



Each Ashley Hall girl brings her own talents, needs, and dreams. That's why we personalize our admission process to each applicant and her family.

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ASHLEY HALL
FOUNDED 1909

MIDDLE SCHOOL

GRADES FIVE THROUGH EIGHT



OUR MISSION

The mission of Ashley Hall is to educate girls
and young women to be independent,
ethically responsible, and prepared to meet
the challenges of their world with *confidence*.

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL



The Middle School at Ashley Hall features two specialized programs: the Intermediate Program, comprising grades five and six, and the Nautilus Program, which features grades seven and eight. These tailored curricula are designed to honor and support students academically, emotionally, and socially at this transitional point in their lives. Our dedicated team of educators prides itself on offering differentiated instruction that draws on each student's strengths and provides opportunities for enrichment across every subject area and grade level.

Here's a glimpse into the Middle School.



“ No matter the generation, the middle school years are full of moments of growth and learning. More often, however, during this time, we can be so focused on the result of academic progress that we lose sight of the journey – we forget to celebrate the process. At Ashley Hall, the journey is honored every step of the way. We believe that middle school should celebrate the uniqueness of our students. ”

– MIDDLE SCHOOL DIRECTOR ALISON PARKS

Celebrating EVERY GIRL AT EVERY STAGE

Middle school is a time of change. As the bridge between Lower and Upper School, it is the transition point between elementary and teenage years. Students are undergoing physical, emotional, and educational growth. It is also often when many other schools focus on what is next – that is, preparing students for high school.

While it is vital to ensure that students are ready to meet the challenges that await them, Ashley Hall believes it is equally important to create a learning environment that meets their needs where they are. So, we often ask, what is developmentally appropriate and necessary to create an environment that will allow them to thrive as individuals?

To this end, our Middle School features two programs designed to give individualized support to every girl at every stage of her early adolescent and adolescent development.

Turn the page to read more about these dynamic Ashley Hall programs for middle-grade students.

A SPACE DESIGNED FOR HER

GRADES 5 & 6

THE INTERMEDIATE PROGRAM

The Intermediate Program at Ashley Hall includes fifth and sixth grades. It is specifically designed to give individualized attention to each girl during the critical pre-adolescent years of emotional and physical development. Because these years are so transformative for girls, we have built a dedicated team of educators who work closely with one another to coordinate their respective course contents within a campus space suited to their needs.

Intermediate Program students are immersed daily in an environment that elevates an already outstanding curriculum to a new level. [Here's what makes their home at Ashley Hall so special:](#)



PLACES TO GATHER

The Intermediate Program building features an open configuration that allows faculty members to interact more effectively with students. This openness seamlessly extends to outdoor spaces, including two porch areas, a communal bench in front of the building, and a gathering area perfect for students to engage with friends from other divisions and their teachers during their free time.



COLLABORATIVE LEARNING SPACES

A guiding principle throughout the design and construction phase of the Intermediate Program building was to inspire students' engagement in their learning process. The space features several showcase areas that support interdisciplinary, project-based learning, including two STEAM classrooms. Mobile classroom furniture that can easily and quickly change the room's configuration supports small group instruction, math centers, and collaborative group work. Educators and students alike often reconfigure the rooms depending on the lesson.



TECHNOLOGY WITH PURPOSE

A Promethean interactive whiteboard is standard in each Intermediate Program classroom to make instruction more efficient. Another intentional technology choice is providing each girl with a Chromebook for in-school use. The devices are critical in supporting the curriculum and making student workstations and individualized learning possible.

“ Students like the freedom of using the entire Intermediate Program building to meet their needs for collaboration, conferring, planning, and studying. The building is more like a house where all the rooms are used for different purposes. ”

– INTERMEDIATE PROGRAM EDUCATOR

GRADES 7 & 8

THE NAUTILUS PROGRAM

Designed to foster a sense of community, the Nautilus Program seizes the opportunity to strengthen a culture of connectedness in a crucial development period for girls in the seventh and eighth grades. The program's emblem is the chambered nautilus shell, which, when cut away, reveals a spiral of chambers that metaphorically reflect each student's maturation and symbolize both growth and change.

[The program is organized around the following programmatic initiatives that work together to create a student-driven experience:](#)



ADVISORY TIME

Advisory time is a purposeful program designed to encourage healthy bonding, social skills, leadership, and unconditional positive regard for others. At the start of the academic year, students are divided into small advisory groups. Advisory groups then select individual group names and logos, which are used throughout the year during competitions and grade-wide celebrations.



COMMUNITY-LED CLASSROOMS

Within the classroom, classes are governed by rules established by Nautilus community members. Each seventh and eighth-grade student pledges to uphold the following three tenets written by the inaugural Ashley Hall Nautilus class: being an engaged learner, a conscientious student, and a good steward of her environment.



A SHARED EXPERIENCE

Nautilus classrooms are almost entirely on the second floor of Jenkins Hall on the Ashley Hall campus. By living and learning together—another chamber—girls flourish by having a place dedicated to their individuality and shared experience. Leadership is nurtured through areas like student council, where students in grades seven and eight are given agency to create programming unique to their grades throughout the school year.



Embracing the INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

It is an exciting time in the Middle School at Ashley Hall as our educators are implementing a student-centered curriculum guided by the International Baccalaureate (IB) framework. As the School pursues IB candidacy, educators and administrators are incorporating the principles and global philosophies of the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) which is an international-minded and interdisciplinary learning approach to middle school education.

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

In Middle School, students don't just learn—they pursue learning by developing and applying self-management skills at every grade level. Here, students are given the tools they need to take ownership of their learning and find success when navigating new challenges.

#1 FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS *Individualized Instruction*

The Middle School advisory program was designed to create the appropriate scaffolding necessary to support our students on their journey toward independence. Placing students in small advisee groups led by a faculty advisor allows individualized instruction, regular check-ins, and dedicated time for organization and time management. Every advisor is committed to delivering the following support:

- Academic planning
- Study skills
- Time management
- Course mapping and selection
- Training students to lead their teacher-parent conferences

#2 AGENCY *Independent Study*

Directed Independent Study (DIS) is a required Middle School course that gradually encourages every student to take ownership of their educational experience. During this hands-on independent learning time, students must report to a specified classroom and use the period to study or complete school work. Attendance is taken by a faculty proctor who checks in with students and monitors the use of technology and student self-management.

#3 SUPPORT *Dedicated Learning Specialist*

A full-time learning specialist provides small group instruction as well as 1:1 support to students across all subjects in the Middle School, focusing on helping them develop strong study habits and manage coursework. Our learning specialist also collaborates with teachers on strategies to help all students be successful in the classroom.



WHAT IS INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING?

Teaching and learning in the MYP is underpinned by the belief that students learn best when their experiences have context and are connected to their lives. Educators embrace this by committing to an interdisciplinary learning approach, or the process by which students can study two or more disciplines and then integrate the knowledge they've gained to create a new understanding.

The aims of interdisciplinary learning in the MYP are to encourage students to:

- Develop, analyze, and synthesize knowledge from different disciplines to generate a more profound understanding
- Explore and integrate different and diverse perspectives through inquiry
- Reflect on the unique ways interdisciplinary learning allows us to communicate and act

ACADEMICS

The Middle School features a curriculum that fosters higher-order thinking skills that build upon one another from one grade level to the next. This prepares students for the academic rigors of the college preparatory curricula they will encounter in seventh and eighth grade, which require critical thinking and student-directed learning.

STEAM

Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math

The Middle School at Ashley Hall values the intrinsic correlation of mathematical and scientific practices. This cross-curricular approach encourages girls to see how these disciplines draw on similar resources and strategies. Our STEAM curriculum includes an introduction to robotics and coding through theme-based projects while encouraging students to explore and pursue these fields of interest that are traditionally underrepresented by women.

HUMANITIES

History, Language Arts, & Literature

Our interdisciplinary humanities curriculum integrates the study of literature and history with opportunities to practice the craft of writing through literary essays, personal narratives, memoirs, and research-based reports. Girls also analyze primary sources and undertake guided research projects with interdisciplinary themes. In formal presentations, sixth-grade students learn to construct effective speeches and improve their delivery techniques.

WORLD LANGUAGES

French and Spanish

Beginning in fifth grade, students choose to study French or Spanish. Both modern languages are taught using a communicative language teaching method which places speaking as the primary focus and grammar as secondary. All courses align with proficiency guidelines set by the American Council for Teaching a Foreign Language (ACTFL), a nationally recognized organization of leading experts on language acquisition.

CLASSICS

Latin and Greek

Ashley Hall is the only school in South Carolina offering an integrated classics program at the middle school level, providing instruction in Latin and classical Greek. Why? Through the classics, students are challenged to develop computational and abstract thinking skills earlier, which are crucial as they advance to higher education. All seventh and eighth-grade students are enrolled in the classics curriculum while also studying the modern language of their choice.



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Each spring, Nautilus students take over campus to compete in the Ashley Hall Classics Forum, a day designed to give students a chance to demonstrate what they've learned in Greek and Latin outside of the typical classroom setting. From theatrical presentations to costume and artwork contests, the Classics Forum is full of competitive events and academic contests to allow students to show off their knowledge.

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL



- #1 Navigating rapid physical and emotional growth
- #2 Aiding new found independence
- #3 Building strong self-esteem and confidence

Because of the transformative nature of early adolescence, the Middle School purposely addresses each girl's well-being as a whole. Ashley Hall's wellness program is thoughtfully integrated into our curriculum through small group classes and regular assemblies designed to support the top three social and emotional needs of girls in this developmental stage:

Weekly wellness classes are taught by our full-time counselor who offers individualized attention to our students' social and emotional needs inside and outside the classroom. The curriculum is designed so that girls get a higher level of age-appropriate instruction each year on the following topics:

- Emotional regulation
- Mindfulness
- Social problem solving
- Resilience and growth mindset
- Communication skills, including advocacy and conflict resolution
- Use of social media and digital tools

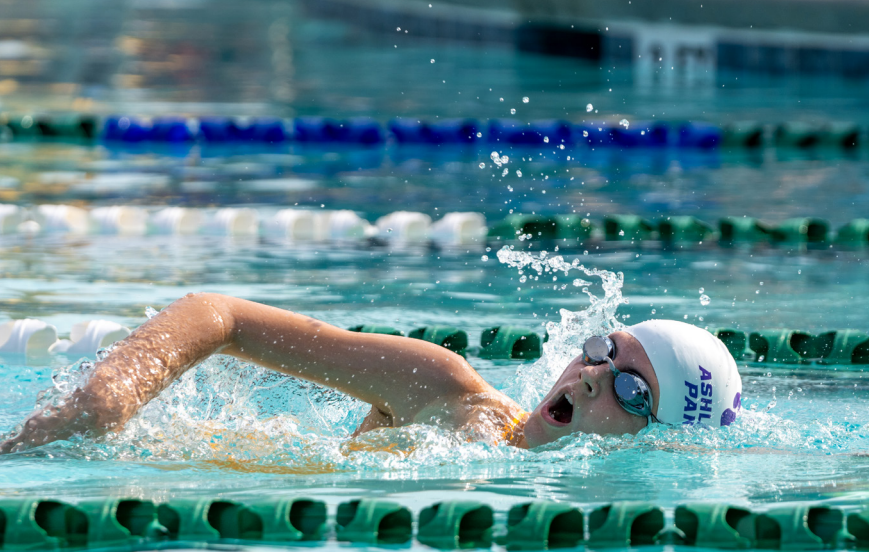
PARENTS AS PARTNERS

The Middle School offers regular parent engagement opportunities based on adolescent social and emotional education. Families are invited to join book readings and discussions with our faculty to not only become more knowledgeable about this critical developmental stage in their daughter's life but also to better be able to equip themselves to support her.

“It's all about development. Each developmental age has unique changes and things to overcome and grow through. It's never harder in one grade or another; it's just about recognizing they are different.”

—MIDDLE SCHOOL COUNSELOR
LYNDSEY BOWLES

ATHLETICS



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education is an integral part of the Middle School curriculum and includes health, physical fitness, team sports, swimming, and intramural games. P.E. is a required course for all grades. Beginning in seventh-grade, students have the opportunity to take dance as a P.E. class.

In Middle School, students are also eligible to participate in the Ashley Hall Athletics program. Beginning in sixth-grade students may try out for a junior varsity sports team, such as volleyball, basketball, tennis, track, cross country, swimming, archery, and soccer. Seventh and eighth-grade athletes may participate in the following 12 varsity sports:

FALL

CROSS COUNTRY
GOLF
SWIMMING
TENNIS
VOLLEYBALL

WINTER

BASKETBALL

SPRING

LACROSSE
SOCCER
TRACK AND FIELD

YEAR ROUND

ARCHERY
EQUESTRIAN
SAILING

ARTS

In Middle School, students participate in an arts rotation that exposes them to various disciplines. All students in grades five and six take a visual arts and performing arts class, which may focus on theater, strings, or dance. In seventh and eighth grade, students choose their own arts electives so they may discover new passions.



PERFORMING ARTS

Students experience music, theater, and dance throughout the year. A strings course is available for girls at all levels, and all Intermediate Program students can participate in the Private Lessons Program that offers individual and group instruction in violin, cello, viola, piano, and voice.



VISUAL ARTS

Middle School visual arts courses are designed to allow for an experiential, student-centered approach to further artistic endeavors.

Seventh and eighth-grade students can select from 2D visual art or 3D visual art and are required also to take one semester of performing arts.

Each year, Nautilus 3D artists team up as models and designers to construct a piece of wearable art. Their final exhibit is a fashion show for their peers and teachers.

EXPERIENTIAL *Learning* OPPORTUNITIES

As part of the Middle School curriculum, each grade offers additional signature programs that encourage girls to develop a voice both in and outside the classroom. Here are just a few exciting examples students experience in each grade:



GRADE 5

Working with the Lowcountry Maritime Society (LMS), fifth graders are guided through learning how to read scaled plans and transform them into hand-engineered wooden boats they build and then row themselves at the annual Colonial Lake boat launch. Throughout the semester, students are also taught about local maritime history and seamanship skills as part of this comprehensive project.

GRADE 6

Every sixth grade student participates in a weekly class entirely dedicated to experiential learning. Students gain new skills through a variety of hands-on experiences, including building and programming LEGO robots, engineering personal pinball machines, and gardening.

GRADE 7

As part of Ashley Hall's signature Gibbes Museum of Art Junior Docent Program, each spring, seventh graders investigate a work of art, present their findings in a research paper, and deliver an oral presentation open to the public as part of their service as gallery tour guides.

GRADE 8

As part of the Nautilus Program's dedication to hands-on STEAM learning, girls travel to Florida to participate in Disney's educational program investigating physics's application to roller coasters.

INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Beginning in sixth grade, students can broaden their horizons while strengthening their linguistic abilities by participating in Ashley Hall's signature travel program. In the alternating years, trips are thoughtfully programmed to French and Spanish-language countries, highlighting language acquisition and cultural immersion.

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CAMPUS LIFE



HOUSE COMPETITIONS

All fifth and sixth-graders enjoy the thrill of our House Competitions, where students join teams to engage in fun, friendly challenges every week. They compete in various events, ranging from food drives to relay races to class preparedness, to earn points throughout the year with the chance to win the ultimate prize for their House. House Competitions are an exciting way to let the PQV spirit shine!

PURPLE & WHITE TRADITION

Beginning in the fifth grade, each student becomes a Purple or White Team member. If a member of a student's family attended Ashley Hall, she is automatically on that relative's team. New students receive their team color through a random selection process. The goal of each team is to encourage good sportsmanship, teamwork, loyalty and friendly competition. Teams accumulate points by participation in academic and extracurricular activities throughout the year.



FRESHMAN FLIP DAY

Every fall, Ashley Hall eighth graders get a unique opportunity: to see the future. Freshman Flip Day is an annual event designed to give students a sneak peek into classes and programming offered in grades 9-12. On this special day, students split into small groups to rotate through a carefully curated lineup of sessions led by Upper School educators to introduce them to their high school experience.



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Ashley Hall's Big Sister + Little Sister mentorship program was created to encourage interaction and build relationships throughout the different grade levels. In the Middle School program, each student has the unique opportunity to be a mentor and also be mentored. Students in kindergarten and sixth grade, along with a Senior, create a special relationship that will last throughout their tenure at Ashley Hall.