



A Guide to Learning in Middle School at LAS

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



The Middle School at LAS has been designed to provide students in grades 7 and 8 with a safe family environment in which they can learn, study, play, and thrive. Students in the Middle School program are immersed in a tight-knit community of passionate learners and are invited to take part in an exciting curriculum supplemented with opportunities for experiential learning and educational field trips.

Course Descriptions

Academic Core

The Academic Core is designed to provide students with a strong foundational skill set that will lay the groundwork Middle School students need in order to be successful in later grades. Students are placed into English classes based on their language proficiency.

English Language and Literature

The aim of the middle school English course is to explore thematic based topics and concepts through a variety of print and media sources including literary and non-literary texts. Students will develop their reading skills beyond simple comprehension, learning to carefully analyze the texts that they have read. They will explore a range of vocabulary as they read across different genres and styles. Students will write for diverse audiences and purposes developing their organizational skills, word choice, voice, and fluency while continuing to foster the use of proper English language conventions.

Reading and Writing Workshop

This course is designed to provide students with additional opportunities to hone their reading and writing skills. Students will be given ample time and opportunities to read books of their choice not only in English but also in their mother tongue or other spoken languages. Reading and writing will be taught as a process and students will learn to use a variety of strategies in order to develop their skills. They will experiment with different styles of writing, including both structured and unstructured forms. The overall goal of the course is to foster a love of reading and writing.

ELA Foundations

This course for beginner/intermediate English speakers focuses on expanding students' basic English communication skills and cultural knowledge while introducing the language of LAS classroom studies. Students will develop oral interactive classroom skills and reading strategies, expand their vocabulary, and use various sentence patterns to improve writing. Students will also learn how to use school and community resources through language-rich and context-based communicative activities.

ELA Skills

This course is an intermediate/advanced level course in English Language Acquisition. The course is an introduction to English for academic purposes. The focus is primarily on writing and reading skills. Throughout the course, students develop an awareness of grammatical structures used in informal and formal communication, including a review of basic language and writing structures. Students will learn how to write academic essays and other creative text types, in addition to giving formal presentations. Grammar structures are taught through topics on a variety of themes. In terms of reading skills, there is a focus on comprehension of both fiction and non-fiction texts.

Mathematics

Middle School Mathematics focusses on foundational skills and conceptual understandings through the exploration of connections between numbers, algebra, geometry, and data. The course is



designed to be able to accommodate each student's varied experiences and abilities through differentiated instruction. There is an emphasis on fostering curiosity while developing students' investigation and problem-solving skills in order to make connections in a wider mathematical context.

Integrated Science

Middle School Science is taught with an inquiry-based approach aimed at developing scientific skills, values, and attitudes. Content is delivered and assessed focussing on skills, with the aim of creating inquisitive and innovative scientists. The integrated nature of the course allows students to explore different topics of science including branches in biology, chemistry, and physics. The goal of studying Integrated Science in middle school is to provide students with a foundation of skills that allow them to be critical thinkers and problem-solvers, who have a solid grasp of scientific concepts that can be applied to future scientific pursuits as well as real-world situations.

Physical and Health Education

The aim of the Physical and Health Education course is to provide an entry-level program that promotes lifelong participation and learning through the medium of sports and activities. The program is built around a strong ethos of participation, with the opportunity to explore a variety of ways to stay fit for life, whilst embedding roles such as coaching, leading and officiating that enable students to gain the necessary skills to succeed in an ever-changing world.

Academic Electives

Students are able to select two elective courses to supplement the Academic Core.

Beginner French

The Beginner French course aims to develop basic communicative proficiency in the French language and provide an introduction to the study of French-speaking cultures. It assumes that the students have minimal or no prior knowledge of the language and culture. Major topics may include developing communicative skills in the following situations: greetings, daily activities, ordering in restaurants, daily classroom conversation, discussing family relationships, professions and nationalities, shopping, domestic life, and health. Grammar topics may include regular and irregular present tense verbs, negation, definite, indefinite and partitive articles, possessive adjectives, agreement of adjectives, interrogatives, forming questions using inversion, demonstrative articles, comparatives, and imperative verbs forms.

Integrated Arts

Integrated Arts is a multi-disciplinary course that allows students to explore aspects of art, music, and theater. Students will develop skills and a basic understanding of the three art areas by creating and working on projects. Students will critically reflect on the relationship between the disciplines and are expected to collaborate with each other to develop their own understanding of the arts. The students are expected to contribute to the LAS arts culture by presenting their work to the LAS community.

Academic Exploration

Academic Exploration in the Middle School will help students to explore their interests in relation to the diverse offerings at LAS as they continue their education through the course of the LAS Continuum. Components of LAS edge will be introduced in order to facilitate student's exposure to this program so that they and their parents are able to make an informed decision should they choose to apply to become an LAS edge student in the future. This may include elements of the Young Finders Incubator, the Da Vinci Lab, the Design and Performing Arts Conservatory, and the Alpine Institute.



Academic Honesty

The Middle School at LAS takes the idea of academic honesty seriously and aims to make expectations clear to students. This is of utmost importance in an international community of different cultures in which intellectual property values are not always the same.

Plagiarism is defined as taking someone else's work or ideas as if they were your own. We understand that there is a difference between intentional dishonesty and accidental plagiarism. Each case of academic dishonesty or plagiarism is handled separately with consequences determined based on the severity of the case. The focus is on growth and learning with a shared responsibility among teachers and students.

Through following academic honesty expectations, students are better prepared to become innovative, compassionate, and responsible citizens of the world.

What does it take to be successful at LAS?

Learning to challenge yourself

Support is readily available to students at LAS, from the Academic Deans and their staff to the dormitories and faculty families. Students should challenge themselves to push their limits and try new things. In their academics, students will be challenged and meeting that challenge is essential to success.

Finding Interests

Activities and sports at LAS offer a wide variety of opportunities. Making the most of these is essential to student's development as global citizens and in ensuring they have a balanced lifestyle in Leysin.

Making Friends

LAS is a community and lasting friendships between students from many parts of the world are a major part of why alumni return to visit years after they graduate.

Global Awareness

The international nature of the staff and students expose students to cultures and languages from 43 different countries. Cultural and service trips expose students to world issues and the role they play in a global society.

Focus on Earning Strong Qualifications

At LAS, you will be supported in your studies. Your aim should be to make the most of your opportunity. All we ask is that students reach for the stars and make the most of their ability and balance their lives to ensure they are healthy, happy and doing well in their classes. Strong qualifications will be of great benefit in applications to further education.