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Statement of Philosophy

ACS International Schools is:

- A dynamic educational community made up of international students, teachers, supporting staff and parents
- Accredited by The New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

We offer:

- A secular, American based curriculum for students aged 2 to 18
- An American High School Diploma
- The International Baccalaureate Diploma
- Advanced Placement courses.

The success of our programme is based on:

- Teamwork, collaboration, and the broad participation of our community
- The pool of diverse ideas, experiences, and values which our community offers through the involvement of each individual
- A thorough awareness of educational programmes throughout the world
- Continuous learning and professional development.

We provide:

- Each student with the opportunity and support to reach their full potential
- Each family with effective guidance to pursue the next step in each student's formal education.

We believe that:

- All students can learn and each is a unique individual with equal potential to make a positive contribution to our school community
- It is important to instil an enthusiasm for life-long learning in each student along with the skills necessary to prepare for the challenges and changes which will be faced in their future
- Physical activity, a healthy diet and well-informed decision-making are important for a healthy lifestyle
- Self-expression is enhanced through the development of aesthetic appreciation.

We support our philosophy through:

- High standards of achievement and performance
- A developmental, student-centred approach to teaching
- A comprehensive and varied curriculum aimed at understanding
- A constructivist approach to learning and understanding through the development of critical and creative thinking skills
- Independent learning skills and self-reflection in the learning process
- Constructive feedback for learning
- Nurturing a strong sense of self-esteem, personal integrity, and a respectful, caring attitude towards others
- Developing an understanding of, and appreciation for, the philosophies of people from many different cultures
- Facing problems within a framework of fairness and shared values
- Nurturing a sense of responsibility for our environment
- Encouraging participation in fine arts through a variety of fine arts opportunities
- Teaching the principles associated with healthy living and encouraging participation in physical activity.

Middle School Statement of Philosophy

The Middle School provides a responsive and nurturing atmosphere. We bridge the elementary and high school years, providing a smooth transition between the two. We recognise that adolescents have unique needs that we address in our programme.

We believe that learning should be worthwhile and rewarding. We aim to help students take more initiative, and encourage them to seek knowledge and think independently. We help students develop the skills necessary to achieve academic excellence while also engaging in critical thinking. We guide students to understand the techniques that will help them organise work into an allotted time frame.

We seek to create an environment in which students develop appropriate self-expression with peers and persons in authority. Students learn to accept responsibility for their actions and through both positive and negative consequences, begin to understand the link between their behaviour and its effect on others.

We promote honesty and integrity, develop social and civic responsibility and foster good manners and courtesy. We aim for our students to become well-rounded individuals and encourage them to actively participate in their community.

Introduction

The Middle School curriculum is based on American educational aims. Our materials and curriculum reflect those used in the accredited international schools and in independent schools in the US.

We expose students to a broad background in mathematics, science, social studies, language arts and foreign languages while also developing thinking and problem-solving skills. Student interaction and self-expression are encouraged. We supplement the core curriculum by including instruction in health, drama, art, music, information technology (IT) and physical education. While we usually select American textbooks, we also take advantage of enrichment materials that are published outside of the United States.

While our major emphasis is towards the American system of education, we take into consideration the needs of our international students. We provide a programme that will help students develop the skills and knowledge needed to enter an alternative educational system (ie the International Baccalaureate).

This guide provides an overview of the subjects studied at each grade level and gives information on the content of each course. The following table may help you equate your child's previous schooling with that offered in our Middle School.

Age	Entry Grade
10-11yrs	5 th Grade
11-12yrs	6 th Grade
12-13yrs	7 th Grade
13-14yrs	8 th Grade

Course List*

5 th Grade	6 th Grade	7 th Grade	8 th Grade
English	English	English	English
Reading			
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Pre-Algebra
Advanced Mathematics	Advanced Mathematics	Pre-Algebra	Algebra
			Geometry
Integrated Science	Integrated Science	Integrated Science	Integrated Science
Ancient Civilizations	British History	Global Issues	United States History
World Language	World Language	World Language	World Language
Spanish 1A	Spanish 1B, 1AB	Spanish 1A, 2A	Spanish 1B, 1AB, 2B
French 1A	French 1B, 1AB	French 1A, 2A	French 1B, 1AB, 2B
German 1A	German 1B	German 2A	German 2B
Comparative Linguistics 1	Comparative Linguistics 2	Comparative Linguistics 1	Comparative Linguistics 2
Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education
Health	Health	Health	Health
<i>V & PA Courses</i>	<i>V & PA Courses</i>	<i>V & PA Courses</i>	<i>V & PA Courses</i>
Art	Art	Art	Art
Music	Music	Music	Music
Drama	Drama	Drama	Drama
	Orchestra/Choir	Orchestra/Choir	Orchestra/Choir
		Media Production	Broadcast Media
<i>Enrichment Courses</i>	<i>Enrichment Courses</i>	<i>Enrichment Courses</i>	<i>Enrichment Courses</i>
These courses are not offered to 5 th Grade	Music 6	Music 7	Music 8
	Drama through the Ages	Art Studio	Art Studio
	Robotics	Drama Scene Study	World Theatre
	Outdoor Adventures	First Aid Basics	Contemporary Issues & Debate
Literacy Fundamentals	Literacy Fundamentals	Literacy Fundamentals	Literacy Fundamentals
Math Fundamentals	Math Fundamentals	Math Fundamentals	Math Fundamentals

* Courses are subject to change.

5th Grade Course Descriptions (1 of 2)

English

The aim of the 5th Grade English course is to develop students' skills in writing a variety of genres. Students write creative stories, autobiographical pieces and poetry. They also learn how to write expository essays, directions and persuasive pieces. Emphasis is placed on the writing process, using the Six Traits of Writing. Before a project is completed, the writing is discussed, drafted and edited by a writing buddy. Writing is supported by formal grammar and spelling lessons. Individual spelling skills are also addressed through a spelling log. Where possible, connections will be made with other areas of the 5th Grade curriculum.

Resources

– *Write Source*. Houghton Mifflin.

Reading

The aim of the 5th Grade Reading course is to improve students' reading comprehension, vocabulary development, critical reading, expressive reading and organisational skills. Student read an assortment of literature, including fiction, non-fiction, plays and short stories. They read and discuss novels as a class and in small groups. Their analysis of narrative text will focus on critical thinking, interpretation of literary techniques, and the appreciation of literature. Students will also learn to recognise and incorporate strategies specific to expository text. Students are assessed and instructed according to their reading level using a range of texts provided to improve an individual's skills.

Resources

– *Reader's Handbook*. Prentice-Hall Literature.

Mathematics

In 5th Grade, two levels of mathematics are offered; 5th Grade mathematics and advanced 5th Grade mathematics. Both programmes emphasise the following content in varying depth:

- **Operations and Computation** – including basic facts, mental math, algorithms, estimation, number stories, money, powers of ten and exponents
- **Numeration** – including counting, order, relations, estimation, odd/even, fractions, decimals and percentages
- **Patterns, Functions and Algebra** – including number and visual patterns, properties, sequences, functions, number sentences, equations and inequalities, variables and formulae
- **Data and Chance** – including mean, median, range, mode, tally charts, line plots, graphs and probability
- **Measurement and Reference Frames** – including linear measures, weight, capacity, money, time temperature, perimeter, area, volume, diameter and circumference, angles and coordinate grid
- **Geometry** – including two-dimensional, three-dimensional, symmetry, congruence and angles.

Resources

– *EnVision Math, Grade 5*. Addison-Wesley

– *EnVision Math, Grade 6*. Addison-Wesley.

5th Grade Course Descriptions (2 of 2)

Science

Science is an exciting and relevant part of our lives. Science is the world around us! 5th Grade will learn to use their imagination and knowledge to explore the world we live in. The course integrates concepts and topics from life science, environmental science, chemistry and physics. To thrive in an ever-changing world, students must be scientifically literate and have the ability to apply their learning to different situations.

The theme for quarter 1 is 'Inspiration and Imagination' focusing on the scientific method, fields of science, animal and plant cells and an in-depth study of meadow ecology. Quarter 2 is named 'The Invention Connection' focusing on ancient and modern scientists and the study of chemistry, including the period table, atoms, compounds, molecules, mixtures and metrics. Quarter 3 is entitled 'Up, Up and Away – Lighter Than Air' and is a concentrated study in physics, including motion, speed, acceleration and the laws of motion.

A special day event centres on the study of flight. Quarter 4 emphasises animals and the theme is 'Arctic to Amazon'. During this last quarter, a systematic study of animal classification, animal habitats, adaptations and environmental issues including sustainability is addressed.

Resources

– *Science*. MacMillan McGraw-Hill.

Social Studies: Ancient Civilizations

The 5th Grade Social Studies course is designed to introduce students to the following civilizations of the Ancient Worlds: Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and China. Students explore history, geography, economics, culture, ethics and belief systems, social and political systems, and civic understandings and values of these civilizations. Students develop skills necessary to Social Studies including mapping, sequencing, chart reading and making, note taking, collation and presentation of evidence, and research and critical thinking. 5th Grade students are further encouraged to develop study skills, general organisation, responsibility and independence.

Resources

– *A Message of Ancient Days*. Houghton Mifflin

– *History Alive! The Ancient World*. Teachers' Curriculum Institute

– Themed sets: *Early River Civilizations and Ancient Civilizations*. Benchmark Education Company.

Fundamentals of Literacy and/or Fundamentals of Mathematics

In order to provide an additional level of intervention for students who demonstrate a deficit in their learning, the Fundamentals classes are structured in the following manner:

- The Fundamentals classes are deficit based and aim to address the specific needs of students who are demonstrating a gap in their literacy and/or mathematical learning
- Two classes will be offered (one in math and one in literacy) at each grade level
- These are semester long courses and will be tied closely to core concepts being taught in the mainstream classes
- Student data (MAP, Placement Exams, etc.) will be analysed to determine the appropriate course of study
- This class will be offered in the enrichment slot on the master schedule
- These classes will be open to ALL students who have a gap in their education
- These classes will focus on reinforcing, re-teaching and strengthening basic skills.

6th Grade Course Descriptions (1 of 2)

English

The aim of the 6th Grade English course is to enable students to think both critically and creatively, communicate effectively, and explore a wide variety of texts, both literary and visual.

There are five broad areas within the course: reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing. Students develop skills in these areas by participating in a wider range of activities. Students write in a variety of genres using the writing process: planning, drafting, revising and editing, before finally publishing their work. Wherever possible, grammar, vocabulary and aspects of style are taught in context and much of our writing is connected to our reading.

In addition to reading together as a class and in small groups, students are encouraged to widen their choice of independent reading material to include non-fiction and multi-cultural texts. Where possible, connections are made with other areas of the 6th Grade curriculum.

Resources

– *Write Source*. Houghton Mifflin.

Mathematics

In 6th Grade there are two levels of math offered: 6th Grade Math and Advanced 6th Grade Math.

The 6th Grade Mathematics course emphasises the following content strands: numeration, operations and computation, data and chance, geometry, measurement and reference frames, and patterns, functions and algebra.

Specific strands will be examined using a number of methods, including:

- A problem-solving approach based on everyday situations that develops critical thinking
- Mathematical communication including thinking and strategies
- Frequent practice of basic skills
- Activities exploring a variety of content areas and opportunities for students to apply their knowledge.

Advanced 6th Grade Mathematics is a course designed for students who enjoy the challenge of mathematical thinking. Students are expected to use mathematical language with ease, understand and appreciate the notation and deductive nature of mathematics, and express quantitative ideas with precision.

Topics covered include: number and operations, algebra, geometry, measurement, data analysis and probability. Successful completion of this course will lead to continuation in the Advanced Math Programme where students take Pre-algebra in 7th Grade, and Algebra 1 in 8th Grade.

Resources

– *Math Course 1*. McDougal Littell

– *Math Course 2*. McDougal Littell.

6th Grade Course Descriptions (2 of 2)

Science

6th Grade Science is an integrated course. Students learn concepts from each of the major science strands: life science/geology and environment; physical science/physics and chemistry; earth and space, based on the National Science Education standards.

Students will develop the process skills of the scientific method through this laboratory-based course, enabling them to develop questions, make predictions, test their ideas and carry out investigation. They will also acquire problem-solving skills through authentic, hands-on projects.

Course contents

- **Science as inquiry** – emphasises the scientific method, lab safety and metric measurement
- **Life Science** – reproduction and heredity
- **Physical Science** – motion, forces, energy, work, machines
- **Earth/Space** – Earth in space, sun, solar system
- **Chemistry** – matter, changes in matter.

Resources

– *Science Level Red*. Glencoe.

Social Studies: British History

The course covers approximately 5,000 years of British history, from the early farmers and pre-Roman civilization to Roman times, through Anglo-Saxon, Viking and Norman invasions, the Middle Ages and renaissance periods, early modern history and the age of empire, and finishing with the early 20th Century. In particular, we look at the development of national identities, language, customs, traditions, and social, legal and governmental systems. Emphasis is placed on how these have become part of other nations' cultures and governments, and the influence of Britain on the world today.

Skills developed will include evaluation and assessment of evidence, inductive and deductive reasoning, and collation and presentation of information. Emphasis is placed on an understanding and appreciation of the country and culture in which we live, and the links Britain's history has to the rest of the world. Field trips to relevant sites will complement the lessons.

Resources

– *The Young Oxford History of Britain and Ireland*. Oxford University Press.

Fundamentals of Literacy and/or Fundamentals of Mathematics

In order to provide an additional level of intervention for students who demonstrate a deficit in their learning, the Fundamentals classes are structured in the following manner:

- The Fundamentals classes are deficit based and aim to address the specific needs of students who are demonstrating a gap in their literacy and/or mathematical learning
- Two classes will be offered (one in math and one in literacy) at each grade level
- These are semester long courses and will be tied closely to core concepts being taught in the mainstream classes
- Student data (MAP, Placement Exams, etc.) will be analysed to determine the appropriate course of study
- This class will be offered in the enrichment slot on the master schedule
- These classes will be open to ALL students who have a gap in their education
- These classes will focus on reinforcing, re-teaching and strengthening basic skills.

7th Grade Course Descriptions (1 of 2)

English

The aim of the 7th Grade English course is to develop and improve each student's literacy. There are five broad areas within the course: reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing. Students develop skills in these areas by participating in a wider range of activities. Students write in a variety of genres using the writing process: planning, drafting, revising and editing, before finally publishing their work. Wherever possible, grammar, vocabulary and aspects of style are taught in context and much of our writing is connected to our reading.

In addition to reading together as a class and in small groups, students are encouraged to widen their choice of independent reading material to include non-fiction and multi-cultural texts. Where possible, connections are made with other areas of the 7th Grade curriculum.

Resources

– *Write Source*. Houghton Mifflin.

Mathematics: Math or Pre-Algebra

In 7th Grade, two levels of Math are offered: 7th Grade Mathematics and Pre-algebra.

7th Grade Math is the standard level course. The course is sequential and reinforces previously learned skills. Students are expected to develop familiarity with the language, notation and deductive nature of mathematics, together with the ability to express quantitative ideas with precision. Topics covered include number and operations, algebra, geometry, measurement, data analysis and probability. It is expected that the students taking 7th Grade Math will take Pre-algebra in 8th Grade, and Algebra 1 in 9th Grade.

Pre-algebra is the advanced course. This course is for students entering 7th Grade with strong mathematics recommendation from their previous teachers and/or a strong showing in a placement examination. The Pre-algebra course compresses two years of Middle School mathematics into one year to prepare students for Algebra 1 in 8th Grade. Variables, equations and inequalities are introduced and previously learned number theory and computational skills are applied to these new concepts. Integers, graphing, ratio, problem-solving, data analysis, probability and geometry are studied. It is expected that the students taking 7th Grade Pre-algebra will take Algebra in 8th Grade. If successful in the 8th Grade Algebra course work and examination, students will take Geometry in 9th Grade. An individual student's progress will be monitored closely and, if the course being followed seems inappropriate to his or her demonstrated ability, changes will be made mid-year, or upon entering 8th or 9th Grade.

Resources

– *Math Course 2*. McDougal Littell

– *Pre Algebra*. McDougal Littell.

Science

7th Grade Science is an integrated course. Students will learn concepts from each of the major science strands: life science/biology and environment; physical science/physics and chemistry; earth and space, based on the National Science Education standards.

Students will develop the process skills of the scientific method through this lab-based course enabling them to develop questions, make predictions, test their ideas and carry out investigation. They will also acquire problem-solving skills through authentic hands-on projects.

Course contents

- **Science as inquiry** – emphasises the scientific method, lab safety and metric measurement
- **Life Science/Ecology** – explores nutrition, human body systems, food chains and webs
- **Physical Science** – will include matter and its properties, interactions of matter, and energy resources and transfers
- **Earth/space** – covers soil formation, rocks and minerals, weathering, tectonics.

Resources

– *Science Level Green*. Glencoe/McGraw-Hill.

7th Grade Course Descriptions (2 of 2)

Social Studies: Global Issues

7th Grade Social Studies course looks at some of the major issues affecting the world today. Students study various locations around the globe and highlight some problems that affect that region. Examples include: population issues in China, world trade and poverty in Africa, and environmental and development issues in India. Clearly these problems are complex, interconnected in the modern global economy and affect many different parts of the world. To put these contemporary issues in context, we will look at relevant, recent historical background, as in our study of the ongoing conflict in the Israel-Palestine region.

The course is broken into several units of study, each focusing on selected issues affecting a region. Units include the following:

- **Introduction to global issues**
- **Africa Inc.:** Impact of slavery, colonial rule and country-specific issues
- **China:** Population control, impact of rapid growth e.g. Three Gorges Dam
- **South Asia:** Indian independence and the impact of partition
- **Middle East:** Origins of Israel-Palestine conflict
- **South America:** Impact of development on environments and indigenous people
- **Global issues:** Student-selected presentations on an issue they identify.

Students will work in co-operative groups and on individual research. There are opportunities to present findings in a variety of ways including: oral-visual presentations, role-play, formal debates, creating web sites and other forms of ICT. We emphasise critical thinking skills, the need to support statements and defend a position with credible, accurate evidence, and the importance of understanding opposing viewpoints or differing perspectives.

Resources

- *People, Places and Change*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston
- *Student Atlas*. Longman.

Fundamentals of Literacy and/or Fundamentals of Mathematics

In order to provide an additional level of intervention for students who demonstrate a deficit in their learning, the Fundamentals classes are structured in the following manner:

- The Fundamentals classes are deficit based and aim to address the specific needs of students who are demonstrating a gap in their literacy and/or mathematical learning
- Two classes will be offered (one in math and one in literacy) at each grade level
- These are semester long courses and will be tied closely to core concepts being taught in the mainstream classes
- Student data (MAP, Placement Exams, etc.) will be analysed to determine the appropriate course of study
- This class will be offered in the enrichment slot on the master schedule
- These classes will be open to ALL students who have a gap in their education
- These classes will focus on reinforcing, re-teaching and strengthening basic skills.

8th Grade Course Descriptions (1 of 2)

English

The aim of the 8th Grade English course is to create confident, skills communicators who appreciate literature and understand the writer's craft. This course is taught with a theme-based approach designed to integrate the main areas of the course: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Students write in a variety of genres using the writing process: planning, drafting, revising and editing, before finally publishing their work. Wherever possible, grammar, vocabulary and aspects of style are taught in context and much of our writing is connected to our reading.

Students will read a range of texts and genres, including plays, poetry, short stories and non-fiction, and develop skills in literary analysis. Each month, to complement the texts being studied in class, students are required to produce oral or written responses to novels read independently.

Resources

– *Write Source*. Houghton Mifflin.

Mathematics: Pre-algebra, Algebra or Geometry

In 8th Grade, three levels of Mathematics are offered: Pre-algebra, Algebra and Geometry

Pre-algebra is the standard level course. This course begins with in-depth studies of integers and equations solving and uses these to unify other areas of mathematics, including geometry, statistics and early algebraic concepts. Students are expected to develop familiarity with the language, notation and deductive nature of mathematics, together with the ability to express quantitative ideas with precision. This course will ensure a smooth transition to the high school 9th Grade Algebra course.

Algebra is the advanced course. This course is for students entering 8th Grade with strong mathematics recommendation from their previous teachers and/or a strong showing in a placement examination. Algebra is an accelerated course and students earn high school credit upon successful completion of the course. This course includes explorations of algebraic concepts and processes so that students can understand the concepts of variable expressions and equations, develop confidence in solving linear equations using concrete, informal and formal methods, and apply algebraic methods to solve a variety of real-world and mathematical problems. If successful in the 8th Grade Algebra course work and examination, students will take Geometry in 9th Grade. An individual student's progress will be monitored closely and, if the course being followed seems inappropriate to his or her demonstrated ability, changes will be made mid-year, or upon entering 8th or 9th Grade.

Geometry: for a few exceptional students that meet the required criteria, middle school is able to offer the option of Geometry.

Resources

– *Pre Algebra*. McDougal Littell

– *Algebra 1: Structure and Method*. Houghton Mifflin

– *Geometry*. McDougal Littell.

8th Grade Course Descriptions (2 of 2)

Science

8th Grade Science is an integrated course. Students will learn concepts from each of the major science strands: life science/biology and environment; physical science/physics and chemistry; earth and space, based on the National Science Education standards.

Students will develop the process skills of the scientific methods through this lab-based course enabling them to formulate hypotheses, make predictions, devise ways of testing their ideas and carry out the investigation. They will also acquire problem-solving skills through authentic, hands-on projects.

Course contents

- **Science as inquiry** – emphasises the scientific method, lab safety and metric measurement
- **Life Science/Ecology** – heredity, evolution, extinction, natural disasters, biomes
- **Physical Science** – will include forces and motion: wave, sound and light, chemical bonds and reactions
- **Earth/space** – geological time, origin of the universe.

Resources

– *Science Level Blue*. Glencoe/McGraw-Hill.

Social Studies: United States History

This course covers US History from first settlement to the 20th Century. It also provides the opportunity for students to apply their historical learning to events and issues outside North America. This course gives students experience in accessing, evaluation, and using historical information. This will include identification of themes, cause-and-effect relationships, and introduction to political theory and economics.

Resources

– *History Alive!* Teachers' Curriculum Institute
– *A History of US*. Joy Hakim. Oxford University Press USA.

Fundamentals of Literacy and/or Fundamentals of Mathematics

In order to provide an additional level of intervention for students who demonstrate a deficit in their learning, the Fundamentals classes are structured in the following manner:

- The Fundamentals classes are deficit based and aim to address the specific needs of students who are demonstrating a gap in their literacy and/or mathematical learning
- Two classes will be offered (one in math and one in literacy) at each grade level
- These are semester long courses and will be tied closely to core concepts being taught in the mainstream classes
- Student data (MAP, Placement Exams, etc.) will be analysed to determine the appropriate course of study
- This class will be offered in the enrichment slot on the master schedule
- These classes will be open to ALL students who have a gap in their education
- These classes will focus on reinforcing, re-teaching and strengthening basic skills.

French – World Language (1 of 4)

French 1A

The course develops the four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. At the same time, this course aims to increase the students' knowledge and appreciation of the culture of France and the French speaking countries. This emphasis is on communication and focuses on the communicative functions that young people need: exchanging information, expressing emotions and opinions, inquiring, apologising, paying compliments and inviting. These functions are presented in culturally authentic situations. By the end of the year, the students will be able to have a simple conversation at an appropriate level in French. Students will also learn the elementary grammar rules and structures of the language.

Course contents

- Meeting and greeting people
- Talking about other people
- Introducing one's family
- Saying you are hungry
- Saying you are thirsty
- Paying at a café in France
- Talking about time
- Talking about dates
- Talking about the weather
- Describing daily activities
- Talking about where people are
- Finding out what's going on
- Inviting friends to do things with you
- Expanding one's conversational skills
- Describing oneself and others
- Describing one's room
- Talking about possessions.

Course work and an end of the year examination are used to determine language placement for the following year.

Resources

– *Discovering French Nouveau Bleu*. McDougal Littell.

French – World Language (2 of 4)

French 1B

Prerequisite: French 1A with a C average or higher in semester 2 or on the semester exam.

This course follows the French 1A course. Students continue to develop the four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The emphasis is on communication and focuses on the communicative functions that young people need: exchanging information, giving commands, present and preterite tense. In addition there is some expansion of thematic vocabulary. We review and deepen our knowledge of the present tense and the past tense is introduced. Grammar plays a more important part as students work on pronouns, adverbs and adjectives.

Course contents

- Describing your room
- Talking about possessions
- Describing your city
- Expressing oneself on familiar topics
- Talking about places and things
- Carrying out simple conversations
- Finding your way around
- Describing your home and your family
- Making plans to do things in town
- Talking about clothes
- Discussing shopping plans
- Buying clothes
- Discussing leisure activities
- Describing vacation travel plans
- Narrating what happened
- Talking about your favourite foods
- Shopping for food
- Planning a meal
- Eating out with friends.

Course work and an end of the year examination are used to determine language placement for the following year.

Resources

– *Discovering French Nouveau Bleu*. McDougal Littell.

French 1AB

This is a one-year course for students who have never taken French as a core subject before. Students will be able to transfer to French 2 on successful completion of this course. This course covers all the grammar and vocabulary normally learned in French 1A and 1B. The course develops the four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. At the same time, it aims to increase the students' knowledge and appreciation of the culture of France and the French speaking countries. The emphasis is on communication and focuses on the communicative functions that young people need: exchanging information, expressing emotions and opinions, inquiring, apologising, making requests, giving commands, exclaiming, agreeing and disagreeing, paying compliments and inviting. These functions are presented in culturally authentic situations. By the end of the year, students will be able to have a simple conversation at an appropriate level in French. The students will also learn the elementary grammar rules and structures of the language.

Course work and an end of the year examination are used to determine language placement for the following year.

Resources

– *Discovering French Nouveau Bleu*. McDougal Littell.

French – World Language (3 of 4)

French 2A

Prerequisite: French 1B or 1AB with a C average or higher in semester 2 or on the semester exam.

This is a one-year course that follows the French 1 course and enables the students to transfer to French 2B. This course reviews and reinforces skills learned in French 1. The focus of the second level is on developing longer conversational exchanges and reading for meaning and pleasure. Grammar plays a more important part as we review and reinforce the present, past and near future.

Course contents

- Review of level 1 material
- Nationality
- Professions
- Going out with friends
- Helping at home
- The country and the farm
- Domestic and other animals
- Getting around in the subway
- Narrating past events
- Meals
- Place settings
- Café foods and beverages
- Fruit and vegetables
- Expressions of quantities.

Course work and an end of the year examination are used to determine language placement for the following year.

Resources

– *Discovering French Nouveau Blanc (Units 1 to 3)*. McDougal Littell.

French – World Language (4 of 4)

French 2B

Prerequisite: French 2A with a C average or higher in semester 2 or on the semester exam.

This is a one-year course that follows the French 2A course and enables the student to transfer to French 3 in 9th Grade. This course reviews and reinforces skills learned in French 1 and 2A. The focus of the second level is on developing longer conversational exchanges and reading for meaning and pleasure. Grammar plays a more important part as we review and reinforce the present, past and near future. We also learn about reflexive verbs and the imperfect tense.

Course contents

- Review of level 2A material
- Places to go and things to do
- Types of movies
- Expressions used in letters
- Reading materials
- Individual sports
- Expressions of opinion
- Parts of the body
- Health
- Daily routine
- Hygiene and personal care
- Location of one's home
- Rooms of the house
- Furniture and appliances
- An accident
- Numbers 1-1,000,000.

Course work and an end of the year examination are used to determine language placement for the following year.

Resources

– *Discovering French Nouveau Blanc (Units 4 to 6)*. McDougal Littell.

Spanish – World Language (1 of 3)

Spanish 1A

This course focuses on the use of Spanish in culturally authentic situations. The emphasis is on communication and the communicative functions that young people need: exchanging information, expressing emotions and opinions, inquiring, apologising, paying compliments and inviting. The present tense, simple grammar usage and the basic guidelines of pronunciation are studied. Students are introduced to the cultures of Spanish speaking countries through films and projects.

Course contents

- Gender and number
- Articles
- Nouns
- Adjectives
- Subject pronouns
- Possessives
- Question words (interrogatives)
- Affirmative/Negative
- Frequency words
- Present tense
- Present progressive
- Gustar-encantar
- Conocer-saber
- A personal
- Verbs: ser-estar-ir-tener-venir
- Obligations – tener and que, hayque
- Irregular verbs in yo
- Comparisons
- Weather.

Course work and an end of the year examination are used to determine language placement for the following year.

Resources

– *En Español!* McDougal Littell.

Spanish – World Language (2 of 3)

Spanish 1B

Prerequisite: Spanish 1A with a C average or higher in semester 2 or in the semester exam.

In Spanish 1B, students continue to develop their knowledge of the language. The emphasis is on communication and focuses on the communicative functions that young people need: exchanging information, giving commands, present and preterite tenses. The course covers the last two units of the textbook.

Course contents

- Numbers 1 – 1,000,000
- Ordinal numbers
- Tener idioms
- Irregular verbs in present: saber-salir-dar
- Stem-changing verbs
- Reflexive verbs
- Adverbs
- Comparatives/superlatives
- Demonstrative adjectives
- Direct object pronouns
- Indirect object Pronouns
- Prepositions of location
- Affirmative tu commands in regular forms and irregular forms.

Course work and an end of the year examination are used to determine language placement for the following year.

Resources

– *En Español!* McDougal Littell.

Spanish 1AB

Spanish 1AB is designed as a one-year course for Middle School students enabling them to move into Spanish 2 on successful completion of the course. This course covers all the grammar and vocabulary, which are normally learned in Spanish 1A and 1B. The emphasis is on communication and focuses on the communicative functions that young people need: exchanging information, expressing emotions and opinions, inquiring, apologising, paying compliments and inviting. These functions are presented in culturally authentic situations. At the end of this course, students should have a basic knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. They should also be able to hold a simple conversation in Spanish.

Course work and an end of the year examination are used to determine language placement for the following year.

Resources

– *En Español!* McDougal Littell.

Spanish – World Language (3 of 3)

Spanish 2A

Prerequisite: Spanish 1B or 1AB with a C average or higher in semester 2 or in the semester exam.

This course follows the Spanish 1B or 1AB course and enables students to continue to develop proficiency in the four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In addition, students increase their knowledge and understanding of Hispanic culture through readings, films and the Internet.

Course contents

- Review and expand present tense: regular-irregular and stem-changing
- Review and expand reflexive verbs
- Possessive pronouns
- Demonstrative pronouns
- Affirmative/negative
- Preterite tense of regular and irregular verbs.

Course work and an end of the year examination are used to determine language placement for the following year.

Resources

– *En Español!* McDougal Littell.

Spanish 2B

Prerequisite: Spanish 2A with a C average or higher in semester 2 or in the semester exam.

This course follows the Spanish 2A course. Students will expand their ability to speak, read, write and listen. The course includes a greater use of tenses, interactive oral practice, cultural articles and stories, and writing short compositions. By the end of the course, students are able to understand a native speaker within the limits of an acquired vocabulary.

Course contents

- Preterite tense of regular verbs
- Preterite tense of irregular verbs
- Imperfect tense of regular verbs
- Imperfect tense of irregular verbs
- Preterite and imperfect
- Present progressive
- Past progressive
- Present perfect
- Past perfect
- Double object pronouns.

Course work and an end of the year examination are used to determine language placement for the following year.

Resources

– *En Español!* McDougal Littell.

German – World Language (1 of 2)

German 1A

This course develops the four basic skills necessary for success in a foreign language: reading, writing, listening and speaking. In addition, the course aims to instil an appreciation for German culture and an understanding of German history and geography. The emphasis is on communication and focuses on the communicative functions that young people need.

Course contents

- Introductions
- What we like to do in our free time
- Descriptions of people and houses
- Talking about school
- Going shopping and making plans.

Course work and an end of the year examination are used to determine language placement for the following year.

Resources

– *Komm Mit! Level 1*. Holt Rinehart Winston.

German 1B

Prerequisite: German 1A with a C average or higher in semester 2 or in the semester exam.

This course follows the German 1A course. Students continue to develop proficiency in the four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In addition, students increase their knowledge and understanding of German culture and important Germans through films, reading and the Internet. The past tense, clauses and inverted word order are studied. By the end of the year, students will be able to communicate at an appropriate level in both written and spoken German.

Course contents

- Helping out at home
- Going shopping for groceries
- Travelling
- Going out
- Being invited to and attending parties.

Course work and an end of the year examination are used to determine language placement for the following year.

Resources

– *Komm Mit! Level 1*. Holt Rinehart Winston.

German – World Language (2 of 2)

German 2A

Prerequisite: German 1B with a C average or higher in semester 2 or in the semester exam.

This is a one-year course that follows the German 1 course and enables students to transfer to German 2B. This course reviews and reinforces skills learned in German 1. This course expands the students' skills in speaking, reading, writing and listening. It also focuses on interactive oral practice, cultural articles and stories, as well as writing short compositions. By the end of the course, students are able to understand a native speaker within the limits of an acquired vocabulary.

Course contents

- Asking for and giving information
- Expressing likes and dislikes
- Reporting about past events
- Talking about places
- Expressing obligations
- Asking and telling what to do
- Expressing approval and disapproval
- Expressing regret and making certain
- Inquiring about someone's health and responding
- Asking for and giving advice.

Course work and an end of the year examination are used to determine language placement for the following year.

Resources

– *Komm Mit! Level 2*. Holt Rinehart Winston.

German 2B

Prerequisite: German 2A with a C average or higher in semester 2 or in the semester exam.

This is a one-year course that follows the German 2A course and enables the students to transfer to German 3 in 9th Grade. This course reviews and reinforces skills learned in German 1 and 2A. This course expands the students' skills in speaking, reading, writing and listening. The course curriculum includes use of the dative case, prepositions and adjective endings. It also focuses on interactive oral practice, cultural articles and stories, as well as writing short compositions. By the end of the course, students are able to understand a native speaker within the limits of an acquired vocabulary.

Course contents

- Talking about life in the city and country
- Expressing concerns about fashion and clothes
- Making alternative plans
- Discussing TV and cars
- Planning a party
- Inviting friends.

Course work and an end of the year examination are used to determine language placement for the following year.

Resources

– *Komm Mit! Level 2*. Holt Rinehart Winston.

Comparative Linguistics

Comparative Linguistics I

Comparative Linguistics I will focus on study skills and techniques for learning a foreign language. It will also introduce elements of grammar in English and use these basics to analyse other languages. Comparative Linguistics I introduces the student to different aspects of the study of language and language use.

- Introduce International Phonetic Alphabet and where speech sounds are made in the mouth and throat
- Elements of English grammar – parts of speech, how verbs are conjugated (reviewed and expanded on each quarter so even students entering the school year later are exposed), plurals made, formal and informal language, tenses, cases (subject, direct object, indirect object)
- Study skills and techniques for learning a foreign language (to be revisited once each semester)
- Investigate how people acquire language (from birth) and what can happen if they do not have the chance to learn, as well as differing ability levels (and speech therapy), sign language and being born deaf, deaf communities
- Animal language – debate
- History of languages and how languages are related, concept of minimal pairs
- Made-up language (Navi, Klingon, Elven)
- Language families and how languages are related
- Languages and writing – languages with a syllabary instead of an alphabet, pictograms, ideograms, Xhosa (click language)
- Sociolinguistics
- End-of-year project – students investigate an aspect of linguistics in their own lives, write up their research in a format similar to the Scientific Method, and make a presentation.

Comparative Linguistics II

Foreign language study skills and an introduction to French and Spanish. Comparative Linguistics II focuses on specific strategies for learning foreign languages based on individual student needs, as well as general study skills and techniques for acquiring language. Semester 1 is focused on basic grammar in English and applying that to learning French, as well as understanding basic language structures through songs and games. Semester 2 is focused on basic elements of Spanish.

Semester 1: Study skills and techniques for learning a foreign language (to be revisited two times each quarter)

Specific strategies based on individual student issues

French – emphasis on comparing basic grammar to English so that there is a solid understanding of the framework of French, fun with songs, games and culture-related projects to increase interest and enthusiasm, low-stakes quizzes/testing to build confidence and allow practice with different learning strategies.

Semester 2: Spanish – emphasis on comparing basic grammar to English so that there is a solid understanding of the framework of Spanish, fun with songs, games and culture-related projects to increase interest and enthusiasm, low-stakes quizzes/testing to build confidence and allow practice with different learning strategies.

Visual & Performing Arts (V&PA) (1 of 8)

5th Grade

Two-dimensional Art

This visual arts course is intended to enhance student artistic skills using two-dimensional media. The course fosters an appreciation for the aesthetics of visual arts. Project content focuses on students exploring a variety of drawing and painting media, techniques, tools and processes to produce artwork from personal experience, observation and imagination. Examples of past projects include colour theory, enhanced practice and understanding, bold colourful landscape painting and natural pattern informing surface design.

Three-dimensional Art

This visual arts class is intended to enhance student artistic skills using three-dimensional media. Students will create a large-scale, hybrid species paper-mâché sculpture with cultural or historical art links. This long-term, multi-faceted project will give students an opportunity to develop skills and understanding in sculptural construction processes while fostering a dedicated approach to project work in an art studio setting. Colour theory concepts will be introduced during the acrylic painting processes.

Drama Exploratory

In the Drama Exploratory course, students will work on building a foundation for complete and confident self-expression, understanding the concept of drama and the basic skills of drama. Students will play theatre games that build acting skills, theatre vocabulary, improvisation skills, vocalisation skills, character development, stage presence and movement. They will work on vocal and physical warm up exercises that improve abilities to express ideas clearly and confidently. They will explore role-play and teacher-in-role. Students will work on creating a stage performance from fairy stories. They will workshop the scripts in groups and then develop each scene into a fully developed performance with costumes and props. These scenes will be successfully performed for the Lower School.

General Music

Everyone can make music. Everyone can respond to music. At each grade level, using music of different genres and different cultures as a foundation, students will explore music history, theory, composition, improvisation and performance. Both fun and challenging classroom work is short-term project-orientated, developing listening skills, composition and performing. Students will be encouraged and expected to perform for their peers. Individual and group performance builds confidence and allows students to expand their awareness of themselves in relation to others.

The aims of the General Music course are to:

- Give students a positive experience with music
- Foster an appreciation of music of different styles, periods and cultures
- Enable all students to achieve their full potential
- Encourage students to express themselves through the creative use of sound
- Involve all students in musical performance
- Increase the student's awareness of the place of music study in a well-balanced education programme, and the benefits of studying music as a leisure activity
- Increase the student's discriminatory powers through listening to music
- Encourage students to work together in a friendly, responsible and constructive manner.

Visual & Performing Arts (V&PA) (2 of 8)

Extras Opportunities

The lunchtime 'extras' block gives students an opportunity to participate in select music groups. The groups meet once during the 8-day cycle and are open to all grades (unless otherwise noted). Some groups require an audition; others are open to any student who wants to participate.

Orchestra

This ensemble is open to all 5th Graders who play an orchestral instrument. Beginners are welcome. No audition is required. The repertoire is varied, embracing many different types of music. We play several concerts throughout the year, including some combined with other ensembles.

Choir

Open to all 5th Graders who enjoy singing. Repertoire includes rounds, folksongs and part-songs. Students learn the basics of good singing technique. No previous experience is necessary and no audition is required.

Select Choir

This is a small, auditioned vocal ensemble open to all students who wish to develop good choral singing. The repertoire is more challenging, learning 3- and 4-part music from different genres and cultures. An audition is required and previous experience is recommended. Note-reading is strongly recommended. Meets twice each cycle. Students in this ensemble must sing in their grade level choir.

Brass Tacks

This band is for both experienced and new brass players (trumpet, trombone, French horn, etc.). The repertoire is lively and varied, and is arranged to include both very easy parts for beginners and more demanding parts for experienced players.

Ukestra

The ukulele orchestra is for both experienced and new ukulele players. The repertoire comprises standards and popular music. See www.tinyurl.com/ukestra for more information.

Visual & Performing Arts (V&PA) (3 of 8)

6th Grade

Two-dimensional Art

This visual arts course is intended to enhance student artistic skills using two-dimensional media. Students will have opportunities to develop technical skills with a variety of drawing and painting media. Key concepts introduced are observational drawing skills, compositional arrangement, colour theory application and art-specialist tool usage. Past project examples include: lino relief printing, an expressive self-portrait, a reverse appliqué collage, abstracted enlargements from realistic observation and collaborative group work large-scale paintings. All projects have an art history link to either contemporary practitioners or significant historical artists, styles or movements.

Three-dimensional Art

This visual arts class is intended to enhance student artistic skills using three-dimensional media. The course fosters an appreciation for the aesthetics of visual arts. Project content focuses on students exploring structural processes and sculpture techniques, manipulating appropriate tools and materials such as mod roc or clay to produce 3D artwork from personal observation and imagination. Examples of past projects include medieval art, the study of stone gargoyles, and investigation of contemporary and historic artists focusing on the fish form leading to a clay relief work.

Drama Exploratory

In the Drama Exploratory course we will continue building a foundation for complete and confident self-expression. Theatre games that build acting skills, theatre vocabulary, improvisation skills, focalisation skills, character development, stage presence and movement will be focused on. We will continue to work on intense vocal and physical warm up exercises that improve abilities to express ideas clearly and confidently. Students will look in depth at different genres found in theatre and film and will perform scenes from different genres – accessing different acting styles. We will explore the use of dramatic tension in film and theatre and work on creating dramatic tension within improvised scenes. Students create their own scripts and plays based on 'Recycling' and perform these for the Lower School. Students will work in varied groups and independently.

Web Design

The Web Wizards course will teach the fundamentals of Web page design and development. Students will learn Web development techniques. The course will cover topics such as adding text, images, sounds, hyperlinks and other components, including working with templates, using tables, working with various types of images, designing frame pages, creating interactive forms, and developing dynamic Web pages. Students will strive to design websites that are visually appealing, easy to navigate and sources of information to others.

Choir

This class is open to students who enjoy singing. Each grade level works on its own music literature, in addition to learning music to perform with other grade level choirs and instrumental ensembles. Students learn the basics of vocal production, developing technical skills and aesthetic awareness through the study and performance of varied Middle School choral literature. Aural skills are developed through solfege and melodic dictation. Music theory is also studied. Several mandatory performances are scheduled throughout the year, including some assemblies and evening concerts. No previous experience is necessary. No private lessons are required. This is a year-long course. Students interested in both Choir and Orchestra may divide their time between the two.

Orchestra

Orchestra is open to students at any level of skill who play a traditional orchestral instrument (e.g. strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion). Guitarists and pianists of ABRSM Grade 5 standard or above may audition for a place in the ensemble. Orchestra is an opportunity for students to develop their musical and technical skills through studying music from a variety of genres and styles. Aural skills are developed through improvisation. Music theory is also studied. Several mandatory performances are scheduled throughout the year, including assemblies and evening concerts. Weekly private lessons (on or off campus) on your instrument, at additional cost to parents, are a course requirement. This is a year-long course. Students interested in both Choir and Orchestra may divide their time between the two.

Visual & Performing Arts (V&PA) (4 of 8)

Extras Opportunities

The lunchtime 'extras' block gives students an opportunity to participate in select music groups. The groups meet once during the 8-day cycle and are open to all grades (unless otherwise noted). Some groups require an audition; others are open to any student who wants to participate.

Boys' Choir

Open to all boys in 6th-8th Grades who enjoy singing. Repertoire consists of popular and rock music. No previous experience is necessary and no audition is required.

Girls' Choir

Open to all girls in 6th-8th Grades who enjoy singing. Repertoire consists of popular and rock music. No previous experience is necessary and no audition is required.

Select Choir

This is a small, auditioned vocal ensemble open to all students who wish to develop good choral singing. The repertoire is more challenging, learning 3- and 4-part music from different genres and cultures. An audition is required and previous experience is recommended. Note-reading is strongly recommended. Meets twice each cycle. Students in this ensemble must sing in their grade level choir.

Jazz Couriers

The Jazz Couriers is an auditioned ensemble. Students learn to play a wide variety of jazz repertoire, and learn to improvise over simple chords. They learn about jazz scales, chords and form. Some tunes are learned by ear, rather than from notation. As well as performing at several concerts, the students participate in the Schools Jazz Day at the Norden Farm Arts Centre in Maidenhead.

Brass Tacks

This band is for both experienced and new brass players (trumpet, trombone, French horn, etc.). The repertoire is lively and varied, and is arranged to include both very easy parts for beginners and more demanding parts for experienced players.

Ukestra

The ukulele orchestra is for both experienced and new ukulele players. The repertoire comprises standards and popular music. See www.tinyurl.com/ukestra for more information.

Keyboard Ensemble

This is an opportunity for keyboard players of all standards to play in an ensemble. Students will have a chance to play pianos, keyboards, organs, harpsichords, synthesizers, accordions and melodicas. We will play many different kinds of music arranged to suit each student's abilities.

Visual & Performing Arts (V&PA) (5 of 8)

7th Grade

Two-dimensional Art

This Visual Arts class is intended to enhance student artistic skills using two-dimensional media. The course fosters an appreciation for the aesthetics of visual arts. Project content focuses on students exploring a variety of drawing and painting media, techniques, tools and processes to produce artwork from personal experience, observation and imagination. Examples of past projects include cultural African surface design; enhancing pattern design skills, portraiture painting and pop art mixed media can artwork.

Three-dimensional Art

Digital animation is the focus of this Visual Arts class. Students will work collaboratively with a partner to plan and develop animation films using stop-motion video filming and editing techniques. Students develop practical animation skills bringing inanimate objects to life in an introductory short production. Students next develop a more complex narrative production with multiple characters. ICT skills development includes: using digital video planning, storyboarding, 3D character and set design, frame-by-frame video shooting, iMovie editing techniques including visual effects, scene transitions and title pages with post-production additions of audio tracks using GarageBand.

Drama Exploratory

In the Drama Exploratory course we will continue building a foundation for complete and confident self-expression. We will develop advanced theatre games that build acting skills, theatre vocabulary, improvisation skills, vocalisation skills, character development, stage presence and movement. We will work on advanced vocal and physical warm up exercises, which improve abilities to express ideas clearly and confidently. Students will look in depth at different acting styles. We will explore the use of dramatic tension in film and theatre and work on creating dramatic tension within improvised scenes. They will also look in depth at motivation, how characters are motivated to behave in different ways and how this leads in to character development. Students work in varied groups and independently.

Choir

This class is open to students who enjoy singing. Each grade level works on its own music literature, in addition to learning music to perform with other grade level choirs and instrumental ensembles. Students learn the basics of vocal production, developing technical skills and aesthetic awareness through the study and performance of varied Middle School choral literature. Aural skills are developed through solfege and melodic dictation. Music theory is also studied. Several mandatory performances are scheduled throughout the year, including some assemblies and evening concerts. No previous experience is necessary. No private lessons are required. This is a year-long course. Students interested in both Choir and Orchestra may divide their time between the two.

Orchestra

Orchestra is open to students at any level of skill who play a traditional orchestral instrument (e.g. strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion). Guitarists and pianists of ABRSM Grade 5 standard or above may audition for a place in the ensemble. Orchestra is an opportunity for students to develop their musical and technical skills through studying music from a variety of genres and styles. Aural skills are developed through improvisation. Music theory is also studied. Several mandatory performances are scheduled throughout the year, including assemblies and evening concerts. Weekly private lessons (on or off campus) on your instrument, at additional cost to parents, are a course requirement. This is a year-long course. Students interested in both Choir and Orchestra may divide their time between the two.

Visual & Performing Arts (V&PA) (6 of 8)

Extras Opportunities

The lunchtime 'extras' block gives students an opportunity to participate in select music groups. The groups meet once during the 8-day cycle and are open to all grades (unless otherwise noted). Some groups require an audition; others are open to any student who wants to participate.

Boys' Choir

Open to all boys in 6th-8th Grades who enjoy singing. Repertoire consists of popular and rock music. No previous experience is necessary and no audition is required.

Girls' Choir

Open to all girls in 6th-8th Grades who enjoy singing. Repertoire consists of popular and rock music. No previous experience is necessary and no audition is required.

Select Choir

This is a small, auditioned vocal ensemble open to all students who wish to develop good choral singing. The repertoire is more challenging, learning 3- and 4-part music from different genres and cultures. An audition is required and previous experience is recommended. Note-reading is strongly recommended. Meets twice each cycle. Students in this ensemble must sing in their grade level choir.

Jazz Couriers

The Jazz Couriers is an auditioned ensemble. Students learn to play a wide variety of jazz repertoire, and learn to improvise over simple chords. They learn about jazz scales, chords and form. Some tunes are learned by ear, rather than from notation. As well as performing at several concerts, the students participate in the Schools Jazz Day at the Norden Farm Arts Centre in Maidenhead.

Brass Tacks

This band is for both experienced and new brass players (trumpet, trombone, French horn, etc.). The repertoire is lively and varied, and is arranged to include both very easy parts for beginners and more demanding parts for experienced players.

Ukestra

The ukulele orchestra is for both experienced and new ukulele players. The repertoire comprises standards and popular music. See www.tinyurl.com/ukestra for more information.

Keyboard Ensemble

This is an opportunity for keyboard players of all standards to play in an ensemble. Students will have a chance to play pianos, keyboards, organs, harpsichords, synthesizers, accordions and melodicas. We will play many different kinds of music arranged to suit each student's abilities.

Visual & Performing Arts (V&PA) (7 of 8)

8th Grade

Two-dimensional Art

This Visual Arts class is intended to enhance student artistic skills using two-dimensional media. Students explore both figurative and non-figurative qualities with a variety of painting, drawing and printing media. Technical skills and understanding built through practical project work include the principles of compositional design, formal linear perspective, colour theory, and media application techniques. The concept of visual art as a means of non-verbal communication explores both the commercial and aesthetic aspects of art. All projects have an art history link to either contemporary practitioners or significant historical artists, styles or movements.

Three-dimensional Art

This Visual Arts class is intended to enhance student artistic skills using three-dimensional media. The course fosters an appreciation for the aesthetics of visual arts. Project content focuses on students exploring structural processes and sculpture techniques, manipulating appropriate tools and materials such as clay to produce 3D artwork from personal observation and imagination. Examples of past project include observation of historic African masks leading to a mask relief and furthering construction techniques and confidence building clay miniature houses.

Drama Exploratory

In the Drama Exploratory course we will continue building a foundation for complete and confident self-expression. We will develop advanced theatre games that build acting skills, theatre vocabulary, improvisation skills, vocalisation skills, character development, stage presence and movement. We will work on advanced vocal and physical warm up exercises, which improve abilities to express ideas clearly and confidently. Students will look in depth at different acting styles. We will explore the use of dramatic tension in film and theatre and work on creating dramatic tension within improvised scenes. They will also look in depth at motivation, how characters are motivated to behave in different ways and how this leads in to character development. Students will also study scenes from films that capture these techniques and work in depth on improvisation skills and techniques. Students will work in varied groups and independently.

Choir

This class is open to students who enjoy singing. Each grade level works on its own music literature, in addition to learning music to perform with other grade level choirs and instrumental ensembles. Students learn the basics of vocal production, developing technical skills and aesthetic awareness through the study and performance of varied Middle School choral literature. Aural skills are developed through solfege and melodic dictation. Music theory is also studied. Several mandatory performances are scheduled throughout the year, including some assemblies and evening concerts. No previous experience is necessary. No private lessons are required. This is a year-long course. Students interested in both Choir and Orchestra may divide their time between the two.

Orchestra

Orchestra is open to students at any level of skill who play a traditional orchestral instrument (e.g. strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion). Guitarists and pianists of ABRSM Grade 5 standard or above may audition for a place in the ensemble. Orchestra is an opportunity for students to develop their musical and technical skills through studying music from a variety of genres and styles. Aural skills are developed through improvisation. Music theory is also studied. Several mandatory performances are scheduled throughout the year, including assemblies and evening concerts. Weekly private lessons (on or off campus) on your instrument, at additional cost to parents, are a course requirement. This is a year-long course. Students interested in both Choir and Orchestra may divide their time between the two.

Broadcast Media

This class will combine visual and performing arts media through the creation of a student-produced weekly news show. Production will include the use of digital video equipment, iMovie, GarageBand and the Adobe Creative Suite, among others. Students will have the opportunity of participating in video editing and design, reporting, script writing, camera techniques and broadcast directing and producing. Students may work in front of or behind the camera – or both!

Visual & Performing Arts (V&PA) (8 of 8)

Extras Opportunities

The lunchtime 'extras' block gives students an opportunity to participate in select music groups. The groups meet once during the 8-day cycle and are open to all grades (unless otherwise noted). Some groups require an audition; others are open to any student who wants to participate.

Boys' Choir

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Girls' Choir

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Select Choir

This is a small, auditioned vocal ensemble open to all students who wish to develop good choral singing. The repertoire is more challenging, learning 3- and 4-part music from different genres and cultures. An audition is required and previous experience is recommended. Note-reading is strongly recommended. Meets twice each cycle. Students in this ensemble must sing in their grade level choir.

Jazz Couriers

The Jazz Couriers is an auditioned ensemble. Students learn to play a wide variety of jazz repertoire, and learn to improvise over simple chords. They learn about jazz scales, chords and form. Some tunes are learned by ear, rather than from notation. As well as performing at several concerts, the students participate in the Schools Jazz Day at the Norden Farm Arts Centre in Maidenhead.

Brass Tacks

This band is for both experienced and new brass players (trumpet, trombone, French horn, etc.). The repertoire is lively and varied, and is arranged to include both very easy parts for beginners and more demanding parts for experienced players.

Ukestra

The ukulele orchestra is for both experienced and new ukulele players. The repertoire comprises standards and popular music. See www.tinyurl.com/ukestra for more information.

Keyboard Ensemble

This is an opportunity for keyboard players of all standards to play in an ensemble. Students will have a chance to play pianos, keyboards, organs, harpsichords, synthesizers, accordions and melodicas. We will play many different kinds of music arranged to suit each student's abilities.

Enrichment Courses (1 of 3)

6th Grade

Drama Through the Ages

This class will study theatre at different times in British and European history. Students explore the different periods through learning and performing short scenes from different plays. The class begins with scenes from Greek tragedy and Roman comedy, then works on improvised scenes based on commedia dell'Arte followed by scenes from medieval drama. The course ends with scenes from Shakespeare. Students are expected to memorise their parts in the different plays and work on stage presence and movement, and the interaction of characters on stage. Their scene work will be evaluated according to these criteria.

Robotics

In this hands-on course, students use math, science, and technology skills to build robots and use LEGO MINDSTORM Education NST software to program them to perform various tasks. No experience is necessary. Some aspects of the course will include:

- **Robot Construction** – Working with partners, students build a basic robot
- **Programming** – Students learn the basics of NXT software
- **Sensors** – Students learn how to give the robots 'sense' by using light and touch sensors
- **Activities** – Students and robots will engage in Full Speed Ahead, Right Face, and Velociraptor
- **Competitions** – Working in pairs, students compete in three events: 'SumoBots', 'Follow the Line' and NXT 500 Race'.

Outdoor Adventurous Activities & Games

This course will focus on the outdoor component of physical education. Problem solving, team challenges, map reading and orienteering will all feature. We will also play numerous team games that are not part of the usual curriculum, focusing on co-operation, communication and teamwork.

Music

Everyone can make music. Everyone can respond to music. At each grade level, using music of different genres and cultures as a foundation, students will explore music history, theory, composition, improvisation and performance. Both fun and challenging, classroom work is short-term project-orientated, developing listening skills, composition and performing. Students will be encouraged and expected to perform for their peers. Individual and group performance builds confidence and allows students to expand their awareness of themselves in relation to others. The aims of General Music are to:

- Give students a positive experience with music
- Foster an appreciation of music of different styles, periods and cultures
- Enable all students to achieve their full potential
- Encourage students to express themselves through the creative use of sound
- Involve all students in musical performance
- Increase a student's awareness of the place of music study in a well-balanced education programme, and the benefits of studying music as a leisure activity
- Increase students' discriminatory powers through listening to music
- Encourage students to work together in a friendly, responsible and constructive manner.

Enrichment Courses (2 of 3)

7th Grade

Music

Everyone can make music. Everyone can respond to music. At each grade level, using music of different genres and cultures as a foundation, students will explore music history, theory, composition, improvisation and performance. Both fun and challenging, classroom work is short-term project-orientated, developing listening skills, composition and performing. Students will be encouraged and expected to perform for their peers. Individual and group performance builds confidence and allows students to expand their awareness of themselves in relation to others. The aims of General Music are to:

- Give students a positive experience with music
- Foster an appreciation of music of different styles, periods and cultures
- Enable all students to achieve their full potential
- Encourage students to express themselves through the creative use of sound
- Involve all students in musical performance
- Increase a student's awareness of the place of music study in a well-balanced education programme, and the benefits of studying music as a leisure activity
- Increase students' discriminatory powers through listening to music
- Encourage students to work together in a friendly, responsible and constructive manner.

Art Studio

7th Grade Art Studio is an opportunity for students with a serious interest in the visual arts to expand and advance their practical skills not normally covered in the V&PA courses. Course aims are to challenge a student's use of imagination, to think like an artist and to develop technical skills with a wide variety of two-and three-dimensional media. Project examples include: ceramics and hand-building with clay; photography and digital image manipulation; canvas painting exploring colour and brushstroke techniques; and investigating a master artist or art movement to inspire artwork development allowing personal direction with individually instructed guidance. This class is also an opportunity to link to Tate Modern's thematically based annual Turbine Hall installation international schools art project 'turbinegeneration'.
<http://www.tate.org.uk/modern/unileverseries/>

First Aid Basics

Through this class, students will gain an understanding of the basics of first aid. This course is designed to provide a practical skills for the students, while enriching their science and Health & PE core curriculum.

Drama Scene Study

In Scene Study students develop skills in creating and performing scenes, both from dramatic text and from our improvised own scenes. Students explore the use of body language, voice and movement in creating atmosphere and context. Students will read, speak and act during this course. They will work in varied learning groups collaboratively and independently. Students explore the use of monologue in character work. Learner factors: this course is a way for students to experience their literature through movement and acting. Students present their finished product to the rest of the class.

Media Production

This class focuses on introducing students to the field of media design, creation and editing, with an emphasis on video production. Using digital photography and video equipment, iMovie, GarageBand and the Adobe Creative Suite, students will direct, star in and edit a variety of media products. Project work will include segments for the broadcast media news show.

Enrichment Courses (3 of 3)

8th Grade

Music

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Art Studio

Art Studio 8 is an opportunity for students with a strong interest in the visual arts to enhance their practical skills and application of media through the development of expressive artwork. Students work with a variety of media on projects that integrate a range of art elements designed to challenge students in the areas of critical thinking, technical application and personal creativity. Visual art critical studies are integrated into course work enhancing student awareness and appreciation for the aesthetics of historic and contemporary art practice. Past projects have focused on the Natural World and Self and Place encompassing sculpture, printing, painting and drawing. Examples of project work:

- Large O'Keeffe art works, manipulating and blending oil pastel media
- Natural Object multi-stage lino reduction printing design
- Self and Place digital media and acrylic canvas painting.

World Theatre

Students work with the rich array of theatrical and dramatic styles from around the world and from the history of theatre. Students look at the selected theatre style of Shakespeare and work towards the performance of themes and ideas from a Shakespearian play. Other performance styles are studied and assessed. Students will demonstrate skills in a variety of presentations; create new theatre work and explore a genre of theatre in detail.

Contemporary Issues and Debate

This class is an opportunity for students to discuss issues which affect our society and their everyday lives. Students will research a range of contemporary issues and current events and prepare topics for discussion. Debate skills will be taught and students will participate in formal debates. This elective is a good choice for anyone who has an opinion to share!

Specialist Subjects (1 of 2)

Physical Education

All Middle School students have Physical Education class every other day for 75 to 80 minutes. The curriculum focuses on a broad spectrum of physical education topic areas and is designed to provide a well-rounded and balanced educational experience. Activities covered throughout the year include: basketball, football (soccer), tag rugby, volleyball, dance, gymnastics, tennis, athletics (track and field), swimming, outdoor education and fitness.

The Physical Education curriculum is based on a spiralling education model, the principle being that in the 5th Grade, all students are taught the very basic skills of each sporting discipline and as he/she moves through grade levels, the difficulty and complexity is increased. At the beginning of 6th, 7th and 8th Grades, the skills previously taught are reviewed and consolidated to refresh the returning students and to bring new students quickly up to speed.

The method of delivering Physical Education ensures good continuity as the student's progress in the journey through Middle School. The primary focus is on developing general motor skills, physical abilities and understanding of sport as age and growth rate progress. Students are expected to come to class on time and wear the correct Physical Education uniform.

Incorporated within the Physical Education rotation schedule, students are additionally introduced each quarter to a wide range of topics in Health Education.

Health

5th Grade Health addresses managing change, and the nature and characteristics of friendship; drug education focuses on a basic knowledge of what a drug is and the need for safe storage of drug-related products in the home; sex and relationship education focuses on the features of a positive relationship, and some of the emotional and physical changes of puberty; and issues of safety related to road usage and fire safety.

6th Grade Health focuses on identifying prejudice and stereotypes, and explores strategies for responding in real-life situations; drug education focuses on the risks and consequences of misuse of alcohol and tobacco; sex and relationship education includes physical and emotional changes that happen during puberty, and human reproduction; and the NATO alphabet is learned as part of a unit on emergency response and first aid.

7th Grade Health addresses issues related to body type, body image and the influences on it; drug education explores a range of issues associated with drug usage including risks and consequences of use and abuse; sex and relationship education focuses on sexual health, i.e. contraception and sexually transmitted infections, and the development of personal values and attitudes about teenage sexual behaviour; and The Nature of Conflict introduces Abraham Maslow and his hierarchy of needs as a basis for understanding how and why conflict occurs.

8th Grade Health is involved with learning about the symptoms, treatment and prevention of contagious diseases; drug education which explores the effects of drinking alcohol, and the legal consequences of illegal drug usage; sex and relationship education begins with exploring issues related to gender identity and stereotypes, and looks at romantic relationships, leading into the 'Baby Think it Over' programme, to understand the impact of unplanned pregnancy, while reflecting on personal values and life goals.

Specialist Subjects (2 of 2)

Learning Support Programme

The Middle School learning support programme supports students with mild to moderate learning difficulties in a mainstream school environment. The goal of the programme is for students with special needs to be successful in their coursework by building self-awareness, confidence and independent study habits. Support services are delivered via a combination of an in-class inclusion model for core academic classes, specialised small group instructional session in the areas of mathematics and literacy fundamentals, study hall and homework club opportunities.

In-class support may include a co-teaching model or a facilitation model, during which learning specialists work with classroom teachers to differentiate classroom content and products, to encourage multisensory instructional approaches, and to provide accommodation and modifications necessary for students to access the curriculum.

Small group pull-out sessions are provided in the areas of Literacy Fundamentals and Math Fundamentals, each of which is a semester long elective course that will focus on bridging the identified gaps that may be present in a child's mathematical or literacy abilities. The course will be individualised to address the specific needs of each student, and will meet the child at their current ability. In addition, the curriculum for these classes will be coordinated with the current core content curriculum being taught.

Admission to the middle school learning support programme is not exclusive, as the programme is designed to accommodate for the needs of all students in the middle school who experience difficulties accessing the general curriculum or in keeping pace with the general curriculum. Accommodation and modifications to the students' academic programme are made for students as they are needed.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

The EAL Department serves the needs of non-English speaking students from beginning to advanced levels. The purpose of the EAL classes is to enable the students to reach a sufficient degree of proficiency in the English language to be able to participate fully in mainstream classes.

All EAL students attend regular Mathematics and Science classes, plus visual and performing arts and electives. Students have between four and sixteen 75-minute EAL blocks in an eight-day rotation depending on their needs. The classes are small to allow for individualised, differentiated instruction. The focus is on grammar, syntax, spelling, vocabulary development, pronunciation and fluency in the following four skill areas: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Teachers also provide support for mainstream subjects by reviewing class assignments, giving further explanations and reinforcing concepts and subject-specific terminology. EAL study halls are offered twice per grade in the eight-day rotation so that students have an opportunity to seek help with individual problems related to any subject.

Placement tests are given in August, or whenever a child enters ACS, and diagnostic assessments are made throughout the year to determine a student's readiness to move into a core class. When students are placed in a mainstream subject for the first time, they audit the course until they are capable of achieving a C grade or better. The audit process can continue for up to a year.

Guidance Programmes

The Middle School has the services of a full-time guidance counsellor. Some of the services provided by the guidance office are as follows:

Individual Counselling

Students are met on an individual basis. Education, social and personal needs are addressed. More serious concerns are referred to outside resources.

Small Group Counselling Sessions

The counsellor meets with small groups of students to discuss topics such as self-esteem, friendship, conflict resolution, bullying, peer pressure, etc.

Classroom Guidance

Classes are conducted in all grade levels on topics such as peer pressure, sex education, peer helpers, body language awareness, internet safety, etc.

Student Appraisal

The counsellor works closely with teachers, administrators, parents and occasionally outside specialists to gather information about student abilities, behaviours and needs, so that appropriate decisions can be made about educational placement and student welfare.

Transitioning

The counsellor assists new students and 5th Grade students to make successful transitions into Middle School, and also helps 8th Grade students make successful transitions out of Middle School and into High School.

Referrals

Students and their families receive assistance from programmes and services in the school and from outside agencies.

Parents are encouraged to contact the counselling office at any time during the school year if they have any questions and/or concerns about their child's welfare.

Extracurricular Activities

Clubs

The Middle School offers clubs for an hour after school on one day per week. There are usually two sessions with different choices each session. Popular offerings include cooking, chess, walking, judo, jewellery making, ceramics, wakeboarding, skateboarding, school shop, golf, sudoku, roots and shoots, etc. The information about clubs is distributed after school begins.

Social Activities

A variety of social activities is planned for students after school hours with the help of the PSO and Student Council. The PSO Liaisons working with out student council leaders organise after-school parties for 5th and 6th Grade students. Dancing and music are common features of most parties, but we also offer other alternatives such as games, ping pong and air hockey for those students who would prefer not to dance. There is an assortment of music, including fast songs that encourage group participation. Although group fast dancing is emphasised, we also include a few slow songs and students have the option of 'slow dancing' with a partner. We also serve refreshments which parent volunteers provide. There is usually a small charge for the party that covers the cost of paper goods, entertainment, games and prizes.

We offer dances for our 7th and 8th Grade students that follow a similar format, but with more emphasis on dancing and less on games and other entertainment. The Student Council suggests ideas and organises the set-up and clean-up of the party. Music is screened with the help of the Student Council and PSO Liaisons.

Sports Teams

The Middle School offers a variety of school teams for 6th through 8th Graders. Students may also be eligible for the junior varsity level. Autumn sports include boys' and girls' volleyball, soccer and cross-country. Winter sports include boys' and girls' basketball and boys' rugby. Spring sports include girls' softball, boys' baseball, boys' and girls' tennis and track and field.