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*Photo credit: Esol Education's American School Hong Kong*



# A Warm Welcome

We are pleased to welcome you to American School Hong Kong (ASHK). Thank you for your interest in our school. We are delighted to have this opportunity to establish our vision and to build an exemplary K-12 international school in Hong Kong, steered by Esol Education's 40-year heritage of establishing leading international schools worldwide.



Our mantra is focused on high expectations - expectations of ourselves and high expectations for the students who enter our school community. The combination of a welcoming and safe environment, skilled and inspirational teachers, and supportive parents, makes for great learning and a rich, rewarding atmosphere. We are committed to building a learning community where care and respect for one another is of paramount importance. We are committed to providing a balanced and holistic program with equal emphasis on the intellectual, social, creative, and physical domains.

Working with the many fine children and young adults who come through the doors of a school on a daily basis is an honor and privilege and with it comes great responsibility and joy. We are eager to embrace this challenge at ASHK and to welcome to our community the next group of future graduates who share our passion to build a great school!

We look forward to hearing from you and to welcoming you to American School Hong Kong.

John Jalsevac  
School Director

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## Achieving Excellence

### Our Mission

To provide a challenging American and international education program that empowers students to be independent critical thinkers and responsible global citizens who excel in their future studies and careers.

### ASHK Learner Profile

The attributes that form the ASHK Learner Profile are visibly displayed throughout the school and embedded into our entire program. When all members of our school community strive to live by the spirit of the *Learner Profile*, chances are good that every experience will be a positive and fulfilling one. Therefore, all ASHK students are encouraged to become:

### Accreditation

American School Hong Kong (ASHK) is designed as a co-educational, through-train, day school for students from Kindergarten (age 5) to grade 12. English is the language of instruction and communication at the school.

ASHK has been granted accreditation candidacy by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA), a leading American body that accredits seven other Esol Education schools, and by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

**Independent**

**KNOWLEDGEABLE**

**Internationally-minded**

**Caring**

**PRINCIPLED**

**Confident**

**Creative**

**Reflective**

**Balanced**



## Esol Education

American School Hong Kong is owned and operated by **Esol Education, the world's largest operator of international American schools.** Esol Education currently operates 10 high quality international schools across three continents with more than 10,000 students registered. Graduates from Esol schools are now attending leading universities worldwide, including Stanford University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Yale University, Columbia University, University of Toronto, and the London School of Economics.

## Curriculum Overview

ASHK provides a rigorous American and international education program. Our inquiry and concept-based approach to teaching and learning promotes the development of critical thinking. Concept-based learning is about big transferable ideas that transcend time, place and situation. Concepts are a way to organise and make sense of learning. Content focuses primarily on facts while concepts focus on making sense of those facts and the world around us. Through this approach, students are empowered to become independent, self-actualised, critical thinking problem solvers.

In the Elementary School (KG2 - grade 5) and Middle School (grade 6 - 8), the US Common Core (Math and English), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and American Education Reaches Out (AERO) Social Studies Standards, along with other best-practice international frameworks, provide the foundation for learning. The standards provide benchmarks and success criteria for each grade level and are designed to build upon the most advanced current thinking about preparing students for success in college and with their careers. The standards are the learning goals for what students should know, be able to do, and communicate at each grade level. They are designed to help students acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to reach their full potential.

The Middle School (grades 6 - 8) provides a transitional bridge between the more child-centered, self-contained classroom of the Elementary School and the curriculum based departmental focus of High School. Healthy relationships are of paramount importance when working with 10-14 year olds where the widest range of differences in terms of physical, social, and intellectual growth is typically found. An understanding of adolescent development during this critical phase underpins the Middle School program. In response, the school has introduced a Teacher Advisor Program (TAP) along with a Personal, Social and Emotional (PSE) curriculum framework, and is committed to the development of strong character and life skills in our students. The Middle School has also introduced leadership development programs and activities such as Model United Nations, Week Without Walls, and National History Day, which are all designed to promote responsible global citizenship.

The grade 9 and 10 program is aligned to the US Common Core, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and American Education Reaches Out (AERO) curricular standards. The focus remains interdisciplinary in nature and will continue to promote critical and analytical thinking. Our plan for grade 11 and 12 is to follow the model in place at Esol Education's other 9 schools. We intend to apply for accreditation to offer a premier, college-preparatory, international program characterized by its intellectual rigor, and liberal arts tradition. The program is recognized as an excellent credential or "gold standard" passport for admissions into top tier colleges or universities in English-speaking countries worldwide.





## STEAM Focus

Research tells us that skills have become as important as knowledge in terms of what prospective employers are looking for in college graduates. Higher-order, critical thinking skills such as evaluation, application, analysis, and creativity are the hallmarks of the successful, highly innovative 21st century organization. Within these companies, teams are formed to work together in a collaborative and interdisciplinary mode to create and build their product or service. Forward thinking schools have also begun to shift their thinking to better prepare students to adapt to the rapidly changing world we live in and to the professional world they will eventually work in. Many of these schools have introduced an innovative approach to learning called STEAM.

STEAM is an acronym that represents how all topics in subject areas relate to each other and to the real world. The sentence that best defines this is: Science and Technology, interpreted through Engineering and Art, all based in Mathematical elements. At ASHK, our STEAM curriculum provides activities that foster true innovation that comes with combining the mind of a scientist with that of an artist or designer. STEAM programs require students to be active and engaged. The approach is very hands-on in nature. Students will be called upon to gather supplies, develop hypotheses, construct models, and test designs.

Through STEAM, students develop ownership and responsibility for their education as they face many time management and decision-making challenges. Students will become very effective at teamwork, flexible-thinking, creative problem-solving, and will understand the importance of collaboration. At American School Hong Kong, we are dedicated to maximizing the creative and innovative capacity of our students to help them become what our Mission Statement speaks to: "independent critical thinkers, and responsible global citizens who excel in their future studies and careers."

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**Through STEAM, our students will become very effective at teamwork, flexible thinking, creative problem solving, and will understand the importance of collaboration**

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## Holistic Development

At ASHK, we are focused on developing well-rounded individuals. Intellectual development is of paramount importance but significant emphasis will also be placed on the social, physical, emotional, and creative domains. One of the ways the school can support students with holistic development is to offer a wide assortment of Extra Curricular Activities (ECAs), outside of the classroom, that serve to meet their interests and needs.

## Leadership and Clubs

ASHK promotes social responsibility from an early age by introducing community-based projects that develop students' sense of responsibility and concern for others. ASHK enables students to build a cohesive worldview, empowering them to make the right choices, developing their imagination and creativity, and supporting their development as internationally minded, global citizens.

Through participation in community based projects and clubs, students are provided with opportunities to develop and refine their leadership skills. Many clubs have an executive membership responsible for developing the club's mission and related activities. Students are challenged to set agendas, identify goals, strengthen their organizational skills, establish strong communication skills, execute plans and learn more about the value of flexibility and adaptability. Through these experiences, they grow to appreciate the importance of teamwork.

As the school matures, a broad range of clubs offered at ASHK will continue to grow. They meet on a regular basis either at lunch-time, after-school, or as part of weekend activities. All have a teacher assigned to the club as a supervisor. Clubs that are being offered, or planned for next year, include the following: Student Council, Model United Nations (MUN), UNICEF, School Yearbook, Battle of the Books, Brownies, Environment Club, and Habitat for Humanity.

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**Through participation in community based projects and clubs, ASHK students will be provided with numerous opportunities to develop and refine their leadership skills**

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## Fine and Performing Arts

From visual arts, to choir, band, dance and drama, students at ASHK will have numerous opportunities to channel their creative instincts and to immerse themselves in a program that suits their talents and interests.

As part of the regular program for students at all grade levels, specialist teachers in music and visual arts engage students in creative outlets. Students also have opportunities to join an after-school or lunchtime art club or choir. Middle School brass and woodwind ensembles have become an integral part of the school's musical life and theatre productions will be introduced. Our mission is to encourage maximum participation in the creative realm and to provide enjoyable experiences for students.

## Physical Education (PE) and Athletics

The PE curriculum helps students develop an understanding of what they need in order to make a commitment to healthy active living. Participation in our after school 'learn-to-play' and competitive sports program is an extension of the PE program and seen as an integral and enjoyable part of a child's development and of the overall ASHK curriculum plan. Through participation in sports, students learn to

appreciate the close relationship that exists between a healthy body and healthy mind.

The youngest students in the school are introduced to sports as part of a balanced PE program. They are also invited to participate in intramurals (i.e. basketball, soccer, dodgeball) and in after-school 'learn-to-play' programs.

We are full members of the International Schools Sports Federation of Hong Kong (ISSFHK) and, beginning with 10-year-old students, have entered teams in some of the competitions offered by the league such as cross-country, soccer, track and field, badminton, basketball, volleyball, tennis, swimming, and rugby.

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**ASHK PE curriculum modules  
promote a commitment to  
healthy active living**

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## Chinese Studies & Additional Languages

We believe that meaningful and early exposure to more than one language provides our students with advanced cognitive development.

The Chinese program at ASHK is a comprehensive language acquisition and development program. We offer daily Chinese (Mandarin) lessons for all children. Our aim is to provide opportunities for students to develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills to an optimal level based on their linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

ASHK has established separate levels (foundation, standard and advanced) to accommodate the varied experiences students have had with the language. The levels are different in the nature of the expected outcomes for the children and the structure enables children to learn at an appropriate pace. Movement between levels is carefully considered and handled sensitively by the teaching staff in the interests of all children. Movement between levels, if appropriate, is arranged at the end of each term.

### Different Levels for Different Learning Needs

**CFL** - Chinese Foundation Level (Chinese for beginning/emergent communicators) This pathway is designed for children who have limited to moderate experience in learning Chinese. The learning in this pathway focuses on communication, and aims to enable the children to develop their skills of listening and speaking. Writing is introduced and developed gradually. Simplified characters are used in this pathway.

**CSL** - Chinese Standard Level (Chinese for capable communicators)

**CAL** - Chinese Advanced Level (Chinese for proficient/native communicators) This pathway is designed for competent speakers of Chinese and for those who have or want to pursue opportunities to use Chinese in daily life. Speaking and listening remain the focus in the early years but as the

children move into upper elementary and middle school, reading and writing grow to be of equal importance. The children's competence in speaking and reading enables them to exchange their opinions and information on familiar topics using Chinese in and outside class. Traditional and simplified characters will be used in this pathway.

Beginning in Grade 9, students will have the choice of continuing with Chinese or selecting Spanish as an additional language. As part of our international program in grade 11 and 12, all students will be expected to take both English and a second language through to graduation.

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## ASHK offers daily Chinese (Mandarin) lessons for all children with traditional/simplified Chinese writing

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### Digital Technology

The use of technology provides many opportunities for students to delve deeper into their learning. With teachers guiding and extending the educational process, students begin to engage in collaborative work and establish their own digital footprint as part of a 1:1 technology program at ASHK. MacBooks, iPads, mobile devices, and classroom management software are connected through an intelligent infrastructure that provides seamless, wireless connectivity throughout the school. The school recognizes that, when digital environments are used effectively, they can build character, enrich discovery, guide learning, and encourage positive behavior.





## Parents as Partners

We recognize the crucial role that parents play as primary caregivers. Our faculty are committed to honoring parents as significant partners in the educational process. Teachers act "in loco parentis" - as a good person would in the absence of the parent. It is crucial, therefore, for school and family to work closely together, informing, supporting, and communicating. A strong home-school partnership is essential for students to reach their full potential. ASHK promotes regular communication between parents and teachers and includes opportunities for parent volunteers to support the educational program. The American School Parents' Association (ASPA) has played an active role in the school since it was established.

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**ASHK is committed to honoring parents as significant partners in the educational process, while ASHK teachers will act "in loco parentis"**

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## Campus and Facilities

In 2015, ASHK was granted an existing school campus by the Education Bureau and immediately launched a major renovation plan to transform the large facility into a modern, international school campus of the highest standards. The spacious, seven-story building is located in an attractive environment set amidst green hills in the Tai Po district of Hong Kong. The classrooms and specialty areas have all been renovated to provide open, bright and technologically-connected learning spaces.

ASHK offers modern classrooms with the latest teaching technology, laboratories, gymnasium, music room, art studios, children's playground, and cafeteria.

School bus transportation for students is available from all parts of Hong Kong including Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, and the New Territories.







## Admissions

ASHK has a rolling admissions process. Enrolled students need not apply for higher grades or divisions, and, on completion of grade 12, will receive the equivalent of a US High School Diploma if all requirements are met.

With limited class sizes for individualized attention, each kindergarten class will have a maximum of 18 students, grade 1 will have 20 students, grade 2 will have 22 students and all other grades will have 24 students maximum. All students, regardless of race, religion, or nationality are eligible for admissions to ASHK.

ASHK will consider students identified as SEN (with special education needs) and those in need of EAL (English as an Additional Language) support.

### How to Apply

Please visit our website and submit an application form with supporting documents. Our admissions team will arrange a meeting with your family and an assessment for your child. Applications may be submitted up to three years in advance of anticipated enrollment period, with interviews conducted in the months prior to enrollment.

### Interviews and/or Entrance Tests

All applicants are required to meet with the Director of Admissions for an interview. Assessments are also offered to measure the ability of students to access learning in a mainstream classroom and to ensure appropriate grade placement.

Assessment for entry into KG - G2 are designed to determine a child's developmental readiness or mastery of literacy and numeracy skills that will launch them into more complex learning requirements.

Students entering grade 3 and higher will take the Measure of Academic Performance (MAP) test with focus on literacy and numeracy. They will also be asked for a writing sample. As English is the language of instruction at ASHK, students will need to demonstrate proficiency in English.

To learn more about ASHK or to register your interest for your child, please visit [www.ashk.edu.hk](http://www.ashk.edu.hk), or email [admissions@ashk.edu.hk](mailto:admissions@ashk.edu.hk) or call us on **+852 3919 4111**.

