

Programming for Academic and Creative Excellence

Gifted children thrive and learn best in special classes where they are together with their intellectual peers. This affords them the opportunity to exchange ideas, to experiment with unique, challenging concepts and to value their intellect and excellence without fear of being laughed at or scorned. Key components of a "gifted education" include each of the following:

LEARNING EXPERIENCE

A combination of **enriched and accelerated curricula** is the best approach to programming for the gifted. Since gifted children often develop extensive knowledge and skills at an early age, most noticeably in mathematics, we group students according to their competency levels in mathematics alone. This allows for **flexible, accelerated learning in mathematics**. In all other subject areas, the child is placed in his or her appropriate grade level and explores additional, challenging content. This provides for **enrichment of the learning experiences** and affords the students the opportunity to study topics that fit their talents, strengths and interests.

DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER LEVEL THINKING AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Development of process skills in students should be viewed as basic to their curriculum. These "**basics for the gifted**" must reflect practice in the following skill areas: critical and creative thinking, problem solving, research and decision-making. Communication skills are developed in the form of good speech, effective writing, the understanding of verbal and written material, social communication and the ability to interact effectively on general matters with both adults and peers. These skills are linked directly to the curriculum content in each of the various disciplines.

PERSONAL GROWTH

Leadership, good citizenship, respect for others and sound and ethical reasoning are critical qualities that are incorporated into the curriculum, thus allowing each child the opportunity to make significant contributions to his or her personal development and to society. Effective group-building and interpersonal skills are highlighted as attributes for success.

INTEGRATION OF THE ARTS INTO THE CURRICULUM

Integration of the Arts is particularly critical in developing an understanding of self and others, based on the interrelationship of thoughts and feelings. Early introduction and exposure to aesthetic and cultural experiences establishes receptivity to and enthusiasm for them. Extracurricular activities include a cultural component such as plays, art exhibits or museum programs with opportunities for discussion.

ATHLETICS

"Healthy bodies promote healthy minds." At P.A.C.E., athletic programmes are incorporated into the curriculum from grade 1 through to grade 8, and continue into the high school years with many intramural sport activities and interschool teams. 14 different sports team are offered ranging from Ultimate Frisbee to golf, at both the elementary and high school levels. The true spirit of competition is fostered through both recreational and competitive sports.