



**BRITISH
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOLS
OF STAVANGER**

'Creating role models for the future'

BISS Sentrum Language Policy

The IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

BISS Mission Statement

At the British International Schools of Stavanger, we take our responsibility to prepare children for life in the 21st century seriously. The acquisition of fundamental values lies at the heart of everything we do, and all areas of the curriculum are a vehicle for underpinning these values.

Statement of Purpose

As a newly established international school (Friskole) in Norway, we embrace our students' unique linguistic and cultural backgrounds and the arising challenges and opportunities. This language policy outlines our understanding of the importance of language as an essential tool for communication, the promotion of our values and the pursuit and fulfilment of our vision and mission. It aligns with the IB philosophy on language and provides a framework to achieve our linguistic goals. Within this framework we aim to create a multilingual learning environment where all students, regardless of their linguistic background, can achieve their academic goals. Our language policy provides guidance and guidelines for all stakeholders and is adapted according to the changing language needs within our school community.

Language Philosophy and Practice

As an International Baccalaureate (IB) candidate school, BISS Sentrum is 'committed to supporting multilingualism as a fundamental part of increasing intercultural understanding and international-mindedness, and is equally committed to extending access to an IB education for students from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds' (IBO, 2014).

At BISS Sentrum we embrace multilingualism and recognise the ensuing diverse language learning needs of all stakeholders. We believe in the importance of language learning and that all teachers are teachers of language.

Whilst the language of instruction is English, we are strongly committed to offer Norwegian for native speakers comparable to the required national standards (Læreplanverket 2020) and aim for Norwegian language learners to develop sufficient proficiency to fully access local communities and cultures. Equally important are the language needs of our large French community. French native speakers are currently enrolled in mother tongue courses to maintain and develop their specific language skills. Additionally, we encourage students with mother tongue(s) other than the aforementioned to continue independent learning outside of school.

Language learning at BISS Sentrum:

- Aims to create a positive language learning environment where students' varied linguistic and cultural backgrounds acts as a driving force of inquiry in language learning and as a motor to promote international-mindedness and identity formation.
- Aims to develop literacy skills across languages and to explore, share and compare cultural perspectives and linguistic skills.
- Encourages students to use language to identify, explore and investigate connections between different local and global contexts in real-life situations.
- Encourages learners of English as an additional language to develop and achieve fluency through scaffolding and a well implemented English as an additional language programme, where school works closely with parents.
- Encourages students to maintain their mother tongue language (where relevant), as this is vital for cultural identity and personal growth of the student.

Principles of Language Learning

- Language competence relates directly to successful inclusion and students social and emotional well-being
- All languages are valued, but students need support to apply multilingualism appropriately
- Language and linked cultural diversity should be addressed in all subjects
- Language acquisition is a continuous process and should provide students with opportunities to develop competencies in spoken and written communication and comprehension
- Students should receive sufficient support to allow their full participation in language lessons and the discourse in school
- Teaching and learning of languages plays a crucial role for students to develop diverse cultural perspectives and awareness
- Digital sources and regular access to digital devices fosters language learning

Differentiation

- Lesson and unit planning should take each students' language profile into account
- Unit planners must include teaching strategies for language differentiation
- The school aims to provide suitable resources to support language learning and to increase proficiency of the language of instruction; for example, EAL lessons, classroom support, differentiated resources
- Strategies and procedures for summative assessments are in place to allow all students to access the assessment, provided these follow IB assessment regulations

Language Profile

BISS is a multi-cultural international school catering for a multi-national market. We have a student body of 100 students ranging from 6 years to 15 years of age, representing approximately 20 nationalities. Whilst English is the language of instruction and communication, we recognise that for the majority of our students and parents English is their second or additional language.

We have a teaching faculty of approximately 20 teaching staff, representing a cross section of ethnicity and language experience.

Taught languages

At BISS students who are fluent in both Norwegian and English will undertake both languages at Language A in PYP and MYP. Language A is either the student's mother tongue or one in which he/she has near-native proficiency.

Students not fluent in Norwegian will follow language B Norwegian in both PYP and MYP. In MYP students study an additional Language B (French).

All relevant fulfil the IB language learning requirements of either following two MYP Language and Literature classes (English and Norwegian) or one MYP Language and Literature class (English) and at least one MYP Language Acquisition class (Norwegian).

English language learning at BISS

English is the language of instruction and language learning pervades all areas of the curriculum, as well as English being taught as a discreet subject throughout the school.

If English is not the students' mother tongue students will be assessed on entry to determine to what extent they can access and understand the curriculum delivered in English. We understand that all students analyse, comprehend and progress in a new language at different rates, but developing a fluency in the language of instruction is the end goal for all BISS students.

Assessment of English proficiency

Students' level of English is assessed either prior to starting / immediately after starting at BISS Sentrum or at the beginning of the academic year. English proficiency is not a requirement to be accepted at the school; however, basic English skills are recommended to access the taught curriculum.

Assessment of English language proficiency:

- initially conducted by class / subject teachers through observations during lessons (unless information about proficiency is available)
- by the EAL teacher(s) through a series of tasks assessing their ability in spoken and written communication, comprehension skills of spoken and written texts and overall literacy
- through formal testing (Cambridge English proficiency tests)

English language learning for learners who are learning in a language other than their mother tongue

Students entering BISS without English are encouraged to acquire BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) as quickly as possible so they can interact with their peers and teachers. School understands that it takes between 4 and 7 years to become fluent and to operate at the same level as a native speaker. At BISS a modified mainstream curriculum (sheltered classes following the same line of inquiry with differentiated material), as well as discreet language lessons are methods used to allow students to access the English language.

Scaffolding methods are used in mainstream classes to enable learners to accomplish tasks. They include:

- Peer coaching
- Use of Information technology
- Students are given rubrics with modified criteria in order to access the curriculum,
- Structures and frameworks are offered to allow students to develop ATL (Approaches to learning) skills
- Subject specific vocabulary is displayed and given to the students
- Students are paired with others who have the same mother tongue, if possible, for some tasks
- Students are encouraged to use a bilingual dictionary and, in some subjects, Google translator
- Differentiation strategies for both class work and assessments

English as an additional language support

Support is provided by trained English as additional language teachers and includes additional lessons after school, support during lessons and occasional removal from lessons (initially). EAL students follow a modified English Language and Literature curriculum which allows for smaller groups and focuses on specific language skills including grammar and language conventions. The aim of the course is to support language learning and to accelerate language skills in order to allow the students to access the mainstream curriculum as quickly as possible. In addition to Language and Literature aims and objectives, this programme also integrates the four main aspects of languages (speaking and listening, reading and writing).

Assessment

The school follows the European Common Framework Assessment Criteria for languages to identify student English proficiency levels. However, EAL students are assessed according to published IB MYP Assessment criteria.

Entry and exit criteria onto the English as an additional learning programme

Students are assessed on entry into the programme and depending on need are offered support lessons during the school day. Students with limited English proficiency are initially supported with EAL lessons which run parallel to mainstream English lessons. Students in MYP with some English proficiency participate in a sheltered Language and

Literature class which follows the same lines of inquiry, but uses differentiated texts and lesson materials. When a learner of English can cope sufficiently in a mainstream classroom they are reintegrated into mainstream lessons. The reintegration might require differentiation to support the transition.

Host country language

All students learn Norwegian, the language of our host country. Depending on fluency students are divided into either Language A or Language B.

Language A Norwegian

This programme follows Kunnskapsløftet. This programme is regarded as important school for cultural understanding, communication, education and development of identity. Through active use of the Norwegian language when working with their own texts and in the encounter with the texts of others, children and young people are introduced to culture and social life.

The Norwegian subject curriculum opens an area where they can find their own voices, learn to express themselves, be heard and receive feedback. Thus the subject represents a democratic public arena that equips students with the necessary background for participation in social and working life. More than ever before, society needs individuals who master language and texts.

Norwegian enables individual students to develop his or her language and writing skills based on the students own abilities and capabilities. Competence in reading and writing are objectives in themselves, but they also form the basis for learning and understanding in all school subjects at all year levels”.

PYP Norwegian Language A and Language B

New students to BISS who are fluent in Norwegian will be automatically placed in Norwegian Language A classes. Students with no prior knowledge of Norwegian will be placed in Language B Norwegian.

PYP Assessment

Formative assessment takes place throughout all PYP Norwegian lessons. This is to ensure that each student is placed in the correct language class in accordance with their language abilities.

PYP students may show their abilities at the end of a Norwegian unit for example by giving a presentation in Norwegian. Assessment pieces in PYP are not graded but students should receive oral or written feedback.

MYP Norwegian Language A and Language B

- New students to BISS who are fluent in Norwegian will be automatically placed in Norwegian Language A classes.
- New students to BISS with no prior knowledge of Norwegian will be placed in Language B Norwegian.
- Students with some knowledge of Norwegian will be assessed using the global proficiency table and the Language B Norwegian continuums and placed accordingly.

When a student has reached phase 5 before their final year at BISS, they will have an initial trial period in the Language A Norwegian class and assessed according to the Language A Norwegian criteria. The student may then, if appropriate, move into the Language A Norwegian class. Exceptions can be made at the teacher’s discretion. Language A students in MYP1 - 3 who are consistently not meeting the requirements/criteria may be temporarily placed in the Language B Norwegian class.

A student should be placed in a language phase which is challenging, something which is going to benefit their progression. Students can move up into another phase mid-term if they are considered borderline between two phases. The student will then be assessed on two different phases within an academic year. Students are expected to move up one phase each academic year.

MYP students in their final year will be placed and certified in a specific phase where the teacher is certain that the student can succeed. The students will stay in this phase throughout the academic year.

Students, who do not follow the double Language A programme (English and Norwegian) are required to study Language B Norwegian. It is a legal requirement that all students study Norwegian.

MYP Language B – French and Norwegian

- To understand and communicate in another language
- To develop an understanding of the diversity of language

Learning another language contributes to mutual understanding, a sense of global citizenship and personal fulfilment. Students learn to appreciate different countries, cultures, communities and people. The ability to understand and communicate in another language is a lifelong skill for education, employment and leisure throughout the world. This experience is essential to the international experience and enables students to understand the thinking, norms and traditions of another culture. As the student gains an appreciation for a new language and culture they are then part of a more diverse community which will assist them in interacting and communicating with the culturally diverse world they live in today. The assessment process follows the MYP published assessment criteria and the course content follows the aims and objectives of the Language B programme. All results are recorded and the data is used to inform teaching and learning.

The Language B course covers the main aspects of languages (speaking and listening, reading and writing) and is assessed using the Language B criteria. International and cultural understanding is enhanced through the use of film, speaking and listening activities, role play, poems, songs and educational visits to bring the language alive.

Language B is organized into six phases. The phases represent a developmental continuum of additional language learning (language B). Students may commence their language B course in any phase on the continuum and may exit from any phase on the continuum. (See p. 5 Language B guide)

MYP Language Assessment

Each term students are graded on the four IB MYP assessment criteria in either two Language and Literature courses or one Language and Literature course and one / two Language Acquisition courses.

Mother tongue

At BISS we also recognize that a strong level of knowledge and understanding in the students' mother tongue is vital to the students' development of an additional language. The school recognizes the importance of the mother tongue and understands how the use of additional languages can enhance the development of the students' linguistic proficiency in the mother tongue as well as allowing the student to maintain cultural identity. In the MYP programme students are encouraged to continue learning in their mother tongue outside of the school day. BISS provides contact numbers and information regarding mother tongue classes where available. EAL teachers recommend that students keep a journal in their own language at home in order to maintain their skills in their mother tongue.

Within the curriculum there are opportunities for students to study particular units in their mother tongue, whilst students new to English are able to work in their mother tongue, in non-language subjects, until they are able to cope with the mainstream curriculum in English. All subject teachers are expected to promote the use of a student's mother tongue language as an aid. Teachers are encouraged to ask students to keep a glossary of subject specific words in both English and their mother tongue.

Students are encouraged to use a bilingual dictionary which they take to all classes. Students are encouraged to look up information in their own language in order to have a better understanding of the subject material in English.

Students are supported to initially express themselves in their mother tongue (especially if this is their only language of communication) through peer buddying, access to staff who speak their language and encouragement to use their mother tongue e.g..... when counting, where appropriate. Students are invited to spend lunches with other children who speak their language. Reference is regularly made to home country cultures through the PYP units of inquiry and MYP inquiry and through discussion of celebrations and traditions, for example in assemblies and international events such as the European Day of Languages and UN Day.

Twice a year, the school plans to run mother tongue events in PYP and MYP. End of September, mother tongue appreciation will be celebrated through the European Day of Languages. In February, we celebrate mother tongues as part of celebrations for the International Mother Tongue Day.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Children are tracked closely to monitor progress through informal and formal assessment. Where children are identified as requiring additional language support a variety of intervention packages (agreed between SEND, student, parents and subject teachers) are used to help those students make progress. Teachers identify them in their planning and provide differentiated tasks and resources.

Media centre and language

Students use the library facilities to aid language development. The library is well stocked and is available both during the day and after school for students to complete work. A variety of media is available to the students including books in a variety of languages, reference books, and current journals. A qualified librarian is employed to support the students in their learning.

Preferred bibliographic style for MYP

BISS MYP students should use the Harvard referencing system.

Language Summary

The British International School of Stavanger (Sentrum) will:

- Reinforce the importance of language in all subjects.
- Monitor the teaching and learning of language. Have teachers that commit to the importance and responsibility of language development in all subjects.
- Provide opportunities for all students to learn an additional language to their mother tongue or language of instruction (English).
- Offer referrals of teachers, tutors and after school activities that ensure the students maintain a continuous learning and understanding of their own mother tongue.
- Maintain a global awareness and understanding of students' culture and other cultures
- Provide guidance and continuing education to subject staff about the expectations and milestones of all language learners.
- Provide staff with exercises, ideas, techniques and scaffolding which will allow the students to improved their language learning.
- Recognize that students need to be permitted to comprehend language though listening, reading, viewing and writing.
- Give students the opportunity to increase their confidence to express themselves using all language skills.
- Use EAL support to; provide additional support within the classroom for individual or small groups of students; combine pull-out and additional EAL support within the classroom; withdraw from classes for those learners who require intensive English language assistance; adapt classroom environment and materials to suit EAL students' needs; and maintain a constant line of communication with mainstream/subject teachers, parents and administration.

Communicating the policy

There should be consideration of how to keep the whole school community informed of the policy process and how they might make contributions.

The policy documents at BISS Sentrum are discussed and referred to on regular basis in the following fora:

- MYP and PYP FAU meetings
- SLT meetings
- Staff meetings

- Stakeholder group meetings
- Board meetings
- Student council meetings
- A summary of the policy will be made available on the parent portal (expected publication mid-March 2021)

Equal opportunities:

Teachers will ensure that all students have equal access to the curriculum. Students will be encouraged to enjoy contributions and experiences from different cultures and respect similarities and differences. The school will seek to develop tolerance and concern for others regardless of sex, race, culture, religion or class, and to avoid stereotypical views.

Links to other policies:

The language policy is linked to:

- Assessment
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) policies.

Appendix 1: IB standards and practices relating to language

Our philosophy of language teaching and learning is guided by the IB standards and practices. As an IB candidate school we are committed to the following standards and practices pertaining to language.

Programme Standards and practices (2014)

- Standard A, Practice 7: The school places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, host country language and other languages.
- Standard A, Practice 9: The school supports access for students to the IB programme(s) and philosophy.
- Standard B1, Practice 5a: The school develops and implements policies and procedures that support the programme(s).
- Standard B1, Practice 5d: The school has developed and implements a language policy consistent with IB expectations
- Standard C1, Practice 8: Collaborative planning and reflection recognizes that all teachers are responsible for language development of students.
- Standard C3, Practice 7: Teaching and learning addresses the diversity of student language needs, including those for students learning in a language(s) other than mother tongue.
- Standard C3, Practice 8: Teaching and learning demonstrates that all teachers are responsible for language development of students.

New Programme standards and practices (March 2019)

Purpose 3: The school community fosters internationally minded people who embody all attributes of the IB learner profile. (0101-03)

- Purpose 3.1: The school ensures that the school community is aware of the IB learner profile and is committed to international-mindedness and its importance in embodying the IB mission. (0101-03-0100)

Student support 2: The school identifies and provides appropriate learning support. (0202-02)

- Student support 2.1: The school implements and reviews systems and processes to identify the needs of students. (0202-02-0100)
- Student support 2.2: The school supports the identified needs of students, and evidences this support through planning, policy, and practice. (0202-02-0200)

Culture 1: The school secures access to an IB education for the broadest possible range of students. (0301-01)

- Culture 1.2: The school provides relevant support materials, resources and structures to promote access to the school's programme(s) for as many students as reasonable. (0301-01-0200)
- Culture 1.3: The school provides opportunities to access the programme(s) for the broadest possible range of students. (0301-01-0300)

PYP 1: The school articulates and demonstrates that the PYP is accessible to interested students, regardless of learner variability. (0301-01-0311)

MYP 1: The school monitors and evaluates its efforts to provide students with equal opportunities to undertake the MYP. (0301-01-0321)

Culture 2: The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews an inclusion policy that creates cultures that support all students to reach their full potential. (0301-02)

Culture 4: The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews a language policy that helps to foster intercultural understanding through communicating in a variety of ways in more than one language (0301-04)

- Culture 4.1: The school implements and reviews a language policy that is aligned with IB language policy guidelines. (0301-04-0100)
- Culture 4.2: The school describes in its language policy the way that the school recognizes multilingualism as a fact, a right and a resource for learning. (0301-04-0200)
- Culture 4.3: The school identifies in its language policy a variety of physical and virtual resources used to facilitate language development. (0301-04-0300)

- Culture 4.4: The school clearly describes in its language policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and what constitutes good practice within the school context. (0301-04-0400)

PYP 1: The school ensures that students learn a language in addition to the language of instruction (at least from the age of seven). Multilingual programmes, where students are learning in at least two languages, can but are not required to offer additional languages. (0301-04-0411)

Coherent curriculum 1: The school plans and implements a coherent curriculum that organizes learning and teaching within and across the years of its IB programme(s). (0401-01)

- Coherent curriculum 1.6: The school demonstrates that the curriculum is influenced by an understanding of students' prior knowledge, identities, backgrounds, needs and contexts. (0401-01-0600)

Lifelong learners 7: Students pursue opportunities to explore and develop their personal and cultural identities. (0402-07)

- Lifelong learners 7.1: The school provides opportunities for students to explore and develop their personal and cultural identities. (0402-07-0100)
- Lifelong learners 7.2: The school community affirms individual student identity through learning and teaching. (0402-07-0200)
- Lifelong learners 7.3: Students take opportunities to develop their language profiles. (0402-07-0300)

Approaches to teaching 5: Teachers remove barriers to learning to enable every student to develop, pursue and achieve challenging personal learning goals. (0403-05)

- Approaches to teaching 5.1: Teachers consider learner variability when planning students' personal learning goals. (0403-05-0100)
- Approaches to teaching 5.4: Teachers support language development with consideration for the language profiles of students. (0403-05-0400)

Appendix 2: IB Learner Profile and language

The IB Learner Profile guides teaching and learning at BISS Sentrum and 'aims to develop international minded people' (IB Learner Profile) who take responsibility and uphold key values as members of their local, national and global community. We recognize the opportunities of the IB Learner Profile to support and develop language learning.

Inquirer: Our students use language to acquire knowledge and understanding of the world around us through inquiry.

Knowledgeable: Our students acquire subject specific terminology, vocabulary and understanding to facilitate collaboration, valuable exchanges of thought and ideas and advance their learning.

Thinker: Our students use language to formulate ideas and solutions to complex problems and articulate their views, ideas and thought in a precise manner.

Communicator: Our students develop essential language skills in both their mother tongue and additional languages which allows them to become competent linguists and communicators in a variety of situations and contexts.

Principled: Our students learn to appreciate the role and power of language and learn to use language responsibly to advance learning and create bonds of friendship and solidarity with their peers, teachers, parents and members of their community.

Open-minded: Our students cherish opportunities to compare languages and dialects and learn from each other. Respect and tolerance for differences and similarities are celebrated and encouraged in every aspect of school life.

Caring: Our students learn how their use of language can affect others and develop an understanding of using appropriate language in a variety of situations and contexts.

Risk-takers: Our students are encouraged to use both mother tongue and additional languages in unfamiliar situations. We stimulate opportunities to compare and contrast language aspects and make connections between languages to facilitate learning, communication and personal development.

Balanced: Our students gain a deeper appreciation of a balanced language use and its importance to facilitate inclusion by developing their understanding of using the language of instruction, their mother tongue and taught languages appropriately.

Reflective: Our students are encouraged to reflect on effective use of language, language learning and language boundaries which enables them to improve their language proficiency, both socially and academically.



BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS OF STAVANGER

Policy reviewed June 2021 by Senior Leadership Team

Policy review November 2021 by teaching team

Parent overview of policy published (planned October 2021)

This policy is a working document and has been produced by SLT (PYP and MYP programmes) and administration in collaboration with all teaching staff.
The policy is reviewed bi-annually.