HAWKEN: SCHOOL REDEFINED.
Get ready to do school differently.

Lower School
Grades 1 – 5
Forward-focused preparation for the real world through the development of character and intellect
“The main purpose for which the school exists is the development of character.”

James A. Hawken, Founder
At Hawken’s Lower School, we not only teach children to be great students, we teach them to be great people.

We believe that laying the groundwork for your child to live a happy, meaningful life requires not just mastery of skills and knowledge, but character traits like curiosity, honesty, initiative, confidence, and resilience. That’s why Hawken School has been deeply committed to developing both character and intellect from its earliest days.

Our century-old motto of “Fair Play” permeates all that we do. It helps guide the thinking, speaking, and actions of every member of our community and creates responsible, empathetic citizens.

Why Hawken?
We were founded to be different.

“Instilling in students the skills they need to become successful adults is a top priority at Hawken. But we believe that who students become is just as important as what they become. We intentionally create our innovative programming and our community culture of inclusiveness in ways that inspire our students to go out and be good people who do good things in the world.”

D. Scott Looney, Head of School
"I am fortunate to teach children in a community where our first and most important priority is to build authentic, meaningful relationships with our students. These relationships are the foundation on which our students’ learning — academically, socially, and emotionally — are built, so we take this charge quite seriously."

Jenn Harrison, Interim Assistant Director of the Lower School
In Lower School, the day begins with Morning Meeting, a dedicated time to come together as a community to celebrate one another and to offer everyone the opportunity to feel a sense of belonging, significance, and safety. It is a microcosm of how we hope the entire day unfolds for every child. Once Morning Meeting is concluded, students continue their day with a variety of learning opportunities, including core blocks of classroom time for instruction in literacy, mathematics, science and humanities, special area classes, outdoor explorations, and project time. The day ends with Closing Meeting, a time to reflect on the day, share thoughts and feelings of gratitude, and look forward to the next day together.

**Igniting the intellect**

Because a solid academic foundation is essential to intellectual development, our program focuses on fundamental academic skills with an increasing emphasis on personal responsibility. Using a child-centered approach, we emphasize collaboration, adaptability, and creativity in our approaches. We strive to personalize learning by offering a variety of choices in both core disciplines and special areas. All of this builds your child’s confidence in his or her ability to solve problems and master academic pursuits.

You don’t want just to look something up on the internet. You want to actually learn things. That’s what happens at Hawken.”

First Grade Student
“The teachers make classes fun—like math class. We learn a new math skill and then we play a game with it so that you have to think about the math you’re using.”
Fifth Grade Student

**Language Arts**
Through our language arts program, your child will learn what it takes to become a fluid, articulate writer and an independent, critical reader. We teach writing and reading as tools for effective communication, research, and analysis as well as a vehicle for lifelong enjoyment and enlightenment.

**Mathematics**
Students are empowered through Hawken’s mathematics program, which emphasizes the development of core skills and their application to solve problems. Cooperative learning, discussion, written explanations, and hands-on activities are designed to target individual learning styles to improve comprehension and retention.

**Science**
Children experience the joys of inquiry, discovery, investigation, and analysis as they are immersed in constructing tools and models, using scientific equipment, manipulating objects and substances, and observing natural phenomena. Your child will develop a better understanding of our world and have fun exploring and discovering.

**Social Studies**
Hawken’s social studies program opens children’s eyes to various perspectives and to the interdependence of communities, states, and nations through studying the world around them. They come to understand what it means to be a responsible citizen and become empowered to make a difference.
World Language
The introduction to world languages at an early age teaches children to think beyond themselves and to navigate a multicultural society. Starting in kindergarten, students take both Spanish and Chinese.

The Arts
We believe that experience in the universal language of the visual and performing arts provides an outlet for creativity and self-expression while also building confidence. Your child will come to see how participation in the arts not only enriches their lives, but transcends geographic borders, stereotypes, and barriers.

Human Performance (Physical Education)
Foundational motor skills established through our elementary physical education and aquatics program enhance social, cognitive, and physical development while instilling positive attitudes toward physical activity, safety, and wellness. Your child’s water safety skills will also be developed and strengthened through our swimming program.

Technology
While technology is essential in today’s world, we use it intentionally to appropriately enhance your child’s education. Students starting in third grade have access to tablets in a 1:1 capacity.

“At parent-teacher conferences, we clearly saw how sincerely our son’s teachers cared about him and his potential. We’ve appreciated when a teacher has said, ‘I’ve worked with your child, I understand your child, and I know that he can do more.’ The sincerity comes through.”
Grady Burrows, Parent

For more information about Hawken’s Lower School curriculum, visit hawken.edu/LowerSchool.
A day in the life - Lower School

“Teachers are kind and nice, but they also expect a lot from us. I’m really glad I’m here because if I need help on something, I’ll get the help I need.”

Fifth Grade Student

Morning Meeting
- Specials:
  - World Language
  - Science
  - Library/Technology
  - Art
  - Music
  - Human Performance

Core:
- Mathematics
- Numbers & Operations
- Measurement & Data
- Geometry
- Probability
- Algebraic Thinking
- Language Arts
- Literature
- Vocabulary
- Reading
- Spelling
- Writing
- Handwriting

Project-Based Learning:
- Social Studies
- Application/Integration/Collaboration/Reflection

Closing Meeting

Nestled in the daily rotating schedule are moments for movement, including snack and recess.

Students participate in two Specials each day.
Beyond the school day

At Hawken, the school day begins at 8:00 am and ends at 3:00 pm. We also offer options to extend your day. The Passport Program offers intramural athletics and enrichment classes in science, movement, visual and dramatic arts, language and culture, and music.

- **Before and After Care** is offered Monday through Friday from 7:00 am until the beginning of the school day, and from 3:00 to 6:00 pm each afternoon. Families may sign up for this care when needed and are billed monthly for the use of this extended day support.

- Through our **Passport Program**, we offer students the opportunity to participate in enrichment classes. These classes are offered in the hours immediately following the normal school day and are taught by Hawken faculty and professionals from the community.

For more information on Before and After School Options, visit [hawken.edu/BeforeAfterSchool](http://hawken.edu/BeforeAfterSchool)
As students move into the Lower School, they are given daily opportunities to give voice to what they are learning and choice in how they represent their learning to others. This can be seen within the various projects that emerge from the topics introduced in curricular studies as well as student-selected topics of study. The most recent addition to expanding opportunities for personalization is Spark Day, which occurs every Friday for grades K-5. On these days, students step away from their regular weekly schedules to plan assemblies, develop activities with ‘buddies’ from other grade levels, and choose from a large variety of afternoon classes that are not part of their regular school schedule. These offerings are an invitation to spark a new interest or passion at a time when children begin to develop an understanding of themselves as unique individuals with abilities to change the world.

**Personalized assessments**

Hawken’s nationally recognized Developmental Continuum is our primary student assessment tool. A personal portfolio highlighting your child’s academic and social experience, this electronic document represents a collection of work over an extended period of time and fills the role traditionally taken by school report cards.

The Continuum reflects our child-centered approach by honoring the fact that children learn in different ways and at different rates. As teachers share what your child looks like as a learner through a sequence of benchmarks and anecdotal observations, the partnership between home and school is strengthened. Hawken’s Continuum equips parents with the knowledge and tools needed to support their child’s academic and social growth.

“The Developmental Continuum helps me see beyond fourth grade and to really honor where a child is in her or his growth and development. It’s a tool that can help me set goals as I determine next steps for a child’s learning in all domains.”

Julie O’Neil, 4th Grade Teacher
At the beginning of the year, the students in our class made signs with words for how we wanted to feel in our classrooms. The groups chose joyful, hardworking, and adventurous. We hung them and kept them all year long. And that’s how the class was.”
Third Grade Student

A nurturing community

Hawken teachers create a physically and emotionally safe environment that sets the tone for instilling curiosity, self worth, and a positive attitude toward learning.

Because children learn best when they feel known and valued, we highlight the importance of belonging. With an emphasis on routine and responsibility, students learn how to use respectful language and to appreciate differences. Leading assemblies, sharing in Morning Meeting, or participating in service learning opportunities imparts a sense of relevance, responsibility, pride, and empowerment in children.

From greeting every classmate by name each day to receiving a hug or handshake from the teacher at the end of the day, students understand that they are members of a warm and inclusive community.

In Lower School, teachers are trained through Responsive Classroom, an approach to teaching and learning that places equal value on social skills and academic skills. According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), a leading organization in the field of education, social and emotional learning is “the process through which children acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.” Through Responsive Classroom training, teachers are given a variety of strategies to weave the teaching of primary social skills into their academic day. These skills include cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-regulation.
As the parent of a Hawken student, you will become part of a warm, friendly school environment filled with others who have chosen Hawken because of our mission and ethos.

Just as there is not a typical Hawken student, there is not a typical Hawken parent. As one mother put it, “There’s a place for everyone here. Parents get to be who we are, too.” Hawken parents find it easy and helpful to form and foster connections with other families in this supportive community.

For more information on the parent community at Hawken visit hawken.edu/Parents

“A community for families

“Hawken is a welcoming community. Throughout the year, the Parents’ Association works to provide opportunities to bring everyone together, from new families to faculty to alumni. Ask any student, parent, alumnus/a or member and they will share a story of what it means to be a part of this unique place.”

Holly Wiertel
Parents’ Association President
“As a working mom, if I can’t be at a particular event, I know that another parent will send a picture. I’ll be in a meeting and the text will come through. I’ve always felt that when you come into Hawken, you’re part of a family. That’s the rapport we have without ever asking for it. That’s invaluable.”

Hawken Parent
Hawken’s Commitment to Diversity

“Hawken School’s steadfast commitment to diversity in all of its forms is rooted in our mission of ‘forward-focused preparation for the real world through the development of character and intellect.’ We honor the dignity of every human being, and we respect and value differences including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, political and social values, culture, religion, and physical ability. We believe that this commitment to diversity, equity, and social justice is vital to the realization and cultivation of character and intellect in our students.”

Excerpt from Hawken School Diversity Statement
"My personal philosophy is that if we are mindful of our pedagogy, challenging ourselves to be inclusive and ensuring that the most marginalized or underrepresented among us feel like they are a member and not a guest in the community, that helps everyone."

Darnell Epps, Director of Fair Play

Hawken School’s original rule book from 1915 consisted of two words: Fair Play. Today, you will still find Fair Play signs on the walls of all Hawken classrooms – a reminder of our school’s emphasis on the importance of character. The concept remains at the core of our community’s collective consciousness, and it helps to inform our programming and our culture.

Hawken’s mission calls upon us to periodically examine the meaning of Fair Play through a new lens – the feminist movement and the civil rights movement being perhaps the most notable historical examples. Today, we find ourselves at a similar pivotal point in our story as we prepare our students for an increasingly complex, global world. That’s why “Deepening Fair Play: Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice” is a strategic priority at Hawken. Through our developing DEIJ programming, students are encouraged to learn from the stories and life experiences of others, build empathy, and create a culture of belonging and inclusiveness.

Lower School Highlights:
Hawken teachers aim to create a diverse curriculum that enables students to see and learn about life experiences different from their own while also providing opportunities to see themselves reflected.

The Lower School offers voluntary Affinity Groups for students who identify as persons of color in grades K/1, 2/3, and 4/5. The goal of this program is to provide safe, elective spaces for students to do identity development work in community with other students and faculty who share their experiences and understand their unique needs, questions, and sensitivities.

“What is fun about Affinity Groups is I get to be with other kids from other classes. It’s very fun and we get to learn new stuff.”

Hawken Student

“I like this box we made for our Affinity Groups because there’s a lot of crafting and creativity. We got to put things in the box that people don’t know about us and then shared it with each other.”

Hawken Student
At Hawken, we put children at the center of learning. Through developmentally appropriate activities, students learn to manage time and to think both critically and creatively. Teachers create a supportive atmosphere where students feel comfortable making choices and taking intellectual risks. As a result, students come to understand that there is more than one way to come to a solution.

Your child will learn to explore, ask questions, investigate, and share knowledge. Varied teaching methods ensure that students with different approaches to learning are supported and challenged. The result of this approach is a deeper, more genuine learning experience.

“We are fortunate to have multiple spaces to engage students with their natural world including outdoor classrooms, multiple playgrounds, and Poutasse Woods located on the Lyndhurst campus. The woods are an important part of a student’s journey through Lower School, as students from Early Childhood through grade 5 enjoy and learn in this beautiful natural space that includes the woods, creek, and meadow.”

Mary Beth Hilborn, Interim Co-Director of the Lower School
Community at Hawken can be seen in the way the students take care of each other, show respect and kindness to the adults in the school, and work together to take care of the school. Throughout our time at the Gries Center or at various locations in the area doing community service, our students develop a very strong bond not only within the Hawken community, but with Cleveland as well.

Steve Totte, 3rd Grade Teacher

Real world engagement

Real life learning and service opportunities are imbedded throughout the curriculum and are thoughtfully introduced in age-appropriate activities to make learning relevant, meaningful, and fun. Teachers and students travel to destinations throughout Cleveland, including the Sally & Bob Gries Center for Experiential and Service Learning, Hawken’s urban extension in University Circle. Here they might experience a sensory exploration of the neighborhood, a hands-on unit about archeology and prehistoric people at the nearby Natural History Museum, or an interdisciplinary study of the arts and architecture of Ancient Greece and Rome at the Cleveland Museum of Art. These introductions to the local community support the deepening relationship students will develop with Cleveland’s community and cultural organizations in future years.

“We went to Lake Farmpark and learned about animals. We went to the Holden Arboretum and learned about woods. I learn more when I’m outside doing things.”

First Grade Student

For more information on Hawken’s Gries Center in University Circle, visit hawken.edu/GriesCenter
"Lower School assemblies elevate the ordinary to the extraordinary. Students gain confidence as they realize their ability to lead the entire school. Public speaking skills take center stage as students provide an update to other students and faculty alike about recent projects and special events from their class. Dancers, musicians, and artists take advantage of opportunities to be the 'performer of the week' to hone their performance skills. Students leave the assembly feeling connected, energized, and excited for the day ahead."

Bryan Wamsley, Coordinator of Educational Technology for the Lower School
Lyndhurst’s Goldberg Innovation Lab

Because play is such an important part of growth and development, “making” projects that involve playing, tinkering, designing, and creating begin at a young age. This newly opened facility, utilized by all students in grades preschool through grade 8, features distinctive learning spaces outfitted with flexible furniture and organized for access to tools and creative materials based on student readiness. Teachers collaborate with Innovation Lab faculty to design age-appropriate, project-based lessons in design, architecture, coding, 3-D design and printing, engineering, constructionism, electronics, and more to promote student engagement and growth.
All Lower School students will experience the Innovation Lab throughout their school year. Teachers may design a focused module, offer opportunities for project enhancements or extensions, or regularly connect to maker and invention skills and curriculum within content classes such as science. Examples may include the “Nerdy Derby” car build and race, “Light It Up Art,” Kindergarten quilt making, habitat design and construction for the First Grade World Of Wildlife Unit, “Breakerspace,” and specialized SPARK Day or Passport class options. As students grow through the Lower School, appropriate tools are introduced and taught, including woodshop tools, laser cutters, and soldering irons.

For more information on the Innovation Lab, visit hawken.edu/InnovationLab

“Our Innovation Lab is a beautiful physical space that puts students at the center of their learning, encouraging choice of tools and materials they wish to use, even rearranging the entire room to fit their needs. Our expert lab faculty, open-space format, and “make-ready” organization of the space promote rapid ideation, prototyping, student access, and hundreds of creative projects each year.”

Anna Delia, Director of the Innovation Lab
Students advance from Hawken’s Lower School to Middle School through our Moving Up Ceremony. They soon realize that the groundwork laid in the Lower School has more than adequately prepared them for their Middle School experience, allowing them to branch out and explore their personal academic interests.

With established habits and a strong academic base, students feel comfortable and self-assured as they enter another stage of life alongside peers who will become lifelong friends.

For more information about Hawken’s Middle School, visit hawken.edu/MiddleSchool
at a glance

Established 1915
Founded by James A. Hawken

Lyndhurst Campus
Toddler – Grade 8
680 students

Faculty with advanced degrees
80%

$10.7 million
Flexible Tuition
the largest financial aid budget in the state of Ohio

95 National Merit Recognition over past 10 years

Students K-12 receiving financial aid
45%

All figures as of July, 2021.

Hawken students are more than twice as likely to get into top national university and liberal arts colleges.

Students of Color 33%

Transportation available in 20+ communities

High School Grades 9-12 580 students

All-School Student Body 1,260
Coed, Toddler–Grade 12

HAWKEN SCHOOL
Best Private High School in Ohio

HAWKEN SCHOOL
Best Private K - 12 in Ohio
Visit us!

The best way to get to know Hawken is to visit.

For more information, please contact us at 440.423.2950 or visit www.hawken.edu

We look forward to welcoming you.

“There's fun things to do and I like making new friends.”

Second Grade Student

Hawken School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, or sexual orientation in the administration of its admission policies or Flexible Tuition.

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