

The School Day

School officially opens at 8:45 a.m. with Advisory. It is here that attendance is taken and messages are delivered. Most importantly, it is a place where the various topics of the advisory program are discussed. The IT Lab and the libraries are generally open both before and after school for student use.

On Tuesdays, we have our weekly *Assembly* in the Performing Arts Center. Students and teachers make their announcements to the community.

The five academic classes begin right after Advisory: English, French, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics. In addition, there are two daily 50-minute periods during which students will have, depending upon the day and upon their personal choices: Art, Band, Ceramics, Computer Game Design, Computer Graphics, Choir, Debate, Digital Animation, Digital Music, Ensemble Theater, Robotics, Video Production, Physical Education, Yearbook and other courses.

Students are dismissed at 3:30, usually by their advisors, and the first run of school buses leaves at 3:40.

The weekly Alpha Period is used by each grade-level team for diverse purposes. It most often involves an extended Advisory period or grade-based meetings. It may also bring the three grades together for performing arts presentations, guest speakers, or commemorations of special calendar events.

The Values we uphold at ASP

We are a community bound together by the shared values of *respect*, *responsibility* and *honesty*. We believe that living by these values creates an environment that encourages all of us to reach our potential.

Our Middle School is based on *respect* for each person's feelings, individuality, cultural identity and property.

- We treat everyone in the community with courtesy, kindness and appreciation.
- We don't tolerate bullying: pushing others around, threatening them, or picking on them in order to upset them. Bullying can be either physical or through words; it can be done in person, in writing or even by cyberbullying.
- We seek to understand and appreciate the different religious traditions within our community.

- We keep our environment clean. We avoid eating and drinking in the halls and in the computer lab.
- We refrain from offensive language or name-calling.
- We refrain from physical contact that could be, or be seen as, threatening or harmful. We never bring to school any item that might be seen as a weapon, even if it is appropriate for sporting purposes.
- We refrain from using or possessing alcohol, drugs or tobacco.
- We leave the belongings of others alone, whether they are computer files or property. We also respect their privacy.

Our Middle School is based on *responsibility* for one's own actions and for the community.

- We come to class on time.
- As good citizens, we not only avoid being mean and doing harm, we also discourage others from doing so. When we see bad things happen, we don't let it go on – we report it.
- We take responsibility for the environment: minimize the waste of resources. We take care of the school's property.
- In the hallways, we keep our voices down so that we don't interrupt classes, and we ensure safety by not running or roughhousing.
- We act with pride and dignity, not only in school, but also on trips, at performances, at sporting events, on the school bus, and at any time we are representing ASP.
- When we are on the internet, we avoid sites that aim to show people in negative ways; we only access sites which teachers would approve.

Our Middle School is based upon *honesty*.

- We speak openly and truthfully.
- We understand that dishonesty includes not only lying, but also hiding the truth.
- On tests, we work privately without looking at others' work.
- We recognize that copying from books, other people, or the internet without citing the source is plagiarism and is dishonest.
- We only copy computer software when we have the license that allows us to do so. This also means that we don't copy software onto school computers just because we have the right to use it at home.
- When logging on to any site, we use our own passwords. Above all, we do not send messages which pretend to be from someone else.

What happens if I don't uphold ASP's values?

At ASP:

- *You cannot interfere with your own education or with another's education.*
- *You cannot interfere with the teacher's ability to conduct class.*
- *You cannot cause emotional or physical damage to other people, or cause damage to your environment.*

It's always up to you to choose to do the right thing. If you make a poor choice, teachers will take steps to get you back on the right track.

If there are minor issues, a teacher will have a quick talk with you about the matter and may also suggest that you take "time-out" from class and get yourself together.

If the issue continues to be a problem or if the matter is more serious, there are further consequences. The teacher may have you come in for a lunchtime conference. The teacher may tell your advisor about the problem and may go further and report it to your parents. Going even further, the matter may be reported to the Director.

Serious disciplinary infractions may result in your being suspended from school and/or being placed on disciplinary probation for an extended period. While on disciplinary probation, a student's freedom to participate in the full range of school activities may be limited. This is a formal warning that a student may not be able to continue at the school.

In case of extreme violations of our values, such as threatening the safety of one's self or others, or when serious offenses are repeated, the Director can even ask the Head of School to expel a student.

Using the Internet: *Did you know . . . ?*

- Whenever you post something on the internet, others may be able to read it years later *even though you deleted it*. Whatever you write on any site is captured and filed by online systems.
- Once you log in on the ASP network, the addresses of all the websites that you visit are recorded automatically under your name.
- If you misuse computers at school, you risk having your password taken away and being barred from entering the IT Lab.
- If you write hateful messages on the internet, or support others who do, you risk being punished at school and you can also be subject to legal prosecution.

The Advisory System

The advisory system is the heart of ASP's Middle School. The advisor is a teacher who works with a group of 12-15 students throughout the year in homeroom and who serves a variety of roles:

- to get to know you especially well;
- to be a person you can turn to in case of difficulty;
- to help you to become fully a part of the school;
- to foster self-esteem and positive social relationships, especially within your advisory group;
- to follow your progress by keeping in contact with the other teachers;
- to work with the other teachers to help you if you are having academic or social problems;
- to be the key link between all the teachers and your parents;
- to help you to develop good social skills, such as learning to make friends, deal with frustration, and resolve conflict;
- to help you to learn to deal with your emotions and problems of maturing, formulating values, and making decisions;
- to create a better understanding of the world we live in by discussing current problems;
- to help you to become a better student, develop good study habits, prepare for tests, and organize your time;
- to inspire you to develop a sense of responsibility for the school community and the global community.

In September, advisors and advisees take an Outward Bound team-building trip together. The sixth graders spend four nights in the Savoie region of the French Alps while the seventh and eighth graders spend seven nights at Ullswater in the rugged Lake District of northern England. By the end of the week, no student is 'new' to the Middle School.

The Extra-Curricular Program

Many different extra-curricular activities take place either at lunchtime or after school. The lunchtime activities meet from 11:30 to 12:10; students generally bring their lunch with them from home on these days, but they have the option of buying food in the cafeteria and bringing it back to the classrooms.

The *late buses* are available for students involved in extra-curricular activities, as long as they are regular riders of the ASP buses. The buses in this limited service leave the campus at 5:15 and 6:15.

Lunchtime and after-school activities

The Art Club is open weekly at lunchtimes for those who want even more art time than they get in their regular art classes.

The Green Team meets weekly to remind us to encourage and focus our community efforts to reduce, reuse and recycle.

Homework Club meets twice weekly after school. It's a quiet place to do work and get some extra help.

Knowledge Bowl is a challenging but fun academic competition that tests students' general knowledge in areas such as current events, history, grammar, art, science, math, and literature. It meets weekly, and involves both on-line competitions as well as to live, inter-school competitions.

Math Counts is an inter-school competitive mathematics program. Students meet once or twice a week through the first half of the year in order to prepare. They practice solving challenging problems both individually and as team members. This leads to an international meeting in January where they compete with students from other European international schools.

The MS Musical is a major event in our school community. Rehearsals and production take place in the spring preparing for performances in the PAC.

The String Ensemble meets weekly for players of the violin and related instruments to work together under the leadership of a strings teacher.

The Student Council plays a central role in the life of the Middle School. It coordinates numerous activities throughout the year that serve the school community as well as the wider world. Its major annual fundraising event, the Walkathon, is held each spring. It leads the students in choosing the charitable organizations that will benefit from this and other activities. In addition, it organizes three dances a year and is also the main link between the student body and the administration of the school.

Intramural Sports Program

Middle School Intramural Sports change each of the three trimesters. Examples include basketball, soccer, and cross-country running, track and field, and softball. These meet after school, usually ending by 5:00 p.m..

Upper School Athletics Program

Junior Varsity sports teams, under the sponsorship of the Upper School Athletics Department, are open to certain eligible Middle Schoolers. These teams require several afternoons of training each week, often until 6:15 p.m., along with weekend matches against other schools. The seasons end with participation in the International Schools Sports Tournaments (ISST's).

Seventh grade students may be authorized to join Cross-country, Swimming, and Track and Field. However, they are not permitted to participate in competitions that require absence from school. With teacher approval they may be able to join the teams that compete at the ISST tournaments at the end of each season.

In the eighth grade, students may participate fully in all Upper School athletics if they are in good academic standing.

Because all of this requires a considerable time commitment, Middle Schoolers can participate only if they get permission from their teachers before the start of each season. In making their decisions, teachers consider the academic standing of the students, the possible stress that the students may be facing, and the appropriateness of the social pressures that the students may be under. During the season, students must keep up with their academic responsibilities.

Saturday Sports

ASP's parents run a Saturday soccer and basketball program here on our campus. It's open to all our students during the school year.

Middle School Support Services

The Middle School Counselor

The Counselor, Kate Powers, supports students and families in a variety of special roles. These include:

- meeting with you or with a small group to discuss personal concerns;
- providing guidance to families concerning your development, either intellectually, socially, or in any other way;
- referring families to professional tutors in cases where you may need extra support.

The Learning Support teachers

When students have a special need that makes it harder for them to succeed in their school work, they may get special skills classes from these teachers.

The EAL teachers

Only half of ASP's students speak English as their mother tongue. When the other half are still in the earlier stages of learning the language get support from teachers of *English as an Additional Language*.

The Middle School Secretary

Chantal Papin is responsible for reporting on student absences, taking parent requests for conferences, recording late arrivals and early departures.

Parents may call Chantal and ask her to give you a message, but this should only be done if the matter is urgent.

The School Nurse

Catherine de Gueltzl, the School Nurse is present until 5:00 p.m. If you ever have to take a medication, whether prescription or over-the-counter, it must be kept in the Nurse's Office.

If you feel ill during the school day, your teacher at the time can send you to the Nurse. Once you have recovered, the Nurse will give you a note and send you back to class. If necessary, she can call a doctor, or call your parents and ask them to come and pick you up.

If you need the Nurse and she is away from the Infirmary, you should go the Middle School Office. There is a medical kit there that has band-aids and other minor supplies.

Practical Information

Lockers and personal belongings

Middle School students are expected to be responsible for their belongings. Your name should be marked on your wallet, calculator, and other personal items. Obviously, it is unwise to bring large sums of money to school.

During the day, you should use your locker to store your extra books, jackets, and P.E. gear. Before students go to P.E. classes, they should store their valuables in their lockers rather than leaving them unattended in the changing rooms.

The Cafeteria

You are free to bring your lunch from home every day or else to buy whatever you like in the Cafeteria using your Cafeteria card. You can eat lunch either in the Cafeteria or at the picnic tables on the lower terrace.

If you are staying after school for sports or activities, you can get a snack at the Cafeteria first, as it's open until 4:00 pm.

The libraries

Middle School students can use two different libraries: sixth and seventh graders generally use *La Bibliothèque* and eighth graders generally use the Upper School Library.

Both libraries have a wide variety of suitable literature and non-fiction. Both also have fine reference facilities, including internet access. Daily newspapers and periodicals are on hand and librarians are available to assist students.

Middle School Policies

What should my parents do if I am absent?

Your parents are asked to let us know about this by the start of school in the morning, explain the reason for the absence, and tell us how long they expect that you will be out. Your parents should call Chantal: 01.41.12.82.74 or e-mail her cpapin@asparis.fr

What should I do if I'm absent?

It is your responsibility to call a classmate and find out what work you have missed.

Please do your best not to be absent! You can never really make up for classes that you miss, since so much of what you learn takes place in the classroom, and is not just from books. Teachers cannot make up for missed classes.

How many times may I be absent?

Having more than five unexcused absences per term is considered excessive. If you are absent more than this, you may receive no report card grades for that term.

The Director will excuse absences in the following circumstances.

- You are excused if you are absent for one or two days due to illness and your parents have notified the school about this.
- You are excused if you are absent due to extenuating family circumstances and your parents explain this to the Director.
- You are excused if you are on a school-sponsored trip.

What do I do if I arrive late or leave early?

You should be in you Advisory room by 8:50. If you arrive late (after 9:00), you should sign in on the sheet on Chantal's desk.

For special medical or dental treatment, your parents are urged to make such appointments for times after 4:00. If you are being picked up during the school day, your parents are asked to sign you out at the Middle School Office.

Is there a dress code?

Students are asked to be neat, to dress modestly (e.g., not to expose their midriffs), and not to wear hats indoors.

What do I do with my Agenda?

An Agenda is given to all Middle Schoolers at the beginning of the year. In it, you record your homework assignments, and your advisor may check it at the end of the day.

What should I do if I forget my homework?

Students sometimes call their parents to ask them to make a special trip to school with forgotten lunch or with a homework assignment left behind. We discourage this, however, as we expect you to take responsibility for yourself. If you forget lunch or lunch money – we all get by with a little help from our friends – and you should ask your advisor’s advice if there is a problem.

May I stay after school?

You may remain at school after 3:40 if you are a member of an organized school activity. If you wish to remain on campus for other valid reasons (e.g., working with a teacher, doing research in one of the libraries, working in the IT Lab, or attending a sports game) you are permitted to do so if you have signed-in on Chantal’s desk, indicating where you will be.

You may not stay after school simply for social reasons, and you may not stay in classrooms unless you are being supervised by a teacher.

Can I use the phone in the Office?

Chantal will always let you call home from the Office phone.

May I bring a guest to school?

At times, you may wish to invite a friend to spend a day with you at ASP. In such cases, your parents are asked to write to the Director at least two days in advance. You will usually get permission to do this as long as you are in good academic standing, and if the visit does not interfere with any classes.

Guests are not permitted to attend our off-campus trips, nor may you invite guests to our school dances. You may be able to bring a visiting houseguest to a dance, but only with the advance permission of the Director.

Who should I turn to if I’m upset?

You could begin by talking to your advisor, but you can also turn to the Counselor, other teachers and even to the Director.

What are the bus rules?

You should: stay seated and keep your seat belt fastened; respect what the bus monitors and drivers tell you; behave and use language in ways that are appropriate for school.

Once the horn sounds at 3:40, you should immediately board the bus. Unless the bus driver says that it’s OK, please do not eat on the bus.

Bus monitors are asked to report to the Director when students are not behaving properly. If there are repeated reports or any serious misbehavior, students may be suspended from using the bus.

What do I do if I lose my Cafeteria card?

Stop by the Admissions Office or write them an e-mail to tell them about this. They will create a new card for you quickly, but there is a €10 fee.

How do I connect to the ASP network?

When you first enter the Middle School, you get a password for internet and network access. Once you are logged in to one of your teacher’s classes on the Poodle network, you will use your ASP e-mail address to upload or download assignments. Keep in mind that whenever you access the net from school, your web activities are recorded.

How Student Work is evaluated

Your achievement in the academic subjects (English, French, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics) is evaluated in a variety of ways.

The most important factor is whether you have mastered the required knowledge and skills. This is measured by: oral work, written work (coursework, essays, problem-solving, tests, projects, etc.), and practical work (use of an apparatus, recording of changes, identification of a problem, construction of a hypothesis, evaluation and analysis, or forming conclusions). However, other criteria may include creativity, personal initiative, and class participation, completion of homework assignments, and punctuality in submitting assignments.

Teachers evaluate how well you have worked independently, as well as how well you have worked cooperatively with your classmates.

Self-evaluation

Teachers will guide you in evaluating your own progress during the year. The goals are:

- that you understand their personal learning style, including your strengths and weaknesses;
- that at the end of each term, you look both backwards and forwards by assessing how well you have met their past goals and by setting new ones;
- that you set goals that are appropriate for your individual ability and needs; and
- that you take personal responsibility for meeting these goals.

The marking system

The marking system is based on a system of letter grades: A = you consistently meet the standards; B = you usually meet the standards; C = you sometimes meet the standards; D = you rarely meet the standards; F = you fail to meet the minimum requirements. For each of these letters, teachers may add a + or - to indicate where you stand within the band.

Report cards

Report cards are issued for each subject at the end of each of the three terms. These give an achievement grade (A, B, C, D, F) along with a checklist showing how well you meet the standards for each course. They also include a checklist of learning skills and attitudes. Finally, they also include comments from each of your teachers on how well you have done.

Standardized tests

Standardized tests are taken each spring: the Comprehensive Testing Program (CTP 4) of the Educational Records Bureau in the United States. These measure your ability and achievement in mastering core skills and concepts.

Academic probation

A student may be placed on Academic Probation if there is a report card grade of F or if there are two grades of D+ or below. Probation is a serious warning. If a student remains on academic probation for more than one term, he is in danger of not being promoted to the next grade, or of not being invited back to ASP.

End-of-year awards

Awards are given at the end-of-year closing ceremonies. These include:

- *the Academic Excellence Awards*—to the student in each grade with the highest average grade in the five academic subjects;

- *the Service Award*— to the student who best demonstrates the qualities of dependability, generosity, initiative, and commitment to the group, and
- *the Director's Award*— to the student who has strived to excel in every aspect of the MS program: academic, sporting and the arts.

How Teachers contact Parents

For a student to be successful, parents and teachers need to be working in harmony. We try to promote good communication in various ways.

- The Middle School *Open House* evening, early in September, is when the teachers introduce all aspects of the program to the parents.
- *Progress Reports* are sometimes written from individual teachers to parents. All during the year, teachers are asked to send a report if a student's grade in a course has slumped to C- or below, but they will also send a report if there is any matter that they wish to bring to a family's attention.
- *Parent-Teacher Conference Day* is in October. Parents will meet with your Advisor to discuss your progress in every part of school life.
- *Report Cards* are issued for each of the three terms a year: in early December, in mid-March, and a week after the close of school.
- *The Middle School Newsletter* is sent to parents by e-mail most Fridays.

I understand what ASP expects of me and I promise to uphold the values of my school community.

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Student's signature

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Parent's signature

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Advisor's signature