

INTRODUCTION

1.1 WELCOME

Welcome to Leysin American School. Located in the stunning Swiss Alps, LAS brings together students from over fifty countries to live and study in a community that promotes a global perspective and a family atmosphere.

For almost 60 years, we have nurtured the talent of our students, motivating them to achieve their best in education, sports, and arts. Our success stems from the vision of founders Fred and Sigrid Ott—to create an international high school in a secure, inspiring location, where young people can reach their academic and personal potential, and become true “citizens of the world.” Under the leadership of the third generation of the Ott family, this vision continues to guide our mission of promoting international understanding among young people and excellence in boarding school education.

It is in this spirit that we educate our students at Leysin American School. We believe that they have a great contribution to make in the 21st century, both as future leaders in their countries and in the world.

1.2 SCHOOL GOVERNANCE TODAY

In 2005, the Ott Family decided to cede majority ownership of the school to the LAS Foundation for the Advancement of International Education, a non-profit philanthropic organization overseen by the Swiss government.

The Foundation has two operational goals—first, to maintain LAS’s current mission of offering a high-quality education to its students; and, second, to pursue fundraising support for student scholarships, special projects, annual funds, and capital campaigns.

The current governance of the school is organized in the following manner:

- The LAS Foundation for the Advancement of International Education provides any necessary developmental support to the school.
- The LAS Board is responsible for the operations, development, and financial affairs of the school. This board reports directly to the Foundation Board.

- The school also maintains a separate 501(c)(3) charitable foundation in the United States. This foundation receives vital donations from LAS alumni, alumni parents, current parents, and friends who are US taxpayers.

1.3 OUR GUIDING STATEMENTS AND VALUES

1.31 MISSION STATEMENT

“Developing innovative, compassionate, and responsible citizens of the world.”

To better understand the depth and scope of our school’s mission statement, let’s take a closer look at its meaning:

- By “innovative,” we mean being creative and open-minded while developing a passion for learning.
- By “compassionate,” we mean demonstrating a strength of character through a true sense of kindness and caring.
- By “responsible,” we mean making thoughtful decisions that take into account the community and the environment.
- By “citizens of the world,” we mean encouraging a state of mind that promotes international understanding through a shared respect for everyone, regardless of their culture.

1.32 PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

- **Academic Challenge** - LAS offers students an academically challenging setting based on realistic goals to prepare them for university study. To meet this challenge, students are expected to master the skills necessary to become lifelong learners. Non-native English speakers can expect a supportive environment in the classroom that enhances the mastery of English communication skills.
- **Balanced Program** - LAS offers a balanced program of study, sports, recreation, and cultural travel in order to promote the holistic education of our students.
- **International Understanding** - LAS promotes a living and learning environment where students can mature into model ‘citizens of the world’ who are actively engaged in promoting those principles defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- **Community Harmony** - LAS is committed to maintaining a stable, caring, and supportive family-like environment. Students receive guidance through daily interaction with live-in faculty who provide an *in loco parentis* presence while serving as role models.

- **Partnership with Parents** - LAS believes that the involvement of parents is integral to the success of our students. Through school initiatives that encourage long-distance parenting, LAS parents can become partners in our educational process.

1.33 CORE VALUES

- **Students First** - Recognizing our responsibility to prepare our students for university, careers, and life, we have based our organization, programs, and policies on fulfilling every student's needs.
- **Teachers are the Key** - Our faculty plays a key role in creating a holistic education for our students—one that reaches beyond the classroom to include social, moral, and emotional growth.
- **Leadership with Inspiration** - As educators, we know that inspired students are motivated students. For this reason, faculty and administrators alike work to provide inspired leadership to every student at LAS.
- **Management with Purpose** - Prudent and consistent management practices provide the framework through which our educational goals can be achieved.
- **Systems for Support** - Supporting systems and programs collectively advance the mission and goals of the school and provide a safe environment for students, staff members, and visitors.
- **Continual Improvement** - To promote an evolving environment of academic excellence and personal growth, LAS seeks to make the newest technologies and most innovative tools available to our students.

1.34 LAS LEARNER PROFILE

The LAS educational program is designed to promote the expectations of our mission for students to become *'innovative, compassionate, and responsible citizens of the world.'* These traits are the guiding principles of our programs, and are put into practice in our school by the IB Learner Profile:

1. **Inquirers:** We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.
2. **Knowledgeable:** We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

3. **Thinkers:** We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyze and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.
4. **Communicators:** We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.
5. **Principled:** We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.
6. **Open-Minded:** We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.
7. **Caring:** We show empathy, compassion, and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.
8. **Risk-Takers:** We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.
9. **Balanced:** We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.
10. **Reflective:** We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

1.35 LAS SCHOOL PLEDGE

We ask all students to recite this pledge at the beginning of the year, affirming their commitment to the ideals and philosophy of the school.

Leysin American School Community Pledge

As a member of the LAS community,
I pledge to be an innovative, compassionate, and responsible citizen of the world.

I am innovative.

I am an inquisitive risk-taker, seeking knowledge.

I am compassionate.

I am an open-minded, respectful, caring communicator.

I am responsible.
 I am ethical, reflective, and balanced.
 I am a citizen of the world.
 I will honor, embrace, and respect my own and other cultures.
 I will uphold these, our community values, with the highest regard.

1.36 CORE PRINCIPLES

Leysin American School is dedicated to developing innovative, compassionate, and responsible citizens of the world. To that end, LAS students are expected to practice the following core principles throughout their enrollment at school:

- Acceptance,
- Commitment,
- Honesty,
- Kindness,
- Reflection,
- Respect.

In the role of *in loco parentis*, dorm faculty, staff, and administration intentionally guide students to live by these values so they will eventually be principled citizens of the world.

1.4 PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

We are excited to work with you, parents, in the best interest of your child. Each parent has access to plenty of information regarding their child’s progress at LAS: from grades, homework assignments, quizzes, and teacher comments, to school-sponsored trips, dormitory information, activities, and financial and health information. All of these links can be accessed through the Parent Portal at las.ch/login. We also partner with parents to help us guide their child during their time at school. This partnership between parents and the school is key to the success of every LAS student.

Parent Communication

Platform	Information	Help
Parent Portal	This is the first stop to access all platforms listed in this table.	Log in with your PowerSchool email address. On your first visit, click “forgot password” to create a password.
Boardingware	View School Pass type and give approval approval.	Dean of Students pfomalont@las.ch

PowerSchool	Find information here about grades, teacher comments, dormitory comments, activity comments, and attendance.	LAS Registrar academicoffice@las.ch
las.ch/news-events	This page will lead you to the LAS News and Events Calendar.	LAS Marketing marketing@las.ch
Magnus Health	Keep up to date with medical records and Health Center visits.	Health Center

At LAS, we believe that parental involvement is a key factor in a student’s success. Parents can follow academic grades and comments by teachers, dorm staff, faculty parents, and trip leaders. This information is available through our online portals. LAS reinforces this by direct discussions with parents throughout the year in Leysin or in the family’s country of residence during our many global trips. Discussions and comments with parents are open, constructive, and aimed at helping each child succeed at LAS and in the future.

Parental Visits at LAS

LAS parents are always welcome to visit their children during the school year to check on their academic and physical wellbeing. As a parent, you also may schedule conferences in advance with teachers—simply email registrar@las.ch at least one week before the date of your visit. Parent conferences are scheduled to be during the school day and may include appointments with all of your child’s teachers. If you’d like to meet with other members of the faculty or administration, please email your request in advance. To avoid any conflicts with your child’s academic schedule, please consult our travel policies and procedures before your visit and when leaving the LAS campus with your child.

“LAS on the Road”

At LAS our admissions representatives, Director of Advancement, and administrators travel across the globe to meet parents in their home countries. This is a special privilege and opportunity for school administrators to learn more about the home countries of our students. These meetings offer the chance to discuss student progress, share information about what is happening at LAS, and discuss and how best to support each student. School administrators also seek advice on how to make our school better. Many innovations at LAS began with suggestions from parents.

1.5 CONFIDENTIALITY

LAS reserves the right to determine the level of confidentiality in regards to information about enrolled students. While LAS strives to keep student information as private as possible, the school must balance the safety and security of the student as well as any legal requirements when deciding on disclosure. As a boarding school the adults that work here are committed to acting as *in loco parentis* in the best interest of student safety and wellbeing. To ensure a quality duty of care, information is shared in the form of dorm notes and pastoral notes in Boardingware, PowerSchool, Magnus Health, and other software systems.

1.6 RELIGION

In the spirit of true international diversity, LAS recognizes and values the different cultures, religions, and traditions represented by all of our students. Being a secular school, we do not promote one religion over another, but rather encourage our students to respect and learn from all of the world's religions. We understand that many of our students have a strong desire to continue their religious practices while at LAS, and we make every effort to support their needs by making reasonable concessions, while attempting to minimize the impact on the educational procedures of the school. The village of Leysin has both a Roman Catholic church and a Protestant church within the community. There are a variety of other spaces of worship (for example: Russian Orthodox churches, synagogues, and mosques) all within a reasonable commute from Leysin.

1.7 DISCLAIMER

The LAS Student Handbook contains a detailed outline of the established policies and procedures for LAS students. However, it is impossible to detail responses to every situation that might affect students over the course of the year. Therefore administration reserves the right to amend this Handbook as necessary, and to respond in good faith to situations using means not described in this Handbook.