Middle School Online FAQ

Teachers

Who is my child's teacher for the year?

All middle school online courses are taught by subject specialists who will connect with your child regularly throughout the school year. A detailed list of teachers is found in SOPHIE here.

Course Information

How many online courses should my child take in a year?

Taking online courses is an important part of building executive functioning skills, growing in responsibility and independence as students progress throughout their middle school years. It is strongly recommended that beginning online students start with the **Skills for Online Success ADST module** to learn about digital platforms and build the necessary skills for learning in the virtual environment. First year online students generally start with one core academic course (e.g., English, Math, Science, Social Studies) plus one non-core academic course (e.g., ADST, Foreign Language). As students progress with their online learning, they can add more online courses to their load.

What is the difference between asynchronous classes and synchronous classes?

Asynchronous courses are best suited to students who study well independently and wish to work on curriculum on their own schedule. The course is overseen by a subject specialist teacher who communicates and provides feedback through the LMS and email. Synchronous courses offer the same program of study as asynchronous online courses with the added benefit of weekly meetings with a teacher and working alongside a cohort of your peers. Synchronous courses provide overall structure for students, with the expectation that they will work to keep up with the schedule set by the teacher for assignments and assessments. The accountability of the weekly meeting is designed to support learning of challenging concepts and content, encourage student interaction and community building**,** and provide a natural place for students to ask questions and develop deeper understanding. More information about our synchronous program can be found in SOPHIE here.

When do synchronous classes meet?

Middle school synchronous classes meet for 30 minutes each week from late September to early June. The schedule can be found in SOPHIE here.

Second Languages

What online options are available for my child to study a second language?

We offer both asynchronous and synchronous second language courses in our middle school online program. Students should enroll in their grade level; however, Middle school students often come to HCOS with varying levels of prior experience in foreign language courses and it can be difficult to determine the appropriate grade level. Whenever possible, it is our hope for students to enroll in their grade level course and work under an alternate pacing guide to complete the necessary content to prepare for the following grade level. Students with substantial prior learning can be assessed by one of our second language teachers to determine whether placement in a different grade level is appropriate. Asynchronous and synchronous courses use the same curriculum, but synchronous courses offer the additional feature of weekly conversation practice and community building opportunities with their peers.

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