

Important dates

Field Trips

- Sept. 21: Johnston's Fruit Farm
- April 2024: Ann Arbor Science Museum
- May 2024: Swan Creek Metropark
- Specific dates will be determined for spring 2024 field trips.

Performances

- Nov. 21: Fall harvest family celebration (morning)
- May 17: K/1 concert and art show

Late Start Dates: April 25, May 13

Parent-Teacher Conferences: Oct. 26-27 and April 11-12

Special Events

- Oct. 5: Picnic dinner and s'mores campfire. 5-7 p.m. Anning Lawn
- Oct. 31: Halloween Party
- Nov. 21: Get Back, Give Back Day. 2:15 p.m.
- Feb. 14: Valentine's Day Party
- April 8: Solar eclipse viewing party (early dismissal at 1 p.m.)
- April 27: MV Annual Gala
- May 31: Lower School Field Day and family picnic

Creative Arts Program

The Creative Arts Program provides private lessons to students of all ages on piano, strings, and guitar. These lessons take place at school and may occur during or after the school day as arranged by the individual teacher. Email Mrs. Savickas for more information.

Student Support

The Lower School Student Support Team is made up of the school nurse Sherrie Watkins; school psychologist Sara Dowling; Lower School counselor Betsey van de Heijning; and intervention specialist Jill Augustyniak. The team meets with the teachers and division head monthly to discuss challenges and brainstorm solutions that faculty, students, and families are facing in our community. We develop proactive academic intervention and social-emotional support. The goal is to advocate for students in a positive way; focus on strengths to help overcome challenges; educate on neurodiversity, learning styles, learning theory, and psychology within and through the lens of diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging; and approach all students with the understanding that no one wants to fail or be unsuccessful. From the support meetings, we determine next steps that may include observations, additional meetings, outside services, and evaluations. If the team determines accommodations, remediation, enrichment, intervention, or specifically designed instruction is needed, then classroom accommodations, an education plan, or a service plan is written.

K/1 Homefun Program

It is recommended that parents read to their children every day for 10-15 minutes. Reading and discussing books makes a significant difference in a child's literacy development. In late October K/1 students will participate in a Home Fun Program where they take home learning games to play at home. These games reinforce concepts covered in class.

- Students learn to persevere through difficulties and to trust their own judgment while learning to be self-directed, organized, and to manage their time.
- In a TAB-Choice studio, students choose what to work on.
- Students learn best and work harder when they are excited about projects.
- When they design their own work, they understand why and what they are doing and engage much more deeply with their learning.
- Work independently or collaborate.
- Creative and critical thinking

Studio Art Centers that will be open for choice this year are drawing, painting, collage, printmaking, fibers, research, share chair, finish station, sculpture, "Make it" & "Build it," and pop up.

How can we think like an artist? We will use the studio habits of mind: develop skills, engage and persist, envision, express, observe, reflect, stretch and explore, and make connections.

How can we create like an artist? Steps of the artistic process are play, plan, make, reflect, and share.

Artwork brought home this year might look different. Please remember that your child(ren) are becoming artists and are learning the process of creating. Allow time to talk to them about their art and provide a place to display it. In our art studio, it is about the process not the product.

Spanish

The Spanish program focuses on making the language a rewarding conversational and cultural tool that students carry into their lives and into the world. Movement, singing, storytelling, role-playing, chants, and games are all a substantial part of learning at the early levels. Highlights of 1st grade Spanish include big-buddy experiences with Middle School students, a weekly morning circle led in Spanish, and writing to pen pals at SewHope School in Guatemala. Parent communication is conducted through email and Storypark.

Music

Lower School Music introduces students to a variety of music through singing, listening, movement, storytelling, and playing instruments. Students build foundational skills and connect music across subjects. Private lessons on all instruments are available to students through the Creative Arts Program. Students perform several times throughout the year.



1st Grade

MAUMEE VALLEY COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

Expectations inside our 1st grade classrooms

Physical & social skills you can expect of your 1st grader:

- Listen for longer periods of time.
- Work independently.
- Listen to longer sets of directions.
- Stay seated for a longer period of time.
- Be able to see things from another person's point of view so you can reason with them and teach them empathy.
- Relate experiences in greater detail and in a logical way.
- Problem-solve when disagreements arise.
- Crave affection from parents and teachers.
- Experience minor difficulties with friends and working out problems with peers.
- Be able to plan ahead.
- Know their address and phone number.

Academic skills you can expect of your 1st grader:

- Read directions off the board. (Some children may still have difficulty with this.)
- Write words with letter combination patterns such as words with the silent e like make.
- Read and write high-frequency words (red words) such as where and every.
- Write complete sentences with correct capitalization and punctuation.

- Read aloud 1st-grade books with accuracy and understanding.
- Count change.
- Tell time to the hour and half hour.
- Quickly answer addition and subtraction facts for sums up to 20.
- Complete two-digit addition and subtraction problems on paper.

How you can support learning at home:

- Read at least 15 minutes every night and then discuss what they read with an adult
- Read and spell red words
- Make math a part of everyday life. Find numbers in the environment, make patterns with objects, compare weight/length, and other attributes of objects.
- Explore and observe nature.
- Set up routines that encourage independence.
- Get a good night's sleep.
- Promote a positive attitude toward others. Model kindness.
- Talk with your child daily about his/her learning in your first language.
- Model a love of reading. Let your child see you enjoy reading.
- Arrange play dates for your child to play with classmates after school and on the weekends as well as plenty of time for family activities and playing outside.

1st Grade At A Glance

Faculty & Staff

Classroom faculty & staff

Heather Huhn (hhuhn@mvcds.org)
Agustina Sanchez (asanchez@mvcds.org)
Cayla Slattery (cslattery@mvcds.org)
Kitty Weinberg (kweinberg@mvcds.org)

Specials faculty

Spanish: Kathleen Mick (kmick@mvcds.org)
Art: Crystal Borchert (cborchert@mvcds.org)
Physical education: Heather Rakosik (hrakosik@mvcds.org)
Music: Jenica Fox (jfox@mvcds.org)
Library: Renee Moebius (rmoebius@mvcds.org)

Leadership & Staff

Head of Lower School
Michelle Savickas (msavickas@mvcds.org)
Lower School/Middle School administrative assistant
Megan Gray (mgray@mvcds.org)

Daily Schedule

8-8:15 a.m.: Arrival, Morning Centers

8:30-8:45 a.m.: Restorative Circle

8:45-10:45 a.m.: Word study/reading/writing workshop

10:45-11:30 a.m.: Recess

11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.: Lunch and quiet time

12:15-1 p.m.: Math

1-2 p.m.: Specials: Art/PE/Music/Spanish

2-2:15 p.m.: Snack and story

2:15-2:45 p.m.: Science/social studies

2:45-3 p.m.: Closing Circle/recess

3-3:20 p.m.: Dismissal at Door #5

(One morning each week, students have Forest School. Family volunteers are welcome.)

1st Grade Curricula Overview

UNITS OF INQUIRY

Maumee Valley believes that students learn best through inquiry, where they are actively involved in their own learning and take responsibility for that learning.

All learning, be that in the homeroom or single-subject sessions, is approached with a spirit of inquiry. Inquiry nurtures curiosity and promotes enthusiasm for lifelong learning; it encourages students to think, challenge, and extend their idea, and it prompts students to reflect and take action. The inquiry process builds capacity through student agency where voice, choice, and ownership are featured strongly. Students also develop and demonstrate the approaches to learning skills and the attributes of a lifelong learner as they become knowledgeable inquirers. Drawing from the interdisciplinary themes and students' interests, inquiry is an authentic way for students to relate to, explore, and understand the world around them. By situating inquiry in meaningful contexts, connections are made between personal experiences and local and global opportunities and challenges. Play, problem-based learning, collaboration, experimentation, and explicit teaching all have a place within an inquiry-based classroom.

Mathematics

K/1 uses the program Math in Focus to deliver the Maumee Valley math curriculum. Students in 1st grade use a variety of models to assist in deepening their understanding of whole numbers, addition, and subtraction. They are able to draw conclusions and explain the relationship of whole numbers to measurement units and compare sizes of objects. Students are able to tell time using analog and digital clocks with precision to the hour and half hour. They can organize, represent, and interpret data with up to three categories. Students are able to find examples of 2D and 3D shapes in the environment in addition to identifying simple relationships between shapes. Our math units this year include:

- Unit 1: Number sense
- Unit 2: Place value
- Unit 3: Measurement
- Unit 4: Addition and subtraction
- Unit 5: Geometry

Weather

Central ideas: Energy from the sun drives weather. Energy from the sun causes water to change state and be continually recycled.

Light and sound

Central ideas: Light and sound are forms of energy with specific properties. Sound is created by vibrations. Light is required to see. Technological innovations involving light and sound have an impact on the environment.

We are part of a larger community

Central ideas: There are roles we play in larger groups and we can impact the well-being of our peers in the classroom as well as the larger community beyond school walls. Students' social awareness will expand to create a more open-minded and inclusive community as we celebrate diversity.

Communities and maps

Central ideas: There are cardinal directions and different features of maps to help us navigate the world around us. There is a difference between neighborhoods, cities, states, and countries.

Writing

Students improve their writing by writing every day as well as exposure to the revision process of rewriting previous stories and drafts. In addition, students receive direct instruction and writing practice connected to skills associated with specific domains of writing. In the "Launching" unit, students explore the habits and thinking processes used by professional writers. Students begin to learn how to write a narrative in their "Small Moments" unit, focusing their writing on a specific event or action. In their "How To and All About" unit, students explore non-fiction writing and the elements that encompass them.

We use the Orton-Gillingham program as a resource for our handwriting curriculum. By the end of 1st grade, students should be able to write stories with sentences, go through the writing process, meaning they think about what they want to write, write down their first ideas, look back over their work to fix mistakes, and then add details and pictures. At the end, they read it to a friend, the teacher, family member or the entire class, and write their answers to questions. They can also begin to look up facts and write down their observations.

Reading & Word Study

Maumee Valley implements a holistic language arts approach, incorporating components of the Teachers College Writing and Reading Program and Orton-Gillingham's multi-sensory approach to instruction. Using the Science of Reading approach, our word study program is a highly structured approach that breaks reading and spelling down into smaller skills involving letters and sounds and then builds on these skills over time. This approach uses explicit, direct, sequential, systematic, and multi-sensory instruction to teach reading, which is not only effective for all students but essential for teaching students with dyslexia.

First Grade is a key grade level in which students develop core reading skills and often experience rapid growth in reading proficiency. Students typically enter 1st Grade exhibiting beginning reading skills such as using finger-pointing to match the print to the word they are reading; reading books that follow simple patterns; relying on illustrations to decode the print; and reading independently for short periods of time (10-15 minutes). At the end of 1st grade, students are beginning to recognize word endings, contractions, and many high-frequency words; reading with strong fluency and beginning to use voice inflection when reading dialogue; comparing and contrasting different characters and different books; and independently reading for longer periods of time.

Social-Emotional

In 1st grade, social-emotional learning is an integral part of each day. Emphasis is placed on creating a nurturing environment and the development of social-emotional learning skills through the daily practice of school routines and rituals; sharing, collaborating, and problem solving during classroom meetings and activities; and the development of manners, monthly virtues, and positive mindsets. Literature, songs, poems, buddy activities, service learning, character education assemblies, cooperative learning activities, and "teachable moments" enhance the curriculum. Recognizing the critical importance of learning to live peacefully together, the learning community builds understanding of identities, cultures, societies, and histories. All students develop the capacity to relate to others and communicate effectively within and beyond the school environment. Our social-emotional curriculum rotates through a two-year cycle and focuses on skills pertaining to self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationships and responsible decision-making. Our morning meeting time becomes an integral part of the curriculum as students learn to listen to each other, identify and express their feelings, and to solve a problem working together to retain and restore the community.

Passion Projects

Passion Projects begin to offer more student choice and discovery, but within a smaller list of options led by teachers. Students get to dive deeper into their choice as they collaborate with peers on the same topic and research through a variety of student-friendly resources and hands-on experiences. Students from other divisions often get the opportunity to collaborate with all Kindergartners to help them search for the proper information or help piece their project together. Students receive the opportunity to share their discoveries with faculty and staff, families, and peers.

Specials in the Lower School

Physical Education

Young children naturally play. It is that special time when they discover many things about themselves, others, and the environment they are in. Each day at Maumee Valley, students will be playing, but through play, they will also be learning. Throughout the year, 1st grade P.E. students will:

- demonstrate locomotor and non-locomotor skills in a variety of ways.
- demonstrate control of manipulative skills.
- demonstrate knowledge of movement related to body, space, effort, and relationships.
- engage in regular physical activity both in school and out of school.
- understand the effects of physical activity.
- know and follow safety procedures and practices.
- demonstrate responsible behavior during physical activity.
- enjoy participating in a variety of physical activity.

Young children who engage in play will improve their physical gross and fine motor skills, add to their vocabulary through expression, improve their self-confidence, and learn vital social skills through sharing and listening to others, cooperation, collaboration, and conflict resolution. The mission of the physical education department is to inspire and cultivate optimal learning opportunities to enable our students to be competent and confident in pursuing a healthy, lifelong, physically active lifestyle. This will be accomplished in a positive environment that encourages good character and strong leadership qualities.

Library

Lower School library time is all about helping our little bookworms grow and thrive! On a weekly basis, students meet in the library for interactive storytime and book shopping. Each week we discuss the message or "theme" of the story along with the genre. Finally, our library welcomes mystery readers throughout the year. If you'd like to read, we'd love to hear from you! Save these dates for library events:

- Visiting author TBA: Week of Oct. 24.
- Book Fair: Oct. 24-28.
- Lower School book Swap: January 2024.
- Book Fair: April 8-12.

Art

This year in art class your child will work in a student-centered environment. In the art room, we call this Teaching for Artistic Behaviors or TAB. Art is a process where we will be expressing oneself, building new skills, art vocabulary, and sharing our stories. We will be looking at art, talking about art, and making our own art. We will be using our head, hands, and heart to create our art. The philosophy is: **What do artists do? The child is the artist. The art room is the child's studio.**

- In a TAB-Choice studio, students are regarded as artists.
- Students are expected to do the work of artists.
- They practice coming up with their own art problems to solve, asking questions, and seeing possibilities in the world around them.