

Grade 8 Middle School Program Information



Marymount's Middle School is composed of over 220 students making up a vibrant community with diverse cultural and religious backgrounds which celebrates the spirituality of the School's RSHM founders.

Students are guided toward the achievement of their full potential by empowering them to think creatively, reason critically, communicate effectively and learn continuously, fostering independence and preparing them for the rigor of their High School programs. The curriculum is based on the philosophy of the IB and Marymount's Quality Teaching and Learning characteristics which encourage personal commitment to high standards, continuous improvement and a life-long love of learning.

Central to the Middle School's core curriculum is the development of a deep understanding in the following subject areas: Language and Literature, Language Acquisition, Mathematics and Sciences, Individuals and Societies and the Arts.



* Students who enroll in Italian Literature have an option of taking the Media State Exam at the end of each school year. Students who wish to take the Media state exam are recommended to take French, German or Spanish; if students opt for Arabic or Mandarin, they must attend an afterschool DELF or DELE Course.



Marymount also offers classes for students who wish to take the Italian Media exams through an integrated approach whereby each course meets international standards but also covers all the content required for the Italian Media Program.

In addition, embedded enrichment, service and wellbeing activities equip our students to develop their knowledge and skills across subjects for a holistic academic development.



These include: Advisory, MS Sports Program, EAP course and trip, Assemblies, ATLs, Juni Orchestra and musical performances, MUN, leadership opportunities and RSHM conferences and festivals, after school activities, student clubs and enrichment trips beyond the classroom.

Grade 8 Course Descriptions

Language and Literature

English 8

The Grade 8 English course develops the skills learned in Grade 7 with an added level of precision and sophistication. Emphasis is placed on writing skills with practice in planning and developing composition as well as a reinforcement of grammatical concepts and their proper application. Literature study includes a focused study of *Long Way Down*, a verse novel by Chris Reynolds, *Night*, the Holocaust memoir by Elie Wiesel and a Shakespearean drama unit on *Romeo and Juliet*. Class discussions and writing exercises help the student to refine critical reading skills and to use the tools necessary for critical analysis of literature. Academic English language and vocabulary work will also be a priority so that students will be prepared for the demands of High School work.

Italian Mother Tongue - Italian Literature 8

The Italian Literature course is designed for students who are native speakers of Italian and/or have a fluent command of Italian. The class focuses on developing students' oral and written skills in Italian, as well as a deep knowledge of Italian culture and literature.

Through this course students will be prepared and have the option to take the Terza Media State Examination.

Language Acquisition

Arabic, French, German, Italian, Latin, Mandarin, and Spanish

All students take Italian. In Grade 8 Italian is available as an Intermediate, and advanced course, and as a Literature course for students in the Media Program (see above). In all other languages on offer, students will be placed in an intermediate course. All Language courses are designed to enhance students' proficiency in the language developing their receptive and productive skills. Students joining in Grade 8 will be placed in an Intermediate class and offered online language support.

English Language Learner (ELL)

The Middle School ELL program is geared to teach and assist students whose first language is not English with the goal of accessing the content in other parts of the curriculum. Our School uses the WIDA assessment as an English proficiency screener to accurately place students and monitor their English language development. Students' placement in ELL is determined by their WIDA assessment, previous school records, and teacher input.

Latin Intermediate II

In this course, students will continue to develop their proficiency in the Latin language as well as their understanding of ancient Roman history. They will develop a more sophisticated understanding of Latin grammar and its links to modern European languages, and meet a cast of characters from Greek mythology and Roman history through the reading of ancient texts adapted for their level.

Mathematics and Sciences

Mathematics 8

Math 8 is designed to give students a foundation for all future mathematics courses in High School. Students will explore operations on algebraic expressions, apply mathematical properties to solve algebraic equations, investigate linear relationships, manipulate monomials and polynomials, know the essential concepts of analytical geometry, recognize a solid figure and understand the relative formulas for solving problems. They will also dive into basic concepts of statistics and probability and apply these in real life situations.

Science 8

This course concludes the integrated science program and focuses on bringing together what was learned in the first two years of the MS program with a broader approach. The Biology topics include body systems, genetics and inheritance. In Chemistry the periodic table and chemical bonding are reviewed prior to a study of the pH scale and the behavior and reactivity of acids and bases. In Physics, the students will learn about electricity and magnetism, Newton's Laws, and the solar system. Laboratory techniques and critical thinking skills are emphasized in preparation for the specialized courses of High School science. The year is concluded with a project in which students apply the scientific method to an investigation of their choice and present their findings to the school community at a science fair in the style of a research symposium.

Educational Technology 8

The class is designed for students to learn basic programming and interactive media design skills. Students will learn to create their own animations, interactive storybooks, and computer games. Students will learn how to think sequentially, solve problems, reason systematically and work in groups. Projects will be fully developed with hands-on experience in the FabLab. The focus of this course is sustainability and energy saving projects.

Individuals and Society

History and Geography 8

This is a combined History and Geography course, covering the period from the Congress of Vienna to the Cold War in History. In Geography, students study the Earth's various regions with particular attention to the relationship between political, physical, social and economic aspects of selected states in the five continents. Natural environments of the five continents are also examined in depth. By the end of this course, students will be able to identify the importance of significant aspects of human society and its influence on history, master the skills necessary for an effective study of history and develop a keen sense of inquiry, develop critical thinking and understanding of the past, analyze different interpretations of historical events through source analysis and strengthen oral and research skills.

Religious Education 8

The course will teach students about the role of the Catholic Church in history. Special emphasis will be given to the Church's role in salvation history and in their own lives. The course highlights the story of the saints through the ages, as well as the impact of the Church in the arts, music, and architecture. Students will learn how the Church was founded by Christ, commissioned to the Apostles, and continues into the modern day.

Arts

Art 8 (Required Course)

Art 8 provides a continuation of experiences designed to help students solve difficult design problems as well as develop a greater understanding of the Elements of Art and Principles of Design as related to drawing skills, applied design methods, ceramics and glazing techniques. The course is mandatory for Media students, and recommended for students who wish to pursue Art in High School, especially in the IB Art program. The preparation for these students continues chronologically from Art 7 to include the art of the High Renaissance and Baroque periods and continuing into Neoclassicism, Realism, Romanticism, Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Cubism, Futurism, and Surrealism. Students will finish 8th Grade with a complete sketchbook and portfolio of work.

Drama 8 (Elective Course)

This is a practical course in drama, theater and performance. The focus of the course is geared towards teamwork, communication skills, public speaking and confidence-building and critical analysis. They will learn how to focus their skills to create their own performances, read and write scripts, design sets and costumes, empathize with others and critically analyze each other's work. Students will be expected to try different acting and performance techniques as well as directing and designing a scene. Students will use set texts to analyze character and writing techniques.

Students will have a basic knowledge of the timeline of theater and its changes throughout history. Each student should gain a new respect for theater and the true meaning of group work. The nature of the course creates a risk-free environment for the students to experiment and try new things.

General Music 8 (Required Course)

The aim of this yearlong course is to provide a worthwhile musical experience for students, regardless of individual skills or talent level. Emphasis is placed on developing an affective and cognitive appreciation as a listener of all genres of music. The course provides instruction in music appreciation, theory at an intermediate/advanced level in line with the ABRSM theory syllabus and an in-depth knowledge of music history from the Romantic period up to Postmodernism. By examining cultural perspectives of music students will be enabled to utilize critical thinking skills to gain an understanding of music and its value in society. Through these musical experiences students will make connections between the various elements of music and other fields of knowledge. Students are encouraged to enter the ABRSM theory exam in May.

Band 8 (Elective Course)

The purpose of Intermediate Band 2 is to further develop the students' musical understanding through the performance of a wide variety of musical literature at a more complex level. Students develop advanced performing skills and play original repertoire. Music fundamentals, listening skills, instrumental techniques and sight reading are emphasized. Students are required to perform in concerts outside of the regular school day during the academic year. The available instruments are: flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, euphonium, percussion (mallets or drum kit) or bass guitar which can be rented at school at 70 euros per year.

Prerequisites are: Intermediate Band or two years of musical experience in playing a band instrument. Some costs might be incurred for accessories and other materials. Talented Band 8 students might be selected to join the school Honor Band.

Chorus 8 (Elective Course)

Chorus is a course designed for students to develop their vocal skills and to discover the joy of working together in a choral group. During the year, students will explore singing in a variety of styles: rock, gospel, jazz, pop, etc. Performance is a key component, so students will perform in the classroom, in school concerts during the year, in school masses and on retreats. An ability to sing on pitch with some degree of ease and a fundamental interest and enjoyment of singing are helpful. Students will learn how to read choral music and write musical ideas, using music as a means of expression and communication. Students will listen to and analyze music from a wide range of traditions. Students will also learn how to describe music, express their opinions and make critical judgments about the music they hear in class and the music they perform.

Wellbeing

Advisory

In order to support the positive transition from Elementary School, particular attention is given to Middle School students through a daily Advisory program.

Advisors are responsible for the students' wellbeing guiding them personally, academically and socially through the academic year. They provide students with support within the School framework tracking their academic progress, mentoring them in their Enrichment Program, and helping them to integrate creativity, activity and service projects in their curriculum.

The students are encouraged and given the opportunity to meet in small groups with an advisor in the following way:

- Daily check in from 8:20 a.m. for 10 minutes with their assigned faculty advisor.
- Speak to their advisor about the day and how well they feel prepared for their classes.
- Advisors check the students' schedules and verify that the students are organized for the morning classes and the day ahead.



- Advisors remind the students to confirm they have all the materials necessary for the first two classes.
- Students are reminded of the importance of the School's dress code and are urged to always respect Marymount's uniform policy.
- Advisors remind students to look over their schedules to ensure that they have everything they need for their homework assignments.

Secondary School student groups also meet for a longer period of time with their Advisor on a weekly basis in order to focus more in-depth on issues relating to academic planning and progress as well as personal and social development in an open and trusting environment. Students also have the possibility to conference and talk individually with their Advisor.

Middle School Sports Program

Students have the opportunity to train in Sport e Salute's (former CONI) Olympic sports facilities with professional instructors from the Italian Basketball, Tennis, Soccer, Volleyball, Athletics and Swimming Federations. The Middle School Sports program is designed to promote and develop a sport-specific skill set as well as the values of teamwork, commitment, and sportsmanship. Students participate in an individual and a team sport for the year which they then practice at Sport e Salute sports facilities (swimming, tennis, and athletics) or at Marymount's on-campus sports facilities with Sport e Salute's accredited coaches (volleyball, soccer and basketball).

Grade 8 Sports: Soccer and Athletics

Enrichment Program

Marymount is dedicated to guiding students towards the achievement of their full potential by empowering them to think creatively, reason critically, communicate effectively and learn continuously.

Teachers enable students to achieve their full potential. This includes students who need to be challenged, motivated, and inspired to learn beyond the curriculum. The School's core curriculum is inclusive and differentiated. Students who may benefit from enrichment may have a formal written plan which is developed in conjunction with their advisors, classroom teachers, parents, and the student. Learning targets will be set collaboratively and monitored by all parties. Students may benefit from enrichment for academics, athletics, and the arts.

Learning Support

In our School, diversity is a positive resource. We are aligned to the IB learning philosophy by which "Students are the center of international education in the IB with their own strengths and challenges" We strive to meet the needs of all learners and treat each student as an individual. Marymount is a responsibly inclusive School, and we promote and protect the interests of children who learn in different ways or at different rates. Aligning with the IB Learner Profile and our own Marymount Quality Teaching and Learning Statement, we challenge each student and teacher to strive to embody all of the characteristics of a Marymount education.

The Learning Support Department believes that *all* students should have the opportunity to explore and develop their skills in an educationally rich environment that will individualize their learning experiences. There are times when students experience difficulty in the regular classroom setting. When a student has difficulty in school, it may be noticed by their Advisor, the teachers, other school personnel, the parents, or the student. After the Advisor and the relevant administrator have reviewed and implemented a plan, the Learning Support Department may be consulted to determine further interventions, educational evaluations, accommodations, academic support, and/or a modified program.

Learning Support in the Secondary School consists of the following: support in ensuring that students receive accommodations as outlined in their Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), consultation with subject area teacher, Grade 6-12 small group pull out support in all academic areas, using a Study Skills class model (curriculum based on Approaches to Learning-ATL) in class support with an assigned One-to-One Assistant.



Sample Schedule in Grade 8

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
08:20 - 08:30	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	
08:35 - 09:30	English	Math	Middle School Sports Program			English
09:35 - 10:30	General Music	Art			Math	Health
10:30 - 10:40	Break					
10:40 - 11:35	Ed. Technology	Elective	English	Art	General Music	
11:40 - 12:35	Recess/Lunch					
12:35 - 13:30	Science	Religion	Modern Language	Ed. Technology	Math	
13:35 - 14:30	Italian	Science	Italian	Science	Italian	
14:35 - 15:30	History & Geography	Modern Language	History & Geography	Modern Language	History & Geography	

ELL Students' schedule may vary to accommodate student needs.



Grades 6-8 Middle School Program

SUBJECT AREAS	GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8
Language and Literature	English 6 Italian Literature 6*	English 7 Italian Literature 7*	English 8 Italian Literature 8*
Language Acquisition	Italian for all A choice of Arabic, French, German, Mandarin or Spanish* Elective choice: Latin *Italian and Modern Languages are not offered at Beginners Level in Grade 8. <i>Students joining in Grade 8 will be placed in an Intermediate class and offered online language support</i>		
Mathematics and Sciences	Ed. Technology Math 6 Science 6	Ed. Technology Math 7 Science 7	Ed. Technology Math 8 Science 8
Individuals and Societies	History and Geography 6 Religious Education	History and Geography 7 Religious Education	History and Geography 8 Religious Education
Arts	Art General Music Elective Courses: Drama, or Band or Chorus	Art General Music Elective Courses: Drama, or Band or Chorus	Art General Music Elective Courses: Drama, or Band or Chorus
Sports and Wellbeing	Advisory Health 6 MS Sports Program	Advisory Health 7 MS Sports Program	Advisory Health 8 MS Sports Program
Enrichment	After School Activities Athletic Enrichment Plans Enrichment Trips JuniOrchestra Leadership Opportunities Marymount Talks MSMUN Personalized Enrichment Programs		
Service	House System Service Opportunities Student Clubs		
Support	ELL Support Individualized Learning Plans Study Skills <i>Identified ELL (English Language Learners) and Learning Support students will have course choices further reviewed/adjusted to meet their individual needs. Parents will be consulted directly.</i>		