

# GRADE SCHOOL



**CEDAR  
GROVE**  
SCHOOL

# Our Grade School Program

## THE MIRACLE OF CHILDHOOD



*“The goal of the Waldorf curriculum and teaching methods is to **unlock the true potential living in each child**, the true Self, which gradually awakens...”*

- Astrid Schmitt-Stegmann

At **Cedar Grove School**, we believe that in every child, we can witness the unfolding of a miracle. This miracle is the manifestation and growth of an individuality intrinsically different from any other human being.

To nourish and support the developmental stages of a growing child in this process of awakening, we work from a curriculum **inspired by Waldorf Education**.

This unique approach cultivates a love for beauty that is reflected in our **Grade One through Four program offerings**. Inspired most deeply through their feelings, Grade School students respond powerfully to what is beautiful in the world, this feeling for beauty is cultivated by the tools and approaches used in their morning **Main Lesson** work.



# Our Grade School Program

## MAIN LESSON



Main Lesson Blackboard Drawings

From **grades one through four**, each morning begins with a **Main Lesson** which comprises the first two hours of the day. This lesson represents a deep immersion in a particular academic subject.

Academic subjects are studied in blocks which last approximately four weeks and these blocks are shaped and enlivened by the teacher through music, poetry, painting, drawing, movement, and/or drama. This **multi-disciplinary approach** allows the student to become fully engaged in the subject matter, stimulating their **head, heart, and hands**. This ensures that students have a concentrated, in-depth experience with each subject area, while also providing time for integration and reflection before the subjects are reviewed.

The **class teacher** delivers the main academic subjects, coordinates with specialty teachers, and provides a link between home and school. Our teachers encourage mutual respect, love, and understanding, and strive to develop each student's **full potential**.

# Our Grade School Program

## MAIN LESSON BOOK



Children's Main Lesson Book Drawings

In Waldorf education, a **main lesson book** is a handmade notebook that each student creates to record and illustrate the lessons they receive from their teachers.

After each lesson, students capture the key concepts and ideas they have learned in these books. The pages include drawings, diagrams, and summaries of the lesson. These colorful, individualized books reflect the progress of each student and are a **method of inquiry that increases their capacity for creativity and knowledge**.

Over time, the morning lesson book becomes a **record** of a student's academic journey, and a **personal treasure** that they can keep for years to come. They are a unique and vital part of this form of education.

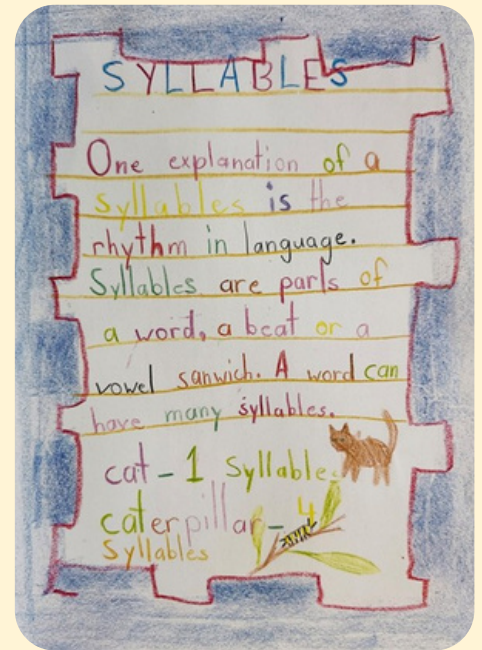
# Our Grade School Program

## MAIN LESSON SUBJECTS

### Language Arts

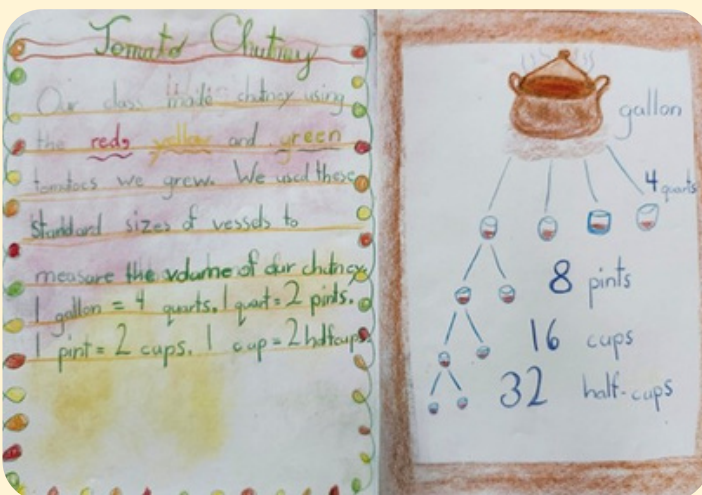
In Kindergarten, children develop a rich oral vocabulary through stories, songs, games, and poems. Special attention is given to the development of fine motor skills through activities such as lacing, finger knitting and sewing.

In the Grade School, topics, such as letters of the alphabet in Grade 1, are introduced through engaging stories and beautiful art. Learning to read and write is accompanied by daily phonetic work in songs, poems, and games that help to establish a joyful, living experience of the language. **Progressive development in language arts is built through a myriad of grammar, spelling, poetry, creative writing, drama, research skills, and diverse literature.**



Language Arts Main Lesson Book Drawing

### Mathematics



Measurement Main Lesson Book Drawing

In the early grades, mathematics is introduced through stories, art, song, and movement. Weekly practice is an important element in a strong mathematical foundation. Students practice **number bonds, the four processes, number problems, and place value daily using manipulatives and movement.** They then progress to learning **multiplication tables, solving word problems, measuring, telling time, and working with money.** Following this, **fractions, long division, rounding, and decimals are introduced.** Throughout the grades, mental arithmetic and games are used to help strengthen skills.

# Our Grade School Program

## MAIN LESSON SUBJECTS

### Science

Science is taught **experientially**. The teacher sets up an experiment, then calls upon the students to observe and discuss their findings so that they can understand the underlying scientific principles. This process **cultivates observation skills, inquiry, and critical thinking**. The sciences begin with Nature Studies in the early grades and carry through to Zoology, Botany, Chemistry, Astronomy, Physiology and Physics in the middle grades (Gr 5-8\*).

*\*Please note: currently available are Grades 1-4, but over time, the school aims to expand programming to Gr. 8*



Left: Children Unravelling Silk Moth Cocoons

Right: Main Lesson Book Entry Describing the Life-Cycle of the Silk Moth

### Humanities

The humanities curriculum begins in Kindergarten and is developed through the use of great stories of the world which reflect a **diversity of cultures and the evolution of humanity**. The stories selected at each grade reflect the specific stage of child development and serve as a guide for age appropriate striving and sense of purpose. The humanities curriculum begins in Kindergarten with fairy tales and stories from around the world. In the Grade School, we use a range of stories to teach the humanities curriculum to children. These include Fables, Indigenous Legends, Creation Stories, Norse and Greek Mythologies.

Students travel through the full sweep of the **world's cultural heritage, history and geography** including Ancient Roman and Greek cultures, North and South American, Asian, European, Middle Eastern, and African cultures.

By experiencing these cultures through their legends, literature, architecture, music, inventions, and art, our students gain a deep understanding and appreciation for the **rich diversity of humankind**.



# Our Grade School Program

## MAIN LESSON SUBJECTS

### Handwork

Handwork has immense benefits for the growing brain as it both trains the **awareness and dexterity of both hands and promotes a child's cognitive development.** As children knit, sew or crochet, they are developing fine motor skills that help make their brains stronger and better at mastering new skills and subjects. Throughout the grades, students make different items each year, from a braided belt and a knitted recorder case in early grades to moccasin slippers and pajama pants in the upper grades.



### Music



According to Rudolf Steiner, the human being is a musical being, and the making of music is essential in experiencing what it is to be fully human. Music education is informed by the stages of childhood development and helps meet the needs of students as they grow. Singing is also infused throughout the day. Students are introduced to different elements of music throughout their education, such as **singing in choir, playing recorder, and music notation.** Music in the Waldorf curriculum awakens and nurtures the deep inner life of the child.

# Our Grade School Program

## MAIN LESSON SUBJECTS

### Physical Education

Our Physical Education program aims to cultivate a **healthy balance of skill development and enjoyment of healthy movement**. In the early grades, there is a focus on **spatial awareness**, as well as fine and gross motor skills through different games that emphasize imagery, story, rhythm and imitation. In the later grades, students learn the **nobility of sport** through the Ancient Greek games of javelin, discus, long-jumping, wrestling and running. Students are then introduced to team sports such as **soccer, volleyball and basketball** after they have learned the importance of working with each other, rather than against. All students are encouraged to participate in all aspects of Physical Education.



### Fine Arts



The Fine Arts, including Painting, Drawing, and Sculpting, are **integrated into all subjects**, including mathematics and sciences to awaken imagination, and creative and flexible thinking, which brings **vitality and wholeness to learning**.