



PINEWOOD

American International School
Thessaloniki, Greece · Est. 1950

Middle School Program of Studies 2026 – 2027

60 Kennedy Avenue, 55535 Pylea, Thessaloniki, Greece
info@pinewood.gr · www.pinewood.gr

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL	4
ABOUT PINWOOD AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL	5
Accreditation	5
U.S. State Department Sponsorship	5
Mission, Vision & Core Values	5
Nondiscriminatory & Privacy Policies	6
THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT	7
FOUNDATIONS AND PHILOSOPHY	7
Middle School: A Formative Bridge	7
Declaration of Powerful Learning	8
The IB Middle Years Program at Pinewood	8
Student Life and Support	9
CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK	10
American Standards: The Foundation for Skills-Development	10
The IB Middle Years Program: A Concept-Based Approach	11
Core Elements of Learning	11
ASSESSMENT	12
Supporting Student Growth	12
Standards and Assessment Alignment	12
Assessment as Process	13
Culminating Assessments	13
Student Portfolios	13
Academic Achievement vs. Learning Dispositions	13
Habits and Attitudes for Learning (HAL)	14
Criterion Grading: How MYP Scoring Works	15
Calculating Final Grades in the MYP	15
COURSES OF STUDY	16
Language & Literature: Overview of MYP Group 1	16
World Languages: Overview of MYP Group 2	16
Social Studies: Overview of MYP Group 3	17
Integrated Sciences: Overview of MYP Group 4	18
Mathematics: Overview of MYP Group 5	18
Physical and Health Education: Overview of MYP Group 7	19
Electives: A Laboratory for Discovery and Choice	19

MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS	19
GRADE 6 COURSES	20
GRADE 6 ELECTIVES	23
GRADE 7 COURSES	25
WORLD LANGUAGES 7 (Greek International / French / Spanish)	26
GRADE 7 ELECTIVES	29
GRADE 8 COURSES	31
WORLD LANGUAGES 8 (Greek International / French / Spanish)	32
GRADE 8 ELECTIVES	34
ACADEMIC GUIDELINES & AWARDS	37
Grade Advancement	37
Academic Integrity	37
English Language Proficiency & Admissions	37
English Language Accommodations	37
Standardized Testing	37
Course Selection	38
Academic Awards	38

LETTER FROM THE MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Dear Pinewood Families,

Welcome to the Middle School at Pinewood American International School, where our students are known, challenged, and inspired to become the best versions of themselves.

Middle School is often misunderstood. In many schools, Grades 6, 7, and 8 are treated as a transition rather than a season to inhabit. But these are among the most formative years of a young person's life. This is where identity begins to take shape, where curiosity deepens, and where the habits of character that define a person are formed in the choices of ordinary days. That understanding is the foundation of everything we are building here at Pinewood.

Our program is built on a strong American curriculum, enriched by the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (MYP) framework. The American curriculum builds top academic preparation while the MYP framework deepens inquiry-driven thinking. Together, these prepare students for a world that demands more than knowledge; it demands judgment, integrity, and courage. Students here do not just learn content. They learn to question, collaborate, and act with purpose. That purpose culminates in the Grade 8 Community Project, where students move beyond the classroom to identify real challenges and take meaningful action.

More than anything, we are excited about the culture taking shape around our curriculum. We honor the whole child: academically, socially, and emotionally. We amplify student voice at every turn. Your children are not passive recipients of their education. They are active participants in it, shaping their learning, pursuing their passions through a wide range of electives, and discovering strengths they did not yet know they had.

To **all** our families: **welcome**. We are honored by your trust and energized by this community. These years belong to your children and we are committed to making them academically excellent, deeply human, and genuinely joyful.

We are so glad you are here.

Dr. David Mannell
Middle School Principal
MYP Coordinator

ABOUT PINWOOD AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Pinewood American International School is an independent, co-educational, non-profit day and boarding school offering an **American college-preparatory curriculum** and the IB Middle Years Program (MYP) to students in PreK-12 from the local and international communities. The language of instruction is English. Each grade level has 3 or 4 sections with a class size average of 18-20 students in each section. The student body consists of approximately 600 students representing over **55 different nationalities**, including students from the diplomatic community, international business, military, the local Greek community, and others. Pinewood is the **American international school** of Anatolia College.

Accreditation

Pinewood is fully accredited through the internationally recognized **Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA)**. MSA verifies that our school meets or exceeds quality educational standards, is engaged in a program of continuous school improvement, and provides for quality assurance through self-evaluation and peer review. Through re-accreditation — a regular process occurring every seven years — Pinewood was among the very few schools worldwide who implemented the **Sustaining Excellence** protocol, foregrounding **relationships** as the cornerstone of our teaching and learning practices. In addition, Pinewood is authorized by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) to offer the **Middle Years Program**. Pinewood also participates in the *MYP Beta* program, whereby we tailor elective courses to fit our school's own identity.

U.S. State Department Sponsorship

Pinewood is one of 195 schools around the world who are assisted by the **U.S. State Department / Office of Overseas Schools**. The State Department is a valued partner for the school. Although the majority of Pinewood's revenue derives from tuition and fees, the school also receives a small yearly grant from the U.S. State Department to support **educational programming** and **professional development**. Pinewood's Regional Education Officer in Washington, D.C., visits our school every other year to support us in implementing the philosophy and methods of American education.

Mission, Vision & Core Values

Mission

Pinewood aims to offer students a **progressive, personalized American international education** centered on **academic excellence** in each student's journey towards **self-actualization**. This is achieved in a stimulating, **multicultural learning environment** that emphasizes **service, respect for ethical values**, and **awareness of local culture**.

Vision

Pinewood strives to be a **growing center of excellence** in the region by educating students through **best practices** for reaching their full potential as **adaptable global citizens**.

Core Values

Curious Thinkers. Our school environment nurtures **curiosity** and skills for **inquiry, research**, and all types of **communication**. Our students are encouraged to ask 'why' and to take risks in their learning experiences. Our goal is to motivate each student to develop and sustain a **love of learning**. Arising from curious thinking are attributes such as insight, awareness, inquisitiveness, motivation, inspiration, and discovery.

Creative Thinkers. Our school environment encourages a rich diversity of **original ideas, opinions**, and **expressions** to flourish. Our students are given myriad opportunities to practice **flexibility of thinking** in order to develop a **critical mindset**. Our goal is to foster **problem solving** and equip our students for their complex future. Arising from creative thinking are attributes such as originality, critical thinking, open-mindedness, individuality, confidence, innovation, and imagination.

Caring Thinkers. Our school environment includes a **holistic approach** to educating students to show **empathy, integrity**, and **respect**. Our students are committed to the care and understanding of all people. Our goal is for students to care for themselves and to make a **positive difference** in the lives of others and in the world. Arising from caring thinking are attributes such as kindness, balance, cooperation, integrity, responsibility, respect, and concern for self and others.

Nondiscriminatory & Privacy Policies

Nondiscriminatory Policy

Pinewood admits students of any **race, color, religion**, and **national and ethnic origin** to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its **educational policies, admission policies, scholarship**, and **athletic and other school-administered programs**.

Privacy Policy

Pinewood understands that the **privacy** of its students and their families is important. To that end, we have adopted a policy and regulations regarding the **collection, use**, and **dissemination** of personal information, in accordance with the **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The *Middle School Program of Studies* is a comprehensive roadmap for the academic journey of our students. It focuses specifically on the **learning process**: the skills, big ideas, and developmental milestones that define the Grades 6-8 experience within our American curriculum and the MYP framework.

This guide is focused on curriculum and does **not** include school-wide expectations, codes of conduct, or administrative policies, which can be found in the **Parent-Student Handbook**. At Pinewood, we treat academic mistakes as "**information, not identity**". It is important to clarify that this refers to the **productive struggle of the learning process**, which is an iterative cycle of drafting and refining ideas. This pedagogical commitment to "failing well" in an academic context is distinct from the community standards of behavior and disciplinary expectations outlined in the handbook.

FOUNDATIONS AND PHILOSOPHY

Middle School: A Formative Bridge

Middle School at **Pinewood** is more than preparation for high school. It is a formative season, a pivotal stage where students begin shaping the judgment, character, and responsibility that define a **Pinewood** Graduate.

We intentionally design our Middle School as a community where every student is known, valued, seen, and heard. Our program emphasizes **personalized learning, student voice**, and the **thoughtful use of technology** so that students can explore their interests, express their ideas, and engage deeply with the world around them. Rooted in American educational traditions and enriched by our international context, our program honors the developmental needs of early adolescence while guiding students toward lives of purpose and contribution.

Our Middle School learners are invited to:

EXPLORE who I am.

UNDERSTAND how I learn.

DISCOVER my place in the world.

Through steady encouragement and high expectations, students begin developing the habits of mind and heart that allow them not only to succeed in high school, but to flourish beyond it.

Declaration of Powerful Learning

What does powerful learning look like at Pinewood?

We live in a world changing faster than our ability to predict it, and we face a future that is filled with uncertainty and complex ethical challenges. **Pinewood** prepares students not only to enter the world as it is, but to shape the world as it ought to be.

We believe this begins with who students are becoming – not just what they know. Powerful learning at **Pinewood** lives at the intersection of character, ethics, and joy. These are not outcomes we add at the end. They are the conditions we cultivate from the beginning.

Powerful learning happens when students:

- Judge wisely, not just think critically
- Engage difference with humility and genuine curiosity
- Contribute to something larger than themselves
- Grow with intention – formed, not finished

In our classrooms, this looks like:

- A **Kindergartener** dives into messy play, learning to share space, take turns, solve small conflicts, and discover that making a mess can also create meaning.
- A **second grader** discovers their family's traditions look different from a classmate's and begins asking why, what that means, and why it matters.
- A **seventh grader** wrestles with a real community problem that has no clean solution, learning to act with integrity when the right path is unclear.
- A **senior** writes not about where he is going, but who he is becoming, and for the first time, the answer feels like their own.

This is powerful learning. This is how a student becomes someone the world needs.

The IB Middle Years Program at Pinewood

At Pinewood, the IB Middle Years Program is key to our investment in student success in grades 6-8. The MYP is a **concept-driven framework** which we place within the context of rigorous **American standards** to ensure our students explore big ideas as well as gain the necessary foundational knowledge needed to succeed in the next stage of their academic journey, wherever it may lead them. Within this framework, Pinewood students explore their interests and gain conceptual awareness **within a community where every student is known, valued, seen, and heard.**

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate (IB) aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to **create a better and more peaceful world** through intercultural

understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment. These programs encourage students across the world to become **active, compassionate** and **lifelong learners** who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Student Life and Support

Our program emphasizes **student voice and agency**, utilizing **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** to ensure every student can access rigorous, meaningful learning through multiple pathways of engagement, representation, and expression. By intentionally removing barriers, we empower students to understand how they learn best and take increasing ownership of their academic progress. Middle School is a protected space and a laboratory for discovery, where students **practice leadership, navigate disagreement**, and **develop a confident voice** prepared for an interconnected world.

Character, Ethics, Joy: Our Advisory Program

Advisory is the heart of our holistic education, ensuring every student is **known, valued, seen, and heard**. Meeting weekly, students and advisors explore themes such as **mental health, online safety, healthy lifestyles**, and **ethical decision-making**, fostering a sense of belonging within the Middle School community.

Student Services

Our team of professionals supports students in all aspects of their educational journey:

- **Psychologist:** Provides a safe environment for students experiencing emotional or social difficulties, collaborating with parents and teachers to enhance wellbeing.
- **Learning Support (SEN):** Identifies and supports students with diverse learning needs to ensure every "Caring Thinker" can flourish in an inclusive environment.
- **Health and Wellness:** The School Nurse oversees physical and mental health, providing assessment and raising awareness on healthy habits.
- **Library Services:** A welcoming space with over 15,000 volumes, serving as a hub for research, creative learning, and community events.

Learning Across Grade Levels

As **part of our program**, not separate from it, Middle School students collaborate with and support others in numerous ways.

- **Leadership:** In a school where students arrive from and depart to countries around the world, **this continuity of care matters**. Students also take on leadership roles in the classroom, in the community, and across grade levels, learning that leadership is not a title but a practice.

- **Seminar:** Approximately twice per month, Middle School students come together for **structured community sessions** featuring guest speakers, student presentations, and conversations that connect classroom learning to real-world ideas and experiences.
- **Week Without Walls:** A signature experience that **moves learning beyond the classroom** through hands-on inquiry and outdoor education, teaching students that knowledge is interconnected.
- **Service as Action:** Integrated across the curriculum, this program enables students to act as **informed and responsible citizens** by identifying and addressing local and global community needs.

Boarding and Dormitory Support (Grade 7-8)

Pinewood offers a boarding program for Middle Schoolers starting in **Grade 7**. Student Services provides personalized support through a dedicated **Dormitory Liaison** and the School Psychologist, including weekly visits and planned off-campus activities to support students living away from home.

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The instructional design of Pinewood Middle School is built upon a **dual-framework approach** that merges rigorous American academic standards with the conceptual depth of the IB Middle Years Program. This synergy ensures that our students achieve **high-level disciplinary benchmarks** while **developing critical thinking skills** which are necessary to navigate a complex, interconnected world.

American Standards: The Foundation for Skills-Development

Pinewood utilizes established American standards to provide **clear learning benchmarks** and appropriate **skill progressions** across all core subjects. These standards ensure that students develop the essential knowledge required for future academic success in high school and beyond.

- **AERO Standards:** Core courses such as English, Mathematics, Social Studies, and World Languages, all adhere to the **American Education Reaches Out (AERO)** standards. These are aligned with the Common Core Standards used across the United States and identify the critical skills and knowledge areas for each subject.
- **Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS):** The **NGSS** employs a three-dimensional learning approach: Science and Engineering Practices (research and inquiry processes), Disciplinary Core Ideas (central scientific principles), and Cross-Cutting Concepts (themes applicable across multiple disciplines).

- **National Core Arts Standards (NCAS):** Our Visual and Performing Arts curriculum follows the NCAS, which emphasizes artistic creativity, expression, and reflection across disciplines including visual art, music, dance, and theatre.
- **SHAPE America Standards:** We follow SHAPE America's National Standards for Physical Education, which define what students should know and be able to do with respect to motor skills, movement patterns, concepts and strategies, fitness, personal responsibility, and working with others respectfully.
- **Greek National Curriculum:** The Native Greek Language & Literature course follows the benchmarks established by the Greek national curriculum.

The IB Middle Years Program: A Concept-Based Approach

The **IB Middle Years Program** at Pinewood serves as the concept-driven engine for our Middle School journey, merging the technical aspects of American Standards (AERO and NGSS) with a framework of discovery and inquiry. Rather than learning facts in isolation, students use an inquiry-based approach to explore big ideas that connect their studies to the real world, fostering the habits of mind and heart necessary for a **Pinewood Graduate**. This framework fosters intercultural understanding, holistic learning, and the habits of reflection that support meaningful intellectual growth.

The Grade 8 Community Project is a **student-led, real-world capstone** where learners identify a meaningful challenge and take principled action to address it. Building on the skills developed across all subjects, students engage in **hands-on inquiry, problem-solving, and reflection**, with the goal of making a tangible impact. Through this experience, students are expected to **act with integrity, think critically, and contribute their unique voices** to their local and global communities.

Core Elements of Learning

Units of learning are designed to integrate the skill benchmarks from American standards with the four core elements of the MYP:

- **Key Concepts:** These are broad "Big Ideas" such as *Communication, Perspective, and Relationships* that **connect learning** across different disciplines, helping students apply their knowledge in diverse contexts.
- **Global Contexts:** Each unit is framed through a **real-world** lens, encouraging students to **explore** personal, local, and global perspectives. This ensures that classroom learning remains relevant and connected to the world beyond the school.
- **Inquiry & Action:** Learning is driven by guided questions and **Statements of Inquiry**. Students move from inquiry to **principled action**, where they use their agency to solve real-world problems and contribute to something larger than themselves.

- **Reflection:** Reflection is the habit of mind that turns experience into learning. Throughout every unit, students are encouraged to develop resilience in a variety of ways; ongoing reflection supports the development of **self-awareness** to understand not just what they learned, but who they are becoming.
- **Approaches to Learning (ATL):** In all subjects, students explicitly develop five categories of "learning how to learn" skills: Thinking, Communication, Social, Self-management, and Research. These skills are not developed separately; rather, ATL skills are **integrated** into the curriculum with **flexibility** and with **relevance** to our students' needs.
- **Interdisciplinary Units (IDUs) of Learning:** Interdisciplinary Units (IDUs) of Learning allow students to discover that knowledge is **interconnected** and relevant to **solving real-world challenges**. By synthesising insights from different subject groups, students develop higher-order thinking and a more holistic worldview. Additional information about IDUs, including specific assessment criteria, can be found in the Subject Group sections of [this document](#).

ASSESSMENT

At Pinewood, assessment is a tool for **growth, reflection, and meaningful learning** rather than just a measurement of achievement. Our approach distinguishes between the daily learning journey (process) and the curated evidence of mastery (product). The full **Middle School (MYP) Assessment Policy** can be found on our website.

Supporting Student Growth

At Pinewood, we are committed to cultivating lifelong learners who approach challenges with curiosity and resilience. Assessment in the MYP is designed to empower students, encouraging them to reflect on their learning and set meaningful goals. Through formative and summative assessments, teachers provide constructive feedback that helps students develop the attributes of the IB Learner Profile – becoming inquirers, thinkers, communicators, and principled global citizens.

Standards and Assessment Alignment

At Pinewood, we have intentionally mapped our American standards to the four **MYP Assessment Criteria**. This alignment ensures that when we evaluate a student's progress, we are measuring both their mastery of specific AERO/NGSS skills and their ability to apply that knowledge through inquiry and action.

Assessment as Process

Assessment at Pinewood centers on **how students learn** and develop their skills over time. Students receive continuous feedback, and teachers provide **multiple opportunities** for students to engage with content, demonstrate understanding in varied formats, and improve their work through iterative **revision**. This process-heavy approach prioritizes skill development and confidence-building, empowering students to take increasing ownership of their own learning journey.

Culminating Assessments

Demonstration of learning at Pinewood is a continuous, reflective practice rather than a static destination. We believe that learning is not finished simply because a specific assessment has been completed; instead, each learning experience serves as part of an **ongoing feedback loop** where students are expected to take action toward further growth.

To ensure the focus remains on this developmental journey, **Middle School students do not sit for traditional, high-stakes Final Exams**. Instead, we utilize a **range of authentic data** collected throughout the year – for example, through inquiry projects, performance tasks, and research investigations – to measure student progress accurately, efficiently, and consistently. These culminating artifacts are curated as part of **Student Portfolios**, which are meant to provide a complete and evolving picture of each learner’s mastery and reflection as they navigate these crucial developmental years.

Student Portfolios

While daily learning focuses on process, the **Student Portfolio** serves as the definitive **culminating product** for each year.

- **A Body of Work:** This curated collection represents the student's entire body of work produced during the year, showcasing progress across all subjects and highlighting meaningful work, reflection, and real-world application.
- **Multi-Year Reflection:** Students maintain and build upon the **same portfolio throughout their three years** in Middle School (Grades 6–8). This longitudinal format allows students to visually track and reflect on their long-term growth as they cross the formative bridge toward High School.
- **Authentic Evidence:** Through the portfolio, students demonstrate what they know and can do in ways that are both personal and academically rigorous.

Academic Achievement vs. Learning Dispositions

At Pinewood, we maintain a clear distinction between **academic progress** and **behavioral feedback**. Numerical grades are reserved exclusively for a student’s academic mastery of subject-specific MYP criteria; they are never inflated or deflated as a reward or punishment

for behavior. We view mistakes in behavior or organization as "**information, not identity**," providing a safe space for students to repair mistakes and grow in self-awareness.

To provide a holistic view of student development, we use **Habits and Attitudes for Learning (HAL)** marks to give feedback on the growth of a student's character and their "Approaches to Learning" (ATL) skills.

Habits and Attitudes for Learning (HAL)

In addition to numerical grades, students receive qualitative feedback on their **Habits and Attitudes for Learning**, which are the dispositions and skills necessary to cultivate a growth mindset and become an independent lifelong learner. Teachers use HAL indicators to provide feedback on the learning *process*, and students use them to self-assess.

HAL feedback is based on four core criteria:

1. **Attendance & Punctuality:** consistently present and on time for learning sessions.
2. **Preparation:** arriving with the necessary tools, completed tasks, and a state of mind ready for inquiry.
3. **Independence:** self-management and taking initiative.
4. **Collaboration:** working effectively with others, contributing to group goals, practicing empathy, and respectful listening.

HAL Indicators

Teachers assign these qualitative continuum marks throughout the year to reflect a student's current development in each habit:

Indicator	Descriptor
E: Excellent	The student consistently and independently exceeds expectations in this area. They serve as a role model, proactively organizing their learning and seeking ways to contribute to the community.
G: Good	The student regularly meets expectations. They are reliable in their preparation and collaboration, demonstrating the habits of a purposeful and motivated learner.
S: Satisfactory	The student generally meets expectations but may require occasional reminders. They show an emerging ability to manage their time and work with others effectively.
NI: Needs Improvement	The student rarely meets expectations and requires significant teacher support. This indicator serves as a call to action to develop the foundational habits needed for academic success.

Criterion Grading: How MYP Scoring Works

Each course interprets the four MYP criteria (A–D) in ways that reflect the **skills and goals of that subject**. Despite minor differences, all courses share common elements: **students are assessed on understanding, inquiry, communication, and application**, ensuring we see consistent expectations across subjects.

Criterion	What it Measures
A: Knowledge / Understanding	Depth of insight and ability to connect ideas.
B: Investigating / Critical Thinking	Inquiry skills: analyzing and evaluating information.
C: Communicating	Clear and effective expression in multiple formats.
D: Applying Skills / Taking Action	Real-world application, problem-solving, and student agency.

Calculating Final Grades in the MYP

Each of the four criteria (above) is scored **1–8**, with a maximum total of 32 points per subject. Final grades are calculated by adding together the **four criterion grades** for a **total score** that is converted to a **final MYP grade of 1–7**. The MYP’s grading chart is below:

Total Score (Out of 32)	Final MYP Grade (1-7)
28-32	7 - Exceptional conceptual understanding, creativity, and skill application across multiple contexts.
24-27	6 - High-level competence, independent thinking, and insightful connections.
19-23	5 - Strong grasp of concepts with effective application.
15-18	4 - Meets standard expectations with clear understanding and engagement.
10-14	3 - Basic comprehension; requires further support to deepen learning.
6-9	2 - Limited understanding with emerging skills.
1-5	1 - Minimal achievement, significant support needed for progress.

COURSES OF STUDY

Students take a range of courses across the Middle School program. The following descriptions capture the subject studied across all three years of Middle School. Specific course descriptions are provided in the next section.

Note that Pinewood students do not complete the formal MYP eAssessment in any subject.

Language & Literature: Overview of MYP Group 1

MYP Language & Literature courses equip students with linguistic, analytical, and communicative skills. Students develop skills in six domains – listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and presenting – and can be expected to form opinions, make decisions, and engage in ethical reasoning. The course offers a balanced study of genres and literary texts, including a world literature component. Students interact with the course to generate moral, social, economic, political, cultural, and environmental insights.

Subject Objectives

The study of MYP Language and Literature encourages and enables students to:

- Use language as a vehicle for **thought, creativity, reflection, learning, self-expression, and social interaction.**
- Develop **critical, creative, and personal approaches** to studying and analyzing literary and non-literary works.
- Engage with texts from different **historical periods and a variety of cultures.**
- Explore and analyze aspects of **personal, host, and other cultures** through literary and non-literary texts.
- Apply linguistic and literary concepts and skills in a variety of **authentic contexts.**

View the full list of MYP Language and Literature Subject Objectives [here](#).

World Languages: Overview of MYP Group 2

The study of Language Acquisition at Pinewood develops a student's ability to interact across cultures and navigate a globalized world with curiosity and empathy. Beginning in Grade 6, students study **Greek International** and, beginning in Grade 7, students can elect to study **French** or **Spanish**. In our Middle School, language learning is a vehicle for **intercultural understanding and personal expression.**

Subject Objectives

The study of Global Communication encourages and enables students to:

- Develop the ability to **communicate effectively** in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes.
- Develop an awareness of the **relationship between languages and cultures**.
- Engage with the host culture and global communities through **authentic linguistic interactions**.
- Acquire the skills to process and respond to information in **listening, reading, speaking, and writing**.

View the full list of MYP Language Acquisition Subject Objectives [here](#).

Social Studies: Overview of MYP Group 3

Social Studies courses in Middle School fall under the **MYP Group 3: Individuals and Societies**. At Pinewood, these courses help students understand the complex relationships between people, societies, and the environments in which they live. Drawing on disciplines such as **history, geography, economics, and civics**, students investigate how human systems develop, interact, and change over time. Our program emphasizes perspective, evidence-based reasoning, and global awareness, encouraging students to recognize the connections between past events and contemporary issues.

In Middle School, assessment emphasizes **inquiry, action, and authentic application** rather than only traditional testing. Students use projects, simulations, and collaborative research as evidence of their growth.

Subject Objectives

The study of MYP Individuals and Societies encourages and enables students to:

- Appreciate **human and environmental commonalities and diversity**.
- Understand the **interactions and interdependence** of individuals, societies, and environments.
- Develop **inquiry and research skills** used in the humanities and social sciences.
- Analyze historical, geographic, political, and economic **perspectives using evidence**.
- Evaluate multiple viewpoints and consider the **impact of decisions** on communities and environments.
- Act as **informed and responsible citizens** in local and global contexts.

View the full list of MYP Individuals and Societies Subject Objectives [here](#).

Integrated Sciences: Overview of MYP Group 4

Middle School Science at Pinewood develops scientific literacy, critical reasoning, and investigative skills through inquiry-based learning. Students explore life, physical, and earth sciences across an integrated curriculum that presents science as a dynamic process to understand patterns, interactions, and changes in the natural world. Assessment emphasizes **scientific habits of mind** – questioning, investigating, and analyzing evidence – through inquiry-based labs and research projects.

Subject Objectives

The study of MYP Science encourages and enables students to:

- Develop **curiosity and a sense of wonder** about the natural world.
- Understand scientific methods and appreciate the nature of **scientific knowledge**.
- Communicate scientific ideas effectively using appropriate **terminology and representations**.
- Analyze and interpret data to make **evidence-based conclusions**.
- Appreciate the interrelationship between **science, technology, and society**, including ethical and environmental implications.

View the full list of MYP Science Subject Objectives [here](#).

Mathematics: Overview of MYP Group 5

Mathematics at Pinewood emphasizes understanding and applying mathematical concepts to model real-world situations, make predictions, and solve problems. Students explore how mathematical systems describe patterns and change across Number, Algebra, Geometry, Data, and Probability. Authentic inquiry—including investigations and collaborative problem-solving—helps students develop logical reasoning and represent ideas in multiple ways.

Subject Objectives

The study of MYP Mathematics encourages and enables students to:

- Enjoy mathematics and develop **curiosity regarding its elegance and power**.
- Develop logical, critical, and **creative thinking**.
- Develop **powers of generalization** and abstraction.
- Apply and **transfer skills** to a wide range of real-life situations and future developments.
- Appreciate how **technology and mathematics** have influenced each other.

View the full list of MYP Mathematics Subject Objectives [here](#).

Physical and Health Education: Overview of MYP Group 7

Physical and Health Education (PHE) at Pinewood is designed to foster **lifelong wellbeing** and social interaction. The program moves beyond physical activity to explore health perspectives, tactical strategies, and leadership roles, ensuring students connect physical health with psychological and social development.

Subject Objectives

The study of MYP PHE encourages and enables students to:

- Understand the **benefits of physical activity** and its impact on lifelong health.
- Develop **tactical awareness** and strategic thinking in competitive and cooperative scenarios.
- Exercise **leadership and sportsmanship** through officiating, coaching, and team-building.
- Make **informed lifestyle choices** regarding nutrition, sleep, and digital ethics.

View the full list of MYP Physical and Health Education Subject Objectives [here](#).

Electives: A Laboratory for Discovery and Choice

Electives at Pinewood Middle School are designed to amplify **student voice, choice, and agency**. Students explore their passions, take ownership of learning, and develop skills through **hands-on, active experiences** with real-world relevance. As part of our involvement with MYP Beta, we have tailored the assessment criteria for electives so that they meet the criteria for **MYP Art** (Group 6) and **MYP Design** (Group 8), ensuring a unique fit to our Pinewood culture and aims for student learning.

These courses prioritize **joyful, personalized learning**: students take intellectual risks, practice leadership, and see setbacks as opportunities to grow. By the end of middle school, they are equipped to **think critically, act with integrity, and contribute their unique voices** to an interconnected world. There are **no prerequisites** for any of these courses. Each year, electives are updated in response to student feedback and emerging interests.

MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Our program of study is organized below by grade level. During each year of Middle School, students take courses from each of the eight MYP subject groups, with opportunity for student choice injected meaningfully throughout.

GRADE 6 COURSES

English Language & Literature 6

English Language & Literature 6 introduces students to language as a tool for expression, storytelling, and interpretation while building foundational skills in reading, writing, and discussion. Through short stories, poetry, novels, and informational texts, students explore themes such as courage, identity, and perspective, learning to recognize how authors use language, structure, and literary devices to shape meaning.

Through guided writing workshops, collaborative discussion, and oral presentation, students develop command of standard English conventions and strengthen their confidence as readers, writers, and speakers. In Grade 6, students build a foundation to read with care, write with intention, and speak with confidence. By year's end, students will communicate ideas more effectively in writing and speech, demonstrate stronger comprehension of literary and informational texts, and show increasing independence in expressing and supporting their own interpretations.

Greek Language & Literature 6

Greek Native 6 builds foundational skills in reading, writing, and communication, helping students develop confidence in expressing their ideas clearly and effectively. Through the study of paragraph structure, persuasive techniques, narrative prose, poetry, and descriptive writing, students learn how language serves different purposes: to inform, persuade, describe, and move readers. In this course, students develop the ability to identify main ideas, recognize basic persuasive techniques, distinguish between fact and opinion, and engage in sustained reading of a novel that deepens skills in character, plot, and theme. Across all units, oral communication is strengthened through discussion and simple presentations.

Instruction emphasizes clear organization of ideas, development of vocabulary, and awareness of audience and purpose, progressing from structured tasks toward greater independence in both writing and speaking. By the end of the course, students demonstrate improved reading comprehension, clearer organization in writing, and greater confidence in both written and spoken expression, gaining an understanding of how language can be used creatively and purposefully.

Note: A Greek language test is administered at Pinewood, the results of which are used to determine readiness for either Greek Native or Greek International.

Greek International 6

Greek International 6 develops students' ability to use the Greek language as a tool for communication, reflection, and self-expression. Students build skills in listening, speaking,

reading, and writing while learning to interpret and respond to spoken and written texts in familiar contexts. The course is grounded in meaningful, real-life situations and cultural contexts, enabling students to engage with Greek language and culture, participate more fully in their community, and develop intercultural understanding alongside multilingual competence.

Learning is supported through a communicative, student-centered approach, with scaffolded instruction that progresses from basic vocabulary and sentence structure to more extended speaking and writing tasks. Through interactive activities, guided practice, and differentiated support, learners gain accuracy, confidence, and the ability to adapt language to purpose and audience. By the end of the course, students will express themselves with greater clarity, participate in simple conversations, understand a range of basic texts, and show a growing awareness of how language fosters cultural understanding and personal expression.

Note: A Greek language test is administered at Pinewood, the results of which are used to determine readiness for either Greek Native or Greek International.

Social Studies 6

Social Studies 6 is a foundational course in which students explore how human societies develop by investigating four ancient civilizations through the analytical lenses of geography, society, power, and belief. Rather than memorizing isolated facts, students analyze patterns across cultures, compare civilizations systematically, and construct evidence-based explanations grounded in primary and secondary sources.

Instruction is supported through structured debates, simulations, discussions, and comparative analysis projects that connect students directly with historical evidence. Students learn to ask meaningful questions, examine multiple perspectives, and construct historical arguments using maps, artifacts, and primary sources. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate foundational historical reasoning, perspective-taking abilities, and the capacity to recognize patterns in how societies respond to fundamental challenges; these skills are vital in preparing students for increasingly sophisticated historical work in future grades.

Science 6

Science 6 introduces students to what it means to think and work like a scientist. The course develops foundational skills in scientific inquiry, experimentation, and evidence-based reasoning through investigations in chemistry, life science, energy, environmental science, and earth science. Understanding how scientists gather evidence and ask questions about the natural world is as important here as the content itself -- students are learning not just what science knows, but how it comes to know it.

Through laboratory investigations, collaborative research, and environmental case studies,

students explore the properties and changes of matter, examine the structures and functions of living things, and analyze how energy and environmental systems influence life on Earth. Instruction encourages curiosity, careful observation, and clear scientific communication. By year's end, students will demonstrate growing confidence in designing and describing investigations, interpreting evidence, and communicating their findings with increasing precision and scientific vocabulary.

Mathematics 6

Mathematics 6 develops students' ability to think quantitatively and reason systematically, building strong foundations for confident problem-solving. Students develop fluency with decimals, fractions, factors, and multiples before exploring percentages, ratio, and proportional reasoning in real-life situations. The course continues with expressions and equations, key concepts in plane geometry, and an introduction to statistics and probability, before extending the number system through integers.

Throughout the year, instruction is carefully scaffolded to move students from concrete understanding to abstract reasoning, with consistent emphasis on mathematical communication and problem-solving strategies. By year's end, students will demonstrate fluency with number operations across multiple representations, apply proportional and algebraic reasoning to solve problems, interpret and construct statistical displays, reason about probability, and approach mathematics with growing confidence and curiosity.

Physical Education 6

Physical Education 6 develops students' understanding of the importance of physical activity through participation in a range of individual and team sports. Students begin to build confidence in movement, improve coordination, and develop basic sport-specific skills while learning how exercise, teamwork, and healthy habits contribute to overall well-being. Through units such as Basketball, Soccer, International Sports, Volleyball, and Baseball, students take part in activities that promote physical fitness, cooperation, and responsible participation.

Through structured practice, guided instruction, and game play, students are introduced to the basic rules and regulations of each sport, develop fundamental techniques through drills, and begin applying their skills in simple game situations. Across all units, students are supported in building teamwork, communication, and positive attitudes toward physical activity. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate growing confidence in movement, improved basic skills, and a stronger understanding of how physical activity supports health, enjoyment, and personal development.

GRADE 6 ELECTIVES

Students in Grade 6 choose two elective courses, each of which fits with the **merged Art & Design Criteria**. We actively seek student input on elective courses and, as such, the elective course list is subject to change on an annual basis.

Visual Arts 6

Visual Arts 6 is designed for all experience levels and builds foundational skills and conceptual understanding to prepare students for further artistic study while developing creative confidence. Art is a way of solving problems, taking risks, and seeing the world differently -- habits of mind that extend far beyond the classroom. Students learn to revise, experiment, and see mistakes as necessary steps toward growth.

Students explore media including drawing, comics, painting, and collage, balancing foundational technique – such as perspective, composition, and character design – with expressive exploration of how personal stories can be told through visual metaphor. By practicing the habits of artists – observing, questioning, and reflecting – students develop a more confident sense of personal expression and emerge with work that demonstrates technical growth and the creative resilience needed to find meaning through making.

Robotics 6

In Robotics 6, students are introduced to the MYP Design Cycle and the iteration process through two comprehensive projects. During the first unit, they develop a 3D-printed multifunctional keychain designed to adapt to specific physical interactions and applications. This is achieved through rigorous research into existing products, creative ideation techniques, and the consistent recording of progress in process journals, culminating in the production and formal evaluation of their final product.

In the second project, students transition to robotics by developing a hopping legged robot engineered to navigate rough surfaces. Working in teams, they follow multiple iteration cycles that allow them to combine their ideas into the most effective end product based on objective data collection. By the conclusion of the course, students are able to use both 3D printing and robotic technologies effectively to develop sophisticated products through the framework of the Design Cycle.

Dance 6

Dance 6 introduces students to movement as a way to express themselves, communicate ideas, and explore their creativity in a supportive and engaging environment. As the first year of dance in the program, the course focuses on building strong foundations in movement, coordination, and body awareness, while encouraging students to see dance as a meaningful form of personal and artistic expression.

Through four units covering movement, choreography, performance, and purpose, students grow from learning basic movements to creating their own short dance sequences. Step-by-step guidance helps students develop artistic habits, try new ideas, collaborate with peers, and reflect on their learning. By the end of the course, students will have built not only physical skills but also confidence, creativity, and resilience, understanding that dance is both a physical discipline and a powerful language for human expression.

Scouts 6

In Scouts 6, students build outdoor skills, leadership, and environmental responsibility through hands-on projects and real-world problem solving. Using the Design Thinking process, students learn to identify challenges, work collaboratively, and create practical solutions. Across a wide range of activities, students will have opportunities to think creatively while building confidence, teamwork, and communication skills.

Throughout the course, students are encouraged to take initiative, care for the natural world, and connect their learning to their community. They receive support through collaborative projects, guided exploration, and opportunities to present their ideas to authentic audiences. Students may also earn official badges from *Scouting America* as they demonstrate new skills. By the end of the course, students will have stronger problem-solving abilities, greater independence, and the confidence to make meaningful contributions both in and outside the classroom.

Note: *this course comes with a 140 Euro fee, which is used for all official Scouts registration and badge fees.*

Keyboard Lab 6

Keyboard Lab 6 develops foundational musicianship through keyboard instruments, particularly the piano, and digital music tools. Learning an instrument builds discipline, coordination, and creative skills that transfer across disciplines and provide students with a lifelong relationship with music. Students learn basic technique, music theory, and ensemble skills while exploring how music is created, practiced, and performed.

Instruction balances technical skill-building with creative exploration and expressive performance. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate growing keyboard technique and music literacy, the ability to read and produce basic musical ideas, and an appreciation for music as both an art form and a means of personal expression.

Public Speaking 6

Public Speaking 6 develops students' ability to communicate confidently, think critically, and engage meaningfully with the world around them. The ability to articulate ideas clearly, listen actively, and construct well-reasoned arguments is one of the most transferable skills a student can develop. Through a performing-arts-based approach, students apply design

thinking to communicating about real issues and current events.

Activities include structured discussions, speeches, debates, simulations, storytelling, and collaborative dialogue. By the end of the course, students will be able to shape messages for specific audiences, speak with greater confidence and clarity, construct and deliver structured arguments, engage respectfully in debate and discussion, and demonstrate stronger critical thinking when evaluating ideas and information.

Language Mastery 6

Language Mastery 6 supports students who are developing their English language proficiency to a level that allows them to succeed fully in Pinewood's academic program. English is the language of instruction across all courses at Pinewood, and students who are still building fluency deserve dedicated, respectful support to ensure access to, and success in, our program.

Through targeted instruction in reading, writing, listening, and speaking, students develop the vocabulary, grammar, and communication strategies needed to participate confidently in academic contexts. Placement is determined by the administration based on language assessment. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate meaningful growth in English proficiency, stronger academic communication skills, and increased confidence in using English across all areas of school life.

GRADE 7 COURSES

English Language & Literature 7

English Language & Literature 7 develops students' ability to use language as a vehicle for thought, reflection, and self-expression while building critical and personal approaches to analyzing literary and non-literary texts. Students examine persuasive rhetoric through speeches and advertisements, engage with moral responsibility, courage, and activism through historical fiction and personal narrative, analyze craft and structure in short stories, and encounter the language and world of Shakespeare for the first time.

Activities are designed to center on paragraph organization, writing craft, oral presentation, and collaborative discussion. Students develop command of standard English conventions, strengthen their ability to adapt language to audience and purpose, and practice building on others' ideas while expressing their own with clarity and confidence. By year's end, students will demonstrate deeper analytical capacity, produce well-organized evidence-based writing, exhibit greater fluency in academic conversation and presentation, and show heightened awareness of how language functions as a tool for persuasion, empathy, and change.

Greek Language & Literature 7

Greek Language & Literature 7 develops students' ability to use language effectively for communication, critical thinking, and self-expression. Through persuasive writing, personal narrative, short stories, and Homer's *Odyssey*, students build skills in interpreting voice, perspective, and emotional tone while learning to organize ideas coherently and support them with evidence. The study of foundational literary texts -- from ancient epic to contemporary authors -- develops students' ability to analyze themes, character, and structure while making connections between literature and the world around them.

Across all units, students strengthen writing skills including paragraph structure, coherence, and grammatical accuracy, as well as oral communication through discussion and presentation. By the end of the course, students demonstrate increased confidence in expressing ideas, greater precision in language use, and a deeper understanding of how language functions as a tool for storytelling, persuasion, and critical inquiry.

WORLD LANGUAGES 7 (Greek International / French / Spanish)

World Languages 7

World Languages 7 (*MYP Phases 1-2 / CEFR A1-A2*) develops students' ability to use language for communication, self-expression, and intercultural understanding while building foundational skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. At the Emergent level, learners are introduced to the language through familiar topics such as personal identity, daily routines, and family life, using basic structures to express meaning in everyday contexts.

Students engage with authentic, age-appropriate materials to build cultural awareness and interpret simple messages, while recognizing how communication shifts based on audience and purpose. Through structured practice and interactive tasks, students develop essential vocabulary, foundational grammar, and confidence in expressing ideas. By the end of the year, students will communicate in familiar situations, produce simple spoken and written texts, and apply a basic repertoire of language with increasing accuracy and independence.

Greek International 7

This course is designed for students learning Greek as an additional language. Foundational study focuses on introductions, origin and residence, and family, learning to use the simple present tense to define themselves and their surroundings. Developmental study expands to place description and holiday contexts, where students begin using future and simple past tenses to communicate personal and cultural habits. As students gain independence, they use more complex descriptions to discuss lifestyle choices and give advice.

French 7

French students explore the language through the lens of identity and global interaction. At the Emergent level, units cover identity formation, cultural expression, and health and eating habits, building foundational structures and vocabulary for daily life. At the Capable level, students progress to topics of leisure, sustainability, and rights and responsibilities, moving toward complex tenses and debating global issues.

Spanish 7

Using the *Reporteros* framework, Spanish students move from personal identity to historical and global analysis. At the Emergent level, students explore identity, preferences, and daily routines, learning regular verbs and basic sentence structures to interact in familiar situations. At the Capable level, students examine change and development and orientation in space and time, engaging with cultural references from Zaragoza to Chile using the imperfect and preterit tenses.

Social Studies 7

Social Studies 7 develops students' ability to investigate historical change, analyze cultural, political, and economic systems, and construct evidence-based explanations about how societies organize, expand, interact, and transform over time. Through the study of the medieval and early modern world, students examine the rise and fall of empires, the spread of major religions, the development of feudal and trade systems, and the innovations that reshaped societies during the Renaissance -- across Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and the wider Afro-Eurasian world.

Students strengthen their ability to think, write, and speak like historians by analyzing sources, developing claims, and supporting their ideas with evidence. The PEEL framework helps students organize clear historical arguments, while debates, Socratic seminars, and collaborative activities encourage them to examine multiple perspectives and engage meaningfully with the past. By year's end, students will demonstrate stronger historical reasoning, produce more organized evidence-based writing, and explain connections between past developments and broader patterns of human interaction.

Science 7

Science 7 develops students' understanding of how scientific thinking explains the natural world, from microscopic cells to complex ecosystems. Learners build skills in inquiry, data analysis, and evidence-based reasoning while exploring how scientific knowledge is constructed and applied. Students investigate the organization of living systems, explore energy flow and matter cycling, examine how biologists use evidence to support their theories, and apply their understanding of environmental interactions.

Through scaffolded inquiry, from designing investigations and interpreting data to constructing explanations and engaging in scientific discussion, students develop confidence in using scientific language, analyze patterns and relationships, and apply concepts to real-world challenges such as climate change and food sustainability. By year's end, students will demonstrate stronger inquiry and critical thinking skills, construct well-supported scientific explanations, and show increased awareness of how science helps us understand and respond to environmental and societal issues.

Mathematics 7

Mathematics 7 develops students' ability to think with greater precision and abstraction, extending their mathematical foundations while building algebraic fluency, geometric reasoning, and statistical literacy. Students strengthen their understanding of integers, progress through algebraic expressions and sequences to linear equations and inequalities, explore 2D geometry and multi-step problem-solving, and engage with statistics through the full data cycle. Mathematics at this level is where students move from computing answers to constructing arguments, a shift that sharpens thinking across every discipline.

Throughout the year, instruction moves students beyond procedural recall toward conceptual understanding and flexible application, with consistent emphasis on mathematical communication, logical justification, and independent problem-solving. By year's end, students will demonstrate increased fluency and confidence, apply mathematical reasoning to unfamiliar and multi-step problems, communicate their thinking with clarity and precision, and approach mathematics as a connected and meaningful discipline.

Physical Education 7

Physical Education 7 develops students' understanding of the value of physical activity through active participation in a range of individual and team sports. Students are introduced to the benefits of movement, exercise, and healthy habits while building confidence, coordination, and sport-specific skills. Through units in Basketball, Soccer, International Sports, Volleyball, and Baseball, students engage in activities that promote physical fitness, teamwork, and responsible participation.

Through structured practice, skill development, game play, and reflective participation, students follow a gradual progression that begins with basic rules and regulations, moves into fundamental skills and individual techniques, and builds toward applying tactics and strategies in game situations. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate greater confidence in movement, improved sport-specific skills, and a stronger understanding of rules, teamwork, and responsible participation, together with a greater awareness of the importance of physical activity for health and well-being.

GRADE 7 ELECTIVES

Students in Grade 7 choose two elective courses, each of which fits with the **merged Art & Design Criteria**. We actively seek student input on elective courses and, as such, the elective course list is subject to change on an annual basis.

Model United Nations 7

Model United Nations (MUN) 7 develops students' ability to research global issues, construct well-reasoned positions, and engage in structured debate and negotiation as representatives of nations in an international forum. The ability to advocate for a position, listen to opposing views, and work toward compromise is among the most valuable skills a student can practice, and MUN offers an authentic context in which those skills have real stakes.

Students develop diplomatic communication skills while working toward resolutions that address complex global challenges, with consistent emphasis on perspective-taking, evidence-based argumentation, and respectful discourse. Preparation involves research into current international affairs, the writing of position papers, and participation in formal debate. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate stronger research and argumentation skills, greater confidence in formal speaking and negotiation, and a deeper understanding of the complexity of global decision-making.

Visual Arts 7

Visual Arts 7 develops the capacity to think, make, and communicate through art. Building on foundational skills, this course deepens conceptual and technical understanding while fostering creative curiosity. Students learn to value trial and error, build resilience through the making process, and see mistakes as milestones -- transferable habits of mind that drive innovation across disciplines.

Through scaffolded instruction, students explore drawing, painting, and clay sculpture, balancing precision – such as mastering facial proportions in Portraits and Identity -- with expressive exploration of how color affects mood in Visual Narratives. This journey guides students through the complete creative cycle: from research and ideation to finished works. By practicing the habits of artists – observing closely, questioning boldly, and reflecting critically – students develop a more confident, original voice and emerge with work that demonstrates technical growth and the creative resilience needed to find meaning through making.

Start-Up 7

Start-Up empowers students to become entrepreneurs and thoughtful problem-solvers by identifying real-world community needs and developing ethical, human-centered solutions.

Using business and design as tools for positive impact, students learn to think critically, collaborate effectively, and approach complex problems with creativity and responsibility.

Throughout the course, students explore topics such as product design, branding, and professional communication while developing prototypes, pitches, and promotional materials. Hands-on projects and collaborative feedback help students build confidence, resilience, and adaptability as they refine their ideas. By the end of the course, students will have stronger analytical and communication skills, greater self-awareness through reflection, and the confidence to take intellectual risks and navigate the process of innovation and improvement.

Scouts 7

Scouts helps students build outdoor skills, leadership, and environmental responsibility through hands-on projects and real-world problem solving. Using the Design Thinking process, students learn to identify challenges, work collaboratively, and create practical solutions. Across a wide range of activities, students will have opportunities to think creatively while building confidence, teamwork, and communication skills.

Throughout the course, students are encouraged to take initiative, care for the natural world, and connect their learning to their community. They receive support through collaborative projects, guided exploration, and opportunities to present their ideas to authentic audiences. Students may also earn official badges from Scouting America as they demonstrate new skills. By the end of the course, students will have stronger problem-solving abilities, greater independence, and the confidence to make meaningful contributions both in and outside the classroom.

Note: *this course comes with a 140 Euro fee, which is used for all official Scouts registration and badge fees.*

Music Production 7

Music Production develops students' musicianship and creative voice through the study and performance of a wide repertoire of music on instruments including guitar, ukulele, drums, piano, and others. Learning to play, collaborate, and create music builds discipline, listening skills, and expressive capacity alongside the confidence that comes from performing for and with others.

Through individual and group work, students practice technique, collaboration, and expressive performance. Music production tools support composition and recording, helping students understand how music is constructed across acoustic and digital contexts. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate improved technique on at least one instrument, stronger ensemble skills, and a growing ability to express ideas and emotion through music, both as performers and as creators.

E-Shop 7

E-Shop introduces students to the world of digital entrepreneurship by guiding them through the process of designing and launching their own online stores using user-friendly web platforms. Through the MYP Design Cycle, students learn how to identify user needs, develop creative solutions, build functional e-shops, and evaluate their work for improvement. Along the way, they explore branding, web design, logo creation, advertising, and marketing strategies while examining real-world examples of successful e-commerce brands.

Through hands-on projects, technical guidance, peer feedback, and creative exploration, students develop both practical digital skills and an entrepreneurial mindset. They learn how design and marketing influence consumer choices while building independence, creativity, and critical thinking skills. By the end of the course, students will have created their own e-shop and brand identity, demonstrating confidence in the design process and the ability to apply digital and communication skills in meaningful, real-world contexts.

GRADE 8 COURSES

English Language & Literature 8

English Language & Literature 8 develops students' ability to use language as a vehicle for thought, reflection, and self-expression while strengthening their analytical and personal responses to both literary and non-literary texts. Students explore identity, voice, and culture through World Poetry; examine resilience and personal narrative in *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*; engage with ambition, power, and consequence through *Macbeth*; analyze influence and bias in Media Literacy; and construct persuasive arguments through structured writing tasks.

Through scaffolded instruction -- from close reading and poetic analysis to essay writing and oral communication -- students build confidence in interpreting complex texts and expressing their ideas with clarity and purpose. They develop command of standard English conventions, strengthen their ability to adapt language for different audiences and contexts, and engage in collaborative discussions that encourage critical thinking and respectful exchange. By the end of the year, students will demonstrate stronger analytical and interpretive skills, produce clear and well-supported written arguments, and show a deeper understanding of how language shapes meaning, influences perspectives, and reflects human experience.

Greek Language & Literature 8

Greek Language & Literature 8 develops students' ability to engage thoughtfully with a variety of texts while strengthening their analytical, interpretive, and communication skills. Through Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*, students build understanding of dramatic structure,

character development, and subtext. Critical reading of articles develops skills in distinguishing fact from opinion, identifying bias, and forming balanced, evidence-based viewpoints. A novel by Alki Zei deepens narrative analysis, while the study of argumentation and poetry sharpens students' ability to construct logical claims and respond to language with emotional and analytical precision.

Across all units, students strengthen their writing by organizing ideas clearly, supporting arguments with evidence, and using appropriate language for different purposes and audiences. By the end of the course, students demonstrate greater confidence in expressing ideas, improved analytical thinking, and a deeper understanding of how language functions across literary and informational contexts.

WORLD LANGUAGES 8 (Greek International / French / Spanish)

World Languages 8 (*MYP Phases 1-2 / CEFR A1-A2*) develops students' ability to communicate with increasing control and confidence while strengthening skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Building on the foundations of Grade 7, learners construct simple connected language in familiar contexts such as daily life, school, leisure, and personal experiences.

Students engage with authentic, age-appropriate materials to interpret meaning in context, expand cultural understanding, and recognize how communication varies depending on audience and purpose. Through structured practice and collaborative tasks, students strengthen vocabulary and communication strategies to support more meaningful interaction and expression. By the end of the course, students can participate in short conversations, understand main ideas in simple texts, and produce organized spoken and written responses using a growing range of language with increasing accuracy and independence.

Greek International 8

This course is designed for students learning Greek as an additional language. Foundational study focuses on introductions, origin and residence, and family, learning to use the simple present tense to define themselves and their surroundings. Developmental study expands to place description and holiday contexts, where students begin using future and simple past tenses to communicate personal and cultural habits. As students gain independence, they use more complex descriptions to discuss lifestyle choices and give advice.

French 8

French students explore the language through the lens of identity and global interaction. At the Emergent level, units cover identity formation, cultural expression, and health and eating habits, building foundational structures and vocabulary for daily life. At the Capable level, students progress to topics of leisure, sustainability, and rights and responsibilities, moving toward complex tenses and debating global issues.

Spanish 8

Using the *Reporteros* framework, Spanish students move from personal identity to historical and global analysis. At the Emergent level, students explore identity, preferences, and daily routines, learning regular verbs and basic sentence structures to interact in familiar situations. At the Capable level, students examine change and development and orientation in space and time, engaging with cultural references from Zaragoza to Chile using the imperfect and preterit tenses.

Mathematics 8

Mathematics 8 develops students' ability to think algebraically and spatially with increasing sophistication, bridging earlier concrete reasoning with more abstract, connected mathematical thinking. Students deepen their algebraic skills through linear equations and inequalities to solving systems of equations, explore linear functions and graphs, study the Pythagorean Theorem through visual proofs and applied contexts, develop spatial reasoning through 3D geometry, and build precise probabilistic reasoning in situations involving uncertainty. At this level, mathematics becomes a language for modeling the real world as students learn not just to calculate but to represent, interpret, and predict.

Throughout the year, instruction emphasizes conceptual understanding alongside procedural fluency, with consistent attention to mathematical modeling, logical justification, and the connections between algebraic, graphical, and geometric representations. By year's end, students will demonstrate confident algebraic fluency, construct and interpret linear functions, apply the Pythagorean Theorem to complex problems, and engage with mathematics as a powerful tool for understanding the world around them.

Science 8

Science 8 develops students' ability to think scientifically by building their understanding of key concepts, strengthening their use of scientific language, and fostering critical approaches to analyzing and evaluating scientific information. Students explore fundamental principles of mechanics, examine the development of models of the solar system from early civilizations to modern science, and investigate the nature of matter and energy through atomic structure and wave behavior.

Through structured and scaffolded instruction, students progressively deepen their conceptual understanding, learn to formulate and test hypotheses, and practice interpreting, analyzing, and presenting scientific evidence. Emphasis is placed on clear scientific communication, including the use of appropriate terminology and well-organized scientific writing. By the end of the year, students will demonstrate confidence in solving multi-step problems, produce coherent evidence-based scientific reports, and develop a stronger understanding of how science operates as a systematic way of explaining phenomena and expanding our knowledge of the natural world.

Social Studies 8

Social Studies 8 invites students to explore humanity's interconnected past through the analytical lenses of global interactions, systems, and change -- investigating exploration, trade networks, scientific innovation, and Enlightenment ideas. Rather than memorizing isolated facts, students analyze patterns, compare causes and consequences, and construct evidence-based explanations grounded in primary and secondary sources.

The course moves through five units: Exploration & Global Interactions, Natural & Human Disasters, Trade & Exploitation, the Scientific Revolution, and the Enlightenment. Students engage in OPCVL source analysis, research essays, debates, and persuasive writing, connecting directly with historical evidence including primary sources, artifacts, artworks, and maps. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate historical reasoning about causality, perspective-taking abilities, and the capacity to construct evidence-based arguments about global interactions and human systems -- preparing them for increasingly sophisticated historical analysis and informed global citizenship.

Physical Education 8

Physical Education 8 develops students' understanding of the value of physical activity through active participation in a range of individual and team sports. Building on Grade 7, students continue to strengthen confidence, coordination, and sport-specific skills through units in Basketball, Soccer, International Sports, Volleyball, and Baseball, engaging in activities that promote physical fitness, teamwork, and responsible participation.

Through structured practice, guided participation, and game play, students revisit and apply the rules and regulations of each sport while continuing to strengthen individual techniques through drills. As understanding becomes more secure, students apply rules in game situations, strengthen their use of tactics and strategies in both offense and defense, and continue to develop skills in officiating and scorekeeping. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate increased confidence in movement, further development of sport-specific skills, and a deeper awareness of the role of physical activity in health and well-being.

GRADE 8 ELECTIVES

Students in Grade 8 choose two elective courses, each of which fits with the **merged Art & Design Criteria**. We actively seek student input on elective courses and, as such, the elective course list is subject to change on an annual basis.

Model United Nations 8

Model United Nations (MUN) 8 develops students' ability to research global issues, construct well-reasoned positions, and engage in structured debate and negotiation as representatives of nations in an international forum. The ability to advocate for a position, listen to opposing views, and work toward compromise is among the most valuable skills a

student can practice, and MUN offers an authentic context in which those skills have real stakes.

Students develop diplomatic communication skills while working toward resolutions that address complex global challenges, with consistent emphasis on perspective-taking, evidence-based argumentation, and respectful discourse. Preparation involves research into current international affairs, the writing of position papers, and participation in formal debate. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate stronger research and argumentation skills, greater confidence in formal speaking and negotiation, and a deeper understanding of the complexity of global decision-making.

Visual Arts 8

Visual Arts 8 develops the capacity to create and communicate by examining how cultural symbols, photographic perspectives, and optical perception shape visual meaning. Building on foundational skills, this course challenges students to investigate identity, culture, and viewer experience -- recognizing that artistic choices always carry meaning.

Through scaffolded instruction, students develop technical skills and conceptual depth across four units: Cultural Identity through printmaking, Stories in 8 Frames through photography with digital cameras, Op Art Illusions through precision and value, and a final sculpting unit using armature and plaster gauze. Each unit combines technical discipline with imaginative risk-taking. By practicing the habits of artists -- observing, questioning, and reflecting -- students develop artistic sensibility, the conviction to pursue their own ideas, and the stamina to refine their work through to completion.

Glee 8

Glee 8 develops students' vocal technique, ensemble performance skills, and musical expression through singing and choral performance. The voice is one of the most direct and personal instruments we have; learning to use it with skill and intention builds confidence, emotional intelligence, and the ability to communicate through sound in ways that go beyond words.

Students explore how the voice can communicate emotion, story, and identity while preparing performances for school and community audiences. Reflection and refinement are central to the rehearsal process, helping students understand what it means to grow as performers over time. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate improved vocal technique and ensemble awareness, greater confidence in performance, and a deeper understanding of how music functions as a form of human expression and connection.

Sport & Exercise Science 8

Sport & Exercise Science 8 introduces students to the science, strategy, and creativity behind physical fitness, health, and athletic performance. Through hands-on investigations and real-world challenges, students explore how the body responds to exercise while

applying design thinking to areas such as training programs, performance analysis, sports equipment, and game design. Connections to science, health, and visual design help students understand how movement, data, and communication work together in the world of sport.

Throughout the course, students engage in performance testing, experimentation, data collection, and creative problem-solving while developing skills in collaboration, analysis, and communication. Projects may include designing fitness plans, analyzing athletic performance, or creating branding and visual materials connected to sport and wellness. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate a stronger understanding of exercise science principles, greater confidence in independent inquiry, and the ability to communicate evidence-based ideas and solutions in meaningful, real-world contexts.

Brainworks 8

Brainworks explores how learning, memory, attention, emotion, and motivation actually work, helping students better understand the “operating system” behind their own minds. Drawing from psychology, cognition, and human behavior, students investigate why procrastination happens, how habits form, how technology affects attention, and what strategies genuinely improve learning and performance.

Through experiments, self-tracking, reflection, and collaborative challenges, students explore topics such as memory, neuroplasticity, attention, decision-making, stress, and sleep. They learn to analyze how routines, environments, and digital systems influence behavior while developing personalized approaches to learning and productivity. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate greater self-awareness, stronger learning habits, and a deeper understanding of how the brain learns most effectively.

Formula-1 8

Formula-1 challenges students to think and work like designers, engineers, and innovators as they explore aerodynamics, digital fabrication, coding, and branding through hands-on design projects. Grounded in the MYP Design Cycle, students learn how to research problems, develop ideas, build prototypes, test solutions, and refine their work through feedback and evaluation. Inspired by the F1 in Schools program, students design and create their own 3D-printed Formula 1 cars while also exploring web development and visual branding to communicate their ideas and identity.

Throughout the course, students engage in CAD modelling, prototyping, performance testing, coding, and physical computing using tools such as Tinkercad, HTML/CSS, and the BBC micro:bit. They develop technical skills alongside creativity, resilience, collaboration, and critical thinking as they learn to improve designs through experimentation and reflection. By the end of the course, students will be able to independently move a project from concept to working solution while confidently communicating their design process through technical, visual, and digital media.

ACADEMIC GUIDELINES & AWARDS

Grade Advancement

Advancement in Middle School is based on developmental readiness and academic progress within the MYP framework. Final grades are determined by the combination of scores earned in summative assessments throughout the year. To pass a course, students must earn a **Final Grade of 3 or above** on the MYP 1–7 scale.

Specific requirements for graduation and Greek diploma equivalency begin to take effect in Grade 9. For relevant information about these requirements, refer to the High School Program of Studies.

Academic Integrity

As "Caring Thinkers," students are expected to uphold ethical standards. We view academic honesty as a fundamental part of the learning process. While mistakes are viewed as "**information, not identity**," intentional acts of plagiarism or dishonesty are subject to academic penalties. The **Academic Integrity Policy** is available on our school's website.

English Language Proficiency & Admissions

To ensure academic success within our English-medium curriculum, all prospective students must demonstrate specific proficiency levels on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

- **MYP Year 1 (Grade 6) & Year 2 (Grade 7):** Recommended level of **A2 or higher**.
- **MYP Year 3 (Grade 8):** Recommended level of **B1 or higher**.

English Language Accommodations

For students entering at the **A2 (Elementary)** level, Pinewood provides scaffolded support to aid their transition into Middle School. Accommodations may include:

- Use of bilingual dictionaries and course materials during assessments.
- Extra time for tests and assignments.
- Modified coursework or compensatory marks added at the teacher's discretion.

Standardized Testing

We administer the **Measure of Academic Progress (MAP)** in the Fall and Spring to monitor growth in Reading, Language Usage, and Mathematics. Additionally, the **PSAT 8/9** is offered to **Grade 8 students** in the Spring to provide a baseline for future academic goal-setting.

Course Selection

Students select their Language Acquisition pathway and elective rotations in May for the following academic year. The Middle School leadership team meets with Grade 5 students in the second half of the school year to discuss key information about the transition to Middle School. A parent meeting is also held each spring to share helpful information.

Academic Awards

Pinewood celebrates academic excellence, service, and character through several Middle School awards:

- **President's Awards for Excellence in Education:** Sponsored by the U.S. State Department, awarded to students with the top three GPAs in each grade level.
- **Honor Roll:** Recognizes outstanding achievement through "Director's Honors" and "High Honors" levels.
- **Departmental Awards:** Awarded for excellence and merit in core subjects (English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, World Languages, PHE, and Art).