

WHY ACS? BEIRUT



AMERICAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL BEIRUT

AN INTIMATE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

8:1 Schoolwide student-to-teacher ratio

15 Schoolwide average class size

When it comes to learning, size matters. The smaller the class size, the more time and energy teachers have to devote to each student's needs, to devise classroom activities that are hands-on and impactful, and to get to know their students both as learners and as people.



“ Nothing beats the sense of community a small class size creates among students. We have more space for thoughtful discussion, and I have an opportunity to adjust activities to meet both the needs and interests of each class.

Lena Abboud | Middle School Social Studies Teacher

“ Students don’t slip through the cracks at ACS. There are so many adults looking after them, both academically and socially.

Nour Fawaz | ACS Parent and Alumna



120 YEARS OF HISTORY AND EXCELLENCE

Established in 1905 by the faculty of the American University of Beirut, we meld our deep Lebanese roots with the best educational practices and pedagogy of our peer private, independent schools in the United States.

Accordingly, we are proud to have been the first school in Lebanon to adopt the IB program; the first to launch and host a Model United Nations; the first to build a dedicated Outdoor and Nature Center; and the first to offer students a Week Without Walls, a life-changing experience that combines international travel with community service.

1905 **1ST** distinctly American school established in Lebanon

1961 **1ST** to construct a regulation-sized basketball gymnasium in the Middle East

1962 **1ST** in Lebanon to integrate the teaching of critical thinking skills into the curriculum

1993 **1ST** English-language academic institution in Lebanon to obtain post-war accreditation

1995 **1ST** to offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) program

2004 **1ST** to establish a Model UN program in Lebanon

2009 **1ST** to construct and operate a dedicated Outdoor Learning Center

2012 **1ST** to launch an international travel and service program (WWW) in Lebanon

2017 **1ST** to adopt the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)

2018 **1ST** to unveil a 318 KW solar installation (the largest solar panel installation on a school campus in Lebanon)

2021 **1ST** in Lebanon to announce the return to in-person learning after the COVID-19 crisis

2022 **1ST** school in Lebanon to host a TEDxYouth event

2024 **1ST** school in Lebanon to introduce Harkness Learning

OUR LATEST INITIATIVE

Our latest initiative is the introduction of Harkness Learning in the Middle and High Schools.

Harkness is a teaching method that was developed at Philips Exeter Academy in 1930 and has since spread to the top private schools in the United States.

The concept is simple but revolutionary. Students and their teacher sit together around a table to discuss the day's topic.

It is not a forum for debate, but rather a collaborative approach to problem-solving in which there is joint exploration, listening, and sharing. In this age of encroaching technology, the Harkness classroom promotes genuine human interaction and original thought.



A UNIQUE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Curiosity Fuels Learning

Curious students want to learn. They delve deeper, ask questions, and step out of their comfort zone. And when that happens, they unlock their full academic and intellectual potential. Our supportive learning community and unique programming help our students develop these vitally important qualities.

Empowerment Fosters Engagement

We ask a lot from our students. We ask them to think deeply and creatively, to develop new ideas, and to assume the lead in implementing them. In fact, many of our most celebrated programs, such as LEBMUN, Nour International, and TEDx, are student initiatives managed by our student leaders. Empowerment creates a vibrant and engaged community of learners that believes in its ability to effect positive change in their community and the world.

Compassion Builds Community

At ACS, “community” means many things. It begins with our community of students, faculty, staff, and parents; and it extends outward to our neighborhood of Manara, our city of Beirut, the country of Lebanon, and the greater world. From Early Childhood through High School we look for ways to strengthen our community through camaraderie mixed with fun and compassion combined with action.

“

This philosophy informs everything we do at ACS. It is not enough just to educate students. We strive to instill in them the mindset, skills, and values that will enable them to live productive and meaningful lives.

Tom Cangiano | Head of ACS

“ ACS taught me to think critically and to ask questions, skills that have shaped my career as a journalist. The school’s diversity and emphasis on deeper understanding prepared me to navigate and report on the complexities of the world.

Zeina Khodr ‘90 | Award-Winning Journalist & Senior Correspondent, Al Jazeera



ZEINA KHODR
BADDAWI CAMP, LEBANON

“ ACS was the turning point in my creative journey. It nurtured my artistic vision and gave me the confidence to pursue my dreams.

Alia Hamoui ‘17 | Fashion Designer

A TRULY INTERNATIONAL FACULTY, ADMINISTRATION AND STUDENT BODY

49 Nationalities represented among the student body

30 Expatriate members of the faculty and staff

ACS ACROSS THE GLOBE



**ACS remains the school of choice
for the International Community in Lebanon.**

As stability returns to the country, we expect the number of international faculty and students to increase, eventually reaching pre-crisis levels.



THE ACS JOURNEY

The most important measure of a great school is how much each student grows – intellectually and personally – while in the school's care.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

Learning through Exploration

Ages 4 through 7, Nursery through Grade 2

- A thoughtfully designed curriculum inspired by the Reggio Emilia pedagogy
- Daily Arabic instruction
- A dedicated Art Atelier where creativity blooms in every child
- The Above and Beyond Program, which empowers children through student-driven community service activities
- Daily after-school fee-based programming offering arts, sports and STEM activities
- Outdoor and Nature Education, both locally and at ACS's Deir El Qamar Outdoor Education Center

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Building on a Firm Foundation

Ages 7 through 10, Grades 3 through 5

- Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) embedded into the curriculum
- Daily Arabic instruction
- Robust community service and student council participation
- Daily after-school fee-based programming offering arts, sports and STEM activities
- Outdoor and Nature Education, both locally and at ACS's Deir El Qamar Outdoor Education Center



At ACS, the progression from pre-kindergarten through high school is a journey of self-discovery and the realization of the tremendous potential within each student.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Exploring Independence and Passions

Ages 10 through 14, Grades 6 through 8

- Cutting-edge science program that integrates NGSS standards, coding, and NASA design thinking – all within a state-of-the-art science center
- Harkness Learning in 7th and 8th grade English and Social Studies classes
- Student Advisory Program tailored to the developmental needs of middle schoolers
- Week Without Walls travel and service week

HIGH SCHOOL

Fostering Academic Growth, Leadership and Creativity

Ages 14 through 18, Grades 9 through 12

- Three tailored academic tracks: the IB Diploma, the American College Preparatory Diploma, and the Lebanese Diploma
- Harkness Learning in 9th grade English and Social Studies classes (to be expanded to upper grades as this class cohort progresses)
- Week Without Walls travel and service week
- Student-initiated and student-led clubs and service activities
- Mentorship opportunities via our many cross-divisional student-led clubs, community service organizations, and arts initiatives

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