

Language Policy

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Related policies:

- Admissions policy
- Inclusion policy
- Marking policy

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The school language philosophy

At the British College of Gavà we support and value our students' mother tongue while guiding them through the process of language acquisition. As stated in Language and Learning in IB Programmes, "the ability to communicate in a variety of modes in more than one language is essential to the IB concept of an international education that promotes intercultural perspectives," which is one of the foundations of our language philosophy. Furthermore, we recognise that language lies at the centre of teaching the "whole person," promoting personal, social and intellectual growth through the exploration of cultural identity within a context of active and deepening intercultural understanding.

All our teachers assume responsibility for the development of students' language and communication, in addition to recognising and celebrating the diverse variety of languages spoken in the school, and encouraging and motivating second language acquisition in order to ensure the cultivation of an international-minded school culture that respects diverse backgrounds and promotes global citizenship.

This international focus is also rooted in Catalan culture, and as a school situated in the heart of Catalonia, the recognition and celebration of the local language, spoken side-by-side with Spanish (mother tongue), provides a key foundation stone in the development of recognition, respect, multilingualism and *convivencia* (peaceful coexistence) throughout our school.

At BCG we also hold the belief that language acquisition is a central aspect of personal growth and encourages not only communication, cultural awareness and increased empathy, but also higher-level transferrable cognitive skills and emotional stability. As such, supporting the learning of a new language is a crucial tenant enshrined in our school's mission to foster caring, active and aspirational life-long learners.

Students' language profile and development planning

In Spring 2020 a survey was done of all students and the languages that they speak at home. This gave us the data needed to create a full language profile of our school community. Subsequently, all new families complete a questionnaire at the first point of contact with the school and this information helps us to cater for our students' linguistic needs throughout their time at the college. It is extremely useful for informing language pathway recommendations and choices at GCSE and Diploma Programme and assists the school in the planning and development of language subject options in advance.

To help prospective families who may not speak English, Spanish or Catalan, we will shortly be launching our 'Young Interpreters' project. Our 'Young Interpreters' are students who represent their linguistic community within the school. They will accompany prospective students and their families of the same nationality when first visiting the school and play a pivotal role in helping new children settle in when they start their educational journey with us.

To help ensure effective communication throughout our whole community, we are privileged to have the assistance of multilingual parent representatives from each class who meet regularly with the Principal to discuss school matters and pass day-to-day messages from teachers to the rest of the parents.

We have a developing English as an Additional Language programme in place that supports students with manageable goals and measured targets, allowing them to access the mainstream curriculum appropriately.

We are proud to offer Spanish and English lessons free of charge to our staff to help them integrate into the school and wider community. Our belief in creating opportunities for lifelong learning and intercultural respect and understanding is also evident in our student-run language courses for teachers. Currently, students from our sixth form are teaching Russian to several members of staff. We are investigating the possibility of offering language lessons to parents in school, allowing an even greater sense of community to develop.

We are also pleased to have recently employed a Russian-speaking teacher to assist our Russian students in their English language acquisition.

All teachers are language teachers

At the British College of Gavà, we are committed to the idea that every teacher is a language teacher. Therefore, every teacher is responsible for the language learning of our students, in the most common language of instruction – English.

BCG recognises that success in all subject areas involves having a strong handle on the language of instruction, and that understanding goes hand in hand with rich and accurate language expression. To ensure this ethic of a shared responsibility for language teaching, we endorse the following measures:

Early Years and Primary

- EAL training for staff.
- EAL assessment: using the Bell foundation document to assess, track and set targets
- Learning Village: assessing, planning and delivering using Learning Village
- Specific teaching strategies for Early Years EAL learners
- What is translanguaging and how can it be used in the classroom?
- Scaffolded resources for EAL learners
- Termly Learning Quest booklets for students and their families which detail the subject-specific vocabulary that each student should master.
- Oral story telling with actions for key language and vocabulary
- Daily phonics sessions to build fluency in reading new language
- Word walls to build vocabulary when learnt and refer to if stuck
- Weekly spelling quiz to learn tricky words
- Sound buttons with pre recorded language for children to press and hear
- Repetitive rhymes and songs to revise common classroom language. Eg tidy up song, kind hands
- Teachers will periodically review their method of content delivery and aim to adapt to new and innovative use of technology, visual and physical stimuli, music etc.

Secondary (to the end of GCSE)

- EAL training for staff.
- EAL assessment: using the Bell foundation document to assess, track and set targets
- Learning village: assessing, planning and delivering using Learning Village
- Teaching strategies for secondary EAL learners
- What is translanguaging and how can it be used in the classroom?
- Scaffolded resources for EAL learners
- All teachers aim to use inclusive language in the classroom. This involves grading classroom language to a level where the highest number of students possible comprehend instructions and content.
- Students are encouraged to hone their spoken language skills by regularly having the chance to give oral presentations across all subject areas.
- Word walls are used to prompt students into using subject appropriate language structures and vocabulary.
- Glossaries are created for each subject group and made available to students.
- 3 English Language Pathways are offered at GCSE to cater for the linguistic needs of all our students and lead to coherent Group 1 and 2 choices in Diploma Programme.
- A trial SPaG marking system is being trialled across subjects with the aim of giving students consistent feedback on English spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Sixth Form (Diploma Programme)

- EAL training for staff.
- Word walls are used to prompt students into using subject appropriate language structures, vocabulary and DP command terms
- Glossaries are being created for each subject group and made available to students.
- A trial SPaG marking system is being trialled across subjects with the aim of giving students consistent feedback on English spelling, punctuation and grammar.

BCG Language Practices

Languages taught throughout the school - Overview

As part of the fundamental culture at the British College of Gavà, students are encouraged to learn and develop fluency in several languages. Languages are an ever-present part of our curriculum from EYFS through to Sixth Form and it is expected that all students engage with and develop fluency in a variety of different languages in order to foster cultural understanding, and to be prepared for their education and lives beyond leaving the college. It is also acknowledged that learning another language greatly contributes to the holistic development of students and is believed to raise achievement in other subject areas. (Diamond, 2010, pp. 332-333)

In addition to the curriculum-taught languages of English, Catalan, Spanish and French, the school endeavours to offer provision for the students to engage with extra-curricular language clubs led by specialist teachers in different languages. Other initiatives in place include 'Teach the Teacher' where students from other nationalities teach teachers the basics of their own language. Students plan and deliver lessons and set home work etc. This is an excellent way to promote home languages and also for teachers to place themselves in the shoes of the students. We currently run a teach the teacher course in Russian.

At BCG the language of instruction is English, Spanish is compulsory for all students up to the end of GCSE, Catalan is compulsory for all students until Year 7 and for Spanish nationals until the end of Year 11 in compliance with local education legislation. Until September 2020, French was taught as part of the BCG's after-school activity programme. In accordance with the importance we place on languages, French is now taught from Year 3 to Year 9 and is then an optional subject through to Year 13. BCG is exploring the possibility of offering a new language as an extracurricular activity now that French has become part of the core curriculum.

As part of our school's commitment to share resources, auxiliary staff, and best practice with neighbouring schools, we have an ever-growing set of contacts in the local area who can offer tailored language sessions for individuals and small groups as necessary.

The option for students to undertake school supported self taught or online courses for Diploma Programme subject groups 1 and 2 is being considered as this will allow for a wider range of language learning options in line with our school language philosophy.

	English as language of instruction	English	Spanish	Catalan	French
EYFS / LP					
Reception					
Nursery					
Year 1					
Year 2					
Upper primary					
Year 3					
Year 4					
Year 5					
Year 6					
Secondary					
Year 7					
Year 8					
Year 9					
Year 10 (GCSE)				Span Nat	Option
Year 11 (GCSE)				Span Nat	Option

Sixth Form				
Year 12 (IBDP)	Option (A/B)	Option (A/B)		Option (B)
Year 13 (IBDP)	Option (A/B)	Option (A/B)		Option (B)
Notes:	The option for students to undertake school supported self taught or online courses for Diploma Programme subject groups 1 and 2 Language A and B is being considered			

Early Years and Lower primary

The language of instruction throughout the school is English and whilst many of the youngest students are Spanish and may only speak Spanish or Catalan, each teacher is assisted by a TA. In Nursery, children learn through play and develop their communication skills in this way. The teachers will always communicate in English and the students pick up words quickly. In Reception, Spanish is introduced as a discrete lesson and then in Year 2 Catalan is added. So from an early age our children are exposed to the idea that different people speak different languages and each one is valued in the same way. This programme of study continues through until the end of Year 2. All lessons are taught in the child's own classroom, a familiar and safe environment for them.

Upper Primary - Key Stage 2

In Year 3 French is introduced as a compulsory subject for all students. In Spanish and Catalan, students are separated by nationality with Spanish students grouped together and non Spanish students grouped together. This is to enable the non Spanish students to get extra support and move at a slightly slower pace whilst allowing the native speakers the ability to progress more quickly as they follow the National curriculum for Spanish and Catalan. If a non-native Spanish student has high level Spanish and/or Catalan language skills they will be moved into the native learners group. In Year 3 and 4 all classes are done in Primary classrooms, but as students reach year 5 and 6 the Specialist Language rooms are used whenever the timetable allows. This gives the teachers access to more resources and wall display and word walls can be used to good effect.

Secondary - Keys Stage 3

All students will study English and Spanish in first or second language groups to enable each student to access the courses at the appropriate level. If a non-native Spanish student has high level Spanish language skills they will be moved into the native learners group. This applies for each of the languages. French is currently taught as a Second language for all

students. We are considering introducing specific lessons for first Language French speakers but this is still being assessed and would only be introduced if there was deemed to be sufficient demand.

English is taught in two or three groups, depending on the total cohort size. In September 2020 there are two Year 7 groups and consequently there will be 3 English groups; a first language group, a second language group and a third smaller group of students who have little or no English. This last group is taught by a specialist EAL teacher and the aim is that the students acquire enough English to be able to move up to the Second language group. In the same vein the second language group aspire to move into the first language group.

Catalan remains compulsory only for Spanish native students and non-native speakers will not study Catalan or Sociales and instead follow a bespoke English based course. Sociales is a complementary course to Spanish and Catalan and looks at the historical and cultural aspects of the region and its language.

Secondary - Key Stage 4

Three English Language Pathways are available to our students in Years 10 and 11:

- Pathway 1: English Language iGCSE and English Literature iGCSE
- Pathway 2: English as 2nd Language iGCSE and English Literature iGCSE
- Pathway 3: English as 2nd Language iGCSE

Students are tested at the end of Year 9 and placed in the appropriate pathway group after discussions with parents/guardians.

Spanish is compulsory for all students and is taught in the First and Second Language groups. Catalan and Sociales are taught to all Spanish nationals but are not tested at GCSE and as such, there is no formal qualification at the end of Year 11 although requirements for Spanish ESO are met and can be accredited.

French is an optional subject and taught as a Second Language.

Sixth Form - Diploma Programme

After Year 11 mock iGCSE examinations students and parents will receive guidance on the available Group 1 and Group 2 subject choices.

Currently (for 2021) the options are as follows:

	English	Spanish	Catalan	French	
Language A	Yes	Yes			
Language B	Yes	Yes		Yes	
Online or Self-Study	The option for students to undertake school supported self-taught or online courses for Diploma Programme subject groups 1 and 2 Language A and B is being considered.				

The above language choices for Groups 1 and 2 provide our students with the opportunity to maximise their individual language skills and offer a coherent pathway of study from iGCSE. The majority of our student body will be able to access Language A study in Spanish or English and any bilingual students will study both. As all of our students study Spanish to iGCSE level, Spanish B is a suitable continuation of study for non Spanish students. Likewise, French B is a coherent Language B option for those students who have studied French at iGCSE offering continuity of learning.

We are currently exploring the possibility of offering a school supported self taught course (SSST) in Russian for a few students who it is felt may benefit from it. We are in discussion with an online provider at https://www.mihunlimited.com/ibdp-language-a-ssst.html and discussing other options with nearby schools and private tutors. Likewise, we feel that offering a completely new 'ab initio' language in Group 2 would further enhance our philosophy of multiculturalism and multilingualism as well as playing to the strengths of our international student body as natural linguists. At the moment of writing, due to current staffing restraints we are investigating an online Pamoja Mandarin 'ab initio' course. Both of these options would currently incur extra charges for students.

English as an additional Language (EAL)

The British College of Gavà has an ever-growing community of families, teachers and support staff from many different cultures and language communities. The BCG understands the different support necessary to address and cater for the individual needs of students and families, including those for whom English is not their Mother Tongue.

If a student's English language capability hinders them from accessing the curriculum, their needs are assessed by the English as an Additional Language Specialist, who then tailors a

support schedule and differentiated work programme in collaboration with the relevant year group team. This may include scaffolding or altering lesson material to aid conceptual understanding and in-class support is the preferred strategy for EAL learners. This may include small-group or one on one support while working in the classroom.

For students who join the school with little or no English, a personalised support programme is designed and the student will be taken out of regular classes to accelerate their level of English in order to be able to access curriculum content sooner. In such cases, families are advised on admission that these classes are obligatory and incur extra cost.

We recognise that each learner for whom English is not their mother tongue will acquire the language at their own pace and it is for this reason that we offer various pathways of study in English for our students as mentioned previously in the 'BCG Language Practices' section. It should not be forgotten however that the language of instruction for all other non language subjects such as mathematics, science or business studies is English and therefore our philosophy that 'every teacher is a language teacher' and strategies mentioned in the relevant section are key to helping our students' reach their potential.

For external students wishing to access the Diploma Programme, a relevant iGCSE in English or B2 qualification is required.

Early Years and Primary (KS1 & KS2)

Aims

- To ensure EAL student needs are appropriately met in both social (BICS) and academic (CALP) language
- To help students access the curriculum by implementing appropriate teaching strategies
- To monitor progress so as to to inform teaching and planning
- To assess English language proficiency of EAL students new to the school and monitor that of students below scale C
- To support EAL students and their parents by providing support, developing home / school links and informing them of progress made and strategies in place.
- To raise staff awareness of EAL issues through continual staff training

EAL Assessment

Assessment of new students will be carried out to provide the most appropriate provision for each pupil. Initial assessment will be done using a pupil assessment profile. We will be investigating using The Bell Foundation EAL EYFS assessment framework for schools, a framework which also allows ongoing assessment and target setting. Information from the application form, interviews with parents/guardians and from previous schools, where applicable, will also be used. Assessment will be done by class teachers, EAL teacher, parents/guardians and pupil in cooperation. In assessment of EAL pupils, competence in English is categorised on a five point scale.

- A: New to English/Beginning
- B: Early Acquisition/Emerging
- C: Developing Competence/Expanding
- D:Competent/Diversifying
- E: Fluent

This 5 point scale, provides a straightforward, easy-to-use EAL assessment tool using assessment descriptors (one set for primary and one set for secondary) for both summative and formative assessment. The descriptors are designed specifically to support the teaching and learning of EAL pupils.

Provision

- The main aim of EAL provision is to allow better access to the curriculum.
- This will include support within the classroom from the EAL teacher and teaching assistants and also specifically targeted and time limited one to one or small group intervention.
- Learning Village, a platform which provides online and offline EAL intervention support is used by both the EAL and class teacher. It incorporates assessment, tracking of progress, customised content and supports learning English at school and at home.
- Class teachers outline all learning goals, with vocabulary and grammar targets, which forms the basis for the EAL teacher's planning and enables effective pre teaching.

Monitoring and Recording

It is the responsibility of the class teacher with the support of the EAL teacher to maintain up to date records of EAL pupils in their class. The EAL teacher collects and collates information and arranges a baseline for EAL pupils. A register of EAL pupils (identifying

students at stages A,B,C, who require support) is maintained and monitored by the EAL teacher.

Secondary (KS3 & KS4)

Aims

- To ensure EAL student needs are met in both social (BICS) and academic (CALP) language.
- To help students access the curriculum by implementing appropriate teaching strategies (using the Bell guiding principles and strategy document as a reference)
- To assess proficiency in English of EAL students new to the school and to monitor progress so as to to inform teaching and planning
- To support EAL students and their parents both academically and pastorally and develop home / school links
- To raise staff awareness of EAL issues through continual staff training
- To ensure each student is able to follow an appropriate English study Pathway.

Assessment

Assessment of new students will be carried out to provide the most appropriate provision for each pupil. Initial assessment will be done using a pupil assessment profile and the proficiency bands and assessment descriptors from the Bell Foundation EAL assessment framework for schools, a framework which also allows ongoing assessment and target setting. Information from the application form, from interviews with parents/guardians and from previous schools will also be used. Assessment is undertaken as a partnership between the tutor and subject teachers, EAL teacher, parents/guardians and pupil. In assessment of EAL pupils, competence in English is categorised on a five point scale.

- A: New to English/Beginning
- B: Early Acquisition/Emerging
- C: Developing Competence/Expanding
- D:Competent/Diversifying
- E: Fluent

This 5 point scale, provides a straightforward, easy-to-use EAL assessment tool using assessment descriptors for both summative and formative assessment. The descriptors are designed specifically to support the teaching and learning of EAL pupils.

At the end of Year 9, students sit a B2 level English test and are placed on the appropriate Pathway of English study for them.

Provision

- The main aim of EAL provision is to allow better access to the curriculum.
- Secondary EAL provision will include specific EAL English lessons in differentiated groups, support within the classroom from the EAL teacher and also specifically targeted and time limited one to one or small group intervention.
- Subject teachers will be asked to outline subject learning goals and vocabulary and grammar in upcoming planning to be pre taught and form the basis for the EAL teacher's support.

Monitoring and Recording

- It is the responsibility of the EAL teacher to maintain up to date records of EAL pupils in need of support.
- The EAL teacher collects and collates information and arranges a baseline for EAL pupils.
- A register of EAL pupils (identifying stages A,B,C) is maintained centrally by the school and monitored and updated by the EAL teacher.

Sixth Form (KS5, Diploma Programme)

As stated in the BCG Admissions Policy, all students studying the DIploma Programme must show evidence of English proficiency at minimum B2 level or with appropriate iGCSE qualifications.

For those students for whom English is not their mother tongue, it is understood that appropriate language choices for groups 1 and 2 should be recommended by the school and consistent EAL support given in other subjects, including TOK in which the language of instruction is English. This support will come primarily in the form of the strategies mentioned previously in the section 'All teachers are language teachers' and will be reinforced by ongoing staff training from the EAL specialist.

Where possible, students will be advised to choose an extended essay question in their first language.

Celebration of Mother Tongue

BCG is establishing a system to identify and maintain a language profile for each student, detailing Mother Tongues and additional languages and thus forming an understanding of

language proficiency in all languages each student has learned. Understanding a student's ability in their Mother Tongue(s) allows the school to properly assess students' needs and allows us to plan for the future to ensure their success.

At the British College of Gavà we aim to produce internationally minded citizens, who show appreciation and respect for all the cultures, languages and religions of our school. We will endeavour towards this goal through:

Whole school recognition of our international community:

A series of events take place throughout the year to allow students and staff to share their own cultural heritage with the wider community. These events are celebrated in a variety of ways: through primary and secondary assemblies, displays, exhibitions, through social media and on the school website (if appropriate). Examples of this are:

- Language celebration days
- Chinese New Year, St Patrick's day, Sant Jordi's day etc.
- International Week celebrating culture, traditional dress and food from around the world

Maintaining and developing the mother tongues of all learners.

The school recognises the importance of the students' mother tongue by providing opportunities and resources:

- Young Interpreters projects
- Across the curriculum, students will study texts by a diverse range of authors from different linguistic backgrounds, some of which will also be accessible in learners first language.
- 'Teach the Teacher' initiative
- Library resources in a variety of languages
- Multilingual parents class representatives within the school community

Provision for DP students wishing to study in their mother tongue

- BCG is currently exploring the possibility of offering a SSST course in Russian A and will ensure that Diploma Programme students are allocated sufficient time, resources, support and supervision to study independently with the assistance of a tutor. This will incur an extra charge for the family concerned.
- We will continue to add new titles and resources to our library which reflect the language profile of our students and we have plans to include our students in the choice of texts available. Currently we have fiction available in English, Catalan, Spanish, French and Russian.

Promotion of the language of the host country

Complex linguistic scenarios have emerged as a consequence of globalization and new realities are progressively making their way into schools. Over the last years, increasing numbers of people from all around the world are coming to Europe and settling in Catalonia, which results in turning schools based in this country into even more challenging multilingual learning environments.

Our host country offers not only its unique culture and traditions to us as international citizens but, as well as Spanish, its own regional language, Catalan, a Romance language spoken worldwide by over nine million people. It is the 14th most widely spoken language in the EU.

At the British College of Gavà we place great emphasis on learning Spanish (from EYFS) and Catalan (from Year 2) up to Secondary and have expert teachers who deliver both languages to native and non-native students. With a solid knowledge of both languages and the chance to be using either of the two, we also provide students with the means to communicate independently in the wider local community.

Becoming acquainted with the Catalan language is an important goal for our students, and provides them with key insights into the history, habits and customs of the region which, in return, helps them value and respect the language and culture of the host country.

Our school also promotes the learning of the Catalan language and appreciation of its culture by means of the following:

- It is part of the curriculum.
- Catalonia Project.
- Competitions: writing, poetry, speaking, etc.
- Story telling sessions (EYFS)
- Catalan writers school visits.
- Display: Catalan work.
- Assembly: Catalan literature work, history projects, etc.
- Sant Jordi's Day and Book Week.
- Library section and Class Libraries.
- Visits and trips: workshops.

We are also exploring some other initiatives:

- Exchange programme with The British College of Andorra.
- Support in Catalan tests to obtain Catalan Language Certificates (awarded by the Direcció General de Política Lingüística).
- Online self-study courses for DP students (Parla.cat).

Professional development for staff in language learning and teaching

In an effort to support teachers, particularly 'non-language teachers', support our philosophy that all teachers are language teachers, and to make this Language Policy a working document, the British College of Gavà aims to foster a spirit of mutual support and continuous development in the language-teaching practice of its staff. Therefore, the school commits to the following professional development and oversight measures:

- The provision of regular INSET sessions for staff to provide methodological ideas, model lessons, materials and general feedback on language teaching, particularly EAL teaching.
- Offering the opportunity to liaise regularly with EAL specialists to discuss the needs of students, including the possibility of intervention.
- DP staff collaborative planning sessions will periodically address EAL issues, such as accessing the curriculum and EAL specialist will attend.
- Promote a culture of sharing of 'best practice' ideas and materials, including regular invitations to observe classes across all subject areas and year groups.
- In order to inspire a sense of empathy for the challenge that learning in a foreign language poses, an opportunity to study a foreign language through the school will be provided to the staff, with an emphasis on English and the host languages Spanish and Catalan.

Self Reflection on Language Policy

This Language Policy is a working document and the school will conduct a self reflection process yearly with all school staff.

Policy focus group: Ester Pou, Iain Foreman, Omena Osivwemu, Matthew Prosser and Will Smith

This policy should be reviewed as standard a minimum of once every two years.

Date of implementation: Sep 2020

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Policy review date: Nov 2021

Reference List

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