The Putney School

EST. 1935 | PUTNEYSCHOOL.ORG | PUTNEY, VT



VIEWBOOK AND CURRICULUM GUIDE MADE BY *Students*

THIS GUIDE WAS MADE BY STUDENTS, FOR STUDENTS.

It's built around Putney's **Fundamental Beliefs** and the idea that everything here is part of the curriculum, not just what happens in the classroom.

We wanted to give you a real feel for life at Putney: the people, the work, the creativity, and what it's actually like to find your place here. There's a lot packed into these pages, and we're proud of what we put together.

We hope you love it, and we hope we'll see you on campus soon.

ABBY '26, ROOT '27, ISABEL '28, EMMA '29

Welcome to Putney

05 ACADEMICS
16 ARTS
23 WORK
25 PLAY
31 COMMUNITY
37 WORLD OUTLOOK
43 WORKING TOGETHER
51 SUSTAINABILITY
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60 THE NITTY GRITTY

By the Numbers

200
STUDENTS

75%
BOARDING STUDENTS

20+
NATIONS REPRESENTED ON CAMPUS



A NOTE FROM THE

Student Heads of School

Uniquely Putney

600
ACRES WORKING DAIRY FARM

5:1
STUDENT TO COW RATIO



There's a particular kind of morning at Putney where you're walking to the barn at 5:30, and the hills are still doing that thing where they look painted on, and you realize the school has barely changed shape since 1935. Carmelita Hinton founded it that year with ideas about how people should live and learn that were, frankly, a bit strange for the time. Ninety years on, those ideas (which are now our Fundamental Beliefs) still run the place. This guide is built around them, one chapter each, because that's genuinely how Putney is organized. Not on paper. In practice.

Read them cold, and they can sound idealistic. Spend a term here, and they start to look more like a description of an ordinary Tuesday. Morning chores at the barn before it's properly light. A conference block conversation that wanders somewhere you didn't expect. An afternoon on the ski trails. A dorm meeting where the person a few doors down says something that you never knew about them. All of these seemingly unconnected things come together to represent our Fundamental Beliefs. They're all part of the same question: what does it mean to live well, together?

That question is the center of life here. Putney is a community and a school, and the freedom you'll hear about is real. So is everything supporting it. You're expected to show up for work, to make things, to look after the land, and to show up for the people you live alongside. The place runs because everyone holds up their corner of it.

We both remember trying to picture Putney before we got here, and honestly, neither of us got close. If you're the sort of person who finds something in these pages that pulls you in, we'd really like to meet you. A guide can only show you so much. The rest is here for you to discover.

LILLIAN '27 & AMAAN '27

Fundamental Beliefs

The Putney School was founded in 1935 by Carmelita Hinton. She distilled the school's philosophy into nine fundamental beliefs that continue to shape the ethos of our community

TO WORK NOT FOR MARKS, BADGES, OR HONORS, but to discover truth and grow in human understanding and knowledge of the universe, to treasure the hard stretching of oneself, to render service.

TO LEARN TO APPRECIATE AND PARTICIPATE IN THE CREATIVE ARTS, where we give expression to our struggle for communication of our inner lives and for beauty, and to grant these arts great prestige.

TO BELIEVE IN MANUAL LABOR, be glad to do one's share of it and proud of the skills learned in the doing.

TO PLAY JUST AS WHOLE-HEARTEDLY AS ONE WORKS, but watching out a bit for the competitive angle, remembering that play is for recreation and an increased joy in living.

TO WANT TO LEND A HAND TO THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE, not to live in an "ivory tower."

TO COMBAT PREJUDICE AND INJUSTICE WHEREVER IT APPEARS; to strive for a world outlook, putting oneself in others' places, no matter how far away or how remote.

TO HAVE OLD AND YOUNG WORK TOGETHER IN A TRUE COMRADESHIP RELATION, stressing the community and its need for the cooperation of all.

TO STEWARD AND PROTECT THE LAND, to seek ways to live on the earth that are healthy for all beings, and to shape our community as a model of sustainable living.

TO WISH TO LIVE ADVENTUROUSLY THOUGH NOT RECKLESSLY, willing to take risks, if need be, for moral growth, so that one definitely progresses along the long slow road toward achieving a civilization worthy of the name.

SECTION
01

FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF: **TO WORK, NOT FOR MARKS, BADGES, OR HONORS**

8 PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION | 12 SUPPORT |
10 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM

Academics

To work, not for marks, badges, or honors, but to discover truth and grow in human understanding and knowledge of the universe, to treasure the hard stretching of oneself, to render service.

core curriculum



Learning by Doing

At Putney, you are learning all the time: inside and outside, with teachers and fellow students, through your jobs and leadership roles, in independent study, around campfires, and in classrooms.

Here, you are encouraged to pursue your creativity and intellect and discover how your ideas can take shape in the world. With hands-on projects at the center of the experience, you explore your interests, challenge yourself, and develop a deeper understanding of how you learn best.

Your teachers focus on giving you the tools not just to answer questions, but to ask good ones, pursue the answers independently, and share your work and ideas with others. Along the way, you learn how you thrive and how to apply those strengths in everyday life. Whether in the classroom, on the farm, or in the community, you have the freedom to express yourself in meaningful and individual ways.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY:

Educational Programming Committee
Students on the EPC impact what and how we learn. They collaborate with members of faculty and staff to develop curriculum, review proposals for independent study, and make curricular changes.

IN THE CLASSROOM

English: Find your voice in a wide variety of written and spoken forms. Analyze and interpret literature from varied cultural perspectives, debate and discuss topics, and generate your own ideas.

History: Become the historian. Steep yourself in primary sources, construct and deconstruct historical narratives, conduct research, and interpret events for yourself.

Science: Your classes are investigative. Develop your understanding of the essential methods, questions, and content… and then *do* science.

Mathematics: Think mathematically. Develop your conceptual understanding creatively and with precision. Express phenomena in numbers and apply logic to solve problems.

World Languages: Inhabit the language you study. You will learn through speaking, listening, reading, writing, and grow in international understanding.

Our school is a laboratory where students become scientists of their own education.



LEARN MORE about Independent Study on p. 58

Support

Your teachers are mentors and collaborators who guide you along the way and reflect with you at the end. You will find many additional resources in people and places as you develop the skill of managing complex projects, conducting research, and strengthening your writing.

LIBRARY RESOURCES

Designing your own research strategies and making informed decisions about the quality of resources you use are big parts of your studies at Putney. The library supports you with resources that extend well beyond its on-site collection. Just as importantly, it is an inviting space where students gather to study and learn alongside one another.

CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Whether it's structured one on one tutorials or drop in study hours, you can find a variety of learning support right in the center of campus. Using a strength-based approach, the CTL helps you develop the tools, self-awareness, and advocacy skills needed to become a confident and independent learner.

5,000
AUDIO & EBOOKS

24,000
PHYSICAL VOLUMES





ADVISORS

Your advisor helps you discover how to make the independence here work for you. They also help with course and activity selection, and serve as the main conduit of information with your family.

CONFERENCE BLOCKS

This key time is set aside 5 days a week for collaborative student-teacher meetings. You can work on projects, chase a question together, get extra help with class material, and work individually with your teacher nearby.

ASSESSMENT

The way your work is assessed at Putney redefines the relationship you will have with your learning and the quality of conversation you will have with your faculty. You are encouraged to work for yourself and not solely for grades. We use detailed written evaluations to help you identify areas for growth, define meaningful challenges, learn to hold yourself accountable, and take ownership of an education that is your own.

30+

NATIONS REPRESENTED BY STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF

20%

OF STUDENTS FROM OUTSIDE THE U.S.

International Students

Students, faculty, and staff from more than 30 nations are represented at Putney, and roughly 20 percent of students come from outside the United States. The result is an international community shaped by a wide range of languages, perspectives, traditions, and lived experiences.

The International Student Program helps students navigate both the academic and social transition to life at Putney while becoming active members of the community itself. Through orientation programs, advising, ESOL support, cultural events, and student leadership opportunities, students build connections across cultures while developing confidence in and beyond the classroom.

The English for Speakers of Other Languages program supports students in developing the level of English needed for academic work in the United States while encouraging fluency, participation, and self-expression across campus life.



STUDENT *Profile*

NAME
Anna

GRADE
11



FROM
JAKARTA
INDONESIA

FAVORITE ACTIVITIES
SOCCER
BASKETBALL
SKIING
SCULPTURE
CERAMICS

What's your favorite afternoon activity? Mondays and Thursdays, I wake up in such a good mood because I know I'm going to have soccer later that day. I met so many of my friends through soccer, I think I owe soccer my entire life, honestly.

What is the music program like? I've been doing chamber work for evening arts. I used to play in a huge orchestra before I came here, but chamber's different because you only play with a few other people as opposed to a full orchestra. And in chamber I can play whatever I want. Before Putney, we just played what the conductor assigned us, but here I can say, "I want to play this piece by Mozart." So it's very freeing.

Have you discovered any new passions at Putney? My first passion is doing sculpture. I never did any kind of fine art before, but then I took a sculpture class sophomore year, and then junior year I did advanced sculpture and that was so much fun. My second passion would be the barn, which I didn't expect because I grew up in a city. I literally spent all my days in the mall before coming here. So working in the barn, it was like a newfound sense of achievement.

I wake up in such a good mood because I know I'm going to have soccer that day



DAY IN THE LIFE
Anna

	MONDAY
7:15 AM	Breakfast
8:10	Calculus
9:20	Assembly
9:50	Milk Lunch
10:00	Conference Block
10:40	Writing & Research
11:50	Ceramics
12:50 PM	Lunch
1:50	Physics 2
3:30	Study in the library
6:15	Dinner
7:00	Chamber Orchestra
8:45	Back to dorm

Work Job: Lunch Crew chief

Prep for tomorrow's College Planning Seminar

* Don't forget to dry ski pants for Wednesday

SECTION
02

FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF: **TO LEARN TO APPRECIATE AND PARTICIPATE IN THE CREATIVE ARTS**

14 CREATIVE WORK | **16** ARTS | **19** EVENING ARTS

The Arts

To learn to appreciate and participate in the creative arts, where we give expression to our struggle for communication of our inner lives and for beauty, and to grant these arts great prestige.





Creative Work

The arts are woven into daily life at Putney and are central to the school's approach to learning. In your visual and performing arts classes, you learn not only technique and craft, but how to communicate ideas, take creative risks, and develop your voice. You deepen your practice in a specific discipline while building technical skill and creative independence.

Artmaking extends beyond the arts studios.

You might build a stained glass model of a water molecule for chemistry, embroider a geometric sequence for a math independent, document fieldwork through photography and drawing… or apply a discovery made in sculpting class to work you are doing in History.

At Putney, creative work is part of how you learn to observe, interpret, and engage with the world.

Creative work is part of how you learn to observe, interpret, and engage with the world.

STUDENT *Profile*

NAME
Buster

GRADE
11

BOARDING OR DAY?
BOARDING

HOMETOWN
NEW YORK, NY

What drew you to Putney?
The biggest thing was the community! I remember touring during Project Week and seeing all the interesting and hyper-niche projects people were working on and how willing they were to discuss them with me. I was attracted to a place where being actively interested in things wasn't seen as weird or contemptible.

How would you describe the community?
Whenever I ask someone what they're up to, they'll tell me a billion different things they're working on, and what they're going to do next. I think what separates Putney from many of the other schools I've heard about is that so much of the work people do here is by choice, because they believe in what they're doing and enjoy doing it.

What passion have you discovered at Putney?
A passion that I didn't discover, but that definitely clarified itself to me, was my love for music composition. It was through gaining confidence in my musicianship here that I was able to start exploring that. I've been encouraged to think of music as an art form rather than just a pursuit of technical craft, and that's allowed me to form a more active and intense relationship with music. Now I've been able to practice composition through an independent study and multiple project weeks, with a focus on both art and improving my technique.

Whenever I ask someone what they're up to, they'll tell me nearly a billion different things they're working on.



DAY IN THE LIFE
Buster

	TUESDAY
7:15 AM	Breakfast
8:10	American Studies
9:20	Advisory
9:50	Milk Lunch
10:00	College Seminar
10:40	Precalculus 1
11:50	Music Independent
12:50 PM	Lunch
1:50	Photography
3:30	Study time
6:15	Dinner
7:00	Digital Filmmaking
8:45	Study before bed

1:20 WORKJOB: CLEANER CREW HEAD

Remember!
MAKE COPIES OF MUSIC FOR ENSEMBLE



Visual

Putney visual arts classes offer the opportunity to pursue in-depth study and serious practice in your chosen medium. You will increase your awareness of the visual world, develop skills to creatively translate your ideas into visible form, and gain an understanding of the context and language of each discipline.

AREAS OF STUDY:
Ceramics | Drawing & Painting | Fiber Arts | Printmaking
Photography & Filmmaking
Woodworking | Sculpture

Music

Music-making happens in all genres and traditions, from informal jam sessions to orchestra performances to original recording and production work. Whether you are picking up an instrument for the first time or arriving as an experienced musician, you are given the opportunity to develop your skills, experiment creatively, and perform as part of the community.

AREAS OF STUDY

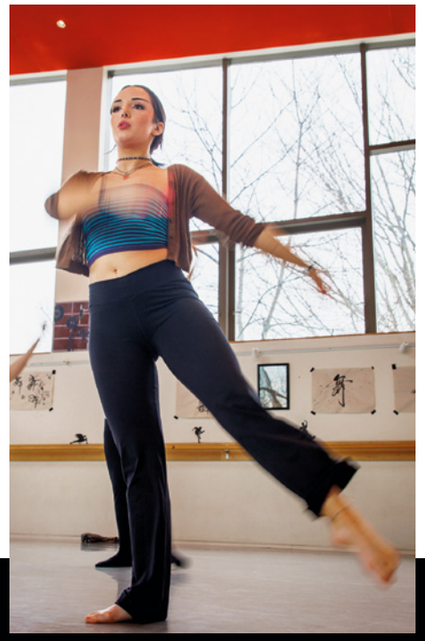
Music Theory | Composition | Songwriting
Instrumental & Vocal Lessons | Music Recording & Production

MUSIC ENSEMBLES: Chamber Music | Jazz Ensemble | Jazz Combo | Traditional Music Ensemble | Vocal Ensemble

Dance

The Putney Dance Studio is a welcoming space where you can explore and hone dance forms like Contemporary Forms, Modern Jazz, and Ballet with a focus on composition and learning how to craft, design and story-tell.

Dance Ensemble offers experienced and dedicated dancers the opportunity to grow as dancers and artists while being a part of a performing ensemble.



Theater

Putney welcomes students of all experience levels into a theater community where everyone has a role to play. You can study a wide range of theatrical styles through scene work, original composition, text analysis, and production design. Students interested in the technical design aspects of performance can explore set construction, lighting, sound, costume design, and stagecraft. All students have opportunities to develop skills through hands-on production experience.

PRODUCTIONS:

Fall Play

Spring Musical

Independent Student Projects



LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY:

Calder Tech
Students in Calder Tech are responsible for the lighting, sound, and technical aspects of performances, assemblies, and events in Calder Hall.

Uniquely Putney

Sing

Every week, the Putney community comes together to sing. Sing has been part of the school since its founding and remains one of Putney's most enduring traditions.

Our Sing Book includes everything from madrigals to sea shanties, folk songs from around the world, and songs of social protest. Over the decades, the repertoire has continued to evolve reflecting the changing life of the school itself.

Through Sing, you become part of a long tradition of people using music to celebrate community, preserve culture, respond to injustice and hardship, and express joy.





Uniquely Putney

Our Fiber Arts students process their wool from the sheep and alpaca on the farm.



Evening Arts

The Evening Arts Program brings you and your peers together to make, rehearse, experiment, and create beyond the academic day. Led by faculty and visiting artists, you can try something entirely new or deepen an existing passion in an exploratory, low-pressure environment. The emphasis is on curiosity, process, and sustained creative practice.

Evening Arts

UNGRADED FOR MAX EXPLORATION

WHEN: 7-8:30 | 2 DAYS/WEEK

SAMPLE OF OFFERINGS: Animation | Blacksmithing | Book Arts | Graphic Novels | Embroidery | Creative Writing | Film Making | Figure Drawing | Jewelry | Knitting | Metal Sculpture | Photography: B&W | Printmaking | Sewing and Quilting | Stained Glass | Weaving | Wood Sculpture | Handcrafts | Furniture Building | Watercolors | Skateboard/ Snowboard Making | Latin Cooking | Pysanky

Work Program

To believe in manual labor, be glad to do one's share of it and proud of the skills learned in the doing.

roll up your sleeves





Work Program

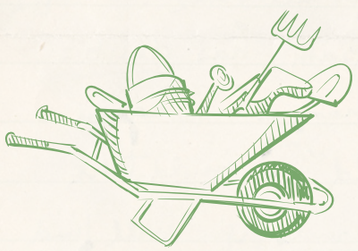
Every student contributes to the daily life of the community through work, and the school depends on that shared responsibility. You might spend the morning bringing horses in for feeding, the afternoon cleaning classrooms or clearing trails with Woods Crew, or part of the day helping prepare meals for the community. Through that work, you learn responsibility, collaboration, leadership, and care for the people around you.

All students participate in rotating work jobs throughout the year, including required work distributions such as kitchen work, dish crew, barn crew, and land-use activities.

You can also participate in afternoon group activities in addition to your normal job. From helping to maintain our trail system, to collecting apples and making cider, to doing community service off campus there are a variety of interesting opportunities to learn new skills and work together. Becoming a "Job Boss" helps you develop your skill engaging and motivating others to do their best work.







SAMPLE WORK JOBS

Baker's Helper | Cow Barn | Horse Barn | Dish Crew | Woods Crew | Library Helper | Post Office Helper | Studio Assistant

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY:

Work Committee
Students on Work Committee play a central role in managing the entire program. They assign jobs, oversee crews, track attendance and credit while helping keep the program running across campus.

We work hard, and have fun doing it.

STUDENT *Profile*

NAME
Julissa

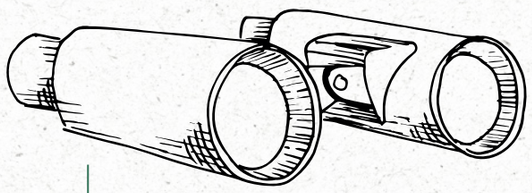
GRADE
12

BOARDING OR DAY?
BOARDING

HOMETOWN
CHICAGO, IL

What has been your biggest challenge? Getting adjusted to being in Vermont — I've been a city kid my whole life. My freshman year I was battling the idea of whether I wanted to stay, because everything was so new, and at 14 years old that was a lot to digest. I reached out and found different people to connect with. Even though there aren't many people from Chicago, there are people from New York, there are international students with different cultures...There was a bigger community here than I was expecting.

I'm taking a field ornithology class — I never thought that was something I'd be doing my senior year.



What has surprised you most? How open I am to trying new things. When I first looked at Putney I thought I would do cow barn and really get into the animals. Then when I got here I got really into academics, which was a huge shocker to me, because I've never been someone who loved school. Learning new things has been really fun. Even now, I'm taking a field ornithology class — I never thought that was something I'd be doing my senior year. I never realized academics would be so significant to my time here.

Was there something about the approach here that helped create that spark? I came from a public school where it was always: here's a worksheet, here's what we're going to learn, here's how to get a good grade. But here at Putney it was about learning why things are useful. It wasn't about getting a good grade — it was more about why you're going to use this outside of Putney, what's more significant about what you're learning, and what it has to do with the world.

How has Putney prepared you for what's next? Work jobs, for one — you learn how to have authority and how to respect other people and shared spaces. And with our schedules, we learn to manage so much that we're essentially living the college experience early. I love that. I feel like when I get to college, my schedule won't seem nearly as demanding as high school did.

What makes Putney different from other schools? Putney allows us to be free thinkers. It's helped me realize what values I want to hold and how I can take action. Being part of Standards, the trustee committee, and head of school — I learned how much I value the community, and that I like to make a difference. At other schools you don't get the opportunity to hold leadership positions that actually influence your community. We recognize that our voice really does matter, and what we want to accomplish is possible as long as we keep persevering.



DAY IN THE LIFE

Juju

	TUESDAY
7:15 AM	Breakfast
8:10	Existentialism
9:20	Sing!
9:50	Milk Lunch
10:00	Health Seminar
10:40	Media Studies
11:50	Calculus
12:50 PM	Lunch
1:20	Work job: Post office
1:50	Social Documentary Studies
3:00	Weights & Fitness
6:15	Dinner
7:00	Weaving
8:30	Back to dorm to finish reading



4:30pm Study!

Prep for tomorrow's assembly!



SECTION
04

FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF: **TO PLAY JUST AS WHOLEHEARTEDLY AS ONE WORKS**

28 COMPETITIVE ATHLETICS | **29** AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES | **30** WEEKEND PROGRAMMING

Play

To play just as wholeheartedly as one works, but watching out a bit for the competitive angle, remembering that play is for recreation and an increased joy in living.

joie de vivre



Competitive Athletics

Athletics at Putney are built on the belief that competition expands opportunities. Our teams compete against other independent schools throughout New England, and students are expected to work hard, practice consistently, and contribute to their teammates. We look to improve every game and coaches are ready to push you and your teammates. At the same time, there are no cuts or tryouts. Our culture values sportsmanship, effort, and resilience, whether you're discovering a sport for the first time or arriving with years of experience.

You are encouraged to explore new sports, balance athletics with academics, the arts, and community life, and discover what motivates you as an athlete. Success is measured by wins and losses as well as your willingness to compete wholeheartedly and your commitment to your team. Here, athletics are another place to practice leadership, perseverance, and joyful engagement to prepare you for a healthy life far beyond the playing field.

Compete in:
Soccer | Basketball | Rowing | Cross-country running | Nordic Skiing | Ultimate Frisbee | Volleyball



Afternoon Activities

Afternoons at Putney are active, varied, and closely tied to the outdoors. You will participate in afternoon activities each semester, and can choose between options ranging from athletics and outdoor adventure to dance, land use, and recreation.

Some students spend their afternoons training competitively or exploring the outdoors. Others learn practical skills, care for animals and the land, or discover entirely new interests. Afternoon Activities reflect a core part of Putney life: learning through movement, work, exploration, and shared experience.

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

climbing | mountain biking
archery | snowshoeing
carpentry | dance | fencing
hiking & tracking | |pond hockey
weights & fitness | yoga

Activity Spotlights



Horseback Riding
Ride through Putney's trails while developing skills in horsemanship and animal care alongside riders of all experience levels.

Recreational Skiing & Snowboarding
Make the most of winters in Vermont and head to the mountain on Wednesday afternoons and a full day Sunday.







Weekend Programming

Your weekend is shaped by what you and your peers care about and want to experience together

STUDENT WEEKEND ACTIVITY PLANNERS (SWAP)

A team of students collaborates to design, promote, and run a wide range of activities on campus and beyond — guided entirely by their peers' interests.

PUTNEY OUTDOOR PROGRAM (POP)

Students with a passion for the outdoors help choose and lead trips based on what excites them and their peers: hiking, camping, fishing, swimming, and more.

CLUBS & AFFINITY SPACES

Weekends also provide dedicated time for student clubs and affinity groups to gather and connect on their own terms.

TYPICAL WEEKEND ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

- Trips to regional towns — thrifting, snack runs, festivals
- Bonfires, hayrides, sledding & ice skating
- Movie nights, karaoke & tabletop gaming
- Baking & cooking events
- Blueberry & apple picking
- Overnight camping & hiking
- Bouldering, climbing & swimming
- Study hours & college essay writing with faculty
- Theater, dance & music trips to Boston & New York

PUTNEY TRADITIONS

Year after year, these beloved community events anchor the Putney weekend experience:

- Harvest Festival
- Halloween Celebrations
- Snow Ball
- Lunar New Year
- Fire & Ice
- Spring Social Dance
- Off-Campus Contra Dance
- Putney Mountain Sunrise Hike

See page 34





SECTION
05

FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF: **TO WANT TO LEND A HAND TO THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE**

34 HARVEST FESTIVAL | **35** OUTREACH AND CHARITABLE WORK DAY

Community

To want to lend a hand to the community at large, not to live in an 'ivory tower.'

a small and deeply interconnected community





Harvest Festival

Harvest Festival brings students, families, alumni, and neighbors together each October for a weekend of celebration and community. The campus fills with music, food, games, crafts, and local artisans, creating a gathering that is equal parts school tradition and community event. First held in 1935, the festival remains a lively expression of life at Putney.







LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY:

Putney Outreach
Students in Putney Outreach are focused on building connections between Putney and the broader community beyond campus. Through volunteering, events, advocacy, guest speakers, and community partnerships, Outreach encourages students to engage directly with the world around them.

Charitable Work Day

Charitable Work Day is Outreach's largest annual project. Instead of attending classes for the day, students work throughout the surrounding community for a rate of pay. All proceeds are donated to a charitable organization selected through a school-wide vote.

PUTNEY OUTREACH

EXAMPLES OF RECENT *Non-profits*

- Women's Freedom Center
- Community of Asylum Seekers Project
- Ground Works Collective
- SUSU commUNITY Farm



STUDENT *Profile*

NAME
Isabel

GRADE
10

BOARDING OR DAY?
DAY

HOMETOWN:
NEWFANE, VERMONT

TRANSFER?
YES

What has been your biggest challenge at Putney? Coming in as a sophomore, I was scared to join a close knit community. As a day student I knew I would not be here as much and I was worried I would miss out or have difficulty making friends; but my fear went away very quickly. Everyone would come up to me and introduce themselves. I always had somewhere to sit at lunch. I very quickly felt like I belonged.

What has surprised you the most? Before Putney I didn't consider myself artistically inclined, but after coming here I realized that I love art. I am currently in stained glass which I would never consider doing before Putney – but being here has encouraged me to try to develop new skills.

What advice would you give to an incoming student? Form a strong relationship with your teachers. They are such a good resource and are so supportive. Being a day student means you are at Putney a lot, even though you are not sleeping here, so it is nice to have an adult you can talk to and get support from.

What makes Putney different from other schools? Students are trusted to lead our school. We are seen as full people that deserve a say in how the school we go to functions.

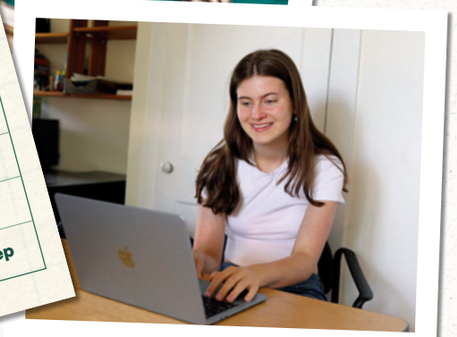
I very quickly felt like I was a part of the community and that I belonged.

DAY IN THE LIFE
Isabel

	THURSDAY
7:15 AM	Breakfast
8:10	Algebra 2
9:20	Sing!
9:50	Milk Lunch
10:00	Health Seminar
10:40	Writing About Literature
11:50	Modern World History
12:50 PM	Lunch
1:50	Spanish 2
3:00	Soccer Practice
4:40	Barn Chores
5:30	Study Time
6:30	Dinner
7:00	Embroidery & Cross Stitch
8:40	Carpool home to study & sleep



Being here has encouraged me to develop new skills.



SECTION
06

FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF: **TO COMBAT PREJUDICE AND INJUSTICE**

40 DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING |
42 STUDY AWAY AND BORDERLINKS



Kind, thoughtful, and caring

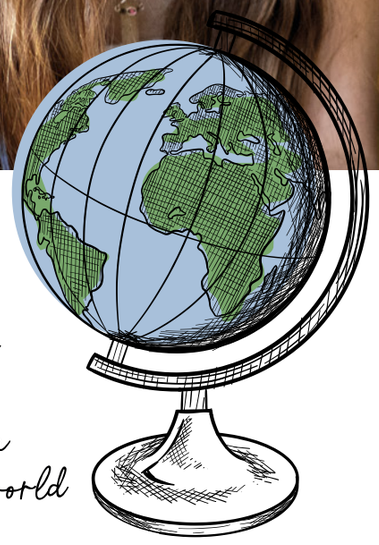
World Outlook

To combat prejudice and injustice wherever it appears; to strive for a world outlook, putting oneself in others' places, no matter how far away or how remote.







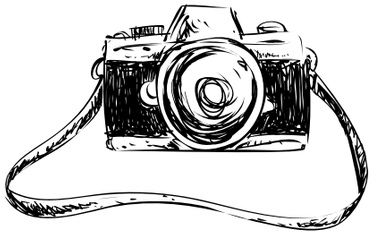


Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

Living in community means learning alongside people whose backgrounds, identities, perspectives, and experiences may be very different from your own. Diversity here is not treated as a separate initiative or occasional conversation. It is part of daily life: in classrooms, dorms, assemblies, advisory groups, performances, and shared work across campus.

Through affinity groups, discussions, student leadership, guest speakers, and community-wide conversations, we are encouraged to think critically, listen carefully, and engage openly with the world around us. The goal is not simply exposure to different perspectives, but building a community where people feel respected, challenged, and supported as they grow. We practice actionable skills in small groups and put them into practice in our wider community.





Study Away

You are encouraged to engage directly with the wider world through travel, cultural exchange, and immersive learning experiences. We have partnerships with schools and programs in the U.S. and abroad, so you have opportunities to live and study alongside peers from different cultures, communities, and educational systems. These experiences encourage curiosity, adaptability, independence, and a deeper understanding of the world beyond campus.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

Diversity Practitioners help build safe spaces for everyone and educate our school community about the political, social, and social justice issues impacting our society, and how identity affects the larger community.

International Ambassadors support new international students during orientation and throughout the year. This group helps bridge the gap between cultures and provide opportunities for the entire community to benefit from cross-cultural experiences.

PRISM creates community and support for LGBTQIA + students and increases awareness of shared issues through meetings, events, and advocacy.



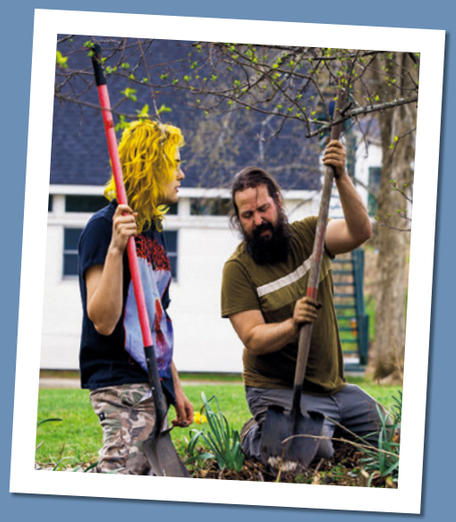
Borderlinks

Putney sent a delegation of students and faculty to BorderLinks, an experiential learning opportunity and educational immersion trip in the Arizona-Sonora region, to deepen their understanding of borders, migration, and social justice. Each delegation is a group of individuals that are committed to learning about the policies and circumstances that have affected thousands of lives across the border.



Working Together

To have old and young work together in a true comradeship relation, stressing the community and its need for the cooperation of all.





Elm Lea Farm



As Putney students, we are entrusted with authentic and meaningful work alongside adults. Farming together is one of the most important ways we put that into practice. Depending on the season, you might care for livestock, tap maple trees, split firewood, repair fencing, or help manage crops and pastures across campus. A classroom, a workplace, and a source of food - we learn responsibility, science, sustainability, and community living through the farm.

OUR BARNS

Dairy Barn
The dairy operation is substantial rather than symbolic. Each semester, more than 60 students participate in the farm program, helping care for our herd of over 50 dairy cows. Students learn milking, feeding, caring for calves, pasture management, gardening, and other aspects of running a diversified farm.

Small Animal Barn
The sheep and alpaca provide most of the wool students use in fiber arts. Students help care for these and other small animals as part of daily farm work on campus.

Horse Barn
Students in the Horse Barn take part in the daily work of maintaining the stable and caring for the horses.

Student Leadership

Leadership here is practical, collaborative, and rooted in shared responsibility. You learn by participating directly in the systems that keep the school running. More than 50 student leadership positions help shape every aspect of the community, from work crews and dorm life to admissions, sustainability, student governance, and academic programming. We collaborate with adults to shape policies, steward the campus, and make decisions that have a tangible impact on our community.



LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

Student Trustees are full voting members of the Board. They bring their understanding and expertise as current students to discussions and decision making.

Admission Committee members help to shape the future of the school by reviewing student applications for the upcoming school year and making admission decisions.

Heads of Dorm work closely with the student/adult dorm heads and the dean of students to help implement and maintain the systems that ensure a safe, fun, and educational residential life program.



Work Day

Each fall and spring, students, faculty, and staff spread out across campus to prepare garden beds, clear trails, repair outdoor furniture, rake leaves, split wood, and paint barns and buildings. Work Day is a chance to care for the campus together while experiencing the satisfaction of shared physical work done in good company.



Student leadership extends beyond the formal positions, manifesting in class, community gatherings and special school initiatives.

STUDENT *Profile*

NAME
Sam

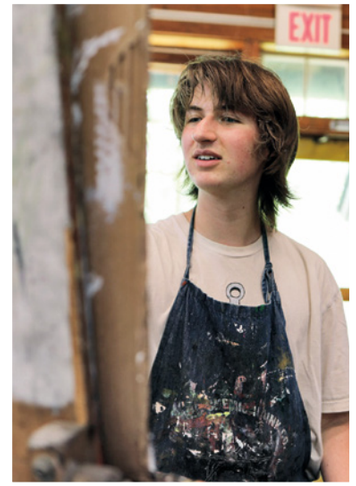
GRADE
10

BOARDING OR DAY?
BOARDING

HOMETOWN:
NEW YORK CITY

What has been your favorite project week? Last spring I did a group project week with Borderlinks Institution. We went to the border of Mexico and studied immigration. I never thought for a school project I could study that kind of thing and go into the courtrooms. It has changed how I think about the world.

How have the adults influenced you? The staff are some of the most skilled, intelligent, caring people I've ever met. I love the teachers. I love the people that work in the KDU. I love the cleaning staff. You get to know everyone so intimately because your teacher might also be your dorm parent. There's an abundance of role models, which is so cool to have when you're a high schooler.



Has being a leader shaped you? Being in a leadership position has taught me that if you don't do something, it's not going to get done. I have been elected to Student Trustee and Standards for next year.

And using what I know from experience about community building, the work you have to put in, the organization and people work you have to do, I'm excited to see how I can make this campus better for everybody.

DAY IN THE LIFE
Sam

	MONDAY
7:30 AM	Breakfast
8:10	Chemistry & Microbiology
9:20	Assembly
9:50	Milk Lunch
10:00	Conference Block
10:40	Writing About Literature
11:50	Experimental Performance
12:50 PM	Lunch
1:20	WorkJob: Cleaner
1:50	Modern World History
3:00	Mountain Biking
4:30	Study Time
6:15	Dinner
7:00	Figure Drawing
8:45	Catching up on reading for class before bed

Don't forget helmet



SECTION

08

FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF: **TO STEWARD AND PROTECT THE LAND**

52 SUSTAINABILITY | **54** CAMPUS









magnolia warbler

Sustainability

To steward and protect the land, to seek ways to live on the earth that are healthy for all beings, and to shape our community as a model of sustainable living.





Sustainability

At Putney, sustainability is part of daily life and deeply connected to how the school works, learns, and lives together. Through the farm, work program, afternoon activities, and academic classes, you engage directly with the land and the practical systems that support campus life.

Our curriculum includes courses such as Physiological Ecology, American Environmental History, Agroecology, Biodiversity and Conservation Ecology, and Environmental Philosophy. Science classes regularly use the surrounding landscape as a laboratory, and many students pursue environmental fieldwork through independent studies and Project Weeks.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY:

Sustainability Squad
"Susty" is our student leadership group focused on environmental initiatives across campus and connecting Putney to larger conversations around sustainability and climate justice.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Spotlight

Senior Exhibition: *The Plastic Problem & an Enzymatic Solution,* Flynn S. '26

Project Week: *Bobolink Conservation & Haymaking Practices,* Lucia G. '27

STUDENT-LED INITIATIVES HAVE INCLUDED:

ESG Investment
Students helped lead Putney's move toward environmentally and socially responsible investment practices, including fossil fuel divestment and ESG-focused investing.

Pollinator Garden
Students created gardens designed to support pollinators and increase native biodiversity across campus.

Campus

Putney's 600-acre campus sits on a hillside in southern Vermont overlooking fields, forests, and distant mountains. The landscape shapes daily life at the school in visible and immediate ways. Trails wind through woods and pastures and the changing seasons influence everything from farm work and afternoon activities to traditions, gatherings, and life in the dorms.

Our buildings reflect the layered history of the school: historic barns and older dormitories sit alongside studios, classrooms, science labs, and modern net zero buildings. Students live in small residential communities spread across campus and connected by walking paths, shared spaces, fields, forests, and working farmland. It is a place where learning happens as much outdoors as indoors, and where the natural environment is part of the experience of everyday life.

The landscape shapes daily life at the school in visible and immediate ways.

New Net Zero Dorms & Field House
New buildings are designed with sustainability at their core. Completed in 2023, Hepper House and Gund House—Putney's two net zero dorms—are powered by electricity from the school's solar sites and built with environmentally responsible materials, including certified wood from managed forests. This commitment builds on a long tradition of innovation: Putney's Field House was the first net zero, LEED Platinum-certified school building in the country, producing more energy than it uses while serving as a vibrant year-round space for athletics, recreation, and movement.

Cabin Program
Putney's Cabin Program gives selected seniors the opportunity to live in rustic cabins on campus, including two designed and built entirely by students. The program encourages a simpler style of living and a deeper awareness of sustainability, self-reliance, and shared responsibility.

Solar Array
Putney's 446 kW solar array includes more than 1,400 solar panels and offsets approximately 65 percent of the school's electrical needs. Installed at Lower Farm in 2016, the array remains a major part of the school's long-term sustainability efforts.

SECTION
09

FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF: **TO WISH TO LIVE ADVENTUROUSLY**

58 INDEPENDENT STUDY



endless opportunities

Adventure

To wish to live adventurously though not recklessly, willing to take risks, if need be, for moral growth, so that one definitely progresses along the long slow road toward achieving a civilization worthy of the name.



Independent Study

Independent work prepares you for a world without an instruction manual.

Putney has built a progression that will prepare you for college and life. You begin with project-based learning in the classroom, expand your independence during Project Weeks, and move toward self-designed coursework. By senior year, you're ready to undertake a Senior Exhibition: sustained, original work that reflects not only what you've learned, but how you've learned to think. You are practicing a bold habit of mind that sets you up for an adventurous life.

Project Week
What are you curious about? At Putney, you pursue independent projects inspired by curiosity and connected to your academic work. You learn how to design, carry out, and reflect on long-term work while developing the time management and organizational skills needed to bring complex ideas to life. You are challenged to research deeply, forge connections between disciplines, and communicate your ideas in compelling ways. Each project is shaped around individual interests and abilities and serves as a foundation for the larger self-directed work that becomes part of life at Putney.

Independent Topics
Designed for highly motivated students who want to pursue a specific topic in math, science, music, or theater.

Independent Studies
Advanced students may choose to design an independent course of study during the fall or spring semesters.

Work Terms
Students may apply for an off-campus apprenticeship to gain hands-on experience from a professional.

Senior Exhibitions
Each spring, seniors have the opportunity to undertake Senior Exhibitions: ambitious, self-designed capstone projects that reflect months of sustained independent work. You could dedicate half of your academic time to pursuing an area of deep personal and intellectual interest, culminating in a presentation for the entire school community. Senior Exhibitions often combine research, creativity, technical skill, and original thinking in ways that cross traditional academic boundaries.

Given time, resources and supportive faculty, you might surprise yourself with where your journey takes you. Imagine pushing yourself to launch the next step of your years long study, or envision how you could use art to explore the complexity of society or finally having the time to write the novel that tells the story of your family.

Your Senior Exhibitions could represent the fullness of a Putney education: sustained curiosity, intellectual independence, creative risk-taking, and the ability to pursue meaningful work with depth, discipline, and originality.

Kids are badass here. Look what happens when the adults get out of the way.

SENIOR EXHIBITIONS

Spotlight

Science: "Beyond Earth: Life in the Universe," Clea Z. '26

"See America Right: Photographing Tumult, Fear, Change, and Hope," Liam D. '25

"En La Vida: The Novel as Heritage," Camilo B. '25

STUDENT *Profile*

NAME
Lilly

GRADE
9

BOARDING OR DAY?
BOARDING

HOMETOWN:
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

I feel very free here.

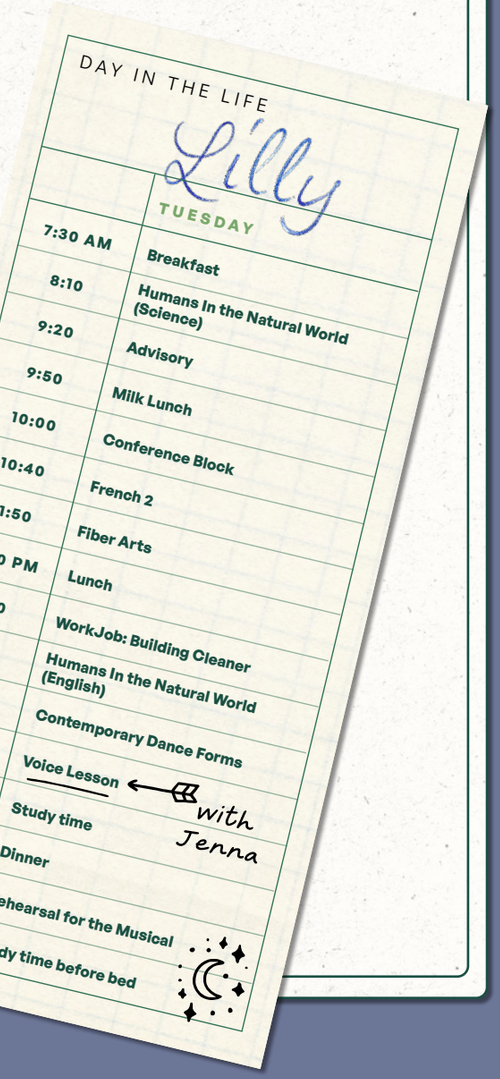
What have you been most excited to pursue here at Putney? I love the concept of Project Week so I can take time to really dedicate myself to something I'm interested in, that I wouldn't be able to learn about in a classroom environment.

What's it like being part of the music department? Learning and performing on bagpipes was extremely fun. I felt free to do something I actually enjoyed. Not many schools offered that for me. That was such an enlightening experience for me just to take that time to say, this is my interest. I want to do this.

What do you love most about being a student at Putney? The community has been really, really kind to me. Also, for me being in such an open community, figuratively and literally, gives me more of a way to be around people and find people who I enjoy, and not be stuck within one clique. I feel very free here. And the independence of the students is really nice.

How has Putney prepared you for what's next? Project Weeks have been the most helpful. Having that time to step back and say, this is what I want to do so I'm going to dedicate time to it really fuels creativity.





The Nitty Gritty

Our schedule is built to support a progressive approach to teaching and learning.

The school year is divided into two twelve-week semesters, a one-month January Term, and an end-of-year Project Week. This structure gives you time to build strong foundations in your core courses while also making room for exploration, deep learning, and project-based work. Across the year, you experience a rhythm of discussion, research, collaboration, application, and reflection.

The semester schedule includes six class blocks each term, with students completing a minimum of ten classes over the course of the year. Every fourth week of each term provides longer class periods for projects, labs, collaboration, presentations, and fieldwork. This allows you to build a thoughtful academic program, make space for support through the Center for Teaching and Learning, and pursue electives or areas of particular interest.

January Term and Project Week offer more concentrated time for you to dive deeply into subjects, questions, projects, and experiences that connect learning to your wider world. [see p. 58 for more info about Project Week]

JANUARY TERM

In between the Fall & Winter terms you practice pursuing your own education with guidance from teachers. Morning sessions offer foundational content, and afternoon sessions provide time for you to explore, build, collaborate, and present projects. The structure allows you to be in charge of how you pursue your questions. You might bolster skills and knowledge in a field you already love, explore a new discipline, design an independent study, or create a course with a faculty member and other students to learn together. It's one month of deep learning and lots of support to do it in a way that works for you.

Graduation Requirements

Designing a balanced and challenging program of study is an important part of the Putney experience. Graduation requirements provide a broad liberal arts foundation while allowing you significant flexibility to shape your own educational path. You are encouraged to pursue coursework that challenges you intellectually, deepens your interests, and supports your long-term goals.

Each year requires you to enroll in at least ten semester courses, two J-term courses, and complete Project Week work. In a four-year plan of study, you will need 8 English, 7 History, and 6 each of Math, Science, and World Language credits and 2 Arts credits. You will also progress through the requirements of the Work Program, Afternoons, and Evening Arts each year.

INTEGRATED CURRICULA

9th Grade Integrated Course
Ninth grade students all take the full year course *Humans in the Natural World*, which integrates English, Social Science, and Natural Science.

11th Grade Integrated Course
All juniors take American Studies and Writing and Research which integrates English and U.S. history to provide a richer exploration of American society, culture, and history.

GRADES & REPORTS

You and your family receive detailed written comments at the end of each marking period describing academic progress, engagement, strengths, and areas for growth.

Letter grades (A+ - E) and engagement marks (1-3) are maintained internally and shared with students and families during the college counseling process beginning in the winter of junior year. If a student is struggling academically, teachers provide direct feedback along with guidance and support for improvement.

COLLEGE PLANNING

Our college counseling program formally begins in 11th grade, but counselors begin building relationships with students long before then. By the time you start exploring colleges and life after graduation, your counselors already know you well as a learner, community member, and individual.

Counselors support you throughout every stage of the process while helping you maintain a strong sense of ownership over your decisions.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Putney supports students who choose to pursue standardized testing as part of the college admissions process.

PSAT/NMSQT: Administered on campus for all juniors in October

SAT: Offered on campus through an SAT School Day each spring

ACT: Transportation support is available for junior-year testing

AP Exams: Exam-only testing is available on campus

English Placement Testing: Coordinated through the International Student Program Office

Testing Accommodations: Supported in partnership with the Center for Teaching & Learning

AFTER PUTNEY

When you head off to college, you will be a critical and interdisciplinary thinker. You will know what hard work feels like and what it feels like to be empowered and practiced chasing your passions. Our students attend a wide range of colleges and universities, pursuing paths that reflect their individual interests, ambitions, and approaches to learning. While many of our graduates attend four year liberal arts colleges, we also have many students regularly enrolling at research universities and art schools both in the USA and abroad.

When you head off to college, you will be a critical and interdisciplinary thinker. You will know what hard work feels like and what it means to be empowered to chase your passions.



Come See for Yourself

Putney is a place shaped as much by conversation, work, music, landscape, and shared experience as by classes and schedules.

The best way to understand life at Putney is to spend time here: walk the campus, sit in on a class, share a meal, meet students and teachers, and experience the rhythms of the community for yourself. We hope you'll visit.

Talk with us
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The Putney School

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