

explore



wonder



imagine



discover

The Primary Day School

theprimarydayschool.org

Discover joy at Primary Day School.

The Primary Day School in Bethesda, Maryland, educates boys and girls during the four most important learning years of their lives—Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, First Grade, and Second Grade. Children are full of energy, curiosity, and potential during this magical time of life. A Primary Day education taps all three to the fullest.





—
From Neil Mufson
Head of School
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Welcome!

Focus and foundations matter.

At Primary Day we devote all of our energies to serving the cognitive, social, emotional, and physical needs of children in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 2. Every decision, every direction, every resource is grounded by what is best for our early learners — a group of bright, inquisitive, active, and fully engaged four through eight year olds.

Our curriculum and approaches are purpose built for these most important years. We nurture not just imagination, impressive skills, and a strong work ethic, but a focus on PDS values. We scaffold the strongest possible

academic foundation with abundant opportunities for free play, fresh air, wonder, and being a kid. Primary Day’s program allows our children to create and open future doors of opportunity.

Our graduates are sought after by the best schools in the greater DC area. We offer a highly personalized approach to next school placement that eliminates chance and anxiety. The schools to which we send our children know the value of what PDS delivers.

If you want to set the strongest educational foundation for your child, all of us at PDS look forward to seeing you soon.

discover



OUR MISSION

At The Primary Day School, we believe the earliest years of learning are the most transformative. Our robust and challenging curriculum for Pre-Kindergarten to Second Grade ignites children’s innate curiosity and sense of wonder. Led by early childhood experts, our developmentally-attuned program sets a strong academic foundation while honoring enduring traditions and values essential to social and emotional growth. The joyful magic of Beako, our mascot, and the strength of our nurturing, collaborative community inspire children to recognize the power of kindness, build their confidence, and discover their voices and gifts.

Primary Day: Where bright beginnings become brilliant tomorrows.



PDS VALUES

Our joyful traditions.



Each month we focus on a different value — kindness, honesty, gratitude, patience, respect, cooperation, responsibility, determination, and empathy.



Beako, our much beloved school mascot, a special, bird with magical powers.

Performance

At each Beako assembly, each class comes forward to share a poem or a skit, and then presents a musical performance, often accompanied by movement, props, artwork, and Orff instrumentation. Before each grade's show begins, announcers welcome the audience, describe what the audience will be experiencing, and thank family and friends for coming. PDS children develop poise in front of a group. Quiet, tentative PK voices develop into self-confident, engaging, and commanding Second Graders.

The Search for the Gingerbread Men

This week-long search in early fall is a way for our newest students to get to know their new learning environment and each other. By the time they find the elusive Gingerbread Men, three things will have happened. This eager group of newcomers will know their new environment. They will know each other—strangers will now be friends. And that powerful, engaging, and sometimes magical experience we call a Primary Day education will have begun.



Pig's Party

Pink punch, purple popsicles, and plenty of people prancing in party hats help popularize the 'pig-p' sound, one of language learning's pivotal players.

[Discover more of our treasured traditions](#)



Discover what's possible with the Phonovisual Method.

The anchor of literacy instruction at Primary Day is our beloved, time-tested Phonovisual Method.

This phonics-based approach uses sounds and symbols as language building blocks to unlock children's capacity to become skilled, confident readers and spellers.

[Discover the Phonovisual Method](#)

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Phonovisual sparks joy, engagement, and confidence, essential elements of our learners' literacy journey at PDS.

Our Curriculum



LITERACY



In our literacy-rich environment, our students immerse themselves in a world of wonder and adventure as they unlock the keys to reading success.

[Discover Literacy](#)



At Primary Day, math is integrated at each grade level throughout the curriculum using a wide range of stimulating and engaging methodologies.

[Discover Math](#)



MATH

Additional Curriculum

- Physical Education
- Social & Emotional Learning
- Spanish
- Social Studies
- Library



ART



We aim to nurture children's creative energies, building their confidence in their ability to express themselves.

[Discover Art](#)



We use songs, singing games, and circle dances to introduce children to basic musical concepts of rhythm, melody, tempo, and dynamics.

[Discover Music](#)



MUSIC



STEM



We are firm believers that the best way to learn science is to do science.

[Discover STEM](#)

[Discover overviews of the Pre-K through Second Grade Curriculum](#)

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LIFE AFTER GRADUATION

We're with you every step of the way.

Our alumni are curious, self-reliant and accomplished. An education at Primary Day fosters lifelong success by endowing our graduates with an inspired academic foundation and the intellectual resourcefulness to actively engage as young learners. Well-prepared, thoughtful and kind, they are courageous risk-takers and compassionate friends. Equipped with a confident resilience, our children are sought after applicants to independent schools throughout greater Washington.



Next School Placement Counseling

Primary Day understands the importance of finding the right school fit for every child.

“Our Head of School and Next School Placement Team personally meet with Second Grade parents to help with the transition to Third Grade.”

We know each child and the regional school landscape and use that knowledge to help guide each family as they determine the school their child will attend following Primary Day. We provide guidance and information during every stage of the decision-making process.

What schools do children attend after they graduate from Primary Day?

Most of our 2024 graduates were accepted into their first choice school. Over the past five years our graduates have gone on to attend Third Grade at the following schools (**those in bold have had more than five students attend in the past five years**):

- Bullis School
- Georgetown Day School
- **Holton-Arms School**
- Landon School
- Maret School
- McLean School
- Milton Gottesman Jewish Day School
- **Montgomery County Public Schools**
- Norwood School
- Potomac School
- St. Andrew's Episcopal Day School
- St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School
- St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School
- Sheridan School
- **Sidwell Friends School**
- **Stone Ridge School**
- Washington Episcopal School
- Woods Academy



curiosity



Ready to Apply? Start the admission process today.



Learn more about our After School & Enrichment classes.



Questions? Contact our team.
301.365.4355
admission@theprimarydayschool.org

The Primary Day School offers an education of the highest quality to children from Pre-Kindergarten through Second Grade. Admission is based on a number of criteria, including school readiness, maturity, and recommendations from teachers. Assessments during required school visits are another important part of the admission process.

We encourage applications from families from a wide range of backgrounds, and we are committed to admitting qualified applicants without regard to race, ethnicity, religious background, or national origin. Financial Aid is available for families with demonstrated need.

Applications for fall admission are due in late January. Children applying for Pre-Kindergarten must turn four years of age by September 1 of the year they seek to enter.