Stamford American
SCHOOL HONG KONG

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SECONDARY SCHOOL

CURRICULUM GUIDE

Grade 6 to Grade 10

CONTENTS

ABOUT US

OUR FRAMEWORK

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

BRILLIANT BASICS

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Stamford American
SCHOOL HONG KONG

COGNITA AND STAMFORD SHARE A COMMON VISION

Thrive in a rapidly evolving world.

STAMFORD'S ACADEMIC TEAM WELCOMES YOU

Our leadership team warmly welcomes you to Stamford American School Hong Kong. We comprise a team of education professionals who are all experienced in international and IB education and the latest most progressive best teaching practices.

Andrew Noakes
Head of School

Ocki Fernandes
High School Principal

Chris Llewellyn
Middle School Principal

OUR TEACHERS

At Stamford, our teachers bring a wealth of experience that enhances our collaborative community, offering diverse perspectives and a strong commitment to student learning.

In addition to our core subject faculty, we have specialist teachers who instruct secondary school students in modern languages (Mandarin and Spanish), physical education, and the arts (drama, music, and visual art).

Our teachers have over 16 years of experience, and 59% hold postgraduate qualifications, including MSc and PhD degrees. Most of them have experience with the International Baccalaureate (IB) program and are well-versed in progressive teaching practices.

Continuous professional development is a priority at Stamford. We provide opportunities for growth through established learning communities, formal external training, internal collaboration, and daily interactions with students and colleagues. We believe that learning is a lifelong journey for everyone.

Parents receive formal updates on their children's progress through report cards and parent-teacher conferences held at specific times throughout the year. We encourage parents to reach out to their children's teachers anytime with questions, comments, or concerns.

OUR FRAMEWORK

AMERICAN STANDARDS

A curriculum has many parts, all working together to provide students with the best possible learning experience. The curriculum at Stamford represents an ongoing process of reflection and innovation to ensure the latest teaching and learning tools and practices are delivered in our classrooms.

Stamford American's curriculum includes:

- academic standards that define knowledge and skills
- key concepts and enduring understandings
- essential questions to guide learning
- learning activities supported by primary and secondary resources
- cross-disciplinary elements such as 'Approaches to Learning' traits, Learner Profile attributes, and global citizenship linkages
- ''approaches to teaching' strategies that guide teaching pedagogy
- the style and personality of the teacher
- the dynamics of the class as well as individual learners

First and foremost, the anchor of our curriculum is well-established rigorous American standards.

Subject Area	Standards and Benchmarks
English, Humanities, Mathematics, Sciences	American Education Reaches Out (AERO) (based on Common Core framework)
Modern Languages (Spanish and Mandarin)	American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)
Music, Drama, Visual Arts	Massachusetts Arts (MA)
STEM/Innovation	Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)
Physical and Health Education	Society of Health and Physical Education (SHAPE) National Health Education Standards (NHES)
Social Emotional Learning	Second Step Program (gr. 6-8) School-Connect (gr. 9-12)

Every unit of study a student participates in is underpinned by these standards.

EDUCATING THE WHOLE CHILD

Academics play a crucial role during a student's time in school. However, life involves more than just acquiring knowledge and skills; young adults also need to function effectively in social and emotional contexts within an increasingly complex world. To address this need, Stamford integrates programs and projects into its curriculum framework. These initiatives help students build self-confidence, develop communication and collaboration skills, and learn to think critically.

These components either serve as extensions or are part of standard coursework:

- Global Citizenship
- Approaches to Learning
- Action and Service
- IB Learning Profile
- The Sophomore Project
- Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

Global citizenship is closely linked to having an international mindset and intercultural understanding. We want our students to develop a well-rounded and informed world perspective. It is essential for them to genuinely care about the future of humanity and to establish a basic framework for understanding the complexities of our global society. This is no small task! It requires students to consider multiple perspectives, critically examine the costs and benefits of various options, and have the courage to take action.

Each unit of study incorporates the element of global citizenship, where teachers connect the concepts of multilingualism and intercultural understanding to the unit's other objectives. By using identified curriculum standards, knowledge, and skills, teachers can find natural connections to global citizenship.

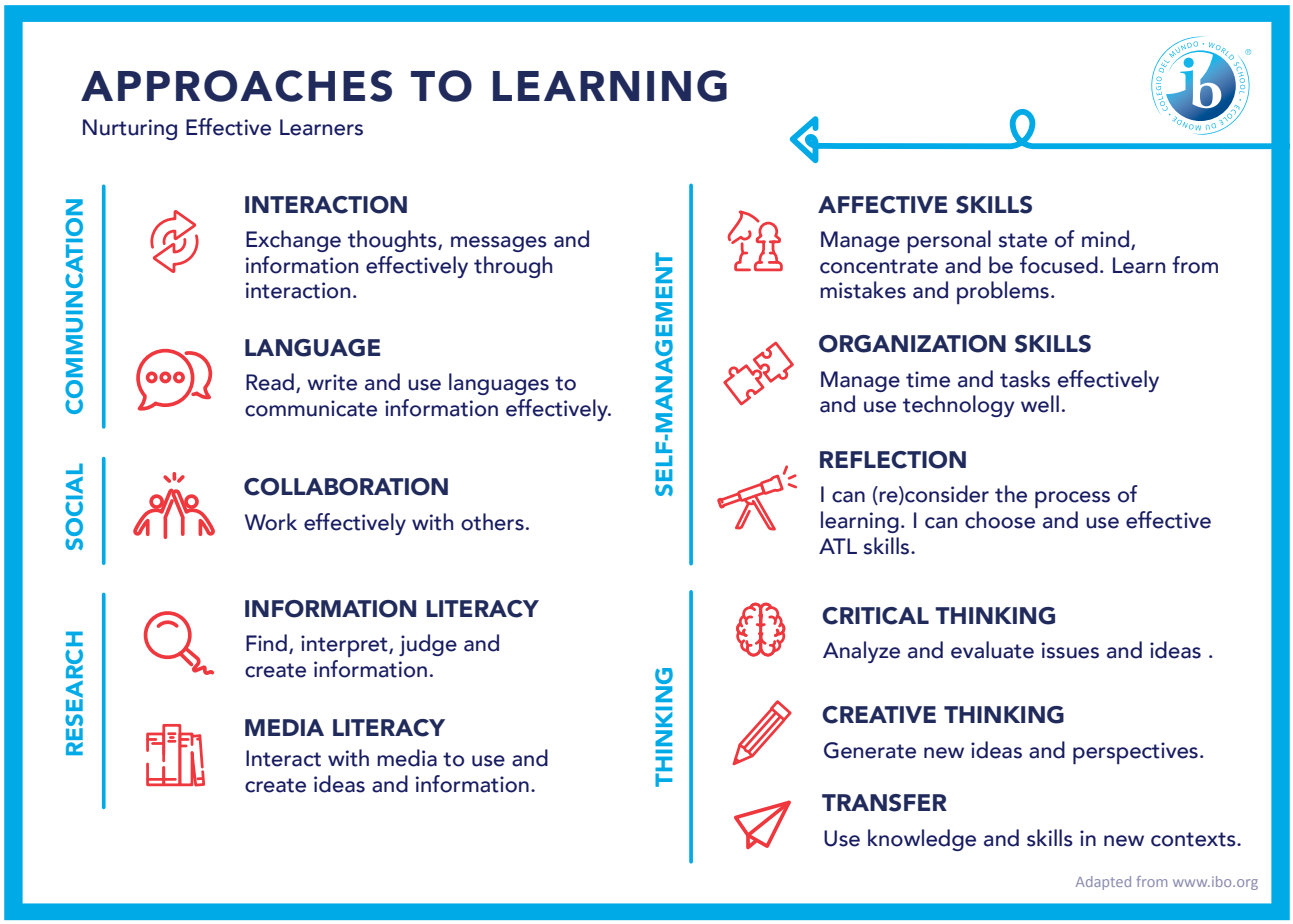
Furthermore, there are numerous opportunities throughout the day for students to engage with global citizenship concepts. For instance, this might arise during a student council discussion about how to use limited time and resources effectively. Alternatively, it could occur in the lunchroom when a student notices a peer with a different kind of food from home and wonders about its significance and choice. The possibilities for connecting to global citizenship are almost endless.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING (ATLs)

Approaches to Learning (ATLs) are a set of 134 academic and affective skills grouped into five areas:

- Communication skills
- Research skills
- Thinking skills
- Social skills
- Self-management skills

ATLs are cross-curricular skills that essentially help students learn how to learn. While they are purposely embedded in every unit of instruction (meaning they are explicitly taught and assessed), ATLs also turn up in all sorts of less formal co-curricular experiences too, like during outdoor education camps, in after-school activities, at sports competitions or when students are performing in a play or choral concert.



ACTION AND SERVICE

All students in grades 6-10 are required to participate in service, creative and active (physical) endeavors. In grades 6-8 the school offers opportunities for students to participate on an optional basis. These can take the form of service opportunities (i.e., Box of Hope, Sunshine Action), after-school sports teams or involvement in the school drama production.

CAS (Creative, Activities, Service) is a compulsory program for Grade 11 and 12 students, emphasizes student-driven experiences in the three strands: Creativity, Activity, and Service, encouraging personal growth, reflection, and a sense of social responsibility. The program is structured around three interconnected strands:

- **Creativity:**
  Encourages students to explore and express their imaginative ideas through various artistic and creative pursuits.
- **Activity:**
  Promotes physical exertion and a healthy lifestyle through participation in sports, fitness, or other physically demanding activities.
- **Service:**
  Involves collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community, addressing real needs and fostering a sense of social responsibility.

IB LEARNER PROFILE

The IB Learner Profile includes 10 attributes valued by IB schools worldwide. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help students become responsible members of local, national and global communities. The Learner Profile supports the notion of international-mindedness and is a central component to all our unit plans.

As IB learners we strive to be:

IB LEARNER PROFILE

We develop learners that strive to be:

INQUIRERS
- Nurture curiosity
- Learn independently and with others
- Learn with enthusiasm all our life

KNOWLEDGEABLE
- Develop and use conceptual understanding to explore knowledge
- Engage with issues and ideas that are important in lives and for the whole world

THINKERS
- Use critical and creative thinking skills to analyze and take action on complex problems
- Show initiative In making reasoned and ethical decisions

COMMUNICATORS
- Express confidently and creatively in more than one language
- Collaborate effectively by listening carefully to the perspectives of others
- Share ideas respectfully

PRINCIPLED
- Act with integrity, honesty and a strong sense of fairness and justice for all
- Take responsibility for actions and their consequences

OPEN-MINDED
- Appreciate cultures and personal histories, as well as the traditions and values of others
- Seek and evaluate a range of points of view
- Grow from experiences

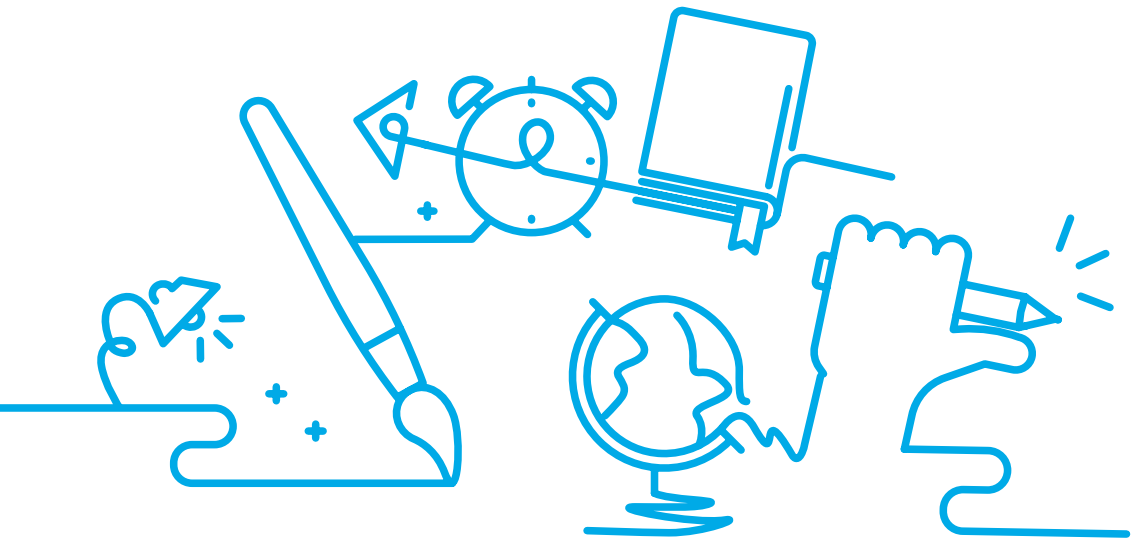
CARING
- Show empathy, compassion and respect
- Commit to service learning
- Act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world

RISK-TAKERS
- Work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas
- Develop innovative strategies
- Be resourceful and resilient in the face of challenge, change and uncertainty

BALANCED
- Balance different aspects of life - intellectual, physical, and emotional
- Create well-belng for ourselves and others
- Recognize interdependence with other people and the world in which we all live

REFLECTIVE
- Consider the world, ideas and experiences thoughtfully
- Understand strengths and weaknesses in order to support learning and personal development

Adapted from ibo.org/benefit/learnerprofile



THE SOPHOMORE PROJECT

The Sophomore Project is a culminating experience for students in Grade 10 (Sophomores), an essential preparation for the diploma options at Stamford. The project is an 8-month-long project where students choose an area of interest to them, research, develop a plan to produce a product, create that product, then hold a final exhibition. Students document the experience in a process journal and report. This project combines the learning and skills and pushes students to the next level with support from an assigned teacher-mentor. The mentor will help guide them through the process, skills, and evaluation criteria.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

Every child receives formal instruction in social-emotional learning (SEL) every week. The Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) program is designed to foster essential skills that empower students to thrive both academically and personally. By integrating the Second Step and WayFinder curricula, we equip students with critical abilities. Research shows that students with strong SEL skills can experience up to a 10% increase in academic achievement. When students feel safe, supported, and connected to their community, they are better prepared to succeed in the classroom and beyond.

IN GRADE 6-8, STAMFORD USES THE SECOND STEP FRAMEWORK. UNITS INCLUDE:

1) mindsets and goals

2) values and relationships

3) thoughts, emotions and decisions

4) serious peer conflicts

IN GRADES 9 AND ABOVE, STAMFORD USES THE SCHOOL-CONNECT FRAMEWORK. SAMPLE TOPICS INCLUDE:

1) building rapport with teachers

2) using active listening

3) managing digital tools

4) cultivating curiosity and grit

5) taking effective notes

TOPICS IN GRADE 10 INCLUDE:

1) coping with stress

2) defusing anger

3) outsmarting media

4) advertising, planning for university

5) the Grade 11/12 course selection process

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ENGLISH A

English A includes a balanced study of genres, literary texts, and non-literary text types. Students generate moral, social, economic, cultural, and environmental insights through their interactions with different texts. Students learn how to support opinions with evidence, make decisions, and engage in ethical reasoning. The course equips students with the linguistic, analytical, and communicative skills that are needed for thorough textual analysis.

American Standards – American Education Reaches Out (AERO)

Key Concepts – Communication, Connections, Creativity, Perspective, Form

Middle School Topics Include:

GRADE 6 – Short Stories, Character Essay, Drama, Non-fiction

GRADE 7 – Novel Study, Argumentative Essay, Poetry

GRADE 8 – Position Papers, Novel Study, Poetry

Middle School Assessment Objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Know, understand and interpret	Analyze and evaluate	Communicate

High School Topics Include:

GRADE 9 – Literary and Non-literary Textual Analysis Across Contexts and Genres

GRADE 10 – Literary and Non-literary Textual Analysis Across Contexts and Genres

High School Assessment Objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Know, understand and interpret a variety of texts	Analyze and evaluate ways to use language	Communicate clearly, logically and persuasively

ENGLISH B PATHWAY (A LANGUAGE ACQUISITION COURSE TO SUPPORT EAL STUDENTS IN GRADES 6-10)

English B is a Language Acquisition course that enables students to develop language skills and cultural understanding necessary to communicate effectively in English and engage meaningfully with the world around them.

Focusing on vocabulary and grammar enhances language proficiency, while literary analysis and writing skills nurture the ability to engage with diverse texts. Oral communication practice builds confidence for presentations and discussions. Additionally, the course's emphasis on interdisciplinary connections and engagement with global issues ensures that students are not only well-prepared for the thematic units in the IB Diploma Program but also equipped to navigate a globalized world. Regular assessments and feedback help students understand expectations and reflect on their learning, setting a strong foundation for future success.

Middle School Topics Include:

Culture & Identity, Sustainability and the Environment, Resolving Conflict, Life's Opportunities, Digital Communication, Novel Study

High School Topics Include:

GRADE 9 – Friendship, Happiness and fulfillment, Migration, Bilingualism and Multilingualism

GRADE 10 – Identities, Human Ingenuity, Sharing the Planet, Social Organization, Experiences, Novel Study

Assessment

Assessment in English B is both Formative and Summative

Types of Assessment

- Oral Presentations
- Written Assignments
- Reading Comprehension Tasks
- Listening Comprehension Tasks
- Interactive Tasks

Middle School Assessment Objectives

	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
ENGLISH B	Comprehending spoken, written, and visual text	Communicating in response to spoken and/or written text	Using language in spoken and/or written form

High School Assessment Objectives

	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 4
ENGLISH B	Comprehending spoken and visual text	Comprehending written and visual text	Communicating response to spoken and/or written form	Using language in spoken and/or written form

MODERN LANGUAGES (MANDARIN AND SPANISH)

Studying the modern languages of Mandarin and Spanish helps students develop intercultural awareness and international-mindedness. Students reflect upon and explore a range of cultural perspectives in addition to the language itself. Language develops critical thinking and global citizenship and explores and sustains personal development and cultural identity.

One of the aims of modern languages is to gain proficiency in an additional language while supporting the maintenance of a student's mother tongue and cultural heritage. It allows students to develop a respect for and understanding of diverse linguistic and cultural heritages. On a deeper level, they appreciate a variety of literary and non-literary texts and develop critical and creative techniques for comprehension and constructing meaning. They recognize and use language as a vehicle of thought, reflection, self-expression, and learning in other subjects. Modern languages are structured in phases (1-6), and students progress through the phases as their cognition and skills improve.

American Standards & European Common Framework – American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)

Key Concepts – Communications, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, Communities

Phase Topics Include:

NOVICE – Communicate using isolated, memorized words and phrases on predictable everyday topics

INTERMEDIATE – Able to create with the language to express personal meaning on familiar daily topics, ask simple questions

ADVANCED – Can effectively engage in conversations using concrete narration and description across major time frames, handle unexpected social situations, and communicate clearly with native speakers

SUPERIOR – Demonstrate no pattern of error in the use of basic structures, although they may make sporadic errors, particularly in low-frequency structures and in complex high-frequency structures. Such errors, if they do occur, do not distract the native interlocutor or interfere with communication

DISTINGUISHED – Highly articulate and culturally adept, capable of using sophisticated, persuasive, and succinct language to address abstract concepts and diverse audiences with accuracy and effectiveness

HUMANITIES

Humanities encourage learners to respect and understand the world around them and equips them with 21st-century skills. Students will explore the historical, contemporary, global politics, social, economic, religious, technological, and cultural contexts that impact our world. This encourages learners to consider local, regional, and global contexts. Students collect, describe, and analyze data used in studies of societies. Students test hypotheses and learn to interpret complex information, including source material. They develop their identities as individuals and as responsible members of local and global communities.

Humanities help students appreciate human and environmental commonalities and diversity. They learn to understand the interactions and interdependence of individuals, societies, and the environment and also how to identify and develop concern for the well-being of human communities and the natural environment. They develop inquiry skills that lead toward conceptual understandings of the relationships between individuals, societies, and the environments in which they live. Ultimately, Humanities helps students learn how to act as responsible citizens of local and global communities.

American Standards – American Education Reaches Out (AERO)

Key Concepts – Change, Global Interactions, Systems, Time, Place and Space

Middle School Topics Include:

GRADE 6 – Mother Earth, Global Village, Ways of Life, Socioeconomics

GRADE 7 – Evolution, Natural Disasters, Ancient Egypt, Geography

GRADE 8 – Sustainability, Human Rights, Age of Revolution, Individualism vs. Collectivism

Middle School Assessment Objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Knowing and understanding	Investigating and communicating	Thinking critically

High School Topics Include:

GRADE 9 – Identity, Industrialization, Urban Environments, Global Conflict

GRADE 10 – Two Interdisciplinary units with lens of Economics, Geography, History, Politics and Psychology

High School Assessment Objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 4
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding	Demonstrate application and analysis	Demonstrate synthesis and evaluation	Demonstrate use and application of appropriate skills

SCIENCE

Science and its methods of investigation offer a way of learning that contributes to developing an analytical and critical way of thinking. Inquiry allows students to independently and collaboratively investigate issues through research, observation, and experimentation. Students explore the connections between science and discover the tensions and dependencies between science and morality, ethics, culture, economics, politics, and the environment. Students develop the ability to demonstrate critical-thinking skills to analyze and evaluate information to make informed judgments in various contexts. Learning science relies on understanding and using the language of science, which involves more than simply learning technical, scientific terminology.

Science helps students understand and appreciate science and its implications and consider it a human endeavor with benefits and limitations. Students will cultivate analytical, inquiring, and flexible minds that pose questions, solve problems, construct explanations and judge arguments. They will design and perform investigations, evaluate evidence and reach conclusions.

American Standards – Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS/AERO/CC)

Key Concepts – Change, Connections, Relationships, Systems

Middle School Topics Include:

GRADE 6 – What is Science?, Cells and Body Systems, Matter and Thermal Energy, Weather and Climate

GRADE 7 – Science Skills, Periodic Table, Chemical Change, Photosynthesis, Ecosystems

GRADE 8 – Scientific Method, Forces and Motion, Genetics, Earth in Space

Middle School Assessment Objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Knowing and understanding	Applying skills and practices	Analyzing and reflecting

High School Topics Include:

GRADE 9 – Atoms and Waves, Sound and Light, Matter and Physical Change, Chemical Change, Ecology

GRADE 10 – Position and Movement, Forces, Stoichiometry and Molarity, Genetics, Inheritance

High School Assessment Objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 4
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding	Make inquiries and design experiments	Process data and evaluate conclusions	Reflect on the impacts of science

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics promotes a powerful universal language, analytical reasoning, and problem-solving skills that contribute to developing logical, abstract, and critical thinking. Through mathematics, students can learn to make sense of the world and analyze and search for patterns and relationships. Mathematics is more than simply teaching formulas or rules but is a means for new knowledge to be applied to situations outside the classroom. It helps students develop problem-solving techniques and provides the foundation for studying sciences, engineering, and technology.

Mathematics at Stamford encourages students to enjoy and develop a healthy curiosity for the subject. Students develop an understanding of the principles and nature of mathematics, as well as logical, critical, and creative thinking. Students learn to build powers of generalization and abstraction and the ability to apply and transfer skills to a wide range of real-life situations. They come to appreciate mathematics's moral, social and ethical implications. Students will see the international dimension in mathematics through an awareness of the universality of mathematics and its multicultural perspectives. They develop the ability to reflect critically upon their work and the work of others. And ultimately, students develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to pursue further studies in mathematics.

American Standards – American Education Reaches Out (AERO)

Key Concepts – Form, Logic, Perspective, Relationships

Middle School Topics Include:

GRADE 6 – Ratios, Rates, and Percentages; Surface Area and Volume; Algebraic Expressions; Introduction to Statistics; Rational Numbers

GRADE 7 – Geometry; Proportions and Percentages; Linear Equations and Inequalities; Statistics and Probability

GRADE 8 – Congruence and Similarity; Linear Relationships and Equations; Functions and Patterns; Angles, Triangles, and Volume; Systems of Linear Equations; Exponents and Scientific Notation

Middle School Assessment Objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Knowing and understanding	Investigating and communicating patterns	Applying mathematics

High School Topics Include:

GRADE 9 – Algebraic Expansion and Factorization; Exponents and Radicals; Linear Functions; Systems of Linear Equations and Inequalities; Right-Angled Trigonometry; Statistics and Probability

GRADE 10 – Formulas and Functions; Quadratic Equations and Functions; Non-Right-Angled Trigonometry; Circle Theorems; Sequences and Series; Statistics and Probability

High School Assessment Objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 4
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding	Solve real-world problems through appropriate models	Communicate, interpret, and reason with sound arguments	Investigate, analyze and test with efficient use of technology

THE ARTS: DRAMA, MUSIC, AND VISUAL ART

At Stamford American, an Arts rotation involves students selecting three out of the three available subjects—Music, Drama and Art—to study for Grade 9, after which they drop one of these choices by Grade 10. This allows for broad exposure to different creative fields.

Drama engages students in an active relationship with theater and encourages autonomous learning and exploration. It promotes the growth of creative, reflective, and communication skills through practical work. There is an emphasis on the artistic process and the student's understanding of it as an essential component of their creative development through continuous investigation, planning, goal setting, rehearsing, performing, reflection and evaluation.

Music gives students access to musical experiences that allow for the development of thinking skills, intuitive skills, practical abilities, communication, and the ability to relate to others. Engagement with existing and emerging music from the local community and from around the world allows students to understand the significance of music to the cultures of the world and, by engaging in practical work, to develop an understanding of how the act of making music is a significant and universal aspect of human expression.

Visual art allows students to experience a wide range of visual art activities, both traditional and contemporary. While traditional practices such as painting, sculpture, ceramics, and architecture have historically provided cultural records, modern approaches and access to technology now give the tools of visual art an extensive palette. Digital technology, time-based art, installation, and performance add to traditional practice and bring an extra dimension and meaning to the student's experience in visual art.

The arts enable students to develop skills specifically related to the discipline of creating and presenting art. Students will engage in creative exploration and self-discovery making purposeful connections between investigation and practice. By understanding the relationship between art and its contexts, students can respond to and reflect on art and ultimately deepen their understanding of the subject.

American Standards – Massachusetts Arts (MA)

Key Concepts – Aesthetics, Communication, Creativity, Identity

Drama Topics Include:

GRADE 6 – Dramatic Sequence and Structure, Drama Strategies, Signs and Symbols, Storytelling
GRADE 7 – Voice, Visual Elements of Drama, Forum Theater, Play Scripts, Vocal Expression
GRADE 8 – Drama in the Community, Russian Theater, Melodrama, Physical Theater, Masks
GRADE 9 – Duologues, Verbatim Theatre, Intro to Shakespeare, Musical Theater
GRADE 10 – Greek Theater, Brecht, Site Specific Methods, Physical Theatre

Music Topics Include:

GRADE 6 – The Elements of Music, African Drumming, The Orchestra, Maestro, GarageBand
GRADE 7 – Baroque Music, Caribbean Music, Chords into Jazz, Music for Films
GRADE 8 – Indonesian Gamelan, Rock and Pop Ensemble, Magic Mozart, Hip Hop music
GRADE 9 – Indian Classical Music, Romantic Period, 21st Century Music, Game Design
GRADE 10 – Contemporary Music and Plagiarism, Chinese Drumming, 20th Century Music, Creative Music Technology

Visual Art Topics Include:

GRADE 6 – Be Well Inquiry, Coral Ceramics, Second Skin Portraiture, Skulls & Identity

GRADE 7 – Be Well Inquiry, Movement & Collage, Expressionism, Joseph Cornell Project

GRADE 8 – Be Well Inquiry, Abstraction, Sculpture, Special Project

GRADE 9 – Be Well Inquiry, Portraiture, Ceramics, Special Project

GRADE 10 – Connections, Light/dark, Structures, Past and Present

Middle School Assessment Objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Knowing and understanding	Developing skills and thinking creatively	Reflecting and responding

High School Assessment Objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 4
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding	Demonstrate application and analysis	Demonstrate synthesis and evaluation	Select, use and apply skills and techniques

STEMinn

The STEMinn program combines sustainability, technology, engineering, making and innovation to elevate students into skilled problem solvers ready to tackle global issues. At its core, students leverage skills in digital technology and physical tools to design and engineer solutions that are sustainable and socially responsible.

Through both hands-on and digital projects, students gain future-proof skills in problem-solving analytical thinking to drive success in any engineering-design field. The secondary STEMinn program builds on the core foundational skills learned in elementary school, elevates them to solve more challenging and nuanced problems, while developing stronger technical and soft skills. Students passionate about STEMinn may want to STEMinn may choose Computer Science and/or Design Technology in the IB Diploma program. The STEMinn program builds a strong portfolio of innovative projects and in-demand skills to foster graduates who are attractive to universities and equipped to achieve beyond graduation.

American Standards – NGSS Engineering Design Standards
International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)

Key Concepts – Communication, Communities, Development, Systems

Middle School Topics Include:

GRADE 6 – Game Design, Textile Arts, Physical Modeling, Sustainable Manufacturing

GRADE 7 – Mechanics and Robotics, UI/UX, Architecture, Audio/Visual Storytelling

GRADE 8 – Automation and Robotics, CAD Modeling, Reverse Engineering, Sustainable Development

Middle School Assessment Objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Knowing, understanding and inquiring	Developing and applying skills	Developing solutions, analyzing and evaluating

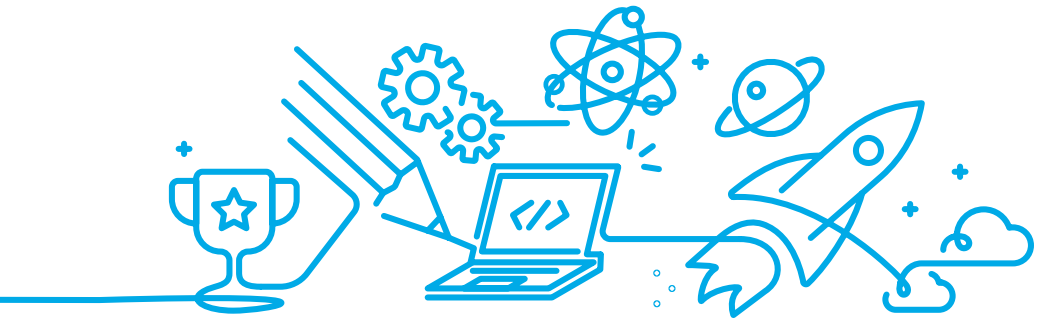
High School Topics Include:

GRADE 9 – Circuit Boarding, Manufacturing and Resistant Materials, Computer Programming, Web Development

GRADE 10 – CAD Modeling and Product Design, Computer Science and Machine Learning, Advanced Topics

High School Assessment Objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 4
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding	Apply design and technology skills, concepts and methodology	Construct, analyze and evaluate solutions and methods	Demonstrate research, experimentation and modeling



PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Physical and Health Education helps students understand and appreciate the value of being physically active and develop the motivation for making healthy life choices. The subject fosters the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that contribute to a student's balanced and healthy lifestyle. Students will explore various concepts that help foster an awareness of physical development and health perspectives, empowering them to make informed decisions and promoting positive social interaction. Physical and health education helps students appreciate and respect the ideas of others and develop effective collaboration and communication skills. This subject area also offers many opportunities to build positive interpersonal relationships that can help students to create a sense of social responsibility.

Through a concept inquiry-based approach, Physical and Health Education helps students to to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

American Standards – Society of Health and Physical Education (SHAPE)
National Health Education Standards (NHES)

Key Concepts – Healthy Literacy, Change, Communication, Development, Relationships

Middle School Topics Include:

GRADE 6 – Basketball, Swimming, Health (Nutrition), Athletics & Fitness, Net Games, Striking and Fielding, Alternative Games

GRADE 7 – Basketball, Swimming, Health (Relationship and Sex Education), Athletics & Fitness, Racket Games, Volleyball, Alternative Games

GRADE 8 – Soccer, Basketball, Swimming, Health (Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs), Athletics & Fitness, Net Games, Alternative Games

Middle School Assessment Objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Knowing and understanding	Planning and performing	Reflecting and improving performance

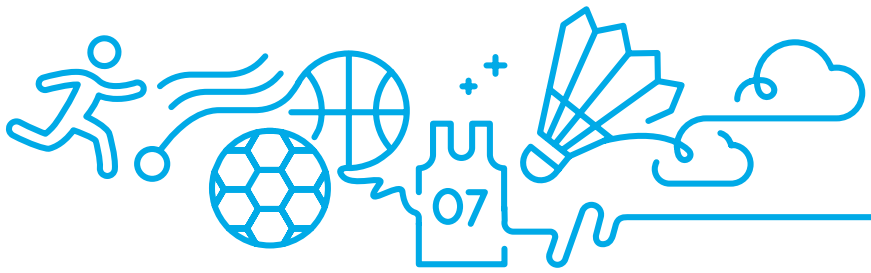
High School Topics Include:

GRADE 9 – Invasion Games, Swimming, Health (Relationship and Sex Education), Health Fitness and Performance, Net Games, Alternative Games

GRADE 10 – Water Polo, International Games, Basketball, Soccer, Personal and Community Health

High School Assessment Objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding	Plan and perform routines, sessions and events	Reflect and improve on performance



BRILLIANT BASICS

TYPICAL SCHOOL DAY

PERIOD	MON	TUES	WEDS	THUS	FRI
Morning Advisory 7:45 am - 7:55 am	Morning Advisory				
Period 1 7:55 am - 8:35 am	Math	STEMinn	Science	Languages	Visual Arts
Period 2 8:35 am - 9:15 am	Math	STEMinn	Science	Languages	Visual Arts
Snack 9:15 am - 9:35 am	Snack				
Period 3 9:35 am - 10:15 am	Physical Education	Humanities	Math	Humanities	English
Period 4 10:15 am - 10:55 am	Social Emotional Learning	Humanities	Math	Humanities	English
Period 5 10:55 am - 11:40 am	Science	Languages	Physical Education	Drama	Science
Period 6 11:40 am - 12:25 pm	Science	Social Emotional Learning	Physical Education	Math	Social Emotional Learning
Period 7 12:25 pm - 1:10 pm	Lunch				
Period 8 1:10 pm - 1:55 pm	Languages	English	English	STEMinn	Music
Period 9 1:55 pm - 2:40 pm	Languages	English	English	STEMinn	Music

Co-curricular activities typically happen for one hour after school.

HOMEWORK

Homework provides the opportunity for practicing, extending and consolidating learning in class and develops planning and organization abilities in students to assist with their learning. Homework should be relevant to classroom learning, appropriate to the individual student's learning abilities (taking into account any accommodations) and purposeful—not homework for the sake of homework.

Homework should have a purpose. It may be to:

- prepare students for upcoming class work
- be an extension of the lesson to practice or revise skills already developed
- encourage students to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively
- occasionally finish off incomplete class work
- transfer new skills or concepts to new situations

Teachers clearly communicate to students the guidelines, expectations and use of assessment objectives for homework or coursework. When appropriate, clear exemplars can be used. Outlined below are the general time guidelines for homework responsibilities per night for all subjects total taught in a day:

GRADE 6 – 70 minutes
GRADE 7 – 80 minutes
GRADE 8 – 90 minutes
GRADE 9 – 100 minutes
GRADE 10 – 110 minutes
GRADES 11-12 – 120 minutes

ASSESSMENT

Progress reports are made available to students and parents four times a year to give an update of the child's progress across all of his or her subjects. The purpose is to provide a basis for constructive conversations about areas of potential growth and improvement. Achievement is reported on a 7-point scale and feedback is also given for overall effort and progress made in a course. The grading scale is a follows:

7 = excellent performance, significantly exceeding grade level expectations

6 = very good performance, exceeding grade level expectations

5 = good performance, fully meeting grade level expectations

4 = satisfactory performance, occasionally requires support, mostly meeting grade level expectations

3 = mediocre performance, requires significant support, sometimes not meeting grade level expectations

2 = limited performance, below grade level expectations

1 = significantly below grade level expectations

Stamford grading is learning-outcomes-related, not norm-referenced. This means individual student performance is compared to pre-developed and communicated expectations which may come in the form of a set of grade level descriptors or a rubric. Therefore, students are not compared to each other, ranked or placed on a percentage scale. Grades are not calculated or averaged out, but instead are determined using a "best-fit" approach, which research supports as being the best way to give ongoing feedback and as being a reliable indicator of real student performance. Using best-fit requires professional judgement on the part of the teacher, and judgements are always supported by multiple and varied examples of student performance.

In the 'Course Descriptions' section on pages 10-19, each course includes a set of 'assessment objectives,' which can be thought of as areas of learning. When a teacher identifies learning outcomes for the unit of study, they are linked to one of these assessment objectives. In this way, teachers can ensure there is strong linkage between learning outcomes and assessment tasks, and between assessment objectives and final progress report mark.

CONCEPT-BASED UNIT PLANNING

Curriculum planning for Grades 6-10 at Stamford is based on the Understanding by Design® framework, which emphasizes identifying what is intended to be explicitly taught and assessed first (American standards), and then designing a unit of study with those goals in mind. There is a strong focus on developing deep understanding and also the ability to transfer that understanding to new and interesting situations. Key primary resources for each course (textbooks) are merely resources, not curriculum.

The basis of all curricular planning at Stamford is built on the structure of a 'unit.' A unit of study is what provides the structure for a cohesive, comprehensive, multi-week series of lessons coalesced around a single 'concept.' At Stamford, every single unit in all grade levels are focused on a single concept that serves as the lynchpin for the 'enduring understanding' and 'essential questions' for the unit of study.

By building units of study around these 16 concepts, it is possible for students to come away with a higher level of understanding, not just topics and knowledge. Each Secondary School course will typically have about 4-6 units of study during an academic year.

COURSE CHOICES

INTEGRATED COURSES

All students in Grades 6-8 study the same subjects; English, a second language (Mandarin or Spanish), humanities, sciences, mathematics, STEMinn, physical and health education, drama, music and visual art. All courses are integrated, meaning that for each grade level a range of topics organized under learning areas are covered. As students progress through the years, the complexity and depth of learning increases, so that students are able to advance their learning. Students explore a range of areas every year, so will never go long without studying a certain area, such as 'statistics and probability,' 'forces and motion' or 'connections and conflict.' Ongoing application of knowledge to different contexts allow for deeper and longer lasting learning

LEVELED COURSES

LANGUAGE

In second language studies (language acquisition) of either Mandarin or Spanish, students are placed in cohorts of students who are at a similar level. Because of the nature of language studies, this is the best way to organize students for these classes.

MATH

Beginning in Grade 9, students are placed in one of two courses: 'Applied Mathematics' or 'Pure Mathematics.' Both of these courses are two-year courses (Grade 9 & 10) Students cover topics from all five math areas: operations/algebra, real and complex number systems (functions), geometry/trigonometry, statistics/probability and calculus. The Applied Math course has more of a focus on real and complex numbers (functions) and statistics/probability. The Pure Math course has more of a focus on geometry/trigonometry and calculus.

For mathematics, students and parents will be led through a course selection process by Stamford's academic team at the end of Grade 8. They are placed according to a number of factors including: career aspirations, university studies plans, personal interest, ability to access courses as evidenced by Stamford progress reports, and feedback from teachers.

MEASURES OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS (MAP)

In addition to normal Stamford American progress reports, all students also sit for Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) exams twice a year, at the beginning and end of the school year. The purpose of these exams is to provide us more data on individual student growth over the school year. We use these as just one measure of learning, to be considered alongside the rich three-dimensional picture of learning that your child's report card, Seesaw portfolio (in the Elementary) and parent-teacher communication provide.

The MAP assessment is an external, standardized, adaptive computerized test in the three subject areas of reading, mathematics and science to provide an estimate of the student's achievement and growth levels. The version of the MAP assessment that our students take aligns with the American AERO/Common Core Plus standards frameworks on which our planning for learning is based.

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

All students who satisfactorily complete their courses while at Stamford earn a 'Stamford American School Hong Kong – High School Diploma.' All courses in Grades 9-12 count toward the high school diploma, so students should be aware that all semester grades that are earned beginning in Grade 9 will appear on their official high school transcript.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:

5 credits for each subject below

- **OTHER COURSES/ ELECTIVES**

4 credits for each subject below

- **ENGLISH**

3 credits for each subject below

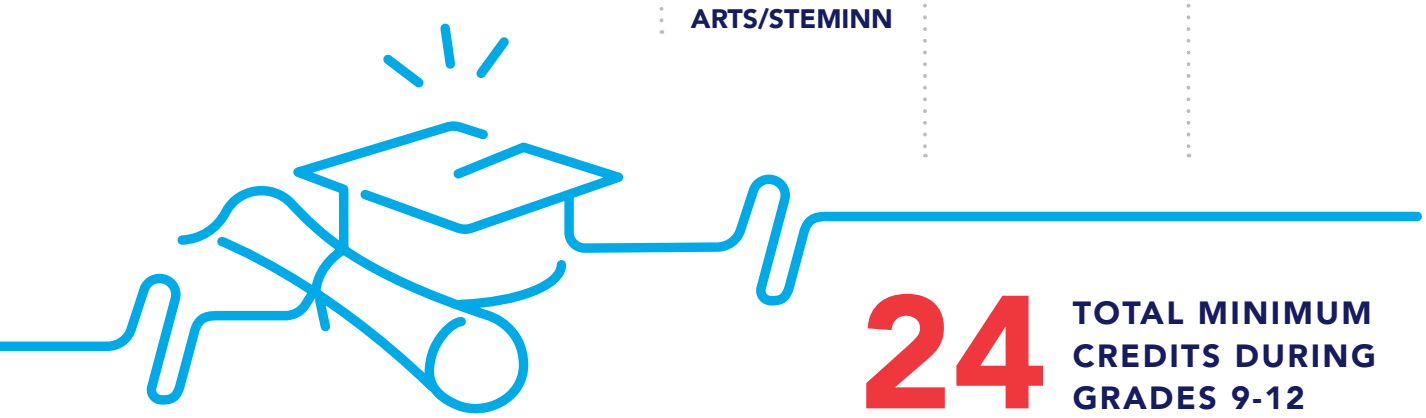
- **HUMANITIES**
- **SCIENCE**
- **MATHEMATICS**
- **ARTS/STEMINN**

2 credits for each subject below

- **LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

1 credit for each subject below

- **PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION**



24 **TOTAL MINIMUM CREDITS DURING GRADES 9-12**

BEGINNING TO PREPARE FOR THE IBDP

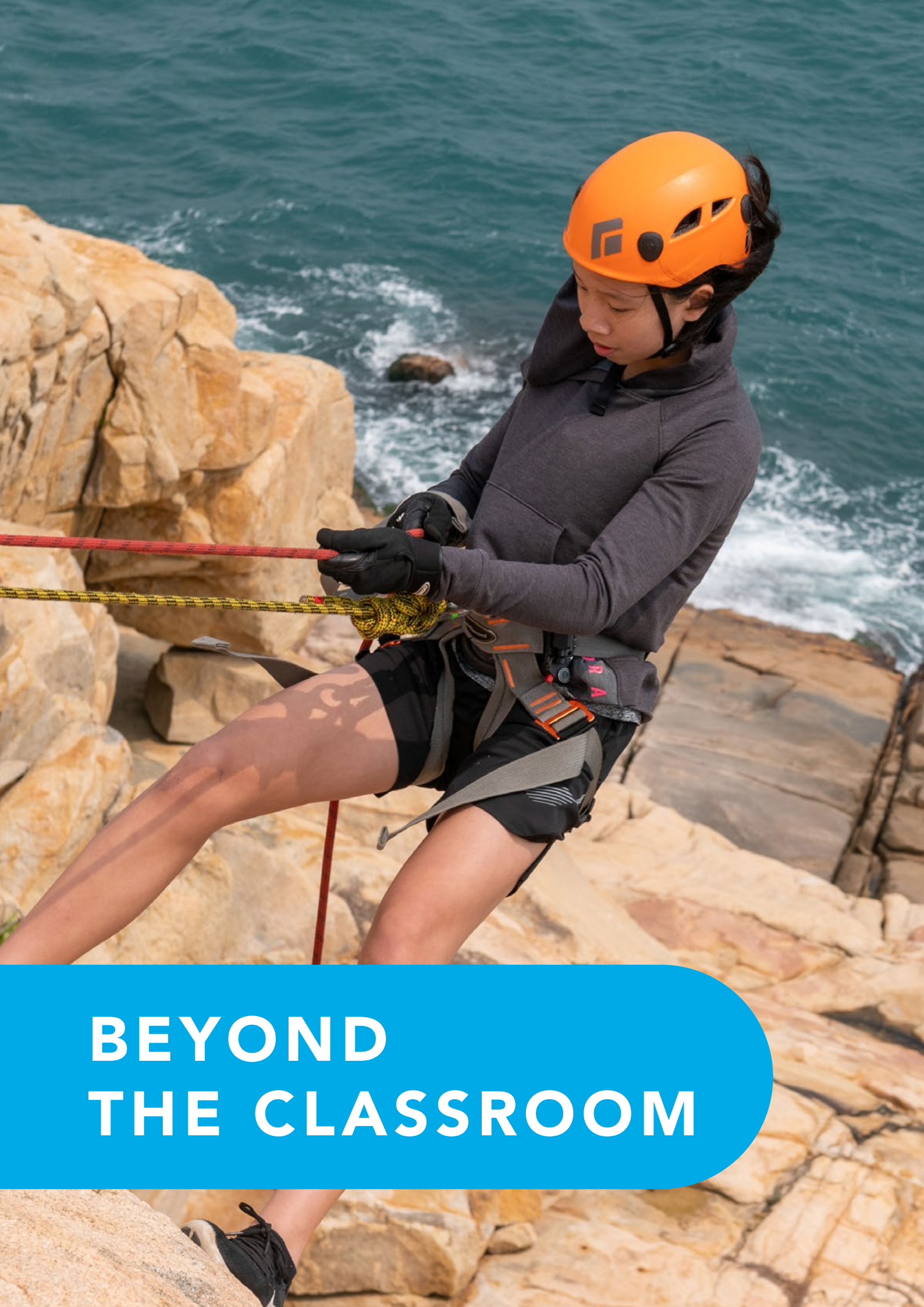
As students approach Grade 11 and the beginning of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Progamme (IBDP), it is helpful for them to think about what an IB Learner looks like.

IB learners generally have the following qualities:

- want to challenge him or herself against world benchmarks
- enjoys collaborative work practices
- ability to work across different subject areas
- good work ethic and time management skills
- interest in internationalism
- wants success at university, not just 'get in'
- higher order thinking skills
- wants to impact positively on the world
- wants to keep career options open
- see him or herself as being a 'lifelong learner'.

Some of the things students in grades 8-10 should be striving for include:

- have perfect or near-perfect school attendance
- demonstrate academic honesty and respectful, safe behavior
- maintain good working relationships with teachers
- develop good note taking and study habits
- devote time almost every day to your studies, be constantly reviewing
- follow the advice of your teachers
- take personal responsibility for your learning
- work hard to develop 'academic literacy' with the assistance of your teachers
- understand that your 'job' is to be a student; do it well
- for the Sophomore Project, follow all the guidelines and do well ('4' or higher).



BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

CORNERSTONES PROGRAM

The Cornerstones Program offers Grade 9 and 10 students 15 hours of real-world experience, integrating one work-related experience into the Stamford high school diploma while the second semester will be focused on Research Readiness and Sophomore project. Students work with industry experts for project-based learning, mentorship, and networking opportunities. The program culminates in a showcased project each year and quarterly progress reports, giving students skills and confidence for university applications and future careers.

This transformative program challenges students to think critically and creatively, gain a unique perspective on their passions and interests, and develop essential skills such as leadership, teamwork, problem-solving, and communication, unlocking their full potential for success in Grades 11 and 12.

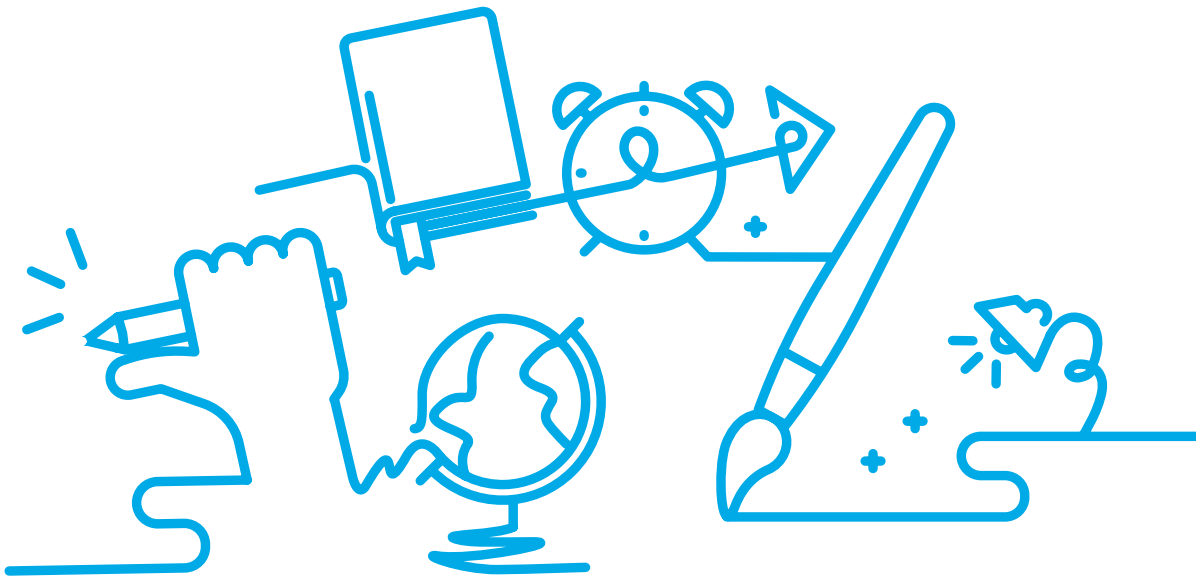
All students in grades 6-10 participate in outdoor education camps organized by the school. The current range of locations for grade level trips have students in grades 6-8 staying in the Hong Kong area and students in grades 9 and above traveling elsewhere in China and Southeast Asia. Locations and timing of the trips are published at the beginning of each school year.

The aim of the camps is to provide a model of holistic, field-based learning in the effort to develop leaders who are ecologically literate, compassionate, and engaged global citizens. Research shows that well designed, field-based experiences can produce learning which transfers from the field to students' home environments. Through immersive and often challenging field study experiences, students develop leadership traits, compassion for others and communication skills useful in today's world.

Outdoor education camps are seen as an extension of the normal school curriculum, oftentimes with elements that support what is taught in the traditional classroom.

Stamford currently offers approximately 50 after-school co-curricular activities (CCAs) and clubs for students to participate in. These activities are organized into four main areas: athletics, innovation and technology, the arts, and special interest CCAs. The purpose of CCAs is to help students build self-awareness, skills, and confidence. Stamford promotes sportsmanship and leadership through various activities and school teams.

Recent activities include a range of sports teams, robotics, digital media, ceramics, Chinese arts and crafts, drama productions, choir, string orchestra, and Model United Nations. Students in grades 6-8 are especially encouraged to view CCAs as valuable opportunities for gaining experience in action and service. Additionally, high school students are welcome to create their own student-led clubs or interest groups.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How do students choose between applied and pure math?

A: The first consideration is what is best for the student. Two important factors to consider will be career-university aspirations and actual mathematics ability. There will need to be some honest heart-to-heart conversations in some cases, to reconcile reality with options.

Q: How does your American-framework-style education compare to the MYP and the IGCSE?

A: All three include a range of courses, ensuring a balanced content approach. One other similarity with the three is that all of them include a grade 10 culminating project experience. Both the MYP and IGCSE have a strong academic achievement exams-based element to their program, whereas Stamford's approach is more focused on growth strategies (MAP exams) and less on student ranking. The IGCSE does not include components of holistic education, but the MYP and Stamford's approaches do. These include elements of: global citizenship, Approaches to Learning, Action and Service, Learning Profile attributes and social-emotional education.

Q: Considering the MYP e-assessments and the IGCSE standardized assessments, what external standardized test does Stamford use to ensure students are well-prepared for the IB Diploma Programme?

A: All students in grades 6-10 take the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) exam twice a year, at the beginning and end of the school year. While the primary purpose of this exam is to inform teaching and learning, with a focus on growth targets, the data (RIT scores) are statistically sound and can be used as a barometer for student achievement as well. Used in concert with other student-specific longitudinal data the school collects, we can show a complete picture of a student's academic standing at the end of grade.

Q: What should I be doing with my child right now (grades 8-10) to help prepare them for the rigors of the Diploma Programme?

A: The best thing you can do is simply be involved in your child's learning. This means having conversations with them at the dinner table about their school day, briefly reviewing their homework with them as regularly as you can, staying in contact with key teachers and encouraging conversations in English using increasingly sophisticated language. One of the most important predictors of success is their reading comprehension and writing abilities. These things alone will benefit almost all other subject areas regardless of content and concepts being discussed. Let your child know you are on their side and there to support them.

Q: How do Stamford's AERO (Common Core) standards prepare students for the Diploma Programme?

A: AERO standards are used by teachers to design all courses up through Grade 10 and also any other 'Stamford' courses such as 'Computer Science' and 'Sport for Life.' Diploma Programme courses do not use AERO standards and instead use a set of very specific IB-directed learning outcomes. In actuality, the DP learning outcomes look and sound very similar to AERO standards, but they are specific to each course. In contrast, AERO standards cover an entire discipline or subject area. In that regard, they are perfectly suited to the nature of our 'integrated' courses in Grades 9 and 10.

Q: What kinds of ongoing professional development do teachers participate in?

A: Ongoing training and support is multifaceted:

- formal external in-person training workshops
- formal internal workshops with other Stamford teachers
- online, multi-week training modules
- school-sponsored training workshops
- normal ongoing collaboration with on-site colleagues
- targeted training and support offered by curriculum coordinator.

Q: Does Stamford offer standardized tests?

A: We offer PSAT and SAT on-campus. Details on specific offering for each school year are communicated to students and families in due time.

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