of the students which allows all students to be actively involved in the learning process. Children read, write, speak, and listen by immersing themselves in meaningful experiences.

Preschool and Prekindergarten

Our literacy goal is to create **strong pre-reading and pre-writing foundations** which allow children to become successful agents of language. Our unique literacy program encompasses phonics, shared reading, and shared writing activities. Each day in prekindergarten, children engage in a phonics program called Heggerty. This phonemic awareness program is auditory, and focuses on the following phonemic awareness skills: **rhyme, initial/medial/final phoneme isolation, blending, segmenting, and adding/deleting/substituting phonemes**. In **shared reading**, children engage in literature with an emphasis on concepts of print. The teacher selects a big book to work on over a period of time and encourages the children to interact with the text by counting letters, counting words, and pointing to where to begin reading. In **shared writing**, the teacher presents children with an authentic reason to write and begins a discussion. After negotiating the message, the children repeat the sentence and count the words. The teacher models writing the sentence and invites the children to participate by sharing the pen. Letter recognition and letter sounds are additional competencies that are embedded in the literacy program and incorporated into the children's daily routines and experiences.

Kindergarten

Phonics and handwriting provide the foundational skills necessary for successful reading and writing. The University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) Phonics program in kindergarten and first grade ensures a comprehensive understanding of phonological elements. We use Handwriting Without Tears to teach letter and number formation in a coordinated, writer-friendly way. Students continue to work on transferring from upper-case printing to lower-case letter formation and correct spacing. Kindergarten units of study focus on building foundational reading skills such as phonemic awareness, letter recognition, phonics, blending sounds, and basic decoding. Lessons emphasize the alphabet, short vowels, and simple CVC words, using activities such as sound wall practice, visual drills, auditory drills, and blending drills.

LITERACY

First Grade

Students enter first grade at a variety of reading levels, and teachers work with students to strengthen their reading knowledge. Reading Workshop in first grade focuses on building student skills to **deepen and improve comprehension, accuracy, fluency, and their expanding vocabulary**. First grade uses the “Daily 5 and CAFE” program as a resource that provides rotational activities during the week where students can further develop their literacy skills through independent work and small-group activities with teachers. Gaining reading independence begins with building stamina and empowering students to read independently for 30 minutes. Students practice their reading skills on a daily basis as teachers work with them in small groups and individually. The strategies are taught through a variety of mini-lessons throughout the Reading Workshop. Our expansive classroom libraries provide students with the ability to choose books that are a “good fit” and that spark their interests in a variety of genres. Students take home books on a nightly basis to share their reading progress with their parents/guardians.

The Writing Workshop model consists of units that **develop independent writing skills**. The units include small moment stories where the child zooms in on a special moment in their life and writes about it with details. Creative and fiction stories allow students to use their imagination, develop a problem for their main characters, and devise an exciting adventure which includes a solution to this problem. Students learn to add writer’s crafts such as onomatopoeia, adjectives, ellipses, dialogue, personification, and big, bold words. How-to writing allows the student to teach their readers how to do something using numbered steps. Our “All About” writing unit focuses on a single topic that the student chooses and writes about, including chapters and a table of contents. Persuasive and opinion writing is done through letter writing, judging a collection of items, and a variety of reviews of books, restaurants, movies, etc. Poetry writing is integrated throughout the school year.



[University of Florida
Literacy Program
Scope and Sequence for
Phonics Program
\(Grades K-1\)](#)

Second Grade

Second grade readers dive deeper into their reading skills and build upon their strong decoding skills from kindergarten and first grade. We focus on **strengthening students’ love of reading by digging into fluency, comprehension, and genre**. Throughout the reading units of study, students have opportunities to work on reading fiction, nonfiction, poetry, fairy tales, and books within a series. We work on keeping track of longer books by working with a partner to retell and write notes about our reading in a journal. Students start to read longer books to grow their stamina. During our unit on series book clubs, students work together to read books from the same series to strengthen their comprehension through dialogue about text. We use independent practice as well as explicit instruction in phonics during our reading and writing units.

LITERACY

Second Grade, cont'd.

Second grade writers learn about the writing process and work on brainstorming, planning, rehearsing, drafting, writing, editing, revising, and publishing. Throughout the writing units of study, **students pursue writing in different genres including narrative, informational, and persuasive.** In our narrative writing unit, we continue to build on the practice of zooming in on a small moment that happened and bringing it to life through actions, details, and dialogue. In our informational writing unit, we learn how to write “All About” books by including the important information that we know about a topic, and lab reports by asking a question and writing a procedure. In our persuasive writing unit, we focus on connecting our writing to our reading by authoring letters to convince people to read the books that we love. In poetry, we explore a variety of poem structures and write poems using our five senses by paying attention to nature and our community. We end the year with our fairy tale writing unit in which students use their creativity and imagination to write their own original fairy tales.

Third Grade

Students continue to develop specific reading, writing, and spelling skills and strategies, while merging these skills as they **“read to learn” and “write to teach” in the humanities, social studies, and even math.** The curriculum continually spirals or cycles back on itself in reading, writing, and math, both during a school year and between grade levels. In each subject area, students dig deeper and stretch farther to continue developing their critical thinking skills. Students build the academic language, skills, and habits utilized by upper elementary and middle school learners in each content area. **Types of writing include: crafting true stories, personal narratives, the art of information writing, changing the world: persuasive speeches, poetry, and open-ended units** based on student interest. Spelling and word work continue in third and fourth grade. Students use the Words Their Way program to work on word construction and to learn specific endings and roots. Each year spelling is assessed through an inventory at the beginning of the year and periodic spell checks. Students are expected to incorporate the words they have learned over time into their written work.



LITERACY

Fourth Grade

Reading in fourth grade tends to **focus on shifting away from “how” we read to “what” we read**. Students spend more time looking to make deeper inferences and connections to their reading. We look at new strategies for reading to learn new vocabulary as well as reading to analyze and understand. Spelling and word work continue in fourth grade.

Students use the Words Their Way program to work on word construction and to learn specific endings and roots. Each year spelling is assessed through an inventory at the beginning of the year and periodic spell checks. Students are expected to incorporate the words they have learned over time into their written work.

In writing, **students will write three main pieces: an informative essay, an informational text, and a persuasive essay**. During this time, students work on writing with detail and expressing themes and development throughout their stories. The informational text is tied to social studies and helps the students to practice research skills they will use in Middle School.



Words Their Way
Scope and Sequence
(Grades 2-4)

HANDWRITING

Beginning in prekindergarten students learn the basics of proper pencil grip, body awareness, posture, and proper letter formation through a formal handwriting program called **Handwriting Without Tears (HWT)**. The goal of HWT is to make legible and fluent handwriting an easy and automatic skill for all students.

The HWT curriculum uses **multi-sensory techniques and consistent habits for letter formation** to teach handwriting to all students - preschool through fourth grade. In our early childhood classrooms (PS-PK), before students write the letters using pencil/paper, they are building letters with wooden pieces, writing them on a slate board with small sponges, pieces of paper towels, and pieces of chalk. In the older grades, students learn and practice correct letter formation through easy-to-use workbooks. Cursive instruction starts in third grade and continues in fourth grade.

The program’s unique methods and materials help students master:

- Letter formation
- Reversals
- Legibility
- Sentence spacing
- Cursive connections

MATHEMATICS

The mathematical curriculum at MFS motivates and challenges preschool through fourth grade students to **think critically, accurately, and independently to become successful and confident problem solvers**, not only in their classroom environment, but also in the world around them. We strive to develop a joy of inquiry and satisfaction in learning about math and its relationship to everyday living. Through whole-group, small-group, and individual discussions, explorations, and hands-on activities, students apply their rote and conventional knowledge flexibly, while using manipulatives and literature.

Much of the **mathematics learning that takes place in our early childhood classrooms comes from children's play**. National Council for the Teaching of Mathematics (NCTM) standards and the National Association of the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) guidelines are used to support our early childhood math curriculum. Children develop geometric concepts as they build with blocks or sort buttons according to their shape. As they play in the sandbox on the Playscape, children develop ideas that lay the foundation for work with measurement. When they recognize and repeat a pattern of actions or sounds, they begin to develop concepts that are fundamental to algebraic thinking. Prekindergarten children begin more formally exploring mathematical concepts. Our program is language-based and uses poems, songs, and a variety of games and activities to support mathematical learning. Examples of topics explored include sorting, comparing, two- and three-dimensional shapes, numbers, patterns, and measurement. At each grade level, all components and learning experiences are carefully designed to match students' interests and abilities. Basic fact practice and regular assessments are an important part of the program.

The Math In Focus **curriculum in kindergarten through fourth grade utilizes many manipulatives (hands-on tools specifically used for math instruction), and teaches a variety of ways to solve problems**, ensuring that every learner has the tools they need to successfully apply new skills to novel problems. The spiraling curriculum asks students to gradually move from concrete practice with math manipulatives, to pictorial representation, to the abstract representation. This ensures that students develop a strong skills-based foundation and progress evenly throughout the grade level and from year to year. For the students, a spiraling curriculum means that engagement and interest remain high because the depth and complexity of the subject matter increases each year. Every year in school remains fresh and new, while building on the foundations laid down during the previous year.



MATHEMATICS

Below are some of the high-level topics covered in each grade. For a more detailed list, please review the Math in Focus Scope and Sequence at bottom.

Kindergarten	First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade	Fourth Grade
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numeracy Counting and estimating Single-digit addition and subtraction Money Measurement Categorizing and sorting 3D Shapes Patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition and subtraction with and without regrouping Telling time to the hour and half-hour Measuring Number bonds Shapes and patterns Ordinal numbers Coins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition and subtraction with three-digit numbers Intro to bar models Fractions Geometrical concepts Reinforcement of mental math strategies for addition and subtraction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole numbers, concepts to 10,000 Addition and subtraction on concepts to 10,000 Mental math Estimation and rounding Standard algorithms Problem solving strategies with bar models Multiplication to 1,000 Fractions - comparing, ordering, and finding equivalents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased challenge of problem solving in math Deepening understanding of topics from Third Grade while also using larger numbers Improving mental math efficiency Moving away from physical math towards more numeric math



[Math in Focus Scope and Sequence \(Grades K-4\)](#)



SOCIAL STUDIES

Social studies in the Lower School is organized around select topics or themes.

Students' interests and questions are often the springboard into a particular area of study. These may arise through use of literature, current events, class trips, or observations made in their indoor or outdoor environment. In the early years (Preschool - Kindergarten), many of the studies are the result of emergent curriculum which is both planned and responsive to children's interests and inquiry. Grades 1-4 also utilize this practice through more planned studies that are consistent from year to year. Each study includes both what teachers have planned to cover and the result of the questions that students pose.

In the early grades, social studies focuses on children's immediate social environments (family, classroom, school, and town). As children progress through the Lower School, they broaden their view by studying states, countries, and historical periods (for example, Native American life before colonization, colonial times, the Civil Rights Movement, and immigration). We value understanding and respecting people in different settings and involve students in many service projects that relate to both the school community and the local community. Students also learn map skills and study geography.

Preschool and Prekindergarten

Preschool and prekindergarten children invest in project work. The topics of these long-term investigations change from year to year, and are a reflection of the questions that the children have about the world around them as they grow as a classroom community. Children use different materials to express their ideas, and while the subject matter changes depending on the year and the class, the learning is always deep and rich.

Essential to the preschool and prekindergarten experience is social and emotional learning. Students engage in daily activities and interactions that foster problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. Teachers support children by using peaceful conflict resolution and restorative practices based on our Quaker foundation by modeling active listening, problem solving, awareness of others' feelings, and listening to feedback. This emphasis on conflict resolution and the cultivation of healthy relationships leads to building a strong community. By the end of prekindergarten, it is intended that students learn a set of social and emotional competencies: cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy, and self-control.



SOCIAL STUDIES

Kindergarten

Kindergarten students begin to engage in deeper studies. Thematic units are built around the observable world, as well as the emergent questions and interests of students. Teachers work to weave literacy and math skills into thematic work, ensuring that the learning feels relevant and necessary to students. By tying thematic work to curricular goals, student engagement grows, which dramatically increases content retention and skill development. Past examples of student-centered theme units include: holidays, light, weather, houses, mail, and restaurants. Students also learn key social-emotional skills during kindergarten and much time is spent on developing interpersonal relationships and recognizing oneself as an independent being in the wider world.

First Grade

First grade studies are designed to be engaging and fun while providing opportunities for students to explore elements of the natural world. The year starts with a study of bears and camping that allows students to build connections with each other while also learning about the environment. From there, students learn about oceans, space, and finish the year with a robot construction project.

Second Grade

In second grade there are three main themes that guide our school year: Identity, Inventions and Inventors, and Letting Your Life Speak. Students begin the year with a focus on what makes each person unique and special. When identities are affirmed and honored, we become a stronger community where everyone belongs and can learn, grow, and thrive. Some parts of identity discussed include religion, ethnicity, gender, race, who you love, family, ability, and more. The unit starts by sharing about ourselves, and then by reading books that help us learn about identity through the characters and stories that are shared. Students move into a study of inventors and the design process. They use empathy to create an invention that solves a problem they see in the world. Finally, the year culminates with a study of the Quaker belief of “letting your life speak,” which is listening to what is in your heart, thinking about your family’s values, and using those feelings and values to guide your actions and choices. The unit gives students outlets for voicing what letting their life speak means and how they can take actionable steps every day to have a positive impact. The unit introduces the Quaker practice of conducting a Meeting for Worship for Business. Second graders learn to participate in this meeting during which a community comes together to discuss community concerns, create solutions, and collectively make decisions that will impact all.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Third Grade

In third grade, students develop their cultural competence, moving from their own identities to the identities of their classroom, school, and global communities. Students build content knowledge, research skills, and geographic concepts as they explore the themes of indigenous peoples, social justice, immigration, and country reports. Guiding questions, project-based learning, independent study, and real-world experiences through field trips motivate students to construct their own understanding and learn to communicate essential ideas and supporting facts to diverse audiences. Students research a country of choice and create a slide-based presentation highlighting the facts, data, and imagery that shows the unique character of the people and place. The culminating country report continually evolves to showcase the key learning outcomes in reading, writing, social studies, and math.

Fourth Grade

The fourth grade curriculum has four major topics but is also filled with shorter units generated by student interest. Students complete longer units on maps, the original 13 U.S. Colonies, the American Revolution, & the U.S. Constitution, Women's Rights, and Civil Rights. We focus on each of these in depth and integrate writing skills and reading analysis skills into these units. Students bring current events into the classroom and we often take time to discuss topics that the students are curious about or relate to on a personal level.





SPECIAL AREA CLASSES

Special Area Classes

The **Lower School Special Area Program is core to the academic and student experience.** Each special area has a continuum of learning that spans the Lower School curriculum and intentionally builds upon skills from year to year and are **taught by specialists in their field.**

MFS special area classes:

- Provide a foundation of social-emotional learning and spiritual growth/self-discovery
- Integrate with Lower School classroom curriculum
- Support necessary skill development
- Develop natural interests
- Prepare students for engaging in the wider world
- Connect to a larger Preschool - Grade 12 continuum of learning

CODING

Preschool - Grade 4

Coding is a class during which students reflect on the technology that surrounds their lives, discover technology they may not know exists, and interact with technology in an engaging, meaningful way. Students are tasked with thinking about problems that innovations have both solved as well as created. In coding, students learn about how technology works, how to make it work the way they want it to, and imagine what innovations of the future may look like. It's a class of making, exploring, problem-solving, and more. Students use a mix of programs throughout their Lower School years including TinkerCAD, Kodable, and codeSpark. They program interactive designs with MIT's Scratch Jr. and Scratch. They also work with circuits with Birdbrain and Makey Makey.



MUSIC

Preschool - Grade 4

Music is a universal language. Music education is designed to ignite all areas of child development and skills for school readiness, including intellectual, social-emotional, motor, language, and overall literacy. The Lower School music program is a spiraling curriculum. Each grade level builds on what was learned in the previous year. The five musical elements covered in each grade are pitch, beat and rhythm, timbre, form, and expression. Prekindergarten through fourth grade students participate in two on-stage performances during the school year. Each of the musical elements is demonstrated in all stage performances.

Throughout the program students learn to sing Solfeggio as they begin to develop their musical ear and singing voice. They learn to read simple rhythms using sounds and words. They also learn about the instruments of the orchestra and their musical families. Instruments are introduced in second grade. Second through fourth grades learn ukuleles. Recorders are introduced in third grade.



LIBRARY

Preschool - Grade 4

The Lower School Library program is a **celebration of reading** and an **introduction to information literacy**. It is designed to support classroom instruction and Quaker pedagogy while fostering a lifelong love of reading and learning.

Students focus on reading for enjoyment, exploring the many ways stories build empathy and community. Together and independently, students read stories that are diverse in voice, subject matter, genre, and perspective. They experience the joys of reading beyond the pages of a book, engaging in creative storytelling, dramatics, music, and art activities. They learn about authors and illustrators, through Author/Illustrator Spotlight lessons and visits/special events, and explore various genres. Information literacy lessons begin in kindergarten, and students build upon their understanding of reading for information, the research process, and digital citizenship each year.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Preschool - Grade 4

Lower School student-athletes are given the opportunity to grow in many ways as they progress through the grade levels. Beginning in Preschool, students are exposed to a variety of equipment which challenges them physically as they are encouraged to give their best effort. As they move through the lower grades they are taught basic skills which will be carried over into team sport units as they mature. Although team sports begin in Second Grade, the emphasis is not on perfecting skills and knowledge of the rules, but rather on improving personal ability and demonstrating important life skills (cooperation, communication, teamwork, and conflict resolution). Sport-specific skills are taught and practiced through a variety of modified activities which challenge students, help them progress, and allow them to have fun! As students move into Middle School, they will continue to practice these skills and dive deeper into game rules and strategies.

QUAKER EDUCATION

Preschool - Grade 4

Quaker Education at MFS provides students with a spiritual and ethical education through formal classes, leadership opportunities, group decision-making opportunities, and Meeting for Worship (MFW), an opportunity for students to practice contemplation skills and mindful stillness. Students share reflections and listen empathetically to one another. MFW is held once a week in the Meeting House.

Quaker Education and MFW offer student support through lessons and opportunities for practicing skills that further students' social, emotional, and spiritual development. Social-emotional skills in MFW include: self-discipline and self-control, effective oral and listening, empathy, and advocacy for self and others. Quaker Education social-emotional skills include: ethical decision-making and social responsibility, conflict resolution, listening, advocacy for self and others, effective collaboration and cooperation, religious identity awareness, and emotional awareness.

SCIENCE

Prekindergarten - Grade 4

In Lower School science, the goal is to encourage curiosity and engagement. We focus on gaining a firm foundation of the scientific method, asking questions, creating hypotheses, making observations, and drawing conclusions. Students learn through hands-on experiences observing what happens in the world around them through models and experiments. Throughout each grade we improve upon our ability to observe and describe our observations using them to improve our understanding. We touch upon the many branches of science, including biology, physics, chemistry, and earth science. These lessons build upon each other in each grade level deepening student understanding.

SPANISH

Kindergarten - Grade 4

The Lower School Spanish program meets three times a week for 30 minutes and is designed to build a foundation in both the Spanish language and cultural understanding. Through songs, stories, games, and interactive activities, students develop listening, speaking, reading, and early writing skills in a joyful and age-appropriate environment. The program also introduces students to the diverse cultures of the Spanish-speaking world, fostering curiosity, empathy, and global awareness from an early age.

TECHNOLOGY

Kindergarten - Grade 4

Technology instruction in Lower School starts in kindergarten. Students learn specific skills as well as how to navigate programs used for instruction. A core component of the program is learning about digital citizenship. Students are taught internet safety while developing an online presence that is consistent with personal values. Technology learning is project-based and, when possible, integrated into classroom studies. Skills taught include data analysis, website creation, graphing, password security, and responsible use of school equipment and accounts. Students begin typing instruction in kindergarten and continue through fourth grade. Technology classes also touch upon the evolution of different technologies and their impact on society.

VISUAL ART

Kindergarten - Grade 4

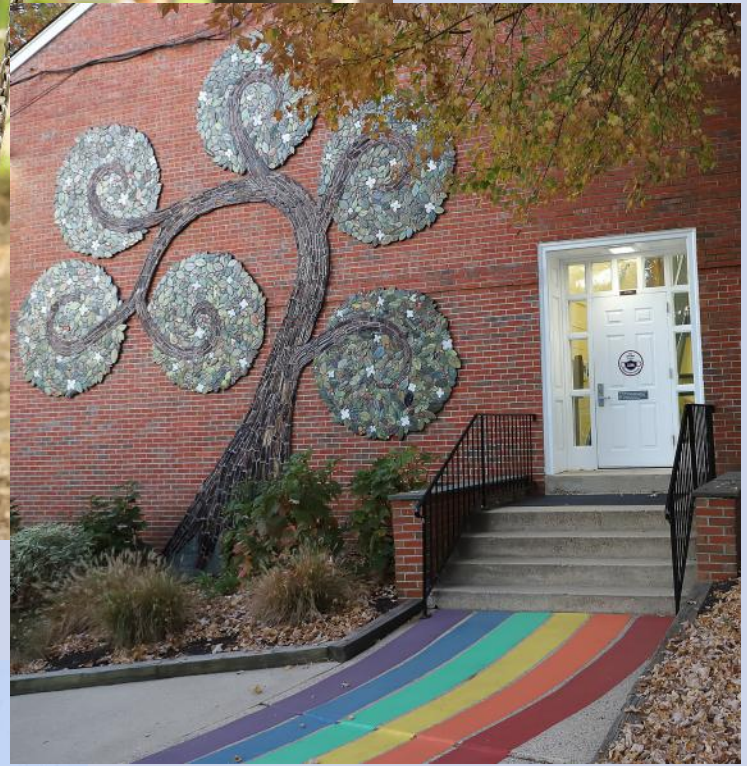
When students enter Lower School art, they enter into a space of wonder, discovery, and creativity. Visual art is a language in which children learn to express themselves and connect to a sense of awe. Each year students contribute to community art pieces within their grade level as well as a project that all Lower School grades create together. These community works are student-led at their inception with many ideas contributing to the overall project. These projects build collaborative skills and strengthen a connection to our community.

At times we creatively connect to what students are learning in the classroom as well as in other special areas. Through the exploration of different materials, visual art styles, and skill building, students discover ways of expressing themselves and find excitement through the creative arts. In Lower School, art mindfulness practices help with connecting to our creative selves in the present moment. Students explore: clay, painting, drawing, weaving (textiles), and mosaic work all while learning and reinforcing the elements and principles of design.



The MFS Playscape: An Outdoor Classroom

The Playscape is an immersive, natural outdoor play space designed to support open-ended play for people of all ages. Students are surrounded by nature through every season, with colorful, ever-changing bushes, shrubs, and flowers of all shapes and sizes displaying berries, pods, and a variety of leaves throughout the year. There are over 2,600 new plantings featuring 27 different species of plants! The area is referred to as a Playscape instead of a playground because it's not just about play structures and activity. The space highlights the instructional value of landscape architecture and the desire for children to engage with and learn from nature. Teachers work with students to develop a relationship with the natural world found on the Playscape and students are also involved in maintenance and beautification efforts as stewards of this unique and scenic play area.



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