Middle School overview

East Campus
UWCSEA East offers a robust and challenging Middle School programme for students in Grades 6 to 8, connecting academic subjects with social development and opportunities for leadership.

The learning programme is structured to meet the varied intellectual and developmental needs of adolescents as they transition from Primary School and prepare for the High School years. The five elements of our programme include an academically rigorous curriculum, a Personal and Social Education (PSE) programme addressing the needs of adolescents, challenging expeditions through our extensive Outdoor Education programme and involvement in the wider life of the College and Singapore community through extensive opportunities to be involved in the Activities and Service programmes.

We encourage students to apply themselves fully in all that they do and offer guidance and support in a positive and caring environment. Our teachers act as role models for students, giving instruction in the lunchtime and after-school Activities programme, supporting service initiatives and participating fully in the outdoor education trips with their students.

The UWCSEA East Middle School is committed to providing an educational programme that promotes international understanding, while making education relevant to the global needs of our time. We celebrate the variety of cultures at UWCSEA and encourage our community to explore and understand the traditions and backgrounds of others. Our PSE and mentor programmes provide transitional support for students as they join the College.

Our goal is to develop students who have the ability to lead effectively when the need arises but who can also adapt to various roles within a team to promote the successful completion of a project, activity or service task. The learning programme provides structured opportunities for students to develop these skills in a wide variety of settings.

At all levels of the school, the College provides exceptional opportunity for students to develop independence and leadership skills, and the Middle 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, Middle School students are encouraged to extend themselves so that they experience failure as well as success, to understand that leadership can take many forms, to develop their critical thinking and communication skills and to grow in the belief that they can play a positive role in society.

**Middle 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>6</td>
<td>10-11 years</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>11-12 years</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>12-13 years</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>594</td>
<td>27</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.

An additional 22 new places are created in Grade 6 each year as the grade-level cohort expands, however in Grades 7 and 8, no new classes are created and so the availability of places relies on students withdrawing from the College.

Available places may be offered up to the start of Term 2 of the academic year.
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

Students have a broad and balanced range of subjects, including the core subjects of English, Humanities, Mathematics and Science. In addition, courses in the Arts, Languages, Physical Education (PE) and other exploratory subjects in areas such as Design and Technology ensure that students are able to develop across a range of subjects.

As students progress to our Middle School programme, they refine the core interdisciplinary skills initiated in the Primary School. They have more subject specialist teachers guiding them in fundamental subject-specific skills required for higher studies. Students are still exposed to a broad and balanced range of subjects, with the opportunity to develop in all relevant areas; from physical, technical, creative, numerate and deductive, rational and experimental, to empathic and evaluative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Middle School subject offerings (refer to the curriculum guide on our website for detailed information)</th>
<th>Number of periods per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6: English and Humanities (Geography and History), see note</td>
<td>Grade 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 7 and 8: English or English as an Additional Language (EAL)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 7 and 8: Humanities (Geography and History)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language other than English or Extra EAL or Study Skills</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Language</td>
<td>Chinese (G6); French (G6, G7); Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginner Languages</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Languages</td>
<td>Chinese; English (EAL); French; Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education (PE)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploratory programme subjects taught on rotation: Grades 6 and 7: Outdoor Education (Leadership and Teamwork), Food and Nutrition; Grade 8: Digital Perspectives, Life Skills</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and Technology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be the Change</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Grade 6, the unique UWCSEA-designed curriculum integrates English with the study of Humanities, where the English skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening are woven into the study of Geography and History, in addition to the study of literature texts in their own right.

**Be the Change (BTC)**

BTC challenges students to consider issues of social justice and equity, develop critical thinking skills and develop both a sense of identity and the sense of responsibility required to make a positive change. Students leave this course with an understanding of sustainability and a belief that they can, and should, actively work towards this goal. Throughout the BTC course, students are guided through the planning and research stages of an action project, after which they independently test their theory, gather and interpret their own data and evaluate their effectiveness within the school community and environment.

**Languages other than English**

Students elect one Language other than English as part of their timetabled lessons. Some other First Language classes are taught after school in small groups at additional cost. These classes are arranged by parents, using UWCSEA facilities and are available subject to demand.
Activities

UWCSEA’s comprehensive Activities programme presents our students with opportunities to try new things, discover new talents and further develop their passions, as well as make new friends through the sharing of common interests.

The diverse variety of activities includes many competitive and recreational sports, music, art in many forms, dance, drama, service and curriculum-based or enrichment activities. The programme is offered in four ‘seasons’ each year, allowing students to try a number of new activities throughout the school year. Students who take the bus home are provided with an ‘activity bus’ to take them home after activities have concluded at no additional cost.

Arts

The East Campus ensemble programme offers many different opportunities for specialist and non-specialist Middle School musicians, including the Middle School Chamber Ensemble, Jazz Band and Orchestra, the Caribe Samba Band, Karibu Marimba Express and Vocal Project. The Middle School ensembles perform in two featured concerts during the year.

The instrumental teaching programme offers access to individual and small group vocal and music lessons on a number of instruments at an additional cost. Instrument hire is available.

Performance opportunities are offered as part of the Activities programme, and Middle School students are invited to audition for two drama productions during the year, which are supported by our Drama and Theatre Teachers. In addition, students have the opportunity to perform in the Elements Dance Showcase featuring genres such as Contemporary, Hip Hop, Jazz, Rock and Roll and Asian dance forms.

There is also a Middle School Visual Art exhibition each year, and many opportunities for students to develop interests in several specialisations in visual arts as part of the after-school activities programme.

Sports

The College enters teams in all competitions offered by the Athletic Conference of Singapore International Schools (ACSIS) as well as a number of other competitions in Singapore and the region. The representative sports available to Middle School students currently include: badminton, basketball, cricket (boys), cross country, football, gymnastics, rugby (boys), sailing, swimming, tennis, touch rugby (girls) and volleyball.

A number of additional recreational sports, such as golf, martial arts, rock climbing and ultimate (frisbee), are offered through the Activities programme so that students who want to participate, but perhaps not compete, have an opportunity to do so.

Leadership, Clubs and Special Interests

Students have ample opportunity to develop leadership skills through participation in groups such as Student Council, Model United Nations, the Service Executive Committee and the organising committee for the TECHLife student-led conference. Other leadership activities are available including some College Services coaching or working with Primary School students.

The offerings of clubs and special interests are varied and have included activities such as aerial gymnastics, chess, engineering, masterchef and year book. These options are intended to give students the opportunity to extend their interests beyond the classroom.
Outdoor Education

These challenging and fun expeditions provide invaluable learning experiences, and elements from these trips are drawn into the classroom across the academic curriculum. The trips are planned, managed and led by our experienced Outdoor Education staff. All students are expected to participate in these expeditions, which are at 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 this group effort is a very important aim of the Outdoor Education programme.

- Grade 6 go on a five-day multi-activity expedition to Pulau Tioman in Malaysia
- Grade 7 visit Pulau Sibu for a kayaking trip after completing a one-star kayak training certificate in Singapore
- Grade 8 students spend two weeks in Chiang Mai, Thailand; one week undertaking adventure activities such as white-water rafting and hiking, and the other completing curriculum-based field activities that are then integrated into lessons in Singapore for the rest of the academic year.

Optional trips

Middle School students have the opportunity to participate in optional expeditions during school holidays. These trips are grouped under the categories of:

- adventure trips, such as the annual New Zealand, Southern Africa or Switzerland (skiing) trips
- service trips to Cambodia, Indonesia, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam; many of these are family trips where students and parents travel with UWCSEA staff to visit our NGO partners in these countries
- curriculum enrichment, such as the annual trip to China or Taiwan for students of Chinese language

There are also opportunities through Round Square for students to attend conferences in the region and to participate in student exchanges.
Personal and Social Education

For Middle School students, this is a time of significant change in their intellectual, social and emotional development. It is a time of transition as students seek increased levels of independence and responsibility. Our dedicated Personal and Social Education (PSE) programme provides a supportive, safe and nurturing environment that recognises the unique developmental needs of Middle School students and addresses them through a programme that is relevant, challenging, integrative and exploratory.

Our Middle School PSE team is led by the Principal, Vice Principals and Heads of Grade. The Head of Grade for each year level works with mentors, who are responsible for the overall welfare of their students with an overview of both academic progress and social and emotional needs.

The mentor meets with their mentor group for four, 25-minute sessions per week, and students also attend a weekly grade-level assembly where current topics are explored. Other ways in which students are supported by the PSE programme include guest speakers, special presentations, focus weeks and Life Skills lessons in Grade 8.

Our PSE programme also includes strategies for effective learning such as organisation, self-management and reflection skills that are important for student success. The mentor assists students in their transition to Middle School routines and expectations, and also, as they prepare for High School, provides guidance with the subject selection process.

Professional guidance from the College counsellors is also available for students and families. The Counsellors are also involved in delivering specific parts of the PSE programme where appropriate, for example leading an assembly or delivering elements of the Life Skills lessons.

Technology

All Middle School students are issued with a laptop, the cost of which is included in tuition fees. Students are supported in the responsible use of technology through our extensive digital citizenship programme, which provides them with the skills and knowledge to become responsible, independent and organised digital citizens.

Teachers and mentors are supported by digital literacy coaches and a network of technology mentors in implementing effective uses of technology in their teaching and assignments.

A series of information evenings and workshops for parents ensure that good habits around technology are reinforced at home and parents are equipped to help students navigate the online world.

UWCSEA uses the Generation Safe tools to provide our teachers with professional development in the areas of prevention, detection, intervention and response to cyber incidents.
Service

Service is an essential component of the UWCSEA learning programme and is at the heart of our ethos. The Service programme provides opportunities for students to develop compassion and put their ideals into action, by giving them opportunities to take practical steps to help create a more caring society and conserve the environment.

Service requires whole-hearted commitment and we expect our students to approach every service activity and commitment with energy, and a willingness to try new things, to reflect on successes and failures and to always focus on the larger goal of shaping a better world.

College and Local Service

All students are required to participate in College or Local Service at some point during their Middle School years. Each student is expected to undertake at least two Activity ‘seasons’ of service each year. These services vary widely but include:

• paired reading with children from local primary schools
• chat and games with elderly Singaporeans
• overseeing lunchtime or play in our Infant and Junior Schools
• gardening projects to enhance the environment on campus
• clean up projects in the local community, for example at Changi Beach

Some Local Services are shared with the High School, whose students act as mentors for the Middle School students. In other services, our Middle School students take the lead as mentors for Junior School students who participate alongside them in the service each week.

Global Concerns

All Middle School students are encouraged to join one of several Global Concerns (GC) groups that have links with grassroots NGOs in the region and further afield. These groups meet weekly, usually at lunchtimes, and provide students an opportunity to both learn and to take action to support their chosen GC. Students who elect to undertake a GC rather than College or Local Service are asked to sign-up for a full year, so that they can gain an in-depth understanding of the issues facing their chosen GC.

Of the more than 20 GC groups open to Middle School students in the past, there are also a number of optional service trips open to students (and in some cases their families) which provide unparalleled opportunities for participants to further their understanding of the challenges faced by these groups and to take action to support their chosen ‘cause.’

For more information
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