junior kindergarten

The Collegiate Junior Kindergarten experience cultivates inquisitive thinkers shaped by collaborative and creative experiences. Though they are now four and five years old, we are planning for the day when they will be responsible, compassionate citizens and leaders. The relationships we form and time spent in work and play encourage children to develop empathy for others and a resilience to adapt to “just right” challenges.

Purposeful Play is at the center of our JK curriculum. Each area of learning and development is implemented throughout the day with a mix of adult- and child-initiated activity. At the end of this unique year, our JK students will be well-prepared to take their next step into Collegiate’s Kindergarten program. Through various forms of play, students learn to question, explore, collaborate and love learning. In short, their passion for learning is ignited.

Social and Emotional Development
Knowing that our students will be learning for a lifetime, teachers help guide them in developing strong habits of the heart and mind. As the class becomes a community, each child develops an other-centered perspective, learning to respect and care for one another. Independence is fostered through encouraging each child to persevere and stick with a task, and self-confidence and joy are the results.

Language and Literacy
Through a rich literacy environment, children are immersed in words, books and purposes for reading and writing throughout the day. Opportunities for speaking, listening and vocabulary development are woven into activities. They see themselves as readers and writers through narrating, drawing and eventually writing some of their own pieces. Many early literacy skills are introduced, including linking letters and sounds, beginning reading strategies and developmentally appropriate handwriting.

Math and Science Thinking
Through explorations, experiments and inventions, math and science are naturally embedded in the daily life of the classroom. Students learn numbers and the patterns and relationships that are part of using numbers. Our youngest students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills by making observations and noticing connections in the natural world. Teaching approaches and materials introduce children to science and engineering principles through play.

Understanding the World
Children learn about the world around them every day as they observe, question and explore. Teachers help students make sense of their place in the world through learning what is special about each person and discovering the unique differences in our classrooms and beyond. They learn to care about their community and appreciate cultures. Students also have weekly time in a World Language, rotating among Spanish, French and Mandarin Chinese with one-third of the year for each language.

Expressive Arts
A variety of activities, such as music, art, movement and role play are part of the daily classroom experience. In addition, children also go to specific resource classes during the week. Students learn to use technology for creative purposes through class-made books, videos and other forms of media that are shared within the Collegiate community.

Physical Development
Our focus on physical development supports children as they strengthen gross and fine motor skills. Students have their own outdoor playground as well as movement class twice a week. Our handwriting program, classroom manipulatives and art materials provide critical opportunities for fine motor development. Lots of physical activity is important for health, well-being and continuous learning.

The JK Environment
Our JK students have the opportunity to explore curriculum through a variety of learning spaces while at Collegiate. The classrooms are set up with different materials that provoke creative thought and play. The children are able to travel freely within their classroom and at select times are invited to visit other JK classrooms. Our outdoor play areas allow for exploration and discovery with child-focused equipment and materials as well as natural elements. Additionally, Robins Campus is an extended part of our JK environment. Taking trips to this outdoor campus gives our children a chance to appreciate nature and share the experience with their classmates.

JK Program: At a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Curriculums include:</th>
<th>Resource Classes:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Math</td>
<td>• Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Literacy</td>
<td>• Art Exploration</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Project Work</td>
<td>• Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Science</td>
<td>• World Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Social Studies</td>
<td>• Library</td>
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Outdoor Discovery

Involvement with the Collegiate Community

A Typical JK Day

**Early Morning**
- Morning Meeting:
  - Math
  - Literacy
- Choice Time
- Small Group Instruction:
  - Math
  - Handwriting
  - Literacy

**Midday**
- Lunch
- Resource Classes
- Outdoor Play

**Afternoon**
- Rest
- Snack
- Read Aloud
- Project-based Work
- Reflections on the Day

Lower School Learning Partners

Our youngest learners are an important part of the Collegiate family and relationships are developed throughout the year with other grade levels. JK students participate in school-wide activities across the Lower, Middle and Upper School campuses, such as Convocation, Town Meetings and the Pep Rally.
The Collegiate School Kindergarten program emphasizes the development of the whole child, including social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth. Each classroom incorporates Collegiate’s values of honor, love of learning, excellence, respect and community into the daily routine and provides opportunities to talk about and practice these values.

The Collegiate Kindergarten experience is designed with opportunities to develop independence and self-confidence. We foster creativity and resilience by providing “just right” learning for each child. Taking responsibility for their actions, their belongings and their words fosters pride in a job well done. Through our curriculum, we create intentional experiences to help each child understand other points of view, develop compassion for other cultures and empathy for those in need. We focus on cultivating inquisitive thinkers shaped by collaborative and dynamic experiences. As they grow as learners in the Lower School, we work to instill a sense of joy and confidence in all they do.

Social and Emotional Development
Perhaps the most important things we do in Kindergarten are emphasize caring for one another and help students develop habits that lead to a lifelong love of learning. Teachers plan lessons in which they discuss and model kindness, respect and responsibility. Children are encouraged to be independent workers and thinkers, and they are gently nudged to persevere and find joy in persisting at a task. They also engage in one-on-one conversations to provide specific encouragement for each child to grow in the current context of either schoolwork or play.

Literacy and Language
Our reading and writing instruction is based on essential elements of early literacy development: phonemic awareness and phonics, comprehending and discussing texts, developing vocabulary and knowing spelling and word patterns. We view reading growth as a continuum, in which the class receives foundational whole-group instruction and each student also receives individualized and small-group support. A primary goal of this year of learning is to build confidence and excitement about reading and writing, and this requires having both high expectations for growth and extensive support for each reader/writer. We use Fountas & Pinnell Literacy and Calkins’s Units of Study to guide our instruction. In addition to the classroom teacher and assistant, our reading specialist also works with the entire class, providing skill-based instruction with small groups of children.

Mathematics
We use Everyday Math as the backbone of our Kindergarten math curriculum. We build on children’s everyday experiences to create an instructional design that puts math in a real-life context. Learning about numbers and foundational math principles is accomplished through hands-on and concrete experiences. Our Kindergartners are challenged to communicate and reason with mathematical ideas to build conceptual understanding. Our daily math lessons and a weekly Math Lab time are full of investigations, games and discussions to encourage their development into independent problem solvers and flexible thinkers.

Understanding the World
Kindergartners explore the question How are we alike and different? in their social studies. We engage with Collegiate’s international partner schools as a way to study other students’ lives around the world and notice similarities and differences. Students also have weekly time in a World Language, rotating between Spanish, French and Mandarin Chinese for one-third of the year for each language. There is also a focus on the importance of the James River and how it impacts life in our city. Students consider this important asset in our own backyard and how they can care for it.

Science, Engineering and Technology
A science-rich environment begins with curiosity. Observation, drawing conclusions, early thinking about engineering and coding through play all work together to create a climate of discovery. Our Kindergartners experience hands-on activities that promote their investigations and discovery experiences. While valuing the children’s questions, we encourage sharing perspectives and observations.

Expressive Arts
Kindergartners engage with a variety of specialists in the arts throughout their school day. They participate in art, music and movement classes in addition to their regular physical education class. As emerging readers and writers, the arts become a primary way of self-expression for young students. Teachers value giving children opportunities in the classroom to dive into learning through the arts.

K Program: At a Glance

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<tr>
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<td>• Art</td>
<td>• Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Math</td>
<td>• Music</td>
<td>• Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Science</td>
<td>• Physical Education</td>
<td>• Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social Studies</td>
<td>• World Language</td>
<td>• Math Lab</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Spanish, French and Mandarin Chinese)</td>
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A Typical K Day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morning</th>
<th>Afternoon</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning Meeting:</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Math • Literacy</td>
<td>Math</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phonics Instruction</td>
<td>Choice/Project-Based Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Workshop</td>
<td>Writing Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>Resource Classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resource Classes</td>
<td>Reflection/Closing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Gathering</td>
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Collegiate Connections Within Our School
Kindergartners quickly forge new relationships within the School through several community-building experiences. Each Kindergartner is paired with a senior at the beginning of the year for Convocation and other special events. Seniors often refer to “their Kindergartner” and may keep in touch for years to come. In addition, 4th Grade students sit with Kindergartners at some assemblies and take part in cross grade-level activities.