

MODERN ENGLISH SCHOOL CAIRO



*A guide to understanding the British
and American Curriculum Programmes
2024-2025*

YEAR 7 & GRADE 7



MODERN ENGLISH SCHOOL CAIRO

A GUIDE TO SECONDARY CURRICULUM PATHWAYS 2024-2025

Information for Year 6 Students and Parents

MES Cairo offers two curriculum options in our Secondary School: the British curriculum and the American curriculum. Parents are invited to express their preference for one section or the other for their Year 6 son/daughter. While every effort will be made to place your child in his/her first preference, the final decision will rest with the school.

Year 7 & Year 8 - Key Stage 3 Curriculum (KS3), British Section

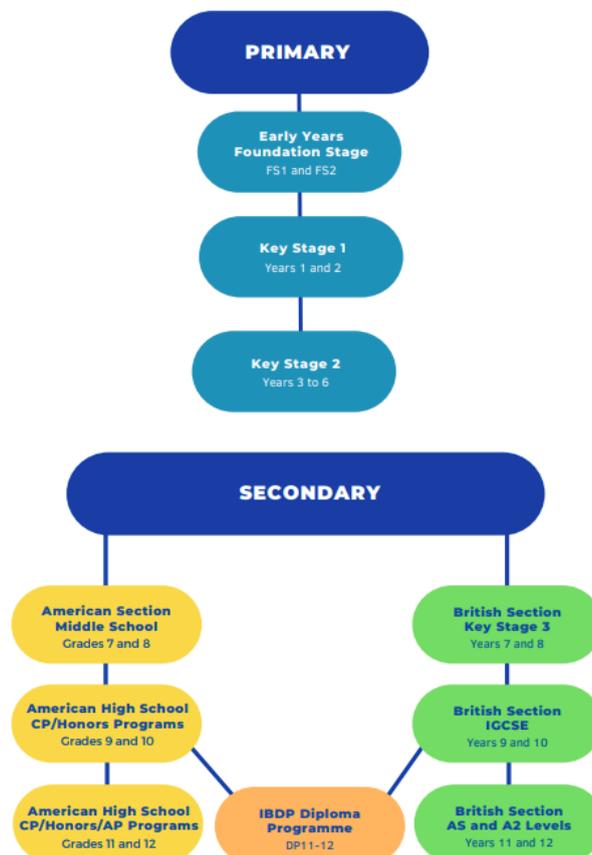
A continuation from the British Curriculum taught in our Primary School and a foundation for IGCSEs (Year 9 and 10), AS/A Level or the IB Diploma Programme (DP 11-12)

OR

Grade 7 & Grade 8 - Middle School Program (MS), American Section

A foundation for the American High School Diploma Program taught in Grades 9-12 which includes College Preparatory, Honors, and Advanced Placement courses or the IB Diploma Programme (DP 11-12)

Modern English School Cairo Curriculum Overview



SIMILARITIES BETWEEN SECTIONS:

Our MES Cairo Graduate Profile:

Our aspirations are the same for all MES Cairo students, regardless of the curriculum they follow

An MES Cairo graduate is:	An MES Cairo graduate can:	An MES Cairo graduate shows:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•A leader•Confident•Articulate•Flexible•Pro-active•Reflective•Principled•Independent•Resourceful•Resilient•Inspired•Visionary•Creative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Communicate fluently in the English language•Intelligently express their views•Problem solve•Lead by example•Recognise personal strengths and passions•Relate well to others•Take appropriate risks•Make a difference	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Integrity•Initiative•Empathy•Excellent interpersonal skills•Appreciation of individuals' rights and responsibilities•Cultural awareness•Respect for self and others•Global understanding•Commitment to lifelong learning•Understanding of the Egyptian culture and the Arabic language

Quality Education: You have chosen MES Cairo for your children because of the recognised standards upon which our reputation is built and maintained. Regardless of the curriculum your son/daughter follows in our Secondary school they will be *cared for, challenged, and inspired*.

Preparation: The subjects studied, and the numbers of lessons are similar in both sections. There is a difference in that History & Geography are taught as separate subjects in the British Key Stage 3 Programme but are integrated into the Social Studies curriculum in the American Middle School Program. All curricula options at MES Cairo prepare students well for universities in Egypt or abroad and are taught by experienced, qualified teachers which satisfy the Ministry of Education's requirements.

Advisory Programmes and Enrichment Opportunities: PRIME TIME lessons, break times, assemblies, scheduled Homeroom, athletics, involvement in After-School Activities, House Competitions, and special focus events are features of both Sections.

Student Class/ Homeroom Placements: In both sections, Y/G 7-8, students stay with their Homeroom group for all their subjects other than Languages. Students are initially placed in Homerooms by their primary teachers, based on teacher observation, CAT/MAP results, and Primary Head Teacher's recommendations.

Classroom Instruction: A variety of formative and summative assessments are utilised, allowing students, teachers, and parents to have an understanding of how much progress has been made over the course of instruction. There are opportunities for differentiation within all subjects. All Secondary students are issued with their own password to access our Google Classroom, which enhances the students' learning experiences by allowing access to classroom materials 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Students with Exceptionalities: Support from our Learning Development Department is accessible for all students who have an established need, regardless of which curriculum they follow, including extension through our gifted and talented provision for those students who meet our eligibility criteria.

Subject Areas: Students will study the following subjects:

Subjects	Lessons /2-wk period		Additional Information
English	8		
Mathematics	8		
Science	7		Y7/Y8 – Combined Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics) G7 - Life Science G8 - Physical Science
Arabic and Religion	4		
French OR Spanish	4		
Physical Education	4		
History Geography	British Section 5	American Section 6	Y7 - 2 Geography/3 History Y8 - 3 Geography/2 History G7 - Ancient History (6 lessons) G8 - Classical World History (6 lessons)
Expressive Arts Carousel: Drama Music Art Design Technology	2 2 2 2		Two subjects taken 2 times a week for half a year. - Drama and Music - Art and Design & Technology
Computing*	1		Computer science, programming, and coding are taught through the Design Technology curriculum.
Primetime	1		Home room tutor time and guidance.

Assessment: Students may be assessed in a variety of ways, including:

- Field Work
- Group Work
- Individual Work
- Practical Work
- Electronic Portfolios
- Classroom Participation
- Paper and Electronic Tests
- Midyear and End of Year Assessments
- Collaborative Projects and Presentations

Technology: All students in Secondary use technology to support their learning; our Bring your own device (BYOD) policy applies to all Year and Grade levels.

CHOOSING A PREFERENCE FOR YOUR CHILD:

By offering two programmes at the transition point between Primary and Secondary at MES Cairo, we aim to ensure that all students have the opportunity to achieve their ambitions and to meet the aspirations of themselves and their parents. The choice is often a simple matter of personal preference.

Your choice will also be influenced by the programmes offered later in your child's educational career. Once a curriculum pathway has been decided upon students should remain in their chosen section until graduation, exceptions being those students who wish to undertake the IB Diploma programme in their final two years of Secondary.

- If you are intending for your son/daughter to follow a British Curriculum, which is individually designed from an extensive range of subjects leading to IGCSEs, AS and A Level offered through the recognised UK examination authority, Cambridge, then Year 7 and 8 is the best foundation.
- If you are intending for your son/daughter to follow an American High School Diploma program in Grades 9-12 which is designed around a liberal arts education guided by the National Common Core Curriculum and provides the option of an individually selected Honors college-level classes and Advanced Placement classes offered through the US College Board then Grade 7 and 8 is the best foundation.
- Either programme will prepare your child for the IB Diploma programme which follows as an option after Grade/Year 10.



OUR BRITISH CURRICULUM: Key Stage 3

We offer an outstanding programme for students entering Year 7 of the British Secondary Section. We work closely with Primary colleagues to ensure continuity between Key Stage 2, the end of the Primary phase, and the beginning of KS3, the start of the Secondary phase. We are regarded as being 'outstanding', not just in terms of our own reflection and review, but by the regulating body of British Schools Overseas (BSO) who inspect and accredit our British programmes on a 3-year cycle and have offered the following judgements:

"The secondary curriculum meets the needs of all students"

"The attainment levels achieved by students across the school is outstanding."

"Throughout their time at school, students are developing high order personal and social skills, which enable them to make a positive contribution to the society in which they live and effectively prepare them for the next stage of their lives."

What is the British Section Key Stage 3 Curriculum?

The KS3 programme builds on the KS1 and KS2 programmes your child has been studying in the primary section at MES Cairo and is a part of the National Curriculum for England. The programme was introduced into schools in England and those schools offering an English curriculum internationally to ensure consistently high standards across schools, to facilitate transfers between schools, to enhance public understanding of what children are learning in school, and to best prepare students for success at UK universities. It is supported by extensive documentation to assist teachers in planning varied and well-resourced lessons and parents in helping their children with their studies and students in their learning. In addition to a substantial library of texts, this documentation is readily available from websites such as: [National Curriculum](#)

Aims of the Key Stage 3 Curriculum:

Key Stage 3 has two broad aims. These aims provide the context within which we have developed our own schemes of learning relevant to MES Cairo students.

Aim 1: To provide opportunities for all students to increase their knowledge, deepen their understanding and develop the skills needed to extend and apply this knowledge and understanding independently.

Aim 2: To promote students' personal, moral, social and cultural development and to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in a rapidly changing and shrinking world.

British educational traditions have developed over centuries, encouraged and monitored by the Government's Department of Education and led by outstanding institutions such as the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Britain's history is tied to countries throughout the world and its society is multi-faith, multicultural and multi-racial. Its education system is the product of all these influences.

An English National Curriculum education concerns itself with the development of the whole person. Whilst firmly rooted in traditions of scholarship and learning, the British curriculum enthusiastically embraces wider objectives. Young people are expected to develop their potential to explore and discover the world around them, to think for themselves and to form opinions, to relate to others, to develop physical well-being through sport and to gain experiences in taking responsibility. Virtues such as honesty, truth, justice, tolerance and a sense of duty are integral to the curriculum, as is support and care for young people. These traditions are intrinsic to the ethos of MES Cairo. Further information can be found on our school website. [British Secondary](#)

Global Perspectives:

In order to support our aims, Global Perspectives runs throughout the Key Stage 3 curriculum. The emphasis is on developing students' ability to think critically about a range of global issues where there is always more than one point of view. Learning takes place throughout traditional subjects both in and out of the classroom where students further develop understanding through their 'real life' experiences and outstanding transferable skills. These include critical thinking, research and collaboration. Students refine the necessary skills in order to become a successful learner and develop the personal attributes that are linked to the MES Cairo Graduate Profile and our MES Cairo Elements.

- Academic integrity, confidence in working with information and ideas - their own and those of others
- Readiness to learn
- Responsive to and respectful of others
- Ready to make a difference

Students take part in creative workshops, one day visits to local areas in Cairo and the opportunity to attend residential excursions to complement the work that they do in the classroom.

CAT4 Tests and the PASS Survey:

At the end of Year 6, 8 and 10, students sit a CAT4 cognitive ability test. The test is designed to understand student strengths and weaknesses and an insight into how our students learn best. The test can also highlight gifted and talented students and if students are underachieving. This allows the school to address patterns and adapt teaching methods to suit individuals or group needs, ensuring feedback is appropriate and targets are achievable. Students also take the PASS survey, Pupils Attitudes to Self and Learning which assists the school to identify areas for improvement in terms of student intervention and well being.

Plan-4-Grad:

Students begin a 4-year programme of counselling for their future choices from November in Year 8. They take part in workshops focusing upon the different skills and qualifications needed for different professions and spend time researching the requirements of various universities in Egypt, the UK and beyond. We also offer a wonderful platform, Unifrog, that helps parents and students undertake this research. All students meet with a member of the British section leadership team to discuss their choices. They review progress on a regular basis and work alongside teaching staff to achieve the progress required to ensure their success.

What happens after the British Section Key Stage 3?

At the successful completion of Year 8, students progress on to Year 9, where they begin their two-year preparation for external examinations in eight or more IGCSE subjects at the end of Year 10 (KS4). By completing IGCSE/GCSE in eight or more subjects, students will be well prepared for embarking on either AS/A Levels or the IB Diploma Programme, both of which are rigorous, academic courses.

Cambridge Checkpoint Assessments:

By Ministry of Education decree all students must take Aadidaya in Y9, as well as a recognised equivalency examination. At MES Cairo, we choose for students to take Cambridge Examinations Checkpoint examinations in English, Mathematics and Science. Our students are well prepared for the tests as content is covered in the Curriculum in Year 8. [Cambridge Checkpoint Information](#)

A brief insight into IGCSE in Key Stage 4:

IGCSE stands for International General Certificate of Secondary Education. It is designed for students in schools throughout the world and the syllabuses are international in content and approach. All the subject IGCSE assessment is by final examination at the end of Year 10. Students are prepared throughout the 2-year course for the examinations, allowing teachers time to give students guidance on how to improve their performance. This examination whilst challenging is accessible and private tuition is not required, contrary to popular belief. We offer catch up sessions should students require additional support. Students mature over this period, develop and hone their examination technique and are assessed when they are at their peak. Students who find exams a motivation, who work conscientiously and who follow teachers' advice are successful on this programme. IGCSE grades are awarded on an eight-point scale, A* to G. Grade A* is the highest grade at IGCSE and A Level and A the highest grade at AS level.

In Egypt, Arab students are only allowed to take the Extended Entry papers (where the syllabus provides an option). Universities often specify grades A*- C in their entrance requirements. The examinations are set by the Cambridge International Examinations Authority and students' answer scripts are sent to the Examination Board in England for marking and moderation. The rigour of the Examination Boards' procedures ensures that IGCSE qualifications are recognised by universities and colleges world-wide.

We offer a wide range of subjects, from which students can design their own course in Key Stage 4. Only Mathematics and English are compulsory; students select their other six option subjects from the list that follows. If they know what career they ultimately wish to follow, they can begin to specialise in related subjects. If they are unsure about their future or are thinking about joining the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme in Y11, they are encouraged to maintain a broad balance of subjects. The combination of on-going teacher support throughout the two years of sustained study and the experience of final examinations provides an excellent base for success in both the IB Diploma and A Levels and for university study thereafter. Students take eight IGCSE/GCSE subjects (and possibly more if they are invited onto the extension courses of IGCSE Global Perspectives, Arabic and PE).

It is our intention to offer the following option subjects at MES Cairo for students entering Year 9 in 2024: English as a First Language, Mathematics, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Business Studies, Economics, Travel and Tourism, Geography, History, Spanish, French, English Literature, Art and Design, Design and Technology (Resistant Materials or Graphic Products), Computer Science, Information Communication Technology, Computer Science, Drama, Global Perspectives, Physical Education, Arabic First Language.

In addition, students must study the following subjects to meet the Ministry of Education requirements: Arabic, Religious Studies, History and Geography (Egyptian Ministry Syllabus – Y9) , Civil Studies (Egyptian Ministry Syllabus – Y10 & 11)

Core Physical Education (PE) and Primetime are also continued in Y9-12.

IGCSE Results:

Students at Modern English School Cairo complete their IGCSE exams one year earlier than their counterparts in the UK, with extraordinary results. Our students continue to earn top accolades in Egypt's Cambridge International's Award Ceremonies as highest achievers in the country for individual subjects as well as across multiple IGCSEs, AS and A levels.

AS/A Level Progression:

If students in Year 11 and 12 decide to follow the route of AS and A level, they will be able to select from the following options: English Literature, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Geography, History, Psychology, Business Studies, Economics, Spanish, French, Arabic, Computer Science, Information Technology and Drama.

IBDP Progression:

Students entering KS3 and then IGCSEs are well-prepared for the International Baccalaureate Diploma programme, if they wish to follow this curriculum from Year 11.

University Challenge:

In recent years, our students have earned offers from universities across the world including UK universities: Cambridge, Imperial College London, University College London, Bath, Warwick, London School of Economics, Manchester and many others. More MES Cairo students head to universities in the UK than elsewhere. Our British graduates also progress on to top universities in Egypt , Germany, US and Canada, Holland and Spain.



OUR AMERICAN CURRICULUM: Middle School

The American Middle School Program is designed to foster a culture of high expectations that prepares students for the rigorous studies of the American High School Diploma in Grades 9-12. Through a range of academic, social, and co-curricular experiences, students in the program are equipped with the tools necessary to become thoughtful, creative, caring, and healthy individuals. Our Middle School environment is designed to motivate students to master their social and academic skills and encourages them to achieve grade-level standards and to even surpass them. By providing a positive and supportive environment, we aim to instill in our students a love for learning that will continue to motivate them throughout their high school years and beyond.

A Path to Success:

Success for students in an American curriculum context begins with teachers who are specialists teaching in the middle grades. Middle school teachers are skilled at providing students with exciting and challenging opportunities to explore a range of topics and experiences. It is a time when students begin to organize their learning and understand the connection that what they learn in middle school is the foundation for their success in high school.

The 7th and 8th Grade teaching teams provide academic, social, and emotional support during this time of transition through concrete learning within the classroom, but also through the use of learning through experience and reflection outside of the classroom. Key features that are used in the classroom to engage students include:

- Choices in assignments and assessments
- Working with partners and in teams to develop key skills; sharing of learning
- Thinking creatively and at a high level
- Challenging students to develop their own ideas
- Technology and research-based teaching strategies

Learning Skills: critical and creative thinking - collaborating - communicating

The curriculum in Middle School is based upon the [National Common Core Curriculum](#), which was created to ensure all students are ready for success after high school. The *Common Core* focuses on developing the critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills students will need to be successful. The standards also promote literacy skills across all content areas and teachers of all subjects focus on the following key areas:

Reading non-fiction

Writing in all classes

Supporting arguments with evidence

Reading about science and social studies

Reading at Lexile level and seeking challenges

Learning content-specific words

Students enhance their learning by engaging in experiential learning both inside and outside of school and by taking part in fine and performing arts, computer technologies, world languages, health, and physical fitness. Throughout Middle School students are encouraged to take risks in areas they might not have experienced before. This enables them to experience a wide array of opportunities prior to deciding their educational path in high school.

Checking for Understanding:

The purpose of assessment at all grade levels is to determine a student's level of mastery of the content. Teachers work as a team to enable students to demonstrate through both formative and summative assessments the overall depth and breadth of the learned content. Formative assessments that occur regularly are utilized to provide feedback to students and teachers about how students are progressing in their learning, while summative assessments serve as a cumulative evaluation of the content learned.

- **MAP:** The 'Measure of Academic Progress' tests are administered every fall and spring to students at the end of Year 6 and in Grades 7, 8, and 9. This assessment measures the academic progress of each individual child and serves as a diagnostic tool to help teachers customize instruction to each student's unique capabilities.

- **PSAT/NMSQT:** The 'Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test; National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test' is a standardized test that provides first-hand practice for the SAT. All G10 students take the PSAT at MES Cairo. Any student interested in attending university in the United States as a US passport holder and would like to compete for the National Merit Scholarship, should register and retake the exam in G11.
- **SAT:** The 'Scholastic Aptitude Test' measures the verbal, mathematical, and reasoning of a student to forecast their likely success at the university level. The writing skill section in the new SAT is optional. Many universities use the SAT as one indicator of a student's college readiness. For more information, visit www.collegeboard.com.
- **ACT:** The 'American College Testing' assessment is designed for students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. Tests cover 4 skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science. For more information, visit www.act.org.

Individual Graduation Plan (IGP):

We are committed to assisting students in developing a course of study that meets their academic goals. Beginning in Grade 8 and continuing early in the second term of each year, students are asked to choose courses for the next academic year. During the registration process, an advisor will talk with each student as to which courses are appropriate based on ability, performance, and future plans. A comprehensive four-year plan is created during the Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) advisement meeting. This plan is revisited each year to ensure that students remain on track for graduation and future university plans. Students are encouraged to research universities and career choices by visiting <https://mescairo.mymajors.com/college-major-quiz/> to receive relevant and up-to-date information and students use Unifrog from Grade 8 through to Grade 11.

What happens after the American Section Middle School Program?

The American High School Program offers a challenging academic curriculum connecting the various content areas, fostering artistic appreciation and expression, nurturing the individual talents of each student, developing responsible leadership skills, and instilling the ethic of 21st Century global citizenship. The American High School offers students a rigorous curriculum with options to enroll in Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes. Students are also highly prepared during Grades 9 and 10 to successfully enter the IB Diploma Program at the end of Grade 10 if they choose.

American High School Graduation Requirements:

Most year-long courses earn one credit. A minimum of 28.0 credits earned in Grades 9-12 is required for a college preparatory MES Cairo diploma in the American Program. In order to graduate from MES Cairo, a student must meet set course requirements and attendance guidelines. These requirements are meant to serve as a minimum standard rather than the standard students should strive to achieve. For more detailed information on the American Curriculum in Middle School and High School, please see our [program of studies](#).

Besides the core content classes of English, Math, Science, and Social Studies, students have the opportunity to choose from an extensive range of traditional and contemporary subjects to create their own uniquely challenging program of study. Since classes are participatory by nature, students learn the content while developing life skills and focus on critical and creative thinking/problem solving, written, visual, and oral communication, and collaboration.

In the academic year 2024-2025, our school is proud to offer a diverse range of elective courses to cater to the unique interests and aspirations of our students. The following elective options are available: Computer Applications, Digital Animations, Economics, Business Studies, Multimedia, Spanish, Psychology, Media and Literacy Studies, Creative Writing, Physical Education, French, Theatre, Choir, Art and Design, Digital Art and Design, Photography, Sculpture, Statistics, Pre-calculus, Calculus, Environmental Studies, Advanced Sports Science, and Physics.

Advanced Placement (AP):

The College Board's Advanced Placement Program (AP) enables willing and academically prepared students to pursue college-level studies. Students who obtain high scores on the examinations can typically earn college credit and/or placement into advanced courses in college. The following AP courses are offered at MES Cairo: Art (2D or 3D Design), World History, Calculus (AB and BC), Statistics, English Language and Composition, English Literature and Composition, Art History, Statistics, Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Chemistry, Biology, Physics I, Physics C, Comparative Government, Psychology.

American Section's Pathway to Top Universities Worldwide:

At the heart of the American Section program is the belief that every student deserves a pathway tailored to their unique strengths and aspirations. Our program not only opens doors to renowned universities worldwide but is dedicated to ensuring that each student finds the perfect fit for success. From Egypt and the UK to the United States, Canada, and across Europe, our graduates have achieved remarkable milestones.

American Section students have gained admission to prestigious universities in the United States, such as the University of Illinois-Champaign, Brown University, Georgia Tech, John Hopkins, University of California, University of Chicago, Michigan State, and the University of Arizona. Our graduates have also been accepted to some of the top UK universities, including the London School of Economics, King's College, University of Warwick, University of Kent, University of Surrey, Sussex, and Brighton. In Egypt, American Section graduates have matriculated to top universities like the American University of Cairo, Coventry, and New Giza. In Canada, our graduates have gained admission to leading universities such as the University of Toronto and McGill University.

We are proud of the accomplishments of our graduates and are confident that our program will continue to provide students with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed at the university level, regardless of their chosen destination.