

Language Policy

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Related policies:

- Admissions policy
- Inclusion policy
- Assessment policy

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BCG Language Policy Statement

At the British College of Gava, we understand that language is central to learning, communication, and identity. It shapes how individuals think, express ideas and connect with others. With a school community consisting of over 40 nationalities, we value and support our learners' mother tongues while guiding them in the acquisition and development of additional languages.

Our priority in language learning is that learners understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and through a variety of modes of communication. We aim to develop international mindedness by promoting multilingualism from Early Years until Year 13, enabling students to become effective communicators who collaborate willingly and engage with diverse perspectives.

English is the language of instruction and shared communication at BCG, fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion across our community. Within the classroom, a range of strategies are used to support students for whom English is not their first language, ensuring equitable access to learning and encouraging confidence in multilingual expression.

All teachers share responsibility for language development and for creating an environment that celebrates linguistic diversity, nurtures curiosity, and promotes inquiry and enjoyment in language learning.

Rooted in our Catalan context, we celebrate the coexistence of Catalan and Spanish as integral to our identity and as a foundation for respect, multilingualism, and *convivencia* (peaceful coexistence).

Grounded in collaboration and reflection, our language policy evolves with the changing needs of the community and aligns with the International Baccalaureate's educational philosophy and programme standards. It supports our shared mission to cultivate caring, open-minded, and globally aware lifelong learners.

BCG Language Profile

In recent years, our school's language profile has evolved significantly as a result of migration and global events. Our community now includes a growing number of students who speak a wide range of Eastern European languages, enriching our linguistic and cultural landscape.

This shift has brought both opportunities and challenges. While it enhances the multilingual and intercultural nature of our school, it also requires sensitivity in supporting students'

sense of identity and belonging, particularly for those who have experienced displacement or conflict.

We recognise that language can carry deep emotional and cultural significance. Therefore, we are committed to fostering an environment where all languages and cultures are respected and valued, and where students can take pride in their linguistic heritage while building shared understanding across the community. Our practices aim to balance the celebration of identity with the promotion of empathy, dialogue, and peaceful coexistence, ensuring that every learner feels safe, respected, and supported.

At the time of writing, our formal communications to parents continue to be provided in English and Spanish, which are still our most widely spoken and most accessible languages. However, translation for parent-teacher conferences and academic meetings with families is sought for other language speakers whenever possible. We currently have staff who can support the following non-curricular languages: Russian, Italian, Dutch, Greek and Czech.

We recognise and celebrate that almost every member of our community, teachers, learners and support staff are multilingual.

Celebration of Mother Tongue

Being aware of the languages that our students and their families speak allows us a glimpse into their identity. Understanding a student's ability in their Mother Tongue(s) allows the school to properly assess students' potential, 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 through:

Whole school recognition of our international community:

A series of events and projects take place throughout the year to allow students and staff to share their own cultural heritage and language with the wider community. These events are celebrated in a variety of ways:

- Student / teacher-led assemblies to celebrate a particular culture
- Cultural displays & exhibitions created by students in language lessons or in PSHE
- Language celebration days / Language of the Month project when students run presentations about their language & culture in other year groups
- Celebration of important days for members of our community such as Chinese New Year, St Patrick's day, Sant Jordi's day etc.
- International Week celebrating culture, traditional dress and food from around the world
- Student access to online resources from around the world in a host of languages, for

example for Current Affairs (PSHE)

- Translation at parent presentations and parent-teacher conferences facilitated wherever possible

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 and Language of the Month 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 and online resources available in a variety of languages
- Wednesday without Walls language teaching/learning

Provision for DP students wishing to study in their mother tongue

- SSST courses facilitated wherever possible
- Extended Essay language options facilitated wherever possible

Promoting the languages and cultures of our host country

Over the last years, increasing numbers of people from all around the world are coming to Europe and settling in Catalonia, resulting in complex and sometimes challenging multilingual learning and cultural 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. According to 'Plataforma per la llengua' it is the 14th most widely spoken language in the EU for young people.

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

- Forms an important part of the curriculum
- Competitions: writing, poetry, speaking, etc.
- Story telling sessions (EYFS)
- Annual school visits by Catalan writers
- Student-led presentations in lessons, PSHE and assemblies
- Sant Jordi's Day and Book whole school celebrations
- Catalan language library section and Class Libraries.
- Catalan cultural visits for year groups throughout the school
- Participation in local government run education projects such as Audencia Educativa
- Online self-study courses for DP students (Parla.cat).

BCG Language Practices

Languages taught throughout the school

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)

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 a high level of 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 continue to study English, Spanish and French.

English is taught in mixed-ability form groups across KS3, allowing students to learn collaboratively and benefit from a range of language models and perspectives. Teachers use adaptive teaching methods to meet the needs of all learners. Where necessary, students may be divided into proficient (working at curriculum level) and foundation (emergent bilingual) groups to provide more focused language support and ensure that all learners can access and progress through the curriculum effectively. Regardless of grouping, all students study English through literature to keep open a full range of Sixth Form language options in the future.

French is taught in tutor groups from Years 7 to 9, with teachers using adaptive teaching methods to cater for all learners.

Spanish groups continue to be separated by level in this Key Stage with non-native speakers given the opportunity to move into the native learner group if appropriate.

Although Catalan remains compulsory only for Spanish first language students, BCG advises parents of the importance of continuing with these lessons in order to be able to apply for l'ESO - the Spanish certificate of secondary education, which widens options for students when they leave the school. We are now running first and second language Catalan groups throughout secondary.

Secondary - Key Stage 4

Students at BCG prepare for iGCSE/GCSE qualifications. Spanish native students and those who have chosen to continue with Catalan will meet requirements for the accreditation of the Spanish

certificate for secondary education.

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 Language iGCSE
- Pathway 3: English as 2nd Language iGCSE

EAL students are offered English as 2nd Language iGCSE and English Language iGCSE rather than Lit, as the feeling is the Literature iGCSE is much more challenging for learners still developing their English, the idea being this route helps them strengthen their language first and sets them up for success later on.

Students are generally placed in the appropriate group in Y9, although progression is permitted and encouraged.

Spanish is compulsory for all students and continues to be 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.

Russian speakers have the opportunity to sit an iGCSE in Russian as an additional subject. Exam preparation sessions are provided.

Sixth Form - Diploma Programme

After the Year 11 mock iGCSE examinations, as part of our Pathways programme (Careers), students and parents receive guidance on the most appropriate Group 1 / Group 2 subject choices.

The following subjects are currently offered as part of the IBDP:

	English	Spanish	French
Language A	Yes	Yes	
Language B	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ab Initio		Yes	Yes

Online or Self-Study	Students can choose to take a school supported self-taught SL course in Literature (if the school is able to offer the required support) or online taught courses for Diploma Programme subject groups 1 and 2 if available and appropriate.
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The above language choices for Groups 1 and 2 provide our students with the opportunity to maximise their individual language skills, offer a coherent pathway of study from iGCSE and continuity of language learning. Language courses are blocked so that students are able to study a bilingual Diploma (English/Spanish) if it is the most appropriate combination of subjects for them. Students receive guidance from the school as to which combination of Group 1 and Group 2 subjects offers sufficient challenge for them.

Non Spanish-speaking students who join BCG in Year 12 study Spanish Ab Initio as a means of integration into our local culture.

Our SSST courses are currently offered in Russian and Chinese as the school feels it can support learners adequately in these languages. We have our own Russian-speaking teachers on roll, and are able to draw on resources from the Inspired group network to support Chinese students. The school will always explore the option of a SSST course for students if it is in their best interest or will maintain their mother tongue development. SSST students attend specific weekly support sessions with an experienced Group 1 teacher as well as the mandatory support provided by a language-specific tutor.

Online language learning is run by Kings Interhigh (part of the Inspired group of schools) or Pamoja.

Both SSST and online courses are timetabled for students during the school day and, depending on the support required, may incur an additional cost for parents.

As BCG expands, we expect to offer a third Ab Initio language to further foster multilingualism in our community.

Extended Essays and Reflective Projects are usually completed in English or Spanish, but the school will always try to facilitate the possibility of a students realising these pieces of work in their mother tongue if permitted by the IB and if the school can offer appropriate supervision.

Sixth Form - Career-related Programme

As stated in the BCG language policy statement, *'language is central to learning, communication and identity'* and nowhere are these values more explicitly echoed than in the curriculum of the IBCP Core syllabus. Three key topics for focus in Personal and Professional Skills, a CP core component, are 'effective communication', 'cultural understanding' and 'ethical thinking'. Here students go beyond language acquisition and multilingualism to explore multi-modal mediums of communication, going beyond just the nuts and bolts of vocabulary and grammar, and exploring the role context and cultural awareness plays in effective communication as a global citizen.

In another CP core component, Language and Cultural Studies, and as the name suggests, language takes centre stage. In contrast to DP language subjects, LCS focuses on how language and culture interact, how language is a product of history and traditions, and how it impacts a society, its' ethics, and its citizens' perspectives. As an inquiry-based, student-led subject, pupils are given the agency to work within the subject framework to explore the respective languages and cultures that interest them most, whether those be contextualised within our international BCG community, the local community that surrounds us, or even the global community beyond the college walls, by collaborating with other schools which form part of the Inspired network.

As the CP core takes a blended, holistic approach to learning, the focus on language filters through all core components, the two mentioned previously, but also Community Engagement, where students have the opportunity to put their knowledge and learning into action. Here students utilise their understanding of culture, ethics and language, in tandem with effective communication, to create, plan and run active engagement initiatives and projects within the school, local and global communities, where effective, efficient and appropriate language knowledge is crucial to success.

Sixth Form - A Levels

The BCG A Level programme is designed to provide continuity of learning for our students who are able to choose either Spanish, French or Russian second language courses.

Extra-curricular language learning & support

In addition to the curriculum-taught lessons in English, Spanish, French and Catalan the school endeavours to offer provision for students to engage with extra-curricular language learning.

Academic support in languages

There are weekly lunch time language support clubs for iGCSE and Sixth Form students. Students may be referred to a club by teachers, for example when they will run a specific bitesize session that will benefit the student, or students can drop in for independent language learning, or to request specific language support from a specialist.

Additional language learning

In the Sixth Form, students can opt to continue studying Catalan outside of the formal curriculum with the objective of earning recognition of level C1 according to the CEFR or preparing to go on to further education studies in Catalan state universities. The school also facilitates preparation for the Spanish PCE examinations in Spanish/Catalan for those students who wish to take them. To achieve this, we work with an external partner.

Exposure to new languages

BCG's new 'Wednesday Without Walls' project provides opportunities for exposure to new languages. These sessions are initiated and run by teachers or students as part of their CAS or Community Engagement projects.

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 homework etc. This is an excellent way to promote home languages and also for teachers to place themselves in the shoes of the students. Students currently run a teach the teacher course in Russian.

EAL learners

The British College of Gavà is proud to have an ever-growing community of families, teachers and support staff from many different cultures and language communities. We understand 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.

In Primary, students judged to be below the expected curriculum level in English attend a time-limited English intervention focusing first on survival English and then on developing key language skills to help them access the curriculum more quickly. In both Primary and

Secondary, students below the curriculum level also attend after-school English classes, which consist of two additional hours per week of non-curriculum English as an Additional Language (EAL) support.

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 C1 qualification in English is ideally 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 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

EAL assessment is carried out on admission to ensure each student receives the correct level of support. All new students from KS2 upwards complete a CAT4 test and a written English assessment, alongside information gathered from application forms, parent/guardian interviews, and previous school reports where available. The EAL Coordinator also regularly monitors the progress of new EAL students after entry to track their development and adjust support as needed.

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.

- 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. A register of EAL pupils is maintained and monitored by the EAL coordinator.

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
- 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

EAL assessment is carried out on admission to ensure each student receives the correct level of support. All new students complete a CAT4 test and a written English assessment, alongside information gathered from application forms, parent/guardian interviews, and previous school reports where available. The EAL Coordinator also regularly monitors the progress of new EAL students after entry to track their development and adjust support as needed. At the end of Year 9, students are placed on the appropriate IGCSE pathway of English study for them.

The British College of Gavà Language Policy (v2.0)

Secondary EAL Provision

- **Extra-curricular EAL lessons:** Students below curriculum level attend **two hours per week** of additional **EAL support** after school. The focus is on developing academic English, comprehension, and writing skills to help students access the mainstream curriculum.
- **Integration in regular lessons:** EAL students are fully included in mainstream classes, with teachers adapting instruction using **EAL and CLIL (Content and Language Integrated**

Learning) strategies. This includes use of visuals, scaffolding, key vocabulary pre-teaching, and structured talk to support understanding and participation.

- **Teacher responsibility: Every teacher is a language teacher** — all subject teachers play an active role in developing students' language alongside subject content. Teachers regularly monitor EAL students' progress and communicate with the **EAL Coordinator** to adjust support and track development.
- **Ongoing monitoring and support:** The **EAL Coordinator** reviews progress regularly and provides guidance to staff on strategies and differentiation. Targets and interventions are reviewed termly to ensure progress and integration.

Sixth Form (KS5, Diploma Programme, Career related Programme, A Level

English proficiency requirements for admission to BCG Sixth Form are outlined in the Admissions Policy. 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 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 to complete an extended essay or reflective project question in their first language.

All teachers are language teachers

At BCG, we believe that all teachers contribute to students' language development and identity, thereby promoting a diverse, internationally-minded school culture that values multilingualism and global citizenship.

We understand that a 'one size fits all' strategy in such a multicultural community is not always the most effective way of supporting language learning and expression. We recognise and regularly reflect on the challenges of ensuring that the language policies lived in the classroom go hand in hand with approaches that nurture students' emotional wellbeing, promote positive behaviour, and celebrate each learner's linguistic and cultural identity. Therefore, our approach to language learning combines immersion, CLIL and translanguaging to foster multilingual competence and equitable access to learning. While the language of instruction and shared communication at BCG is English (with the exception of Spanish, Catalan and French lessons), students are encouraged to draw on all their linguistic resources to construct meaning and develop understanding. Our

teachers participate in regular workshops to remain responsive to current research and evolving pedagogical practices in language acquisition, development, and learning.

With a large number of EAL learners in our community, our expert language teachers have collaborated with their colleagues over the past few years on CLIL strategies as a means of fostering language growth. More recently, we are exploring translanguaging to deepen student understanding, affirm identity, and develop flexible multilingual competence. Our ongoing commitment to evolve our practice ensures that our language provision and strategies continue to align with the IB's philosophy that language lies at the heart of all learning.

Subject-specific language strategies implemented throughout the school in age appropriate ways include:

- Word walls, including students' own work, to reinforce academic vocabulary, discipline-specific terminology, and IB command terms.
- Glossaries are developed and made available to learners and parents to promote clarity and consistent understanding of key terms.
- Regular vocabulary booklets
- Use of subject-specific dictionaries in non-language classes

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 teaching multilingual learners
- The opportunity to liaise regularly with EAL specialists to discuss the needs of students, including the possibility of interventions
- DP staff collaborative planning sessions will periodically address EAL issues, such as accessing the curriculum and an EAL specialist will attend.
- A culture of sharing of 'best practice' ideas and materials, including regular invitations to observe classes across all subject areas and year groups.

Self Reflection on Language Policy

This Language Policy is a working document and the school will conduct a self reflection

process biannually.

2025 policy focus group (teachers and students): Stuart Fassam, Juliet Jensen, Martina Vilert, Luke Woodcock, Simon Mower, Rachel Fenton,

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Reference List

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