

# Middle School **CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**

Carlucci American International School of Lisbon



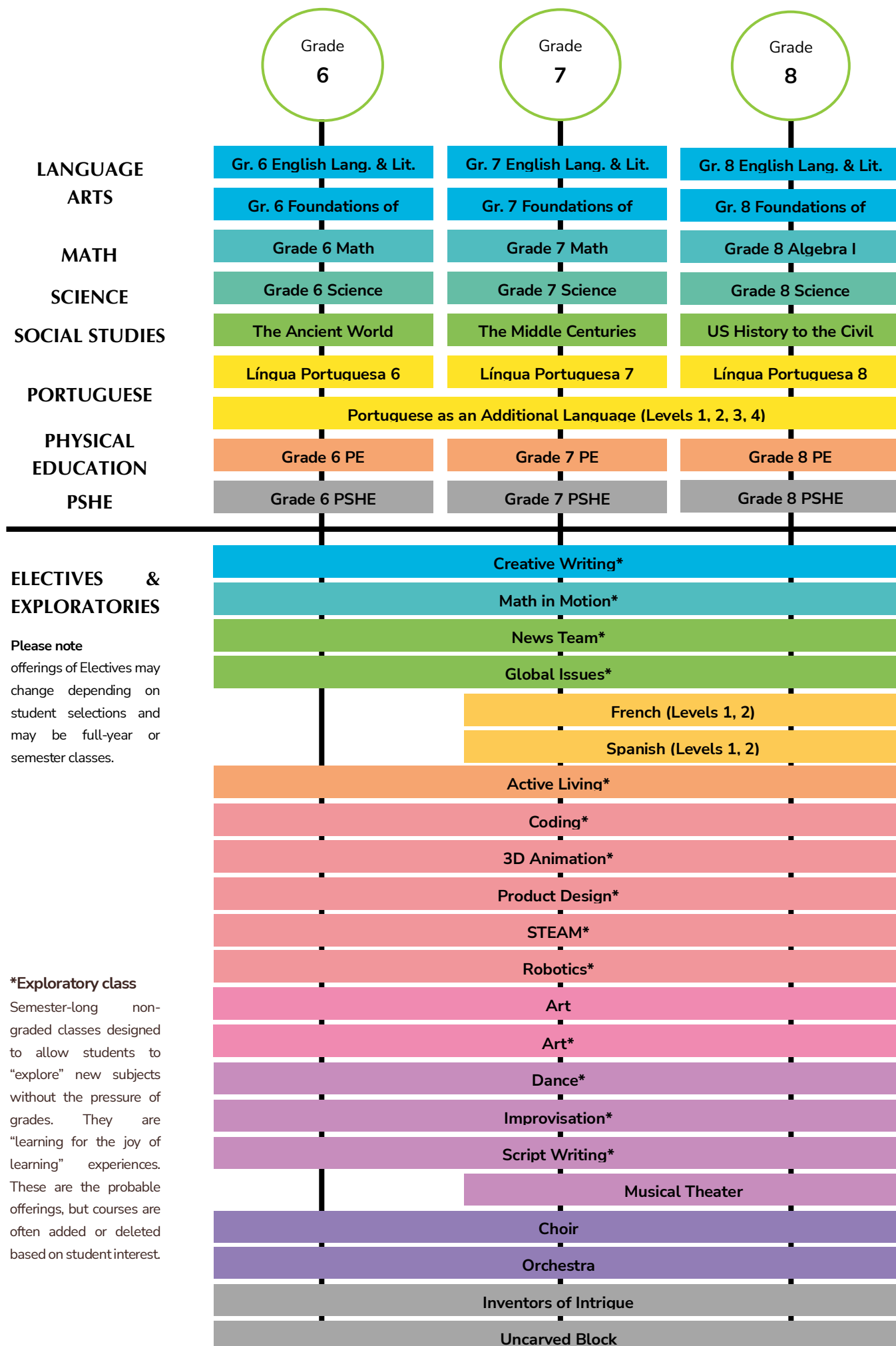
# MIDDLE SCHOOL: Program Overview

## Introduction

CAISL's Middle School program allows students to build on the foundations laid down in Elementary School while preparing them for their eventual progression to High School. CAISL's Middle School curriculum continues to reflect the importance of developing literacy and numeracy through the mandatory core areas of Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, and a Foreign Language, but also allows students to choose electives in the areas of the arts and technology, helping them to tailor their program in line with their interests. One feature of CAISL's Middle School curriculum is the opportunity for students to include "exploratory" courses within their program – exploratory courses aim to provide students with new experiences without committing to a full-year course. CAISL's Middle School program reflects CAISL's commitment to providing a broad and balanced program that allows students to develop a deeper sense of responsibility and ownership of their learning.

Ted Fuller

Secondary School Principal



# LANGUAGE ARTS

## English in Middle School

### Grade 6 English Language & Literature

In sixth grade, students read a variety of literature, comparing and contrasting texts of different genres. Students determine the theme, or central idea of a text, and how it is conveyed through particular details. They study how a story's plot unfolds in a series of episodes (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution), how characters evolve over the course of the story's action, and how the author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text. Students determine the meaning of words, including connotative and figurative, and analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone.

Students in sixth grade write routinely over both extended and short time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. They write arguments and informational text, supporting claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. They write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences using relevant descriptive details and well-structured event sequences. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, the students develop and strengthen their writing as needed, which incorporates the use of technology during development, collaboration, and production.

Sixth graders engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. They interpret information presented in diverse media and formats and explain how it contributes to a topic or text under study. Students delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from those that are not. Students present claims and findings, including multimedia components and visual displays for clarification, and demonstrate command of formal register.

### Grade 7 English Language & Literature

In seventh grade, students read a variety of literature, becoming more familiar with the language of literary analysis. Students determine the theme, or central idea of a text, analyze its development throughout the text, and provide an objective summary of the text. An important feature of seventh grade English is the use of textual evidence, both explicit and inferred, to support summary and analysis. In addition to determining the meaning of figurative and connotative language in a text, students think about authorial choice and consider the effects of a particular sound, word, or phrase on the reader. Furthermore, students analyze how the form or structure of a work contributes to its overall meaning.

Students in seventh grade write routinely over both extended and short time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. They use the writing process to write well-organized, multi-paragraph texts, with an introduction, a clear thesis statement, relevant supporting details, precise language and visual imagery, appropriate register, and a conclusion. Their writing incorporates the use of technology during development, collaboration, and production.

Seventh graders listen critically to speakers and media presentations, identify and analyze information from a variety of formats, engage in collaborative discussions, and deliver oral presentations. Students follow rules for collegial discussions, pose questions that elicit elaboration, and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations. In their presentations, students include multimedia components and visual aids for clarification, use appropriate eye contact and volume, and apply the same conventions of Standard English when speaking as in writing.

## **Grade 8 English Language & Literature**

In eighth grade, students read a variety of literature, becoming more familiar with the language of literary analysis. Students determine the theme, or central idea of a text, analyze its development throughout the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting and plot, as well as analyzing how a text makes connections and distinctions through comparisons, analogies or categories. An important feature of eighth grade English is the use of textual evidence, both explicit and inferred, to support summary and analysis. In addition to determining the meaning of figurative and connotative language in a text, students think about authorial choice and analyze the role of particular sentences in developing and refining key concepts.

Eighth grade students write routinely over both extended and short time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. They use the writing process to write well-organized, multi-paragraph texts, with an introduction, a clear thesis statement, relevant supporting details, precise language and visual imagery, formal style and appropriate conclusion. Their writing incorporates the use of technology during development, collaboration, and production.

Students in eighth grade listen critically to speakers and media presentations, identify and analyze information from a variety of formats, engage in collaborative discussions, and deliver oral presentations. They follow rules for collegial discussions, pose questions that elicit elaboration, and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations. In their presentations, students include multimedia components and visual aids for clarification, use appropriate eye contact and volume, and apply the same conventions of Standard English when speaking as in writing.

## **English as an Additional Language**

### **Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 English Language & Literature**

Students who need language support to access curriculum in English are enrolled in the "English as an Additional Language" (EAL) which is designed to teach students to become socially and academically competent in English. Students who demonstrate beginner through advanced levels are designated as part of the program. Secondary students are given support based on their individual needs and may receive support in small EAL groups, sheltered classes for science or history, or supported immersion in grade level classes.

EAL teachers regularly monitor student progress during the year. English language curriculum is delivered through the EAL Program which assesses each student individually on his or her progress. As students gain proficiency, adaptations are made to their program. This is done through work samples, observations, and official testing. Students transition from Foundations of English when they

show the ability to produce work and demonstrate comprehension mostly comparable to their grade level peers.

# MATHEMATICS

## Math in Middle School

### Grade 6 Math

In order to cultivate an in-depth understanding of mathematics, students focus on developing their process skills through mathematical practices. They make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, reason abstractly and quantitatively, construct viable arguments, and critique the reasoning of others. Students model with mathematics and use appropriate tools strategically. They attend to precision, look for and make use of structure and look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning. Process skills are the essential elements for the mastering of math and will be developed through the critical areas of focus shown below:

1. Apply previous experiences with multiplication, division, and fractions to develop an understanding of rate and ratio as well as completing concepts concerning dividing fractions.
2. Expand student's understanding of the number system with the introduction of negative integers.
3. Introduce algebraic expressions and equations.
4. Develop statistical thinking.

### Grade 7 Math

In order to cultivate an in-depth understanding of mathematics, students focus on developing their process skills through mathematical practices. They make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, reason abstractly and quantitatively, construct viable arguments, and critique the reasoning of others. Students model with mathematics and use appropriate tools strategically. They attend to precision, look for and make use of structure and look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning. Process skills are the essential elements for the mastering of math and will be developed through the critical areas of focus shown below.

1. Develop an understanding of and apply proportional relationships.
2. Develop an understanding of operations with rational numbers and work with expressions and linear equations.
3. Solve problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and work with two and three- dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume.
4. Draw inferences about populations based on samples.

## Grade 8 Algebra I

In order to cultivate an in-depth understanding of mathematics, students focus on developing their process skills through mathematical practices. They make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, reason abstractly and quantitatively, construct viable arguments, and critique the reasoning of others. Students model with mathematics and use appropriate tools strategically. They attend to precision, look for and make use of structure and look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning. Process skills are the essential elements for the mastering of math and will be developed through the critical areas of focus shown below.

1. Use linear equations and systems of linear equations to represent, analyze, and solve a variety of problems.
2. Recognize equations for proportions as special linear equations, understanding that the constant of proportionality is the slope, and the graphs are lines through the origin.
3. Use a linear equation to describe the association between two quantities in bivariate data.
4. Reason on the structure of linear equations and formulas, as well as polynomials and expressions with exponents and radicals.
5. Strategically choose and implement procedures to solve linear equations in one variable, understanding that when they use the properties of equality and the concept of logical equivalence, they maintain the solutions of the original equation.
6. Solve systems of two linear equations in two variables and relate the systems to pairs of lines in the plane.

# SCIENCE

## Science in Middle School

### Grade 6 Science

In sixth grade we focus on developing the following science and engineering practices or skills:

- Asking questions and defining problems;
- Developing and using models;
- Planning and carrying out investigations;
- Analyzing and interpreting data;
- Using mathematics and computational thinking;
- Constructing explanations and designing solutions;
- Engaging in argument from evidence; Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information.

We develop these skills by studying the following content areas:

- Physical Science: Types of Energy and Energy Transfer

- Earth Science: Weather and Regional Climate; Global Climate Change- Causes and Solutions
- Life Science: Cells and Body Systems; Variation and Heredity

## **Grade 7 Science**

In seventh grade we focus on developing the following science and engineering practices or skills:

- Asking questions and defining problems;
- Developing and using models;
- Planning and carrying out investigations;
- Analyzing and interpreting data;
- Using mathematics and computational thinking;
- Constructing explanations and designing solutions;
- Engaging in argument from evidence;
- Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information.

We develop these skills by studying the following content areas:

- Physical Science: Atoms, Molecules, States of Matter; Chemical Reactions
- Earth Science: Rock Cycle, Plate Tectonics; Resources Availability; Natural Hazards
- Life Science: Photosynthesis and Respiration; Ecosystems

## **Grade 8 Science**

In eighth grade we focus on developing the following science and engineering practices or skills:

- Asking questions and defining problems;
- Developing and using models;
- Planning and carrying out investigations;
- Analyzing and interpreting data;
- Using mathematics and computational thinking;
- Constructing explanations and designing solutions;
- Engaging in argument from evidence; Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information.

We develop these skills by studying the following content areas:

- Physical Science: Magnetic and Electrical Forces; Motion and Stability; Kinetic Energy; Waves and Technology; Electromagnetic Radiation
- Life Science: Inheritance of Traits; Variation of Traits; Natural Selection and Adaptation; Evidence of Common Ancestry and Diversity
- Earth Science: Solar System; Cyclic Pattern of Lunar Phases; Gravity; Geologic Time Scale; Natural Resource Consumption



# SOCIAL STUDIES

## Social Studies in Middle School

### The Ancient World

The sixth grade Social Studies curriculum has four main areas of study:

- History, Culture & Perspective;
- Geography, People and the Environment;
- Economics, Innovation & Technology;
- Civics, Government and Human Rights.

Sixth grade Social Studies students will learn about the origins and developments of major ancient civilizations with a thematic focus on Systems, Society and Progress. The course topics include: Early Man, Sumer and Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, and Ancient China. Students will compare and contrast different aspects of these unique cultures that developed around the world during ancient times, and analyze the factors that led to their rise and decline. Emphasis will also be placed on developing students' research skills by evaluating sources and studying a variety of informational texts.

### The Middle Centuries

The Social Studies curriculum has four main areas of study:

- History, Culture & Perspective;
- Geography, People and the Environment;
- Economics, Innovation & Technology;
- Civics, Government and Human Rights.

This subject covers the Middle Centuries with a focus on the impact influence different cultures have had on the Iberian Peninsula. They will study the impact of trade, technology, culture, the availability of natural resources, and contact with other civilizations. Topics include: Monotheistic religions, Feudalism, MR, the Rise and Expansion of Islam, the Protestant Reformation, the Renaissance and The Age of Exploration. Emphasis will be placed on assessing the credibility of a source as well as developing students' research skills by studying a variety of informational texts.

### US History

The Social Studies curriculum has four main areas of study:

- History, Culture & Perspective;
- Geography, People and the Environment;
- Economics, Innovation & Technology;
- Civics, Government and Human Rights.

Grade 8 US History covers the early history of the United States with a thematic focus on citizenship. Students will analyze changes in British policies and the subsequent responses in the North American colonies which led to the American Revolution. They will develop their awareness of Civics,

Government, and Human Rights, and be able to explain the ideals in Founding Documents. Topics include: Slavery, American Revolution, and the origins of modern US government. Emphasis will also be placed on developing students' research skills by evaluating sources and studying a variety of informational texts.

# PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE

## “Língua Portuguesa” in Middle School

### Língua Portuguesa 6

Esta disciplina tem como objetivo solidificar as aprendizagens feitas em anos anteriores. Pretende-se que os alunos: desenvolvam as suas capacidades de expressão oral, através de variadas atividades como a apresentação de livros, o recontar de histórias ou a declamação de poemas; treinem a audição e a compreensão de vários textos; leiam e interpretem vários textos, desde contos tradicionais, diários e textos biográficos, poesia, até obras integrais narrativas, dramáticas e informativas. Os textos são o ponto de partida para variadíssimos trabalhos tais como pesquisas, produções escritas, apresentações orais e discussões em aula visando a melhor compreensão dos textos, mas também da gramática da língua portuguesa. Para fomentar o gosto pela Educação Literária, para além da leitura de obras na íntegra, na sala de aula, os alunos são também incentivados a fazer algumas leituras recreativas.

### Língua Portuguesa 7

Neste ano de escolaridade dá-se especial atenção à leitura e interpretação de textos narrativos (textos de tradição oral e de autor; outras obras de cariz memorialístico), textos dramáticos e textos poéticos. Desenvolver-se-á a consciência das diversas categorias que regem cada tipologia textual, entre outras características estruturais e linguísticas. Estimular-se-á, também, a interpretação e a inferência partindo desses mesmos textos. Para além destas competências, a disciplina de Língua Portuguesa 7 visa sedimentar e desenvolver os conhecimentos gramaticais adquiridos no ano anterior, recorrendo à veiculação de conteúdos de conhecimento explícito da língua e à prática dos mesmos, exigindo um nível mais desenvolvido de domínio linguístico e consciência gramatical tanto morfológica como sintática. Associada às práticas da língua, desenvolver-se-á a técnica de organização e redação de textos, tais como guiões de leitura, apreciações críticas das obras lidas e produções criativas.

### Língua Portuguesa 8

Esta disciplina tem como objetivo solidificar as aprendizagens feitas em anos anteriores. Pretende-se que os alunos: desenvolvam as suas capacidades de expressão oral, através de variadas atividades como a apresentação de temas gramaticais e de livros; leiam e interpretem obras integrais (texto narrativo e texto dramático), texto jornalístico e texto poético; treinem a compreensão de vários textos.

Trabalha-se ainda a produção escrita, nomeadamente a redação de textos do tipo jornalístico e a composição de texto com características narrativas. Os textos são o ponto de partida para variados trabalhos tais como pesquisas, produções escritas, apresentações orais e discussões em aula visando a melhor compreensão dos textos, mas também da gramática da língua portuguesa. Para fomentar o gosto pela Educação Literária, para além da leitura de obras na íntegra, na sala de aula, os alunos são também incentivados a fazer algumas leituras recreativas.

## **Portuguese as an Additional Language in Middle School**

Portuguese as an Additional Language (PAL) is required of all students who are new to the language except to those who are just beginning to learn English. It is taught at Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced level. This program will give students the opportunity to express themselves in Portuguese, orally and in writing, and to understand the culture of Portugal. Students who successfully complete the PAL program through the Advanced level, may be eligible to move into Transitional LP (Língua Portuguesa, native language). During the transition, students will typically receive sheltered assessment.

# **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)**

## **Grade 6 PE**

The 6th Grade PE course teaches students about their physical selves and creates enthusiasm for physical activity while simultaneously helping them adapt to the requirements of a Middle School program and schedule. We provide our students with a balanced program that builds a strong foundation in physical fitness, basic sport performance skills, lead-up games, introducing an understanding of tactics in sports.

## **Grade 7 & Grade 8 PE**

The Grade 7 and 8 Physical Education courses teach students about their physical selves and create enthusiasm for physical activity while developing each student's physical skills. We provide our students with a balanced program that builds a strong foundation in physical fitness, develops sport performance skills to an advanced level, lead-up games, and an intermediate-advanced understanding of tactics in sports.

# PERSONAL, SOCIAL, & HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE)

## **Grade 6 PSHE**

The goal of PSHE is to offer students the opportunity to learn about their personal, social and health development and to help them find strategies to deal with the main problems that occur in this stage of development. Small group sessions, lunch time activities, guest speakers and collaborative projects, will address the following topics with the 6th grade students: coping skills, problem solving, friendship, cooperation/empathy, addictions, bullying, and cyberbullying, digital citizenship and media literacy, study skills (goal setting, time management, procrastination), puberty, stress management, nutrition, happiness and positive thinking... 6th grade students will have close contact with the Personal Counselor so that their questions, concerns and comments can be addressed.

## **Grade 7 PSHE**

The goal of PSHE is to offer students the opportunity to learn about their personal, social and health development and to help them find strategies to deal with the main problems that occur in this stage of development. Small group sessions, lunch time activities, guest speakers and collaborative projects, will address the following topics with the 7th grade students: coping skills, problem solving skills, self-esteem and identity, body image, emotions, the addiction cycle and the use/abuse of substances, bullying and cyberbullying, digital citizenship and media literacy, study skills (goal setting, time management, procrastination), puberty, stress management, nutrition, happiness and positive thinking. 7th grade students will have close contact with the Personal Counselor so that their questions, concerns and comments can be addressed.

## **Grade 8 PSHE**

The goal of PSHE is to offer students the opportunity to learn about their personal, social and health development and to help them find strategies to deal with the main problems that occur in this stage of development. Small group sessions, lunch time activities, guest speakers and collaborative projects, will address the following topics with the 8th grade students: coping skills, problem solving skills, bullying and cyberbullying, digital citizenship and media literacy, study skills (goal setting, time management, procrastination), addictions, peer pressure, communication skills, choices/consequences, media influence in teens, stress management, nutrition, happiness and positive thinking, sexual health and coping with changes/moving to High School. 8th grade students will have close contact with the Personal Counselor so that their questions, concerns and comments can be addressed.

# ELECTIVES & EXPLORATORIES

## Fine Arts Electives

### **Art (Grade 6, Grade 7 & Grade 8)**

Middle School students are all offered an Art elective as a full year course. It encompasses a range of technical and expressive exploration in the media of drawing, painting, sculpture and ceramics. Students will have the opportunity to work both individually and collaboratively and will maintain a sketchbook practice to assist in the development of their ability to plan, explore and communicate visual ideas.

### **Musical Theater (Grade 7 & Grade 8)**

Grades 7 and 8 may elect to take Musical Theater which will develop performance skills both individually and as an ensemble, with an emphasis on rehearsal and audience etiquette. This class produces one major performance during the school year. There are also Drama Exploratories offered which are described in that section.

### **Choir & Orchestra (Grade 7 & Grade 8)**

Middle School students have two music options: - choir or string orchestra. Choir is a year-long class with an opportunity to learn and grow in the area of vocal music. Orchestra is only available as a year-long class for novice string players.

Orchestra students are required to either buy or rent their instrument for the entire school year. Both ensembles perform regularly throughout the year.

## World Languages Electives

### **French/Spanish Level 1 (Grade 7)**

CAISL offers French, and Spanish as Foreign Languages at level one. These courses are designed to develop students' interest in studying a foreign language. The aim is to provide a solid foundation in order to develop language competence and cultural knowledge through speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

### **French/Spanish Level 1 & Level 2 (Grade 8)**

CAISL offers French, and Spanish as Foreign Languages at either levels one or two. These courses are designed to build on the students' foundation in a foreign language. The aim is to continue to provide skills so that students can further express themselves, with more ease, about familiar topics through speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

## Exploratories in Middle School (Grades 6 through 8)

Middle School Exploratories are semester-long non-graded classes designed to allow students to “explore” new subjects without the pressure of grades. They are “learning for the joy of learning” experiences. The probable Exploratory offerings are listed on the chart at the beginning of this guide, but courses are often added or deleted based on student interest.

### **Creative Writing**

Stretch the imagination and develop writing skills through a variety of genres in a creative way. We will explore literary devices and different writing techniques to produce playful pieces of writing.

### **Math in Motion**

In this class, students will be able to step out of the traditional classroom structure. This will include hands-on projects that explore the patterns found in nature, geometry, and game theory. Students will engage in collaborative and inquiry-based learning that build problem-solving skills and foster curiosity.

### **Global Issues**

Introduce students to current events based on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

### **News Team**

Focus on the exploration of the journalistic process starting with research and ending with an edited informative video.

### **Active Living**

Encourage students to be active through playing fun games and participating in low level physical pursuits.

### **Art**

Semester-long non-graded classes designed to allow students to “explore” Art without the pressure of grades. They are “learning for the joy of learning” experiences.

### **Dance**

Build creativity, flexibility, coordination, and enjoyment for dance. Dancers will have a variety of experiences that include improvising, choreographing, collaborating, performing, and self-reflection.

## **Script Writing**

Provide students with the opportunity to give a voice to their imagination and creativity by supplying them with the basic tools to create a theatrical script.

## **Improvisation**

Focus on improvisation and how to incorporate the rules of improvisation in acting exercises.

## **3D Animation**

Students will embark on a journey through the realms of digital design, animation and 3D graphics. Through interactive tutorials, fun projects and hands-on activities, students will learn the fundamentals of 3D modeling, animation and rendering in a way that is both educational and entertaining. Students will design, program, simulate and animate characters, coordinating sound and movement to create interesting animations.

## **3D Project Design**

In this course, students will learn how to find solutions to real-life problems designing and producing objects using a 3D Graphics editor (Blender). Learning useful skills like modeling, prototyping and presentation, students will dive into the iterative design process, from brainstorming concepts to sketching ideas, refining prototypes and 3D printing. Future inventors are welcome to turn their visions into reality.

## **Robotics**

Design, build and program robots. During this course, students are exposed to LEGO Mindstorm NXT and EV3 kits as well as other related materials. Designed robots will be programmed to participate at FIRST® LEGO League and MAIS Robotics.

## **STEAM**

Use critical thinking skills to design, build, innovate, and collaborate with other students in Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts (and Humanities) and Math project-based learning units and tasks.

## **Coding**

In this interactive class, students will explore the fundamentals of programming using Python, a beginner-friendly and powerful coding language. Through hands-on projects, games, and problem-solving activities, they'll learn key concepts like variables, loops, conditionals, and functions. By creating simple programs and mini-games, students will develop logical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills in a fun environment. No prior experience required—just curiosity and enthusiasm!

## **Inventors of Intrigue**

In this hands-on, minds-on elective, students become designers, storytellers, and sleuths. They'll explore the mechanics of great games and mysteries, develop logic and critical thinking skills, and unleash their imagination through divergent thinking challenges. From escape rooms to strategy games to mystery storytelling, students will invent experiences that surprise, engage, and challenge others.

## **Uncarved Block**

Discover ways to identify and develop practical skills to manage stress. The activities focus on mindfulness, self-awareness, and self-reliance.