

# HISTORY

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The Jerusalem French School is situated at 66 Prophets Street, a heavily-traveled thoroughfare that runs parallel to Jaffa Street and links the Old City with the center of West Jerusalem.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Prophets Street, then called the Street of the Consuls, was one of the most prestigious addresses in Jerusalem. Thabor House, a few steps from the school, was designed as his personal residence by Conrad Schick, a German missionary who had become the most famous architect in the city by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Victorian painter William Holman Hunt lived at number 64. West Jerusalem's first ophthalmologist lived and worked in what is now Ticho House, just opposite our school, and several consulates and churches were located along the street.

The school rents its present facilities in the Convent of St. Joseph from the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition. The Jerusalem French School is the direct descendant of the 'Petite Ecole Francaise de Jerusalem', founded in September 1967, which occupied our buildings for many years.

The Convent of St Joseph is one of the highlights of any tour of the architectural monuments of Jerusalem. Built in stages from 1887 to 1930 to replace the Order's original quarters in the Old City, the convent is a fine example of the neo-classical style. At the heart of the convent is a quiet inner courtyard and the whole complex is protected from the street by high walls.

For many years the Jerusalem French School had a student population of between 100 and 150 students. Today, there are 205 students in 14 classes, from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

# STUDYING AT THE FRENCHSCHOOL

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## 1 Kindergarten

Children begin the Infants section at age 3 and leave kindergarten at age 6.

The role and mission of kindergarten is to help each child grow, develop autonomy and acquire the attitudes, skills and competencies that will enable him to build fundamental learning skills. Kindergarten draws on the child's capacity to imitate and to invent, and on the pleasure of action and play. It provides a wide range of opportunities to stimulate the child's desire to learn and to enrich their experience and understanding. Activities are designed to be appropriate to the child's own rhythm of development and growth.

The kindergarten curriculum is covered through a flexible timeframe. It lays out the major cognitive, social and motor skill areas to be developed over the three-year program, defines the objectives to be reached, and the skills to be acquired before the child enters elementary school:

- Developing language - the heart of learning skills
- Learning to live together
- Expressing oneself with one's body through movement
- Discovering the world
- Enriching sensitivity, imagination, creativity

## *2 Elementary School*

French elementary school is divided into two stages: **Cycle 2** – which includes the final year of Kindergarten, as the transition to elementary school, Preparatory Class and Elementary Class 1; and **Cycle 3** – which includes Elementary Class 2, Middle Class 1 and Middle Class 2.

- During **Cycle 2, the Fundamental Skills Stage**, children acquire the fundamental building blocks of knowledge – speaking, reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- During **Cycle 3, the Learning Skills Expansion Stage**, basic learning skills become the intellectual tools that will enable the child to find information, build solid knowledge, and gain initial autonomy in his or her intellectual pursuits. The child is no longer dependent on the teacher's permanent presence beside him.

At the end of each stage a national evaluation enables teachers and families alike to assess progress, highlight the child's strengths and help to remedy any problems that may have arisen.

### *Cycle 2 - Fundamental Skills*

The **Fundamental Skills** stage begins in the child's last year of Kindergarten with the introduction of pre-literacy activities. Oral and written language skills, however, are not systematically taught until the first year of elementary school.

- **Mastering language and French**
- **Learning to live together**
- **Mathematics**
- **Learning a foreign language**  
The Jerusalem French School offers pupils the opportunity to learn two foreign languages beginning in CP: Arabic and English
- **Physical Education and Sports**
- **Art Education**

<b>Skill</b>	<b>Minimum Hours/Week</b>	<b>Maximum Hours/Week</b>
<b>Mastering language</b>	9	10
<b>Living together</b>	30 min	30 min
<b>Mathematics</b>	5	5.5
<b>Discovering the world</b>	3	3.5
<b>Foreign languages</b>	1	2
<b>Art education</b>	3	3
<b>Physical education and sport</b>	3	3

### ***Cycle 3-Learning Skills Expansion:***

At this stage, the curriculum introduces subject areas such as French, History, and Mathematics, grouped into broad domains such as ‘French language, literary and humanistic studies’, to prepare students for the subject areas that they will encounter in junior high school.

The curriculum defines two transversal domains, which are connected to all subject areas: Language Mastery and Civics. Children do exercises in both domains frequently and are carefully evaluated at regular intervals.

Timetabling is still flexible at this stage, so that work may be adapted to the needs of the students, but the number of hours per subject area is clearly defined so as not to allow any area to be neglected. Students must read and write at least 2 hours a day.

### **Transversal Domains**

- Language Mastery and French
- Civics

### **Subject Areas:**

#### **French language. Literary and Humanistic Studies**

- Literature (speaking, reading, writing)
- Observing and thinking about the French language: grammar, conjugation, spelling, vocabulary.
- Learning a regional language: the school offers two – Arabic and English
- History and Geography

#### **Science Studies**

- Mathematics
- Experimental Sciences and Technology

#### **Art Education**

- Visual Arts
- Music Education

#### **Physical Education and Sports**

<b>Subject Area</b>		<b>Minimum Hours/Week</b>	<b>Maximum Hours/Week</b>	<b>Subject Area Total Hours</b>
<b>Language Mastery</b>	Speaking Reading Writing	Transversal Transversal Transversal		Transversal Transversal Transversal
<b>Civics</b>	Citizenship Group skills (weekly debate)	Transversal <b>30 minutes</b>		Transversal <b>30 minutes</b>
<b>Literary and Human Studies</b>	Literature	<b>4.5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11.5</b>
	Grammar		<b>1.5</b>	
	Foreign Languages	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	
	History and Geography	<b>3</b>	<b>3.5</b>	
<b>Sciences</b>	Mathematics	<b>5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>8</b>
	Experimental Sciences	<b>2.5</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b>Arts</b>	Music	<b>3</b>		<b>3</b>
	Visual Art			
<b>Physical Education and Sports</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>3</b>

### 3 Junior High School

In the French system, *Collège*, or Junior High School is divided into three cycles:

- *6ème* [Grade 6]: Observation cycle
- *5ème* and *4ème* [Grades 7 and 8]: Core cycle
- *3ème* [Grade 9]: Orientation cycle

At this level, the French national curriculum is designed to build a strong foundation in the core academic subjects, while offering a range of options. The curriculum centers on three main academic areas and two transversal areas:

#### **Academics:**

1. Mastery of language and languages

2. Humanities

French

History and Geography

Modern languages

Arts

Plastic arts

Music education

Classics (Latin, Greek)

3. Sciences and Technology

Mathematics

Experimental sciences

Earth and Life Sciences

Physics and Chemistry

Technology

#### **Transversals:**

1. Civics

2. Physical Education and Sports

At the end of four years of junior high school, students may choose to continue their studies towards a general or technological baccalaureat through the *Seconde de détermination* [see below] or towards a technical-professional baccalaureat, by opting for a professional certification course .

## 4 Senior High School

*Lycée* or Senior High School is divided into two cycles:

1. In *Seconde* [Grade 10], the **determinative cycle**, students choose two subjects in addition to the core curriculum. Their subject choices as well as their tastes, interests and strengths will determine their Baccalauréat stream.

2. *Première* and *Terminale* [Grades 11 and 12] make up the **final cycle**. Students sit for the general Baccalauréat examinations at the end of the final cycle.

At the Jerusalem French School, students may choose one of three general Baccalauréat streams:

Literature and Languages

Economics and Social Sciences

Sciences

Students who successfully pass the Baccalauréat examinations may continue their studies at the post-secondary level, at university or in *Classes Préparatoires aux Grandes Ecoles*, university-level classes leading to admission to highly specialized schools.