



St. Paul's School

St. Paul's School Language Policy

Reviewed November 2022

Executive

Senior Leadership

IB coordinator

Mission Statement

St. Paul's provides a high quality British and Brazilian education for the personal and academic development of pupils and students within a framework of a caring and united community. We share the core values of Aspiration, Adventure, Resilience, Responsibility, Inclusion and, above all, Kindness.

Introduction

St. Paul's is an English-speaking British School. As such, it has a school-wide language philosophy which underpins this policy document. This approach connects our school mission and culture with the philosophy and approach of the IB as well as bringing together our British and Brazilian heritage. We update this document regularly based on the evolving needs of our pupils and IBO requirements applying to the DP programme.

Our language policy underpins the academic, social, emotional and cultural values of the school and is critical for the cohesion and continuity within our curriculum and our community.

Philosophy

Our language philosophy is to equip all our pupils with the full range of communication skills in English and Portuguese. When pupils join the school, we begin by building their confidence in all aspects of basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS), and then support our pupils' journey towards cognitive academic learning proficiency (CALP).

We are committed to providing all our pupils with the language skills to develop holistically. St Paul's School believes that proficiency in languages promotes academic, social and emotional development and is key to developing our core values of adventure, aspiration, inclusion, kindness, resilience and responsibility. These values mesh with the IB aspiration to develop 'inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people' who will become active, compassionate lifelong learners, helping to create a better and more peaceful world.



St. Paul's School

We believe that:

- Language is a fundamental means of communicating and learning in all subjects and areas of knowledge.
- The acquisition of language is a life-long process and a key component of intellectual and personal growth.
- Language is an essential tool for self-expression and personal growth.
- Language is an expression of culture, and is valued as an integral aspect of a pupil's identity.
- Development of one's mother-tongue language is critical for maintaining one's cultural identity.
- All teachers are language teachers.
- Achieving proficiency in more than one language is an integral aspect of becoming a global citizen.

School profile

St. Paul's was founded in São Paulo in 1926 as a non-profit British school. English is the vehicular language of the school, and we foster its use in academic and social settings. In the Junior School, we use the English Early Years Foundation Stage for our pupils aged 3-6, moving to a rich curriculum based on the English National Curriculum for Key Stages 1 (5-9) and 2 (6-11). In Key Stages 1 and 2, our pupils also have daily lessons in Portuguese and humanities are taught in both English and Portuguese.

In the Senior School, we follow National Curriculum guidelines at Key Stage 3 (11-14). All our pupils take 9-10 IGCSE subjects in Key Stage 4 (14-16), with options for some to take BTech qualifications in some creative subjects. All pupils take Portuguese and Brazilian social studies (BraSS) lessons. International pupils have the option to take Portuguese as an additional language. In addition to English and Portuguese, we also offer French from 11-18 and Spanish from 14-18.

Our Sixth Form pupils all take the IB DP, with the majority taking a bilingual diploma in English and Portuguese.

As a British international school in Brazil, we strive to support acquisition of Portuguese language and develop engagement with Brazilian culture and society. We also make provision for those pupils joining us with a third language as mother tongue. Currently, the majority of our pupil body and staff are Brazilian, but we do have a number of non-Brazilian and non-British pupils in each year group, mainly from European backgrounds with French, Spanish and German as their mother tongue.

St. Paul's complies with federal and state policies regarding the provision of Portuguese lessons in both primary and secondary sections of the school, alongside the delivery of BraSS: Brazilian social studies lessons (history & geography). Our pupils have the option of acquiring two Brazilian qualifications, the Ensino Fundamental,



St. Paul's School

marking the end of compulsory education in Brazil at the age of 15 (equivalent to Form 4 or year 10) and the Ensino Medio, a three year high school certificate.

Expectations of language use in Junior and Senior sections

Expectations surrounding language use differ between staff and pupils. All lessons in the Prep and the Senior Schools are delivered in English, with the exception of Portuguese and BraSS lessons and MFL. In addition, the Prep conducts a small number of designated curricular lessons in Portuguese to ensure compliance with the statutory weekly requirement for Portuguese teaching. The expectation is that staff and pupils will use only the vehicular language of the classroom, in other words, English for all subjects unless pupils are learning Portuguese, French or Spanish and BraSS or in other clearly designated examples on the timetable.

In the Pre-Prep School, to support both development in BICS and CALP, we encourage pupils to use as much English as possible, and support translanguage interactions, where pupils use English and Portuguese interchangeably in the interests of encouraging communication.

As pupils move upwards through the School, we actively encourage increased use of English in social situations. We praise and reward oral fluency in English. There may be times when individual teachers may judge that a limited use Portuguese in certain settings is needed, for example in cases of imminent danger or if a pupil is struggling to express details of a wellbeing or safeguarding issue.

We are aware that language can be used as a tool for exclusion and isolation of peers, and we are alive to the importance of encouraging positive interactions in both English and Portuguese during breaks and free play. In Junior School, staff supervise much play and provide structured games and activities to encourage pupils to speak English. We are developing peer and buddy programmes across the whole school so that no child experiences isolation or social exclusion as a result of language deficit in either English or Portuguese.

Beliefs about language teaching and learning

Admissions

The majority of our pupils join the school in the Early Years. Pupils are not assessed on language proficiency, but we do require parents to demonstrate fluency in English. When pupils join the school later in the Junior School or coming into the Senior School, they may be asked to take a range of tests to assess their literacy, numeracy and knowledge base.



St. Paul's School

Senior School

At Key Stage 3, most assessment is formative, with pupils preparing a portfolio that includes (but is not limited to) a range of writing tasks (diaries, letters, recount, essays, creative writing), oral assessments such as debates, presentations and formal discussions, as well as functional tests of spelling and grammatical constructions. At the end of Form 3 (Year 9), pupils have their first formal, summative examinations.

During Key Stage 4, all pupils are preparing for IGCSE examinations in English and Portuguese. All pupils take English Language, with most taking both English Literature and Portuguese as First language. We also offer French, Spanish and Portuguese as an additional language.

At IB, we offer a range of both the Language & Literature and the Literature courses at Higher and Standard Level in English A and Portuguese A. We also offer French B, Spanish B and Portuguese B. For international students we offer IB Language A self-taught courses with supervision and private native speaker tutors to support pupils.

Curriculum planning

Junior School: During the pandemic, the Junior Leadership Team undertook a complete overhaul of the Key Stage 1 and 2 curriculum. This has now evolved into a coherent series of programmes of study that integrate language acquisition in English, Portuguese, humanities and science through thematically connected texts, activities, knowledge-rich content and mastery of skills. Subject leaders and the Assistant Head (Academic) also work to identify opportunities with Senior School colleagues to ensure effective transition between the Junior and Senior Sections. During classes, there is focus on exploring big ideas and key questions through discussion, building writing skills such as developing an awareness of complex sentence structures and targeted building of key vocabulary as the first steps towards developing academic proficiency in both English and Portuguese.

- Promotion of authentic language learning
- Transdisciplinary nature of language learning
- Development of listening, speaking, reading, writing and media literacy

Provision for teaching of additional languages (e.g. alternative mother tongue)

Senior School: In the Senior School, the Head of Senior works closely with the Curriculum Manager and Head of Sixth Form to drive a collaborative and collegiate approach to curriculum that encourages the Heads of the English, Portuguese and Humanities departments to align key knowledge, skills and concepts.

At Key Stage 3, teachers begin preparing pupils for the more demanding language expectations of IGCSE. Heads of Department ensure that pupils learn specialist vocabulary, building on the reading and comprehension skills developed in the Junior School. Teachers scaffold, model and support pupils with exemplars and a range of strategies to decode increasingly complex texts.



St. Paul's School

Language course options

In addition to English and Portuguese, we also offer French and Spanish in the Senior curriculum. All pupils take French in Key Stage 3 (Forms 1-3). They may then choose to take either IGCSE French or Spanish. We also offer IGCSE Portuguese as a first language and GCSE Portuguese (additional language).

In the Sixth Form, we offer English and Portuguese as Language A, and we also offer French, Spanish and Portuguese as Language B. The majority of our pupils are able to undertake a bilingual diploma, studying both English and Portuguese Language A.

We do support pupils who wish to undertake the School supported self-taught language A course. We provide supervision, liaison with tutors and support with study skills, planning and time management.

Language-related PD

At St. Paul's, all our teachers are expected to incorporate into their practice aspects of language teaching. Teachers in the English, Portuguese and MFL departments have expertise and qualifications in teaching their target language as a second or additional language.

We provide training and support so that all teachers understand the fundamental elements of language acquisition, are able to distinguish and foster development in both BICS and CALP, and are aware of content and language integrated learning (CLIL) approaches and techniques.

We provide sessions to support staff with effective techniques for supporting language acquisition throughout the academic year at staff professional days, at half-termly meetings of whole school working groups, monthly professional learning communities and specialist workshops.

Liaison with parents

As a British school, St. Paul's uses English as its vehicular language for communication with the parent body. Parent consultations, face to face meetings, workshops and events are conducted in English. All school publications and online sites use English. Where there are safeguarding and behavioural concerns, we do ensure that meetings are held with both English and Portuguese speaking staff.

Library and media resources

The Learning Resource Centre provides a wide range of books, magazines and newspapers, both actual and virtual. We are also subscribers to a range of resources, including access to British film, television and theatre productions, and a wide range of textbooks through Kognity, Bridge U and ActiveLearn



St. Paul's School

Language Policy Review process

St. Paul's undertakes annual reviews of key policies including the Language Policy. The Language Policy is reviewed by the Executive Team, the IB Coordinator and our Learning Support Coordinator. It is also submitted to the Brazilian Directorate of the School to ensure that it meets Brazilian statutory requirements.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of policy

- Ensuring that all stakeholders know there is a policy and how to find it
- Ensuring that all staff (including non-teaching staff) understand and support the policy in their daily practice
- Ensuring that we meet our own standards of provision of language teaching and training
- Ensuring that we regularly review the policy and amend it in the light of best practice in language teaching.

British Schools Overseas (BSO) Standards

This policy has been written in the context of the UK Government's BSO standards and should be read together with the information available on our school website at www.stpauls.br.

Policy review

Reviewed annually and presented to the Chairman of the Board of Governors for final consideration and approval.

Approved by the Board of Governors
Signed:

Philip Reade
Chairman of Board of Governors

Titus Edge
Headmaster

December 2022