

# ACS

BEIRUT



## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

### Learning Framework

# Mission



## Mission Statement

ACS empowers students to solve problems with creativity and integrity, to lead well-balanced lives, and to serve Lebanon and the world community with understanding and compassion.



## Identity Statement

ACS is an accredited, not-for-profit, independent and secular American College Preparatory School serving a multi-cultural international student body. ACS provides internationally-enriched, standard-based curricula, preparing students for the International Baccalaureate, the Lebanese Baccalaureate, and the American College Preparatory Diplomas.



## Beliefs - We Believe:

- Students learn at different rates and in different ways.
- Students achieve success by being active participants in their learning.
- Students develop character through engagement with others from different backgrounds and through interaction within the community.



## Objectives - We Achieve Our Mission By:

- Setting high expectations for ourselves and our students.
- Empowering students to be critical thinkers and independent learners.
- Working collaboratively with all members of our community.
- Understanding and utilizing innovative teaching and learning.
- Creating a safe environment for students to take risks and learn from their mistakes.

- Facilitating students' intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth.
- Engaging students in relevant and reflective learning.
- Encouraging students to explore different forms of personal expression.
- Providing opportunities for students to make choices, to lead, and to demonstrate responsibility.
- Supporting students to be caring, empathetic, respectful, and tolerant.
- Developing student awareness and communication skills through the study of languages.
- Involving students in local and international community service projects.
- Preparing students to seek admission to the most selective colleges and universities.



## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

ACS Beirut is a diverse community of students and adults who share different cultural values and perspectives. Community-wide diversity offers learning opportunities for our students as well as opportunities to build relationships across cultures, nationalities, socio-economic classes, and other aspects of identity.

ACS is committed to creating an equitable and inclusive environment and fostering a community of diverse perspectives to prepare our students for a global society. Faculty members work to ensure a safe and open-minded environment where understanding is central to all, where students' differences are respected and appreciated as an integral part of the educational experience, and where every ACS student feels included, cared for, and valued.

# Core Values



## Our Core Values

- Responsibility
- Creativity
- Compassion
- Respect
- Integrity
- Advocacy
- Open-mindedness

The graphic features a vertical list of seven core values on the right side of a dark blue banner. Each value is preceded by a colored circle and connected to a wavy line that runs vertically through the center. The colors of the circles and text are: Responsibility (green), Creativity (blue), Compassion (orange), Respect (green), Integrity (blue), Advocacy (orange), and Open-mindedness (green). The ACS Beirut logo is located in the bottom left corner of the banner.

The **Core Values** at ACS Beirut are embedded in every aspect of Elementary School life. From the first day, teachers work very hard to create a close-knit community within their classrooms. That sense of community is promoted through daily class meetings that cover both pre-planned lessons and the students' contextualized social-emotional needs. Students also have biweekly guidance lessons and monthly class assemblies that

focus on different behavioral values that all students are expected to uphold.

We believe that one of the most important ways students exercise these essential skills is through various community service projects. Throughout the years, students have developed partnerships with the Lebanese Food Bank, DAFA, UWYTA, and other Lebanese NGOs.

## Student Life

- Homeroom classes go to **Deir El Qamar** three times throughout the year. These trips give students practical opportunities to learn about environmental conservation and other practical applications of their science curriculum. Deir El Qamar is also a crucial team-building tool, with our culminating activity being our 5th-grade overnight trip that is taken each year in October.
- Students are encouraged to nurture their extracurricular interests by participating in **After-School Activities**. These activities are extensive and may vary from semester to semester.
- **Community Service** is an important part of the Elementary program and something that we believe is crucial to teach the skills

necessary for a well-rounded life. Students take part in various drives from coats to food. They write letters advocating for their cause and visit the organization to learn firsthand about the mission and vision of the organizations that they serve.

- **Learning Support** is provided to support students who might be having trouble with the Language Arts or Math program. The ELL Program provides identified Non-English Speaker (NES) and Limited English Speaker (LES) students with specific language instruction catering to their English language learning needs in order to be successful in the mainstream classroom and all areas of the curriculum at their grade level.



## Academic Program / Subject Areas

The Elementary School Academic Program is a dynamic learning environment tailored to ignite curiosity and nurture academic excellence. From English Language Arts to Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and beyond, our curriculum is meticulously crafted to establish a strong foundation in core subjects. Rooted in rigorous standards and enriched with diverse opportunities for hands-on exploration, critical thinking, and creative expression, our program equips students to thrive in a complex and interconnected world.

### English Language Arts

The **English Language Arts program at ACS** provides a balanced literacy approach to learning reading and writing.

The love of reading and writing is nurtured through exposure to various quality fiction and non-fiction texts. Students also acquire the habits of reading independently and closely, which are essential to enhance their intellectual dispositions to help them succeed across grade levels and subjects. As writers, they learn and apply narrative, opinion, and informational writing strategies. The foundation of our literacy instruction is based on the **AERO / Common Core Standards** including assessment procedures. The **Teachers College Reading and Writing Program** guides the instruction.

In **third grade**, students focus on mastering foundational writing skills, including crafting structured essays and analyzing characters and settings in texts. This year lays the groundwork for deeper comprehension and expression. Units include grasping main ideas

and text structures, building a reading life, writing different types of genres such as the art of information writing, crafting true stories, and character studies.

In **fourth grade**, students immerse themselves in a lifestyle of learning, emphasizing regular reading and writing habits. They develop a keen understanding of informational texts, enhancing their ability to extract essential information effectively. Units include reading informational texts, realistic fiction, Greek mythology, writing informational texts, and persuasive writing.

By **fifth grade**, students refine their writing expertise, sharpening narrative and informational writing skills to tackle more complex texts confidently. This mastery prepares them for the challenges of middle school and beyond. In Reading, students read from various genres, such as realistic fiction stories, non-fiction articles and books, and fantasy fiction.

## Math

Mathematics at ACS focuses on rigorous concept development. The students use pictorial representations which help them bridge their learning to a more abstract internalization of concepts. The teachers encourage students to reason mathematically, evaluate mathematical arguments both formally and informally, use the language of mathematics to communicate ideas and information precisely, and make connections between mathematical topics across the different disciplines.

As students transition through **grades 3, 4, and 5**, they engage in a comprehensive exploration of mathematical concepts, each year building upon the foundations laid in the previous. In **third grade**, students explore with number sense and problem-solving. They learn to visualize fractions on number lines, comprehend the properties underlying

multiplication and division, and sharpen their problem-solving skills. Moving into **fourth grade**, students deepen their understanding of these fundamental operations, exploring them with increased complexity while also exploring the concept of fraction equivalence. They also engage in studying different topics in geometry. By **fifth grade**, students confront whole numbers, decimal fractions, advanced fraction operations, and the calculation of volume in three-dimensional shapes.

This progression represents a nuanced continuum of mathematical growth, where students not only acquire new knowledge but also refine their problem-solving strategies and critical thinking skills. Through collaboration between educators, students, and families, we ensure that every child receives the support and guidance needed to thrive in mathematics and beyond.

## Science

The elementary science curriculum follows the **Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Framework**. The students base their learning on natural phenomena used to teach science and engineering practices. Using the curriculum framework, conceptual understanding is developed through progressions in earth, life, and physical sciences.

As students progress through grades, their exploration of science evolves, leading to a deeper understanding of the world around them. In **third grade**, students begin by investigating fundamental aspects of the natural world, such as weather and climate,

and explore the forces and interactions that shape our environment. Moving into **fourth grade**, their focus shifts towards the concept of energy and its various forms, alongside an exploration of structures and functions in living organisms. By **fifth grade**, students explore matter, examining its structure and properties, while also addressing real-world challenges such as water shortages and their environmental implications. This progression not only broadens their scientific knowledge but also cultivates critical thinking skills and a deeper appreciation for the interconnectedness of scientific concepts and societal issues.

## Social Studies

In **Third** and **Fourth Grade**, social studies is taught through the non-fiction units of study in Language Arts. The focus of Third Grade is on understanding the basic concepts of an economic system and studying the movement of peoples in different periods of history. The

focus of Fourth Grade is on understanding key concepts and facts of world geography. In **Fifth Grade**, students explore the concept of conflict, examining different types of conflict both at the local and international level.

## Arabic

### Modern Standard Arabic (MSA)

The Elementary School Modern Standards Arabic program is designed for students who are native or near-native speakers of Arabic. It is a literacy-based program that promotes the student's reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Students in the MSA program engage in a Reader-Writer workshop that exposes them to a variety of Arabic genres. In these workshops, students read appropriate grade-level books that help them improve their reading fluency as well as comprehension. They also learn and develop their writing skills and produce coherent

descriptive, narrative, and informational texts. In addition to reading and writing, students engage in daily oral activities that promote their listening and speaking skills.

### Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL)

The AFL program in Elementary School is designed for students who have no prior exposure to Arabic. The course introduces the students to the Arabic language and culture. The main emphasis of this course is on communication in three modes: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational. Basic vocabulary and grammar, as well as simple writing structures, are introduced.

## French

The ACS French program is offered to all students in grades 3-5. The program is designed to meet the needs of a diverse student population by ensuring that each lesson is differentiated through small group work. The program focuses on the three main

modes of communication: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational. The French program promotes the French cultural experience by organizing cultural events and celebrating the "Francophonie" week during the month of March.

## Visual Arts

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The Visual Arts curriculum emphasizes a dynamic connection between students' creative expressions and their understanding of art. With hands-on experiences at its core, our program integrates art history, criticism, and aesthetic appreciation to enrich students' learning. Classes encourage critical thinking, creative problem-solving, and appreciation

for historical and contemporary art. Through sensory engagement, students develop heightened awareness, exploring art holistically. Additionally, the program seamlessly integrates with other subjects, reinforcing art's role as an essential aspect of education.

## Music

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The Music program is structured to foster musical literacy through a diverse range of repertoire. Aligned with the **National Core Art Standards**, our curriculum revolves around the four anchor standards: create, perform, respond, and connect.

Students of all skill levels engage in the conception and development of artistic ideas, bringing them to life through interpretation

and presentation. They learn to discern and evaluate the meaning conveyed by the arts, connecting artistic expressions to personal experiences and broader contexts. In grades 3 through 5, students embark on learning the recorder, laying a foundation that facilitates a smoother transition to exploring other instruments in middle school.

## Physical Education

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The Physical Education program is designed to provide students the opportunity to learn, practice, and develop a wide range of diverse skills for upper-elementary school children. This is achieved through a comprehensive sequentially planned Physical Education program that takes into account the ACS space, equipment, and supplies. All skill-


based and team-cooperative activities and lessons are designed to ensure that students are actively engaged in becoming physically literate individuals. At the end of elementary school, students will have developed a solid foundation of fitness concepts and locomotor and manipulative skills - individually and cooperatively, with some accuracy.



67 Nigeria Street, Jal El-Bahr | 2035 - 8003

P.O. Box 11 - 8129, Riad El Solh

Beirut | 1107 - 2260 Lebanon

 +961 (1) 374 370

 [www.acs.edu.lb](http://www.acs.edu.lb)

