UWCSEA is an exciting place to learn and grow, and Junior School provides that all-important bridge between the uninhibited curiosity of Infant School and the confident striding-out of Middle School.

Our Junior School students are able to take full advantage of all the opportunities offered by the five elements of the UWCSEA learning programme: academics, activities, outdoor education, personal and social education and service. It is a truly exciting and crucial stage in their school careers and we aim, in partnership with parents, to make it a successful one for every individual. Our PSE programme provides transitional support for students as they join the College.

The Junior School is organised in smaller teams to ensure that students feel welcome and supported. With the day still beginning at 8am but now ending at 3pm, and most students joining activities until even later, the expectations of students are increasing.

We encourage parents to be as connected as possible to their child’s experience in school. A grade-level blog outlines the areas of focus and gives parents a window into their child’s learning. Above all, we encourage face-to-face communication, and parents are welcome to meet with the class teacher at any time, to discuss their child’s progress and wellbeing at school.

Students have access to more specialist subjects than in Infant School, including a greater choice of languages, increased physical education and specialist art lessons for the first time. These changes are important and help our students to approach Middle School, which in turn amends the architecture of their day to prepare them for the independence and self-regulated learning required in High School.

At all levels of the school, the College provides exceptional opportunity for students to develop independence and leadership skills, and the Junior School is no exception. At the heart of our educational philosophy is the belief that we prepare students not just for university, but for life, and it is the skills and qualities students develop, as much as the knowledge and understanding they gain, that will define the quality of the life they live. For this reason, students in the Junior School are encouraged to take on leadership roles, to experience both success and failure, and to grow in the belief that they can make a difference in the world.

### Junior School enrolment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Age of students*</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>Number of classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7–8 years</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>8–9 years</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9–10 years</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10–11 years</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>665</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Students must be born on or between 1 September and 31 August. Refer to our age-grade boundary chart for the planned year of entry for guidance, or contact Admissions.
About the UWCSEA curriculum

UWCSEA’s curriculum is specifically designed to support your child in embracing challenge to shape a better world, and was developed following extensive research examining best educational practice across the world. Our educational leaders continue to refine our unique UWCSEA curriculum across all five elements of our learning programme—academics, activities, outdoor education, personal and social education and service.

The UWCSEA academic curriculum is a concept-based curriculum. This means that from K1 to Grade 12, each curriculum area (or subject) has standards, which identify the key concepts that underpin that curriculum area. These standards are applied at all grade levels and build naturally in complexity through the Primary, Middle and High Schools, culminating in the IB Diploma in Grades 11 and 12.

Because the standards are conceptual in nature, these ideas transfer across the world. This supports students who are coming from different countries and educational backgrounds. For example, while the content of the chosen text in English or the specific time period studied in History may vary, the concepts remain the same.

In turn, each standard has essential understandings that describe what a student should understand as a result of studying a particular content area. They are statements of understanding that are appropriate to a student’s developmental stage and build towards the standard.

Benchmarks are then attached to each essential understanding. The benchmarks describe what a student should know, understand or be able to do at each stage of their learning in each subject. These benchmarks are what our teachers assess to ensure that students are reaching the essential understandings and are working towards the standards.

The Primary and Middle School curriculum builds into the High School programmes. This means that from their first years of schooling, UWCSEA prepares students for each grade, culminating in the High School programmes we offer. In the High School, the standards, essential understandings and benchmarks specifically take into account the requirements of external examining bodies that set the (I)GCSE and IB examinations that students sit at the end of Grade 10 and Grade 12.

Here is an example of a K-12 standard from our English curriculum, together with some of the grade-specific essential understandings and benchmarks linked to this standard. This demonstrates how all students from the Infant School to the IB Diploma programme access this learning, but in an age-appropriate way:

**K1–Grade 12**

**Standard:** Writing expresses selfhood, creativity and intellect in a medium shaped by audience and purpose.

**Grade 1**

**Essential Understanding:** We create real or imagined experiences when writing stories by using characters and setting.

**Benchmark:** Develop the story through character, focusing on specific actions.

**Grade 7**

**Essential Understanding:** All parts of a text work together to shape meaning.

**Benchmark:** Write narratives, using time and plot deliberately in order to influence mood and focus attention on the important moments in a story.

**Grade 11 and 12 (IB Diploma)**

**Essential Understanding:** Writers manipulate structure to convey meaning effectively.

**Benchmark:** Sequence and sustain structure to strengthen and develop the logic and persuasive impact of a claim.
Academics

The Junior School curriculum is structured around a holistic, inquiry-based approach to learning. Guided by the UWCSEA profile and learning principles, in the Junior School, the academic curriculum is integrated with a Personal and Social Education programme that supports students in exploring issues such as friendships, family, personal identity and self-awareness.

A student’s main contact is with the classroom teacher who is supported by a teacher assistant. Specialist teachers are provided for Physical Education, Music, Art and Languages, and coaches work with classroom teachers to support Maths, Literacy and the integration of technology to support learning into the classroom.

The table below outlines the subjects covered in each grade. The school week is divided into 40 periods, and while periods can vary in length according to the time of day and the day of the week, the average length is just under 40 minutes per period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Junior School subject offerings</th>
<th>Number of periods per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy (Reading, Writing, Word Study and Library)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit of Study (Science and Humanities)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language other than English (see below)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Art</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and Social Education (PSE)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Languages other than English

Grade 2: Chinese (beginner and continuity), French (beginner), Spanish (continuation)
Grade 3: Chinese (beginner and continuation), French (continuation), Spanish (beginner and continuation)
Grade 4: Chinese (beginner and continuation), French (beginner and continuation), Spanish (continuation)
Grade 5: Chinese (beginner and continuation), French (continuation), Spanish (beginner and continuation)

In addition, some languages for native speakers are offered in small-group, after-school classes. Please see our Languages factsheet for more information.

Literacy

Our overarching literacy goal is for students to become independent lifelong readers and writers, who communicate effectively through reading, writing, listening, speaking and presenting. To help students achieve this goal, we use the framework of reading and writing workshop, developed in Columbia University, which provides a clear structure for students to gain skills and develop confidence.

In addition to providing students with a balanced approach to Literacy through the workshop framework, we recognise Literacy is not isolated to one specific area of study. It is transdisciplinary by nature and occurs all day, every day, living within all traditional subject areas. Where appropriate, literacy is integrated into other areas of the curriculum to make for more powerful learning connections.

A wide range of Literacy resources is available, to both students and teachers, to support the Literacy curriculum. In addition to the extensive book collection in the Primary School’s David Watson Library, each class has a wide variety of genres in the classroom library for individualised reading.
Activities

The Activities programme is a vital part of student life and learning. It is designed to provide students with opportunities to discover new interests, develop their strengths and pursue their passions. Participants also have the chance to make like-minded friends from across age groups and interact with students from other school sections. Teachers and parents work with students to make sure they are not over-extended and can manage their time.

The Activities programme runs across four ‘seasons’ each year, allowing students to try as many new activities as they would like throughout the school year. It is divided into sports, arts (dance, drama, music and visual arts and music), leadership, clubs and special interests. Activities take place during lunch or after school in fixed time slots, and students who take the bus home are provided with an ‘activity bus’ to take them home after activities have concluded at no additional cost.

Sports

A full programme of after school sport is offered to Junior School students with several recreational options, and representative teams participating in 10&U (Grades 2 to 4) and 12&U (Grades 5 and 6) age groups in the Athletic Conference of Singapore International Schools (ACSIS). Teams currently include: badminton, basketball, cricket (boys), cross country, gymnastics, netball (girls), rugby (boys), football, swimming, tennis and touch football.

Arts

There are many opportunities for Junior School students to participate in a number of performance activities, including Junior Choir, Band and Strings, along with dance and drama activities.

The instrumental teaching programme offers access to music lessons on a number of instruments to students in the Junior School. These lessons are at an additional cost to parents, and are separate to the music lessons timetabled as part of our academic learning programme. Instrument hire is also available. Students have an opportunity to join several ensembles to ensure they have access to performance opportunities to showcase their musical talents.

Leadership, clubs and special interests

The Junior School Student Council and several other groups provide students with the opportunity to work in cooperation with each other and step in and out of leadership roles.

The offerings of clubs and special interest are varied but have included activities such as chess, Minecraft, newspaper, gardening, science and language clubs. These options are intended to give students the opportunity to extend their interests beyond the classroom. There are a number of Chinese-language activity options offered at various stages during the academic year.
Outdoor Education

Outdoor Education is a core element of the UWCSEA learning programme. In the Junior School, the students are taken into unfamiliar environments to share the experience of developing new skills away from the comforts of home and family, often for the first time.

Our main aim for our expeditions is to set each student up for success. In each new environment, students are challenged to reveal their willingness to take risks, to show compassion to others, to demonstrate initiative and enterprise, skill and care, teamwork and leadership.

During the school year, each grade completes an expedition involving overnight stays of varying lengths. Every student is expected to participate, as the opportunities for personal and social development offered by participation in these expeditions are impossible to replicate in the classroom. The trips are an additional cost.

An important component of every grade expedition is the idea of ‘team challenge’ activities, in which students are given challenges to overcome as a group. Developing a sense of the individual’s own responsibility to the group effort is a very important aim of the programme.

Grades 3, 4 and 5 travel early in the school year in order for the peer group to form bonds that will benefit the students in the classroom as well as the playground throughout the year. Grade 2 students settle into their routines and travel later in the year, usually in Term 2. The expeditions are:

- Grade 2 students spend a night at the Singapore Zoo
- Grade 3 goes to Riders Lodge in Malaysia for two nights
- Grade 4 visits Pulau Sibu in Malaysia for three nights
- Grade 5 students travel to the Green School in Bali, Indonesia for five nights

In Grade 5, each class group also spends half a day tackling the College’s high ropes course under the guidance of our qualified Outdoor Education staff.

The activities and venues are thoroughly checked and annually reviewed to ensure safety of all participants.

Optional trips

Grade 4 students are able to travel to Bali with one of their parents and UWCSEA staff on a service trip to undertake a volunteer project at one of the children’s homes supported by the Grade 4 Bali Bridges Global Concern.
Personal and Social Education

We know that in order for learning to be effective, learners must feel secure and supported. The Personal and Social Education (PSE) element of the learning programme is focused on helping students to understand themselves and each other.

Student wellbeing is the main responsibility of the class teacher who closely follows the personal development of their students and maintains communication with parents about their progress and developmental needs. Each grade also has a Head of Grade who assists teachers and parents. All are supported by the Vice Principal (Pastoral) who has an overarching responsibility for the wellbeing of Junior School students.

Every student is part of a ‘tutor group’ that is under the care of a class teacher, and this teacher covers the core subjects and also delivers the PSE programme through daily, dedicated sessions, as well as by integrating key messages into their teaching. The students’ classrooms are grouped around shared learning spaces (pods), encouraging a sense of affinity within the grade.

Activities such as circle time, assemblies, grade talks and a daily focus on personal relationships help our Junior School students to explore issues of friendship, communication, self-discipline and responsibility. A focus on the FRIENDS For Life programme for 25 minutes each morning within tutor group time provides an opportunity for students to understand and explore their own development.

We also involve the community, which has proven the most effective resource of all. Grade 5 and Middle School students organise playground activities for younger students as part of their Service commitments (Peer Play and Helping In Primary School), and this has a wonderful effect on the atmosphere of the playground. Through evening talks, such as on Internet safety, bullying and emotional wellbeing, we try to provide parents and guardians with knowledge they need to keep abreast of issues that are current for their children.

Professional guidance from the three College counsellors is also available for students and families.

Technology

The use of technology to enhance student learning is deeply embedded in the Junior School, and we have a ratio of 1:1, providing regular access to devices (MacBook, iPad, iPod Touch). This is supported by our a strong focus on professional development for teachers which in turn helps to ensure that students use technology extensively and appropriately. Students in all grades use laptops regularly, and in Grades 4 and 5 students are provided with access to an individual laptop in class, which is their own device for the academic year. This laptop stays in the classroom and is not brought home. The cost of technology is included in the tuition fees.

Students are also supported in their use of technology by the introduction of age-appropriate digital citizenship concepts as part of the PSE programme.

The Junior School teachers are supported by a digital literacy coach, whose role is to provide professional development and training for teachers to ensure they are maximising the use of technology for learning.
Service

Service is at the heart of the UWC ethos and even our youngest students become involved in service activities. The programme empowers students to become aware, able and active contributors to the community.

Students participate in College, local and global service projects both during and after school. Every student is encouraged to be involved in some way, and to take their service commitments seriously. From Grade 3, students are encouraged to reflect on their service experiences by recording in a journal their thoughts on and reactions to the service they have performed.

College Service

College Service takes place on the campus, and activities may include being a monitor in the library, becoming a buddy to younger students in our ‘Peer Play’ activities or taking part in the campus gardening service.

Local Service

All Junior School children participate in the Local Service programme, which may involve visiting elderly Singaporean residents at a nearby nursing home or hosting a group from the Genesis School. Singaporean children from a local after-school care facility also come for literacy and art activities hosted by UWCSEA students and staff. Other Junior School students utilise their IT expertise teaching computer skills to domestic workers. Students also have an opportunity to volunteer for Local Service activities linked with organisations such as Riding for the Disabled and ACRES.

Global Concerns

Global Concerns (GC) are service projects which take place outside Singapore, and form the third tier of UWCSEA’s Service programme. Through the GC programme, students are educated about global issues, introduced to concepts of leadership and organisation and encouraged to establish their own initiatives. Where possible, links are made between classroom learning and issues raised by the GC.

In the Junior School, each grade supports a different GC:

• Grade 2 – Tabitha (Cambodia)
• Grade 3 – Water Warriors (Indonesia and Swaziland)
• Grade 4 – Bali Bridges (Indonesia)
• Grade 5 – Temple Garden Foundation (Cambodia)

For more information

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