

The American School in London



**London, United Kingdom
Head of School
July 2017
www.asl.org**

**Carney, Sandoe
& Associates**

The Search Group

www.carneysandoe.com



The American School in London

Mission Statement

Our mission is to develop the intellect and character of each student by providing an outstanding American education with a global perspective.

Core Values

Respect: We treat others the way we expect to be treated. We value diversity of thought and experience.

Responsibility: We take ownership of our words and actions. We fulfill our obligations to ourselves and others.

Kindness: We act with compassion. We help others.

Integrity: We are honest. We make the right choice even when nobody is watching.

The Courage to Act: We have the courage to speak up for ourselves and others. We take positive actions to make our community and world a better place.

Fast Facts

- Students: 1,350
- Nationalities in student body: 63
- Faculty members: 192
- Average faculty tenure: 7 years
- Faculty with advanced degrees: 83%
- Student/teacher ratio: 8:1
- Annual operating budget: \$50 M
- Financial aid awarded this year: \$4.4 M

The Position

“There is no school better equipped to foster the full potential of each individual student.” So says a long time parent about the American School in London. “It is bold in its pedagogy, kind in its culture, and innovative in every dimension of its institutional life.” Based in the capital city of the UK since 1951, ASL offers an outstanding American education with a global perspective to an increasingly diverse and international student body. The school community comprises teachers, students, staff, parents, alumni, and friends who hail from more than 60 nations across the world. Together, these constituents collectively attend to the individual progress of each ASL student.

Grounded in its core values of Respect, Responsibility, Kindness, Integrity, and the Courage to Act, ASL provides students with an accessible vision for excellence. Its rigorous program engages students through inquiry and collaboration, challenging them to strive for personal and academic excellence and supporting them in their quest to make good choices and act with integrity. ASL’s strong sense of community is one of its key strengths; the school is marked by a distinct respect for individual and cultural differences and by its commitment to producing effective, productive citizens who give back to the world.

Strengthened by its palpable community spirit, strong faculty, engaged students, and location in the global city of London, ASL is, as one teacher notes, “an outstanding school committed to continuous improvement.” Under the inspiring leadership of Head of School Coreen R. Hester over the past decade, ASL has revitalized its mission statement, continued to attract world-class faculty, underscored its commitment to its students, and fulfilled the major goals of its 2010 Strategic Plan. With Mrs. Hester’s 2017 retirement approaching, the school is well situated for continued excellence and sustained growth in many areas, and is poised to undertake a new strategic plan.

ASL seeks a visionary educational leader to serve as its new Head of School. The successful candidate



will be a lifelong learner who is a good communicator and effective manager. S/he will embody the school's core values and be kind, warm, visible, and caring. The next Head should embrace with excitement the school's position as a global leader as well as the good work that lies ahead in moving the institution forward with confidence. This is a superb opportunity to lead and continue to develop a world-renowned school.

School History

In 1951, Stephen L. Eckard, an American journalist and former independent school teacher, was living in London, working for the North American service of the BBC. Several of his co-workers encouraged him to start a school that followed an American curriculum, and the American School in London was born. Thirteen students joined ASL's first class, and students attended school at Eckard's London apartment. In six months, ASL had become so popular that three teachers were hired and the school moved to a more spacious property in Chelsea.

Over the next few years, the school continued to grow, moving to a large house in Grosvenor Square, then to two houses in Gloucester Gate, and later to four houses in York Terrace. The first ASL high school graduation took place in 1960, and in 1964 a newly formed Board of Trustees made the landmark decision to raise funds for a \$7 million building that would house the whole school for years to come. This building was completed in 1971 in the neighborhood of St. John's Wood and is the vibrant home of ASL today. In the 1990s, the generosity of several ASL families saw ASL acquire Canons Park playing fields and outdoor recreational space.





In 2000, the school added a new high school wing with an additional 24,000 square feet of space, a new gym, art studios, computer labs, and a renovated library. In 2006, the school broke ground for the school Center for Education and the Arts—a 450-seat theater and new flexible teaching and performance space. During that time and through the generosity of the ASL community, the school also raised endowment funds for faculty and staff support to further its strategic priority of attracting and retaining the best faculty and staff.

In 2014, the school began construction on a community arts building which was completed in December 2015 and an aquatic and fitness center to be completed by end of summer 2016. And shortly, ASL will begin renovation of its middle school and high school science facilities. Alongside these projects, ASL continues to benefit from the generosity of the ASL community and has raised additional endowment funds for student financial assistance to provide funding in support of the strategic goal of increasing socioeconomic diversity at ASL.

ASL marks its 65th anniversary on April 21, 2016, Founder's Day, an annual celebration and an opportunity to reflect upon and commemorate the school, which continues to provide a world-class education in a unique environment for K-12 students.

The School

Today, ASL delivers an American curriculum to its 1,350 students in distinct but aligned lower, middle, and high schools. The school's vision for excellence promotes dynamic relationships among students and teachers; rigorous programs that engage students through inquiry and collaboration; the development of integrity, strength of character, and responsibility; a respect for individual and cultural differences; and a dedicated program of service to others, which inspires compassion and global awareness throughout the student body. As a distinctly American school, ASL draws many of its students from US expat families but enjoys growing interest from international families as well as local British ones. For those students holding US citizenship, 44% also hold an additional citizenship. Of the entire student body, 24% do not hold US citizenship, and 57% hold citizenship in countries other than the US. The re-enrollment rate is robust and is currently approaching 90%. Though admission is selective, the school has a range of learners and seeks to inspire and support each one. The culture at ASL combines elements from the best US independent schools, public schools, and leading international schools. This openness to best practice in each of these distinct domains is foundational to the growth of ASL's curriculum, its dynamic and original program, and its personnel, governance, and ethos.

Academics

With an extraordinarily talented and hard-working faculty at the helm, ASL provides a demanding and comprehensive academic experience for its students. ASL's Portrait of a Learner paints a colorful picture of a well-rounded young person. Students strive to be thinkers, explorers, collaborators, innovators, and communicators who develop well-being, respect, responsibility, kindness, integrity, and the courage to act. The school's rigorous academic program, in conjunction with its extracurricular opportunities and commitment to service, ensures that this portrait is an accurate representation of its students.

Lower School

Learning begins in the lower school, which serves students in Pre-kindergarten through Grade 4. A low student/teacher ratio permits small group and individual attention. Teachers understand that childhood is a journey, not a race, and they work with families to embrace and cherish this exciting, ephemeral time in their children's lives. The academic program encourages children to explore the world, challenges them to think critically, promotes creativity, and strives for continuous growth in an exciting environment. Students adopt an inquiry-based approach to learning, through which they learn to take risks and explore the world, with London serving as a learning laboratory. Activities and lessons in core subjects—literacy, math, science, and social studies—are integrated, demonstrating to young children the myriad connections that exist among subjects and in their own lives. Students are further supported in their learning by a team of learning specialists in music, art, physical education, computer instruction, and Spanish. The result is a stimulating, caring, and individualized program that initiates a lifelong love of learning.



Middle School

In middle school, students develop their sense of self and their relationship with the world around them. A team of caring and talented educators nurtures, inspires, and challenges each student at this critical stage in his/her development. The academic program focuses on the cultivation of deep and meaningful understanding and encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning. Students are challenged to think, question, express, create, and transform their ideas into action. Learning is hands-on, active, and collaborative, with individualized instruction in English, math, social studies, world languages, and science. A rich variety of electives in technology, the arts, physical education, and community service helps kindle individual passions.

College Enrollment

The following is a list of universities at which three or more ASL graduates have recently enrolled:

- American University
- Babson College
- Barnard College
- Boston College
- Boston University
- Bowdoin College
- Brown University
- Colgate University
- Colorado College
- Columbia University
- Cornell University
- Davidson College
- Duke University
- Emory University
- Fordham University
- George Mason University
- Georgetown University
- Harvard University
- Imperial College London
- Johns Hopkins University
- Middlebury College
- New York University
- Northwestern University
- Occidental College
- Pomona University
- Princeton University
- Rice University
- Skidmore College
- Syracuse University
- The George Washington University
- The New School, Eugene Lang College
- Trinity College
- Tufts University
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of Cambridge
- University of Chicago
- University of Oxford
- University of Wisconsin
- Vassar College
- Yale University



Students can pursue interests in ceramics, dance, drama, digital animation, journalism, psychology, robotics, service learning, yearbook, and yoga. A 1:1 laptop program connects students with the latest technology. Across the division, students are encouraged to strive for their fullest potential.

In this division, the school's core values guide student interactions and foster group identity. The middle school advisory program supports these core values. The school nurtures close, trusting relationships with adults and peers to create a positive climate for personal growth and to help students deal successfully with change and transition.

High School

High school teachers challenge students to find their identities as scholars, artists, thespians, journalists, leaders, athletes, and scientists. Students draw from their unique surroundings to prepare both for college and for life in an interconnected, global world—they develop the skills, knowledge, and experience that allow and inspire them to use their talents to leave a lasting impression on their environment.

Students pursue challenging coursework in all major disciplines. The required program of study is effectively considered the minimum—nearly all students fulfill more than basic graduation requirements. Most students choose to take four years of English, math, science, social studies, and world languages, and they have abundant opportunities for advanced study through AP courses in art history, biology, calculus, chemistry, computer science, economics, English, environmental science, European history, French, human geography, music theory, psychology, physics, Spanish, statistics, studio arts,

and US history. With many options at their disposal, students learn to make thoughtful choices between breadth and depth. Each student graduates with the ability to present ideas clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing; understand and apply quantitative reasoning; and think both analytically and creatively to support their arguments and to solve problems. Students participate actively in experiential courses in health, a peer leadership practicum, a teaching apprenticeship, and research seminars. Students also participate in the Alternatives program—four-day trips in the UK and across Europe that provide a wide variety of service learning, cultural, academic, and recreational opportunities. Offerings may include creative writing in Wales, hiking in the French Alps, art and culture in Venice, volcanoes and Vikings in Iceland, and more. The school’s Speakers Series exposes the community to the thoughts of authors, musicians, scientists, and world-renowned lecturers. These experiences yield students who are active, thoughtful, and compassionate participants in a global society. Each year, students leave ASL well-prepared and matriculate at some of the most selective colleges and universities in the world.



Student Life

Student life at ASL is vibrant and engaging, with a host of opportunities to gain valuable learning experiences outside the classroom. London offers a unique opportunity as a learning laboratory for students to explore theater, music, history, and culture. ASL offers extended community partnership programs that seek to enhance perspective, develop empathy, build community, inspire activism, and challenge students through an experiential learning model.



Students are encouraged to explore and identify passions that transcend the classroom. Arts and athletics form vital parts of the ASL fabric. As they create visual and performance art, students learn not just how to create art, but why they should create it. Students can select from several outlets for in-class and extracurricular art instruction, including drawing and painting, photography, and graphic design. Music students perform in one of many student music ensembles or the biennial musical produced



collaboratively by the drama and music departments. All students who perform in Concert Choir, Concert Band, and Chamber Orchestra participate in Music Tour, which provides an opportunity to perform in a European city, such as Vienna, Tallinn, Freiburg, Lisbon, Prague, and Athens. The music department has a long established partnership with AMIS (The Association for Music in International Schools), and each year a number of ASL students are selected to participate in Honor Band, Orchestra or Choir concerts in a variety of international locations.

ASL's athletics program stimulates the physical, cognitive, and social development of students. Dedicated to providing the best possible learning environment for growth in these areas, the program promotes sportsmanship, teamwork, commitment, discipline, competition, conflict management, skill, and character development. Students can choose to play on several different teams in all seasons, including cross country, field hockey, soccer, rugby, volleyball, basketball, cheerleading, crew, dance, swimming, baseball, lacrosse, softball, tennis, track and field, and golf. As well, the middle school and high school teams engage in end-of-season sports tournaments competing against schools in the UK and, in the case of the high school, across Europe.

Robotics programs and student-run newspapers in middle school and high school feature prominently in the fabric of experiential learning available to students. Robotics at ASL is rapidly expanding as students engage with ever more complex challenges. The past few years have seen ASL students garner great success at both local and international competitions. Two student-run newspapers provide valuable opportunities for students to expand critical thinking and writing skills and pursue their passions through journalism. ASL newspapers and student journalists have been recognized internationally for excellence in competition with other schools.

Internship opportunities for high school students further extend experiential learning into the working world through the popular WorkX program developed at ASL over the past several years. ASL students seek summer job experiences through WorkX, which offers a wide range of internship opportunities in areas such as architecture, education, journalism, media, not-for-profit, health, law, and more.

ASL provides support for students who have mild to moderate specific learning differences (SLD program), as well as for students for whom English is an additional language (EAL program). Counseling services are available in each division. ASL's goal is to help students reach their potential while learning to work independently and cooperatively. Many parents regard this feature of the school with deep appreciation.

At the core of ASL student life is the school's commitment to a supportive, values-driven environment. A strong grounding in the values of the school yields an environment that is conducive to learning and growth in which students feel confident, safe, and secure.



Physical Campus

Located in central London and situated in St. John's Wood, a small neighborhood adjacent to Regent's Park, ASL's campus is self-contained, secure, and feature-rich. Faculty and students arrive by tube, bus, bicycle and on foot. The school also provides bus service for students. Close neighbors include Lord's Cricket Ground, Abbey Road Studios, and the London Zoo.

ASL provides excellent facilities for learning on 3.5 acres in central London. An additional 22 acres of playing fields allow athletic development and recreational opportunities for students a short tube ride away in Canons Park. This year, ASL brought online a wonderfully spacious and functional community arts building, and reshaped the adjacent outdoor playspace. Summer 2016 sees the completion of a new aquatic and fitness center, and renovation of the school's science labs begins soon.

The school has 80 classrooms, as well as five computer labs, nine science labs, five music rooms, five art studios, a photography darkroom, a recording studio, a language lab, two playgrounds, and two libraries—one in the lower school and one for middle and high school students—that collectively shelve more than 50,000 volumes. The School Center for Education and the Arts was completed in 2008 and provides exceptional auditorium and performance space with seating for 450. The school recently purchased for future use three residential properties adjacent to campus. The Head of School residence on Grove End Road is also contiguous to school grounds.

London itself also serves as a dynamic classroom for students, who take advantage of the many cultural and historic opportunities the city provides.



London, United Kingdom

The UK's capital, London is a leading global city, one of two in the world rated Alpha++. Founded in ancient times by the Romans, who named it Londinium, modern London provides a rich blend of history and modernity.

The city straddles the River Thames and is home to a diversity of people and cultures. It is the most populous municipality in the European Union and is home to approximately one-eighth of the UK's population. London's temperate oceanic climate ensures warm, pleasant summers, moderate winters, and a touch of rain. A crossroads for international travel, London offers easy access to Europe and connections to the rest of the world, in addition to the bounty of the UK's diverse landscapes, cities, and sights.

Lifelong learners thrill at the educational opportunities that London's noted historic attractions provide. Cultural icons, including the Tower of London, Tower Bridge, Buckingham Palace, Houses of Parliament, and Westminster Abbey, are frequent destinations for tourists and residents alike.

London's well-run museums, including the British Museum, the National Gallery, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and Tate Modern, provide further instruction and enrichment opportunities.

Vibrant cultural, culinary, and recreational possibilities abound in London, which is home to myriad distinctive and historic areas, including the West End, the famed theater district, Covent Garden and the South Bank, as well as the UK's Royal Ballet, the Royal Opera House, the National Theatre, and Royal Albert Hall. London is home to prodigious global literature, music, film and sports. The city has 14 football

teams, including six in the Premier League. Rugby, cricket, and tennis are all popular sports. London has hosted the Summer Olympics three times, most recently in 2012.

This world-class city provides endless opportunities for enjoyment and education for everyone.

Opportunities and Challenges

The next Head of the American School in London will lead an exceptional institution—an American school with a global perspective and international commitment situated in one of the world’s most vibrant cities. The school is well known and respected for its close community, intellectual energy, and innovative spirit. It is driven by its clear mission and core values. Under Coreen Hester’s engaged and energetic leadership over the last nine years, ASL has made many important advances and has fulfilled the major goals of its 2010 Strategic Plan. The school is now poised to develop a new strategic plan under the leadership of the next Head of School.

ASL has extraordinary human and financial resources and an attractive, well-resourced campus with excellent facilities. Uniquely, ASL serves as a “home away from home” for the families—both American and non-American—who make up its community. Students are noted for their motivation and passion for learning; the hard-working faculty for their commitment to student learning and individual development; and the senior leadership team for its effective teamwork. The innovative academic program, based on an American model, provides students with rigor and choice along with an unusually high level of support for those students with learning differences (about 10 percent).

The new Head of School will arrive at a particularly auspicious moment in ASL’s history. The 2010 Strategic Plan and a capital campaign have just been completed successfully, as has a Middle States Association Accreditation that lauds the school in many areas. A highly effective Board of Trustees—sophisticated about its role and responsibilities—provides stable governance and is most supportive of the school and its Head.

Institutional Priorities

To lead ASL at this moment in its history will provide the right candidate with an authentically innovative opportunity informed by the following priorities.

Identity

Essential for the next Head of School will be a new and thoughtful approach to the identity of the school as it becomes increasingly international and diverse as well as more competitive in terms of admissions. A strong part of ASL’s ethos is to teach “the whole child,” attending to students’ learning, nurturing their passions, and encouraging a mindset of continuous growth. As part of strategic planning and day-to-day interaction, the Head will lead and empower people toward continued excellence, develop and sustain the very best programs, and shepherd a cohesive, diverse, and engaged community.

Innovation

The next Head will have the opportunity to innovate on several fronts: creating a new strategic plan, reviewing the mission statement, continuing to guide educational innovation to position ASL as a leading practitioner of forward-thinking pedagogy, considering and developing a master plan for best use of physical facilities, as well as developing a sustainable financial model to support this agenda. A successful

Head will lead the administration, faculty, and greater ASL community to formulate creative strategies and foster a sense of exciting innovation and growth in this next chapter of the school's history.

Community and Cultural Competency

The strength of community at ASL is extraordinary and valued highly across all constituencies. The next Head will benefit from this unique asset and continue to hold this sense of community and cohesion as a high priority. The ASL community has identified a desire to strengthen further its cultural competency by striving for greater inclusiveness. It aims to identify additional ways to find greater cultural understanding by giving voice to diverse perspectives on institutional and social/global issues. In particular, developing the students' cultural competency is a high priority as a 21st Century capability and a student learning objective from the recent accreditation process.

Program

The community is proud of and values highly the quality of the academic program at ASL, both in the classroom and beyond. The next Head will continue the momentum of recent initiatives, such as alignment of a standards-based K-12 curriculum and a focus on developing writing and inquiry, and bring those developments to completion. The next Head will work with the senior leadership team to continue to explore and implement current best practice in assessment and instruction while remaining open to further advances in curriculum and pedagogy. The overall challenge is to embrace a spirit of continual innovation, balanced with careful thought and attention to the pace and demands of school life for faculty and students.

Strategic Resource Planning

Working with the Board of Trustees, the new Head of School will develop, in conjunction with the new strategic plan, innovative strategies that address the balance among tuition, competitive compensation of faculty and staff, financial aid objectives, facility needs, endowment draw, and rising operational costs (for example, added security costs). As well, s/he will consider and develop additional revenue streams.

Qualifications and Qualities of the next Head of School

The Board of Trustees seeks an educational leader with the experience and skills to lead a large and prominent school. Experience at an international school or an American school with a robust global program /understanding is preferred, but visionary leadership demonstrated in a different institutional context is also welcomed. The successful candidate will have worked with highly motivated students, a talented faculty and administrative team, an active Board of Trustees, and an involved parent community. The following qualities are seen as high priorities:

- A highly developed sense of personal ethics and values consistent with the mission and values of ASL;
- The ability to think and lead strategically: to plan, execute, and implement in the context of a community composed of many constituencies;
- High energy, confidence, and strong interpersonal and communication skills;
- Visibility and accessibility within the community while representing the school externally;
- Being the "head learner" with a keen interest in and knowledge of curriculum and pedagogy as well as child development and social issues;
- The ability to undertake an innovative approach to challenges;
- Demonstrated success in hiring, inspiring, and working with strong and talented teachers and administrators;

- The ability to lead with consensus, and also to make and communicate clear executive decisions when necessary;
- The ability to be a community builder in an increasingly diverse environment, with the desire and ability to connect with students of all ages and with all adult constituencies;
- Financial, operational, facilities, and fundraising interest, experience and acumen; and
- The ability to oversee sustained institutional improvement while remaining mindful of the organizational health of the school community.

To Apply

Interested candidates should submit the following materials as *separate* PDF attachments in one email:

- Cover letter expressing interest in the position and connecting yourself to the qualities, aspirations, and realities of ASL;
- Current resume;
- Statement of educational philosophy and leadership practice; and
- List of five references with name, phone number, and email address of each (*references will be contacted only with the candidate's permission*).

Please send all materials to one of the following: John Chandler, Barbara Chase, or Ben Bolté of Carney, Sandoe & Associates.

JOHN CHANDLER | BARBARA CHASE | BEN BOLTÉ

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