Education at SHS

Our Curriculum

working together achieving together

SACRED HEART PRIMARY SCHOOL

At Sacred Heart School we offer a wide range of subjects to give every child a balanced education. Core subjects are English, Dutch, Math, Social Studies, Citizenship, and Science. Children also take part in Arts, Music, and Physical Education, and we encourage them to develop healthy habits every day. Although Saba is part of the Caribbean Netherlands, English is the primary language of instruction at SHS. Dutch is taught as a separate subject.

In Kindergarten (K1–K2) the focus is on learning through play. This helps children grow in their social and emotional skills, their motor skills, and their early language development. Play-based learning gives them a safe start and builds the foundation for later learning.

From Grades 1–6, the program becomes more structured. Children learn through themes and teachers adjust the lessons to meet each child's level. Sometimes this means extra help for those who need it, and sometimes it means extra challenges for children who are ready to move ahead. Differentiation happens through small group lessons, flexible grouping, and extra materials.

This year we are making even better use of our subject teachers. Not only for Arts, Music, and PE, but also for other main subjects. Because of careful planning, teachers can now split the class into smaller groups more often. This gives children the chance to learn in small instruction groups, which means more personal attention and support.

An important part of our program is Citizenship Education. Children learn about respect, responsibility, cooperation, and how to take part in their community. We link this to real experiences, the culture and history of Saba, and the wider Caribbean, so that children grow into active and caring citizens.

Our entire approach is guided by Conscious Discipline, a framework that supports both social-emotional learning and positive behavior. It helps children develop self-control, build healthy relationships, and create a safe and supportive classroom environment where everyone can learn and grow.

This school year we also started using new books and materials for Math, Language, Science, and Social Studies. These come from the Caribbean Primary Curriculum and are fully aligned with the CPEA and CXC standards. This means our students learn within a program that fits both international quality and the Caribbean context in which they live.

Kindergarten (K1–K2)

- Focus on learning through play, with theme-based education
- Development of social-emotional skills, motor skills, and early language
- A safe and playful start that builds the foundation for future learning

Grades 1–6

- Structured program (using new methods) with room for thematic learning
- Teachers adapt lessons to each child's needs (differentiation)
- Differentiation takes place through:
    - Small group lessons

    - Flexible grouping
    - Extra learning materials
- **Extra differentiation this year**:
    - Subject teachers not only teach Arts, Music, and PE, but also support core subjects in small groups
    - Careful scheduling makes it possible to split classes more often
    - More personal attention for students in small instruction groups

Citizenship Education

Children learn about respect, responsibility, cooperation, and active citizenship through a combination of daily school practices, structured lessons, and school-wide activities, including:

- **Conscious Discipline**, supporting social-emotional development, mutual respect, responsibility, and positive relationships.
- **Inspiration from the parish priest**, encouraging children to reflect on *being the best version of themselves* and showing care and respect for others.
- **Participation in school and community life**, through projects and lessons developed in cooperation with partners such as Sea & Learn, Public Health, and the Public Entity Saba. Examples include:
    - Healthy Week
    - Democracy and democratic values
    - Saba's Nature and Environment (Sea & Learn)
- **Culture, history, and heritage**, integrated into history lessons, arts and crafts, and other learning activities that highlight Saba's unique heritage and its connection to the wider Caribbean.

Developing a School-Wide Approach to Citizenship Education

In addition to our existing teaching methods, particularly Social Studies and Science, Sacred Heart School is currently developing a more structured and coherent school-wide approach to citizenship education.

As part of this development, we are identifying common citizenship themes that can be addressed across different grade levels during the same period. Each grade will explore these themes at an age-appropriate level, linked to relevant SLO learning objectives and the existing curriculum.

This approach will create a clear progression throughout the school, strengthen connections between subjects, and provide opportunities for shared projects, activities, and community involvement. Our aim is to ensure that citizenship education is not limited to individual lessons or occasional activities, but becomes a recognizable, continuous, and meaningful part of school life. Through this approach, Sacred Heart School aims to help children grow into active, responsible, respectful, and caring citizens, who understand their role within the school, the Saba community, and the wider world.

New Methods and Materials (2025–2026)

- Introduced for Math, Language, Science, Social Studies and Handwriting
- Aligned with CXC CPEA standards
- Combines international quality with the Caribbean context

Our ‘new’ Kindergarten

Starting last school year, we now work with two mixed Kindergarten groups. Children from Kindergarten 1 and 2 are placed together in the same class, Kindergarten Star and Diamond.

This approach allows us to provide education more closely tailored to each child’s level. It also gives us the flexibility to distribute students across the two groups based on their needs and what best fits the group as a whole.

Transition from Daycare (Absolute Childcare) to School

In cooperation with Absolute Childcare, we ensure a warm transition for new students. This means that we discuss each child's development and support needs before they officially start school, so that we can support them well right from the beginning.

Children are welcome to join us on Monday after their fourth birthday. In the two weeks prior to that, a few introductory mornings are scheduled to help them get used to their new class. Any transfer of personal or educational information takes place with the consent of parents.