



Language Policy

Brent International School Subic

Policy Statement

Brent International School Subic upholds the principles of bilingualism and multilingualism in reverence for individual esteem, social accessibility, and cognitive ability. We recognize the continuing development of the mother tongue in social and academic settings. While ensuring the growth of the first language, the school is committed to using English, the language of instruction, in achieving academic success in all content areas. At the same time, English is encouraged to be used in the social settings when informal discourse transpires. With mutual respect, we provide avenues for the maintenance and inclusion of the native language and culture in the scholastic institution and in the community.

Objectives

Thus, Brent International School Subic adheres to the following objectives to achieve success in language development:

- a. To strengthen the use of English as a medium of instruction in an academic setting
- b. To invigorate the use of English and support the use of mother tongue in social settings
- c. To provide language support, in areas such as grammar, syntax, and content vocabulary, to all students, both native and language learner, not only in English classes but also in content areas
- d. To provide language support to students from non-English speaking background in all subject areas
- e. To encourage our faculty to keep an active role of their responsibility as teachers of language regardless of subject matter
- f. To recognise and connect with the students' mother tongues and cultures in lessons and school life
- g. To encourage parents to help in the maintenance of pride and the development of skills in mother tongue

Expectations

Living in an international community only heightens the value and importance of language in achievement of Brent's Expected School Learning Results (ESLRs). At the same time, as an IB World School, our ESLR's align with the IB Learner Profile in many areas, and one of which is language development. We maintain that we produce students who are

A. Intellectual

- more **knowledgeable** and **critical thinkers** of many cultures, speaking several languages, and still articulating thoughts clearly.
- **reflective** in their oral and writing productions, communicating their thoughts and emotions about the trivial yet global issues.

B. Socio-Cultural

- **open-minded** – seeking and evaluating other points of view, – becoming more effective according to the number of languages used, demonstrating an understanding of their audience.
- **communicators** with the ability to express ideas confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication, using a variety of communication skills.

C. Emotional

- **risk takers**, confident in opening their minds as they argue their opinions while conceding to the opinions of others in order to shatter biases.
- **caring** as they express their compassion in helping the community solve their issues, may it be personal or social.

D. Ethical

- **inquirers** in more than one language, inquiring more effectively and broadly, taking responsibility for their message and demonstrating the ability to listen actively.

Mother Tongue

BISS strongly adheres to the linguistic theory stating that the development of an additional language depends highly on the foundation of the mother tongue (L1). The competency level in L1 is central to the whole development of all cognitive skills in children; therefore, the academic level necessary in learning an additional language is related to the strength of L1. In general, students with good mother tongue skills develop good general language skills.

Therefore, all students are given the opportunity to practice their mother-tongue in social setting, and even in academic setting where discussion and translation in L1 is allowed.

Therefore, the study of the mother tongue is encouraged; that if the language is available in the school's curriculum, the student is invited to enroll in such courses; that in cases when the language is not part of the curriculum, the student has access to do a self-study with a supervisor, a specialist of the target language, who is provided by the school.

Assessment

Assessment in language like all other subject areas follows the school's assessment policy guidelines. These guidelines follow the general principles of standard-based grading. Therefore, any formative and summative assessment in language is used against criteria.

Assessment criteria used in the school differ per department and grade level. However, all are aligned, meeting the expectations of the school's ESLR's and IB Learner Profile on language development.

All assessments in language do not allow any forms of modification. All students, language learners and native speakers, are marked against the same assessment criteria; however, the method of achieving the assessment goal may be differentiated.

Languages Courses Offered by the School

The English course, a compulsory subject, in BISS is suitable for students with a variety of English levels, from native speakers to those with a basic command of English. ESL support is offered to students with limited knowledge of English. All students have the opportunity to learn a foreign language at the school. The school currently offers Mandarin and Spanish.

A. Lower School Language Arts

The Language Arts Program develops knowledge and skills of listening, speaking and reading and writing through various rich activities in the classroom. Activities should include contemporary language teaching best practice informed through Professional Development. Performance, research, guided activities, mini-lessons and word walls, personal dictionaries and reading writing workshops are examples.

The recycling, reviewing and reinforcing of Academic and Social Language throughout the years underpin the program. Instruction for mainstream and ESL should provide resources that scaffold and assist in creating a structure for learning. This focus on individual needs of students, which encourages teachers to choose resources for differentiation. Reading and spelling programs operate from Kindergarten to Grade 5, allowing students to be assessed at a particular level.

Students are exposed to a variety of literature forms, improving comprehension skills and encouraging the application of the techniques of word choice, sentence structure and grammar in context. All students learn to respond and use oral and written language effectively in a range of contexts.

B. Middle School English Course

Middle School views the ongoing language development of the students as the responsibility of teachers in all content areas. Middle school teachers utilise differentiated and inclusive instruction, by integrating listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in context. The teachers also collaborate in developing consistent academic vocabulary across subject areas to assess students with varying language proficiency. Graphic organisers, inclusive instruction of writing in content areas, and assessment criteria cards provide a common ground for students to show their learning.

Students in Middle School are introduced to basic research procedures, and written and oral research reports as their major assessment in preparation for Upper School and IB courses. In addition, Middle School students have the chance to explore language through a broad range of literature, projects, and social contexts.

C. Upper School Language Policy

English in Upper School is divided in two divisions: a. Brent Curriculum, b. IB Curriculum. English courses in 9th and 10th Grade follow the Brent Curriculum while 11th and 12th Grade lessons are in accordance with the IB Diploma standards.

The freshmen and sophomore are considered to be the preparatory years for the Diploma program, and are reinforced in junior and senior years. Teachers, through a range of differentiated exercises, enhance the students' communicative modes with an emphasis on academic proficiency. Teachers provide a variety of work of literature lauded by literary merit, which may be required for homogenous reading or may be open for choices. All courses provide scaffolded materials for guided reading. By dissecting texts in English classes and in other content areas, students are expected to acquire the appropriate levels of interpreting, analyzing, critiquing, and evaluating of fiction and nonfiction work.

Academic reporting in oral and written production is the major form of summative assessment in Upper School. Language, being the main component of such productions, is reinforced through mini-lessons in syntax and genre structures across all curriculum. ESL learners receive a more detailed guidance in their pull-out class. In IB, English is grouped accordingly:

Language A indicates that the language is taught in a way appropriate for students:

- for whom that language is their mother tongue
- as one of their mother tongues
- who have reached native or near native competence in the language.

Language B indicates that languages such as Mandarin, Spanish, and English are offered as AB Initio, standard or advanced and taught in a way appropriate for students:

- for whom that language is not their mother tongue
- who have not yet reached native or near native competence
- who have developed a higher level of competence in the language than those learning it at standard level.

D. Modern Language Policy

Students in secondary level attend Modern Languages classes in Mandarin or Spanish. Students in 6th Grade are required to take Mandarin and Spanish for half a semester, but beginning in 7th Grade, they are required to choose between the two-mentioned foreign languages, and possibly pursue it until 12th Grade. Students not succeeding in the chosen language may opt to enroll in a different language in 8th Grade. In Upper School, to ensure a more balanced and effective foreign language instruction, language levelling is implemented for Grades 9 and 10 students. However, students in 11th and 12th Grades

follow the mandated requirements of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Years Programme in the AB Initio, Standard and Higher Level.

The standards, and the scope and sequence of Modern Languages are dependent on levels:

- Beginner
- Intermediate
- High Intermediate
- Advanced

Assessment evidences are summarized in a GRASPS form, and differentiation is also indicated. Activities that are incorporated in each unit aims to provide an enriching and enjoyable environment for all language learners.

ESL Language Policy

English as a Second Language is a special program the school offers in aid of the students coming from a non-English speaking background. ESL provides the language learners the skills they need in order to be proficient in all subject areas. Within a framework of mutual respect, the ESL Department is committed to ensuring all students use English

- to communicate in social settings,
- to achieve academically in all content areas,
- to use English in socially and culturally appropriate ways.

The ESL program takes a combination of the immersion and pull-out program in its achievement of success. The ESL students, in primary, secondary, and grades 9 and 10 are pulled out of English and Language Arts to receive an intensive course on the target language. The language learners in Middle and Upper School attend an additional ESL instruction in lieu of Modern Language classes.

The ESL teachers, in language lessons, focus on providing intensive workshops on grammar, sentence structures, genre of writing, oral reporting skills, among others. Following the requirement of teaching the language in context, ESL teachers work in collaboration with the subject area teachers taking into account the topics covered in the content areas. As language learners are expected be proficient not only in social but mostly in academic setting, the ESL students are immersed in content areas with a Language Support teacher in the classroom (*when staffing and schedule allow such provision*). The core and language support teachers conform to the principles of collaborative teaching keeping in mind the linguistic profiles of all students.

Language Placement system is in place to ensure the proper accommodation needed for language learners.

- ESL 1 beginning
- ESL 2 intermediate
- ESL 3 high-intermediate
- ESL 4 advanced

(This policy is written in conjunction with the ESL Handbook of Procedures)

Language Policy in Admission

Students applying for Admissions at BISS, whose competence in the English Language is not sufficient for them to participate actively in and benefit from the regular instruction program, will be enrolled in the ESL program. For language instruction purposes students are grouped according to their English Language proficiency, rather than grade level.

Following the school's mission to equip students for entry to colleges and universities throughout the world, only ESL students who commit themselves to obtaining the Brent Diploma will be accepted in the Upper School. The Upper School does not admit applicants who apply solely for the purpose to learn the English language.

Professional Development

To teach English (either in language A or B for IB DP), teachers must be native or near native speakers of the language they teach. They possess knowledge about the fundamentals of grammar and syntax. Nonetheless, teachers are encouraged to be proactive in their professional development. BISS incorporates a strategic plan of staff training and development in language. Further, the school allocates seats for teachers in campus professional development on language teaching and learning.

Practices Relating to Language Teaching and Learning

Brent adheres to the following practices adapted for all content and language instructions, where appropriate. We practice:

- the teaching of both basic interpersonal communicative skills and cognitive academic language proficiency

- the development of macro-skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in meaningful context by instilling an understanding of phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics
- helping students acquire skills in writing and reading varied texts with varied conventions of structure, organization, and appropriate language
- support for differentiated instruction through ESL and in the mainstream by accessing differentiated resources, program development, professional development, planning, expectations, tasks and using ESL teachers as resource.
- sheltered instruction where both the teaching of content and language are the goals of the program
- immersion which allow the students the opportunity to perform with peers
- collaborative instruction in which teaching of ESL students is shared responsibility of all teachers.
- advocating that all subject teachers raise awareness of the language demands of their specific subjects
- developing and interrelating the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing making connections with the mother tongue.
- promotion of consistency of practice, reiteration and reinforcement of knowledge, skills, academic language in the teaching and learning of all languages.