



International
School of **London**

Language Policy 2023-2024

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August 2023**

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August 2024**

Policy: Language

Policy written by: Head of Multilingualism

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Related Policies: Teaching and Learning, Inclusion and Admissions, Assessment, Reporting, Departmental Agreements, Inclusion and Admissions

Compliance matrix: IBO, CIS, OFTSED (See Appendix 1)

ISL Mission Statement

Since 1972, we have established a welcoming and inclusive community. Our diverse cultures and languages drive all our learning experiences.

We nurture creativity and curiosity to stimulate deep thinking. We foster insight, compassion and resilience to enable us to play a meaningful part in a changing world.

ISL Vision Statement

We celebrate our stories, our worth and our purpose to make a difference in a shared world.

At the International School of London, we believe in:

- Empowering students to maximise their learning opportunities and to fulfil their potential.
- Actively integrating cultural diversity in the curriculum.
- Creating inclusive, vibrant and innovative learning communities.
- Offering a diverse and extensive international programme that supports personal, social and professional growth.

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Introduction

ISL London, located in the West of London, is part of a multicultural and multilingual city, which offers broad opportunities for the school community. Students at ISL London bring a range of linguistic and cultural resources to the school, from both personal and educational experiences. Languages are woven into the fabric of the school, evidenced in the offering of a language programme, currently catering for 23 languages, a choice of language acquisition courses and a well-resourced ELL programme. Staff are experienced at working with multilingual students. The advent of the opening of ISL Qatar in 2008 presents opportunities for the utilisation of shared resources across departments. The population of the school is relatively transient compared to many UK national schools and the language programmes of the school enables students to transition smoothly into and out of the school.

The purpose of this language policy

The purpose of this language policy is to ensure a common understanding within the whole school community, teaching and support staff, students and their families, with regards to language philosophy and provision.

The process of this language policy

The policy is updated every two years to ensure alignment with current research as well as compliance with ISL’s accrediting/inspection bodies and is reviewed by a committee made up of language leaders, teachers and members of the senior leadership team (SLT).

Languages Vision

We understand that languages and identity are dynamic.

We agree that an understanding of language development and identity are central to all teaching and learning.

We are flexible as a school and support student agency

We believe in fostering multilingual inquiry and building student confidence in their multi-faceted selves

Guiding Statements

All languages and language varieties are equally valued and worthy of respect

Languages are a resource

Languages play a central role in the construction of our identities

All teachers are language teachers

English is the working language of the school

Consequently:

- All students are learners of academic language
- All students will be enabled to have access to the working language of the school such that they can engage with the full curriculum and the full school community
- The school will seek to offer tuition in the languages of all students and these classes will be incorporated into the mainstream schedule of the school
- All students will study at least two languages as part of the school's normal schedule of classes
- Teachers – both in their classroom practice and as members of the school community - will display sensitivity to and understanding of students, parents and colleagues who require provision in accessing the working language of the school and will inform their practice to enable such access
- Teachers will endeavour to leverage the available linguistic diversity to enable students to make progress, as well as using this as a means to actively integrate diversity and multiple viewpoints in the curriculum

Language Provision

	Language block 1 <i>Vertical grouping: EC, K-G2, G3-5, G6-8, G9-10</i>	Language block 2	Language block 3 <i>Vertical grouping: G6-8, G9-10</i>
PYP	Mother Tongue/Home Language* OR Language Acquisition - French, Spanish	English Literacy AND (ELL)**	
MYP	Language & Literature* OR Communications	English Language & Literature OR English Acquisition	Language Acquisition (French, Spanish, Mandarin) OR Additional English OR Language & Literature* (additional)
DP***	Studies in Language & Literature*	Studies in Language & Literature* OR Language Acquisition – B or ab initio (Spanish, Mandarin, French, English OR other*)	(An additional Language Acquisition)

Notes:

(brackets) indicate optional, additional choices

** Available in any language offered by the IBO, and in which a teacher can be sourced. Depending on class size (less than 5 students in the teaching group), this might incur an additional cost.*

*** ELL in primary may involve co-teaching in the class, 'pull out' sessions, or a combination thereof*

****English must be taken as either Language & Literature or Acquisition*

The purpose of language options

The purpose of **Studies in Language & Literature / Literacy / Home Language / Mother Tongue (including English Language & Literature)** is to enable students to

- develop literacy and the art of language, laying the foundations for academic language (CALP) and learning through language
- learn about language and develop the skills of analysis and evaluation
- develop and extend their strongest language(s)
- develop an appreciation of diverse viewpoints through collaboration within the school as a learning community
- affirm personal ethnolinguistic identity

The purpose of **English Acquisition / English B** is to enable students to

- learn language so as to communicate and express their ideas in English (BICS)
- learn through language and develop skills of knowledge building, in order to lay the foundations for academic language (CALP)
- use existing skills of analysis and evaluation from their other languages to scaffold language learning, in particular when reading literature

The purpose of **ELL co-teaching** is to

- ensure that all teachers activate prior understanding, build background knowledge, and scaffold learning
- ensure that all students are extending their language
- ensure that all students are able to demonstrate/communicate their knowledge and skills
- encourage students to use their entire linguistic repertoire in their learning
- enable all students to experience learning in the mainstream classroom

The purpose of **PYP 'pull out' ELL / MYP 'Additional English' / DP Academic English** classes is to enable students to

- design their own learning path
- explicitly learn about and practise AtL skills
- practise the language skills they want to develop
- be exposed to the language they will need in order to access learning in other subjects

The purpose of **Language Acquisition / Language B / ab initio** is to enable students to

- learn a new language by focussing on discrete skills, with a balance of focus-on-form and a focus-on-meaning
- be curious about new language structures and view new language structures as puzzles to decipher
- have opportunities to draw on their existing language repertoires
- engage in authentic communicative experiences

Multilingualism within the school community

Parents as language partners

Parents are recognised as ‘language partners’, essential in the development of the languages spoken within the home, as well as in supporting the well-being of a student’s acquisition of a new language. Parents who create a home environment where literacy is valued, as well as opportunities for their children to develop their personal identities, enable the school to build on this solid foundation. The languages programme endeavours to provide a bridge between home, school and the host country, the UK.

Language in informal settings

The school has no stated policy on which language(s) should be used in informal settings, such as in the playground between students or in staff rooms between staff members. This is a deliberate choice which reflects our view that all languages are worthy of equal respect and also allows transition to take place more successfully. On the very rare occasions that language appears to be used to exclude or isolate, then we will employ counselling and advisory procedures to resolve the situation.

Linguistic landscape of the school

ISL endeavours to reflect the multilingual nature of the school in the visual, auditory and digital landscape of the school, by displaying, for example, multilingual student work as well as signage in shared areas in the school and on digital media. ISL’s multilingual teaching faculty encourages and supports the acquisition of languages within the community, as well as the faculty, themselves, being encouraged to do so for academic, professional and personal purposes.

Abbreviations used in this document

AtL	Approaches to Learning
BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skill
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
CIS	Council of International Schools
ELL	English Language Learning
IBO	International Baccalaureate Organization
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education

Appendix 1 – Compliance

This policy complies, amongst others, with the IBO Standards and Practices (updated April 2020) below:

Standard: Culture through policy implementation (0301)

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

Standard: Students as lifelong learners (0402)

Lifelong learners 7: Students pursue opportunities to explore and develop their personal and cultural identities.

Standard: Approaches to teaching (0403)

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

This policy complies with, amongst others, the Ofsted ‘Non-association independent schools handbook’ criteria (updated September 2021) below:

Quality of education

192. Inspectors will consider the extent to which the school’s curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each stage (we call this ‘intent’). They will also consider the way that the curriculum developed or adopted by the school is taught and assessed in order to support pupils to build their knowledge and to apply that knowledge as skills (we call this ‘implementation’). Finally, inspectors will

consider the outcomes that pupils achieve as a result of the education they have received (we call this 'impact').

Curriculum flexibility

201. The curriculum sets out the aims of a programme of education. It also sets out the structure for those aims to be implemented, including the knowledge and skills to be gained at each stage. It enables the evaluation of pupils' knowledge and skills against those expectations.

At ISL London, Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.