

**BUCKINGHAM BROWNE & NICHOLS
LOWER SCHOOL**



**CURRICULUM OVERVIEW
GRADE TWO
2026-2027**

Grade Two Teachers

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*** Includes Language Arts, Mathematics and Social Studies instruction**

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GRADE TWO CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Language Arts

Second grade reading instruction focuses on phonics, fluency, expression, comprehension, and vocabulary development. Second grade writers work towards writing organized, thoughtful pieces strengthened by the revision and editing process. In addition, the Foundations program is used to support phonics, phonological/phonemic awareness and word study.

In Second Grade:

- Children respond to text through whole and small group discussions, writing activities, illustration and dramatization.
- Every day children read material of their choice at their reading levels.
- Teachers read aloud for pleasure, discussion and to expose students to a variety of authors and literary genres.
- Literature focuses on exploring plot, character, setting and theme through a wide variety of books and genres.
- Children experience many forms of writing, through science journals, teacher/child journals, factual social studies writing, short stories and contributions to class books.
- Literature is selected to provide a model for many writing projects, in which students recognize patterns of literature in their reading, then experiment with these patterns in their writing.
- Children participate in the writing process in which they plan, draft, edit, revise, and publish.
- Students review and are introduced to a variety of language and grammar skills including syllable types, parts of speech, plurals, capitalization, punctuation, compound words and prefixes.
- Children gain proficiency in decoding and encoding common sounds, blends and spellings.
- Spelling strategies and vocabulary are integrated through writing activities, with attention to words that appear frequently in children's writing.
- Children review letter formation.
- Evaluation and assessments occur regularly.

Academic Support Services

A reading/language arts specialist works with the second grade team to plan consistent, interconnected lessons and to provide additional support for children who are in need of further help in developing reading and language arts skills.

Social Studies

“Ourselves and Our Work”

Students will begin the year with an exploration of self-identity. Building on this knowledge, students will then expand their view to incorporate the world beyond themselves, studying how the communities of which they are a part (family, classroom, school, world) organize themselves around the concept of work.

Work affects our lives in many ways. Because of this, learning about how work shapes our world and our relationships to others is key to understanding our environment and aids us in our ability to see the world through another’s eyes. Understanding the perspectives of different workers helps us to think critically about social issues, media images, and our own role in society.

This year-long curricular study will help students look through the eyes of different groups of workers both from the present as well as the past. We will start with our students’ own notions and understandings about work and then expand beyond themselves to local, global, and historical examples.

Mathematics

At BB&N we believe that math should be joyful and engaging. Our program grows children’s fluency with numbers and is rich in numbers-based experiences. We provide opportunities at every level for students to engage in mathematical explorations, to reason mathematically, and to express their ideas. We strive to strike a balance between larger conceptual understandings and specific skills and procedural fluency. We believe that all of our students can and will learn math.

Second grade is about the extension and consolidation of addition, subtraction, and place value. Using the physical and visual models introduced in first grade, students solve more complex problems with bigger numbers with an emphasis on explaining and showing their thinking. The concept of multiplication is introduced through skip counting and equal grouping. Students continue their study of measurement working with standard units and refining their precision. Finally, students begin developing their understanding of fractions as fair shares, developing initial understandings of equivalent fractions, comparing fractions, and creating different models of fractional parts.

Second grade uses high quality, research based resources including the *Bridges in Mathematics* curriculum. Classes are co-taught by the homeroom teacher and a math specialist using a hands-on approach in whole group investigations, small group activities, and individual practice.

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Mathematics (continued)

In second grade students will:

- Subtract fluently within 20
- Use efficient mental math strategies to solve multi-digit addition and subtraction problems
- Build and break apart three and four digit numbers by place value
- Solve multi-step addition and subtraction problems in context
- Represent and solve multi-digit addition and subtraction problems using equations
- Measure and estimate lengths with standard units (inches, feet, yards)
- Tell time to the nearest minute
- Represent a given amount using coins
- Count fluently from any starting number by 1s, 2s, 3s, 5s, and 10s
- Compose and decompose two dimensional shapes
- Understand that a fraction ($\frac{1}{b}$) is one part of a whole partitioned into b equal parts

Science

Students use a hands-on inquiry-based program to study science. This approach allows them to develop and use process skills in order to gain a body of scientific knowledge. Listed below are the units of study and highlights of the content and skills covered:

Water and its Cycle

- Discover how many drops of water fit on a penny to appreciate the attractive nature of water.
- Design and conduct evaporation experiments.
- Observe a mini water cycle and become familiar with the terms evaporation, condensation, and precipitation.

Trees Through the Seasons

- Visit trees in Longfellow Park four times during the school year and observe their seasonal changes.

Bulbs

- Observe and measure the growth of paper white narcissus bulbs.

Magnets

- Test various classroom items to discover which materials are magnetic.
- Use bar magnets to discover the forces of attraction and repulsion.
- Discover which is stronger, the poles or the middle of the magnet.
- Make compasses using a magnet, piece of cork, pin and a bucket of water.
- Build a maglev train out of a piece of Styrofoam and magnets that float over a magnetic train track

Science (continued)

Snow and Ice

- Use a Celsius thermometer.
- Study the effect of salt on the melting point of ice.
- Apply the above information to make ice cream.

Insects

- Observe the life cycle of painted lady and monarch butterflies.
- Learn about the physical characteristics of insects.

Eggs and Chicks

- Study the development of chicks from fertilized eggs.
- Observe chicks during the first week and one-half of life.

Lower School World Languages

Our goal is to help students to build a foundation for future language learning and to be prepared to communicate as global citizens of an interconnected world. To do this, we want to highlight and embrace student identities and provide an environment where they are comfortable taking risks and applying a growth mindset to language learning.

The Lower School World Language Department uses an approach to teaching languages that focuses on proficiency and communication in an engaging and low stress environment. Teaching with comprehensible input prioritizes the delivery of understandable messages that are personalized, meaningful, interesting and relevant to our students. The goal of our classes is for students to acquire Spanish or French through communication and active participation. When age appropriate, we aim to spend at least 90% of our classes in the target language focusing on listening and reading to provide input (as opposed to formal vocabulary and grammar instruction).

We also strive to provide opportunities to explore other cultures and to do interdisciplinary work that allows students to connect and expand upon what they are learning in other places.

Spanish

Second Graders explore Spanish twice a week for 45 minutes each. The class is divided in half groups, which allows for active participation in class. Second Graders continue to build upon the program from first grade and students are encouraged to communicate in Spanish as much as possible, but it is not a requirement since our program acknowledges that students acquire new languages at different levels/rates. The teacher doesn't focus on error correction at this level since making mistakes is an essential part of acquiring a language. However, the teacher does model the correct use of the language without focusing explicitly on grammar.

Lower School World Languages (continued)

Much of our work is story-based, utilizing both student- and teacher-created content that targets high frequency structures and words that are personalized, compelling, and repetitive by design. Classwork is focused around these stories and is varied, including combinations of reading, writing, acting games, movement, story listening, and drawing in order to increase students' exposure to and use of the Spanish language. Students also spend time every class discussing the date, the weather, personal interests, and daily activities. Second Graders engage and write and discuss exercises based on stories done in class. These activities are kept in the notebook that they will continue using in third grade.

The BB&N World Language Program from Beginners through Second Grade follows what is known as a spiral model, where students explore many of the same topics year after year but with different challenges at each grade level that build upon the skills learned in the previous years.

Music

Second graders attend music class twice weekly, in both half and whole-class groups. Music activities center on the children's experience of music through singing, moving, listening, and playing instruments. Second graders become more familiar with the composition process, and work on a variety of group projects to interpret and create their own sound pieces. The overall objective is for students to use a variety of tools to communicate music made by self and others.

Rhythm:

- Demonstrate and label half note, whole note, quarter and eighth notes as well as rests
- Recognize time signature (2, 3, 4)
- Experience body percussion

Melody:

- Demonstrate contour
- Demonstrate proper vocal technique
- Improvise and compose original melodies on pitched instruments
- Read and write B-A-G melodies on the recorder

Harmony:

- Develop proper mallet technique
- Demonstrate ostinato and simple bordun chords
- Experience major/minor
- Sing songs in round form

Form:

- Demonstrate phrase
- Identify Coda, repeats, ABC, Rondo, Variations, and Call-and-Response
- Identify bar line/double bar/measure

Music (continued)

Timbre:

- Identify instrument families in the orchestra
- Become familiar with a diverse range of instruments from around the world
- Work in groups to create original compositions that blend sound, rhythm, and style in relation to specific contextual frameworks

Integrated Arts

The goal of integrated arts in second grade is to help students develop an appreciation of different materials and to begin thinking, seeing and working both two-dimensionally and three-dimensionally. Students will explore big ideas about imagination, identity, living in a community and connections between children across the world.

Students will develop skill in:

- Developing a creative approach to design by generating many visual images for each project.
- Problem solving simple functional design challenges.
- Engaging in the artistic process of following a visual image from an idea to a working drawing, getting feedback and creating a finished project.
- Basic woodworking hand tool safely.

Essential Questions We Explore Include:

- What role does artwork play in a culture?
- How do artists tell stories through their work?
- How do artists make a difference in their world?
- How do artists advocate for what they believe in?

Key Content:

- Elements of Art
- Color mixing with primary and warm and cool color families
- Three dimensional design and engineering
- Symbolism in simple imagery and icons
- Self portraiture from observation
- Empathy for others in communities near and far

Integrated Arts acts as a platform for collaboration across disciplines. This collaboration helps students see the connectivity between subjects and the interconnectivity of our world. These interdisciplinary connections emerge over the course of our studies, as students explore key questions and ideas through art-making. Our final products will vary from year to year based on the questions and curiosities of our students.

Information Science/Library

Students visit the library for information science, book selection, storytelling, and book talks.

Topics covered include:

- Locating fiction and picture books by using the visual online catalog.
- Locating nonfiction by using a given Dewey call number.
- Practice locating fiction by author's last name.
- Checking out books independently.
- Evaluating a book for ease or difficulty.
- Using an encyclopedia (book and online).
- Using a table of contents and index to locate material in a book.
- Sharing thoughts and opinions about books and recommending to others.
- Using the school library website.
- Using a teacher selected website.

Technology

At the BB&N Lower School, it is our intention to integrate technology into the classroom in meaningful ways, and our goal is to teach students the skills necessary to be successful throughout the school year as well as to prepare them for future years. Through technological integration we give our students an introduction to word processing, spreadsheets and graphing, presentation software, three-dimensional design, internet safety and digital citizenship, online research, robotics, and programming. Our teachers create academic environments that facilitate student creativity, innovation, communication, and collaboration with others, while developing students into critical thinkers, problem solvers, and decision makers.

Health and Physical Education

Program Approach

The Grades 2–6 curriculum is part of a coherent Health program that extends from Grades 2–10. Across the Lower School grades described here, Health and Physical Education are connected parts of students' learning about wellbeing. The scope and sequence is informed by the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Framework. Health instruction builds knowledge and skills related to self-awareness, emotional regulation, relationships, decision-making, personal safety, and care for the body. Physical Education—and, beginning in Grade 6, the athletics program—provides authentic opportunities to apply many of these skills through movement, teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and navigating challenge. Grades 2–5 participate in a Health/PE rotation, while Grade 6 Health continues alongside the athletics program. Across Grades 2–6, Health is taught in half groups by Health and PE faculty, creating more room for discussion, participation, and support. PE and athletics provide ongoing opportunities to reinforce relevant skills and habits. This

Health and Physical Education (continued)

design recognizes that learning is strengthened when ideas are introduced explicitly, practiced in more than one setting, and reinforced through shared language. Across the grade span, the curriculum gradually asks students to move from noticing and naming with adult support, to selecting and practicing strategies, to considering more complex situations and communicating their thinking.

Health

Grade 2 Health introduces foundational skills for recognizing needs, communicating with others, making safe choices, and seeking support. Students practice noticing and naming what they experience and trying simple strategies with adult guidance.

Physical Education

- **Movement exploration:** Explore how the body moves through animal imitations, movement to music, sport movements, and changes in shape, level, direction, force, and time.
- **Manipulative skills:** Develop hand-eye coordination by tossing, throwing, and catching beanbags, yarn balls, playground balls, soft baseballs, and wiffle balls.
- **Locomotor skills:** Continue developing skipping, galloping, sliding, jumping, and hopping through jump ropes, hula hoops, and specific movement patterns. Students also practice kicking, passing, shooting, dribbling, punting, and introductory goalkeeping skills.
- **Non-locomotor skills:** Develop balance, body control, and stability throughout the gymnastics unit.
- **Rhythmic activities:** Participate in square dancing, aerobics, exercise to music, and creative movement using a variety of musical styles.
- **Gymnastics:** Practice forward and backward rolls, cartwheels, balance stunts, animal walks, beam work, vaulting, ropes, and the cargo net.
- **Group games:** Practice following directions, playing by the rules, working toward a shared objective, and applying movement skills within active games.
- **Team-sport lead-up games:** Develop skills and concepts through soccer, basketball, kickball and T-ball, wiffle ball, Newcomb as a lead-up to volleyball, and pilo polo as a lead-up to floor hockey.
- **Mindfulness:** Use brief breathing and mindfulness practices to pause, settle, and refocus.

Responsive Classroom

Responsive Classroom is a school wide program that promotes character development, interpersonal relationships and responsibility to the broader school community. In Second Grade, we focus on the following skills.

- Become a more active participant in morning meeting, supporting others' turn to speak and speaking assertively and respectfully in morning meetings.
- Show caring and concern for peers through words and actions. Develop an understanding of how to create class rules and why community members try to follow rules that are set.
- Continue to work on making positive academic and social decisions.
- Be inclusive and flexible.
- Practice positive self-control.

Homework

Children will read at least 15-20 minutes a night. Teachers may also provide optional, supplemental resources.

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