

## Physical Education – St. Thomas’s Day School

Kindergarten: Students meet twice a week for ½ hour classes. Group stretching, jogging, skipping, galloping, hopping and other movement activities allow students to explore their bodies and to realize the capabilities which enable them to move to their potential. Students begin to understand and to practice moving in their own space, experiencing increases and successes. Taking into account that all children learn and develop at different rates, mastery is achieved and celebrated on an individual basis. Opportunities for success present themselves in all aspects of our program. Play on scooters, with parachutes, using containers and ping-pong balls, jump ropes, hoops and beach balls or balloons allows for students at all ability levels to improve their skills and to work to their potential. Introduction of equipment specific to many different games and activities occurs throughout the kindergarten year.

Fall: (4-5 weeks) Students in grades one through six will begin the year participating in soccer activities, some of which are held outdoors. Those in grades one, two and three are introduced to basic soccer skills such as trapping, kicking, passing, shooting and dribbling through the use of drills and games. Students in grade four continue with more involved games which work on skill increases including those which will be used in game situations such as throw-ins, direct and indirect kicks and penalty kicks. In grades five and six skill growth continues using game play to foster understanding of team play and strategies. Fourth, fifth and sixth graders have weekly challenge activities that give them an opportunity to demonstrate their increasing skill levels, and fifth and sixth graders may be given a written test at the end of this unit to demonstrate their understanding of material taught.

(3-4 weeks) Students in grades one, two and three are given an introduction to the STX unit in which they will participate when they are in fourth, fifth and sixth grades. Plastic short-handled scoopers and plastic wiffle-type balls are used to work on the throwing and catching skills needed to play lacrosse type games. Team game situations are used to introduce students in third (sometimes second) grade to team “lacrosse” play. Students in fourth grade begin throwing and catching balls with longer handled STX sticks. They are introduced to moving as they attempt to throw, catch and score. Fifth and sixth graders continue to work on scoring technique as well as defense and use their skills in game situations. Weekly challenge activities continue for students in grades four, five and six.

(4-5 weeks) Moving indoors, students begin basketball activities that may

include the use of volleyballs in order to make the skills of dribbling and shooting easier. Passing, ball handling and shooting games are incorporated into these classes as students learn to correctly move with the ball and move the ball to their classmates. Fourth, fifth and sixth graders begin to understand the rules which govern actual basketball games. The skills of these students are assessed through weekly challenge activities which include dribbling, passing and shooting. Drills that work on game skills are used, and fifth and sixth graders play actual games depending upon the readiness of their groups. A written assessment may be given at the end of this unit.

Winter: (3-5 weeks) Students in grades one through six participate in a three/five-week floor hockey unit using goggles, plastic hockey sticks and plastic pucks and balls. This unit is run in a less formal manner with shooting, passing, goal tending and scoring practice leading quickly up to floor hockey game play. Sportsmanship and team play is an important part of this unit.

(4-5 weeks) Students in grades four through six participate in target archery. They are instructed in and participate in the safety requirements which are paramount to shooting arrows in a school setting. Students learn to follow three basic safety rules and six commands which allow these indoor classes to run in a safe and secure manner. After an introductory week or two of learning to shoot, students are put into competitive squads and use their score keeping knowledge to add their totals in order to get a team score. A written quiz may be given at the end of this unit.

(4-5 weeks) Students in grades one and two are introduced to volleyball skills using beach balls. They work on games and activities that teach them to “keep it up” and are introduced to different hand positions and hitting over a net. As they progress into third grade the teaching continues to center on hitting, but the hits become more specific i.e. bump, set. Serving is introduced and (third and) fourth graders are transitioned into using volleyballs to hit back and forth to partners. Team play may be introduced. Fifth and sixth graders work on all hits as well as different types of serves, spiking and strategic game play. Fourth, fifth and sixth graders are assessed using weekly skill challenges, and fifth and sixth graders may be given a written test at the end of the unit.

Spring: (4-5 weeks) Students in grades one through six return from Spring Break and enter a unit which includes gymnastics and preparation for the school’s annual Gym Night presentation which is held at the end of April. Students in grades one through three are introduced to basic gymnastic movements and tricks on gymnastics apparatus. The emphasis is on balance,

strength, flexibility and agility. Introduction to the Gym Night program begins, and students in these classes choose and begin to work on a warm-up activity, a skill activity and a game which will be presented by their class during the program. Students in grades four through six work to increase their skill on gymnastics apparatus, some developing routines or tricks to be presented during the Gym Night program. Fourth through six graders also choose and practice their class offerings for Gym Night.

(4-5 weeks) Students in grades one through three enter their last unit which is a kickball unit. This introduction to softball/baseball is held outside whenever possible, and indoors during inclement weather. Beginning to understand the rules of a regulation game and working on kicking and catching, students begin to see how a “real” kickball game is played. Many will participate in the cross-grade activity on Field Day to be held at the end of May. Fourth, fifth and sixth graders enter their last unit of the year which is softball. Students in fourth grade are introduced to wearing a glove for catching and to batting in drills, which may mirror game situations. Game play is introduced in the fifth and sixth grades, and basic skills are revisited along with the addition of pitching and the understanding of field positioning and some basic strategies. Weekly skill challenges assess skill increases and a unit ending written assessment may be given to allow students the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of material taught.