POLICY 6003
BBIS WHOLE SCHOOL LANGUAGES

The Language Policy is grounded in our BBIS Mission and Guiding Statements.

PURPOSE OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide a shared understanding of, and commitment to, a multilingual mindset in our language practices at BBIS. The policy includes the scope and approach of language teaching and learning, as well as our practices regarding language usage and access.

CONTEXT

BBIS is a multilingual community committed to creating a learning environment that values and nourishes our learners' multilingual identities. The school is located near Berlin in Germany and so German is our host country language.

BBIS students and staff are diverse in many ways, including their language profiles. A large number of cultures and languages are represented in the BBIS community. The cultural and linguistic diversity of the community are considered a valuable aspect of our identity.

The Role of English in our Multilingual Environment
We are a multilingual and inclusive school. At the same time, English is the language of instruction and our working language. Classes other than language classes are taught in English; educational meetings are mostly held in English and policies/documents are published in English.

LANGUAGE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

Multilingualism is a fact, a right and a resource, and language provides access to power, learning, opportunities and relationships … therefore…

- Students have access to their complete language repertoire while communicating and learning.
- Students are supported to maintain and develop their home language(s).

Learning languages strengthens cultural identity and deepens intercultural understanding… therefore…

- Students learn multiple languages.
- Students are invited to use and be curious about all the languages that are a part of their own identity and of the BBIS community.
- Students learn German to deepen cultural understanding and have tools for integrating and participating in the local culture and community.

Language is fundamental to all learning, thinking and communicating. It is the heart of learning for life… therefore…

- All teachers see themselves as language teachers and recognize the role of language in learning.
- We empower students to harness the full potential of all of their languages as tools for learning, critical thinking, and effective communication.
- Students are supported to acquire the English needed to successfully access the curriculum.

Language is a part of an individual's identity… therefore…
- Students' identities, cultures and personal experiences are honoured and utilized in the curriculum and classroom.
- Home language is supported for its essential role in learning as well as cultural identity.

A MULTILINGUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: OUR LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE

BBIS designs its learning environment to represent the multilingual nature and needs of the learning community.

Physical and Virtual Environment
- Multilingualism in the school environment is supported by all staff members, both pedagogical and administrative.
- Visual, auditory and digital displays reflect the multilingual nature of the school.
- Intercultural and multilingual events are calendared in advance and highlighted in the physical and virtual environment.
- Different languages are heard regularly during school events and ECAs, as well as in informal settings within the physical learning environment.

Socio-Emotional Environment

- Mentorship programmes connect staff and students of shared home languages.
- Languages, dialects and accents are treated with equal respect.
- We celebrate our multilingual diversity and actively practice translanguaging in community events.

Multilingual Resources

BBIS is committed to providing the community with access to multilingual resources. These include the following:

- The library collection is frequently updated with books and media in different languages that reflect BBIS's multilingual community.
- Home language teachers assist and/or advise teachers with lesson planning or curriculum development.
- Language profiles provide teachers with information to directly guide their teaching and facilitate the connection of students to other community members who share their home language.
- Students have access to different language dictionaries and online resources for multilingual development.
- We have subscriptions to databases that contain professional material, scholarly articles, newspapers, and magazines in many languages.
- Devices are equipped with keyboard layouts for a variety of languages.
- Extra-curricular activities provide opportunities for students to use multiple languages.

THE BBIS COMMUNITY

Role of Teachers and Pedagogical Leaders
- Teachers create an environment that supports and recognizes student home languages as a resource to support learning.
- Teachers reach out to families in order to understand students' language profiles.
- School leadership provides resources and training so that teaching and learning are informed by research on multilingualism and language learning.
- School leadership identifies a Position of Responsibility that will provide research-based insight on students' multilingual needs, train teachers in up-to-date teaching practices and help ensure a coordinated approach.

Role of Students
- Students develop and display a positive attitude towards multilingual learning and communication.
- Students draw upon multilingual resources to further their own and peers' learning.
- Students actively draw upon all of their languages to contribute to the school and wider community.
- Students use language to pursue inclusion in all settings (social, cultural, academic, emotional).

Role of Families
- Families recognize and embrace the multilingual nature of BBIS.
- Families recognize that multilingualism is imperative to a child's cognitive development and cultural identity.
- Families support the development of all their child's languages both in and outside of school.
- Families celebrate and participate in multilingual, multicultural community events.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Multilingualism: a fact, a right and a resource
- Educators actively support multilingualism by planning for the needs and language profiles of all learners.
- Every educator is a language teacher and therefore participates in internal professional development and is encouraged to participate in external Professional Development on supporting multilingual learners.
- We empower students to draw on all of their languages to learn, to develop their identities, and to gain proficiency across all subject areas and disciplines.
- We use translanguaging as a strategy to support learning and growth.
- Students are offered the space and time to learn, communicate and make meaning using their whole language repertoire, and have access to multilingual resources.
- English is our primary language for sharing and demonstrating learning and understanding, and therefore students are supported to develop sufficient levels of proficiency in English for academic success.
- We adapt our language offerings to our students' languages and needs (see below for current language provision).

LANGUAGE PROVISION

- We promote literacy in multiple languages.

	ENGLISH	GERMAN	HOME LANGUAGE	ADDITIONAL LANGUAGES
Early Education	English immersion	EE 5-6 German		
Grades 1-5	English immersion and English as an Additional Language (EAL)	German literacy or German acquisition	Home language tutor-led language groups for language that have 5+ students	
IB MYP	Grade 6-8 EAL Grade 9-10 Language Acquisition and Literature or Grade 6-10 English Language and Literature	German Language and Literature or German Acquisition	Grade 6-8 Home Language takes place during Advisory for part of each semester. Grade 9-10 Home Language offered as a subject choice with external tutors.	French Spanish Mandarin
IB DP	English Language and Literature English Language Language B	German Language and Literature Language B	Self-taught Literature	French Spanish Mandarin

Home Language: A bridge to learning and an essential aspect of identity
- We support and promote home languages as the basis for acquiring new languages and attaining academic success.
- We acknowledge the key role of parents in strengthening their child's home language.
- We support Home Language development through programmes across the whole school.
- We recognize the value of bilingual IB diplomas which can be obtained in Grade 12.

Role of language in assessment
- When designing assessments, educators are aware of the language demands of a task and support or differentiate as needed.
- Students are supported in developing academic English skills in order to achieve success.
- IB MYP assessments and IB DP exams in Grade 11/12 are in English (except for Group 1 and Group 2 courses in other languages).
- Students are encouraged to translanguage and use their full linguistic repertoire while preparing, sharing, and presenting their IB PYP Exhibition.
- The Personal Project report and Extended Essay may be written in a language other than English, if teaching staff are available to supervise and advise.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY

In order for the implementation of this policy to be successful, the following actions/ aspects must be planned for:

- Professional development of teaching staff
- Engagement of the wider community of parents, administrative staff and students in the implementation
- Review the Language Policy every two years to reflect current research and practice

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Dominant language: the language a person feels most comfortable in most contexts. BBIS uses this term to refer to a child's preferred language *upon admission*. A person's dominant language can change over their lifetime.

English as an Additional Language: a department/programme at BBIS for multilingual students who are developing their English language proficiency. Students in the EAL programme are referred to as bilingual/multilingual learners.

Emerging bilinguals: this term refers to students who are new to English, as it emphasizes additive bilingualism (adding an additional language without subtracting from the first or home language).

Language of instruction: the language used in all classes, except in language courses other than English. The language of instruction at the BBIS is English. However, as BBIS supports drawing on a student's full linguistic repertoire to access learning, English is not the *only* language used for learning at BBIS.

Heritage language: a language present in the family but not the dominant language of the student (e.g., the language spoken by a grandparent). A heritage language refers to the relationship a child has to a language rather than their proficiency in the language itself. Heritage languages are part of a child's identity.

Home language: the language a student predominantly uses at home to communicate about everyday topics/in most family interactions. The home language is:

- the language or languages spoken at home
- may be the first language a child hears and speaks
- a key part of a child's identity.

BBIS uses this term rather than 'mother tongue'.

Host country language: the language predominantly spoken in the region/country of the school. German is the host country language at BBIS.

Language Acquisition: also called **Language B,** Language Acquisition classes are for a language the student is learning, usually from a beginner level. Participation in a Language Acquisition course indicates that this language is not a student's home, primary or dominant language.

Language and Literature: also called **Language A,** Language and Literature refers to a taught class in the language a student has used since a very young age, usually the child's home/dominant language; this is also the case for bilingual students who speak the language as one of their home/dominant languages.

Language proficiency: The ability to communicate or perform in a given language. A student's language proficiency can be characterized and assessed in productive (speaking, writing) and receptive (reading, listening) skills. We also distinguish between Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) when referring to language proficiency. Proficiency in one domain does not mean a similar level of proficiency in another.

Language profile: the individual language background of each student, including the home or dominant language/s, languages learned previously, and heritage languages.

Linguistic landscape: a school's language environment, including the linguistic and cultural make-up of the students, their families, and our staff, as well as the physical and virtual presence of languages in the school

Linguistic repertoire: languages a student can call upon to express themselves and make meaning. Using a student's full linguistic repertoire supports conceptual understanding and develops students' language proficiency.

Multilingual mindset: recognizing that all a student's languages are important to identity, and using a student's full linguistic repertoire to access learning, is evidence that a school has a multilingual mindset. It is more than openness to linguistic diversity; it is actively incorporating multilingual pedagogies to support student learning and wellbeing.

Multilingualism: linguistic ability in more than one language. BBIS recognizes multilingualism as a fact, a resource, and a right; it is an asset. A child's proficiency in each of their languages can change over time: multilingualism is dynamic.

Multilingual Learners: students who speak a language other than English at home, and who are learning English at BBIS, are referred to as Bilingual and Multilingual Learners). Some of these students will be in the EAL programme to support their English language learning. As all BBIS students learn more than one language at school and a majority speak a language other than English at home, each student is a developing multilingual.

Self-taught: a course that is part of the language and literature studies group for Grade 11 and 12 students wishing to study the literature of their home language/s not offered as a taught course. Self-taught language courses are primarily independent learning

<u>Translanguaging is:</u>

- the use of more than one language to communicate; and
- a pedagogy that supports students' use of all their linguistic resources to deepen understanding and express themselves.

The underlying belief is that the languages of multilinguals are not separate, but work together.

Translanguaging in the classroom can be:

- incidental, which happens naturally and flexibly when a linguistically inclusive environment is created; or
- planned, which happens when teachers prepare resources, activities, and opportunities for students to use all their languages, when, for example, they work in groups; research and take notes; plan, brainstorm, and organise their thinking; or produce a final product in more than one language.

Translanguaging uses all a student's languages as a:

- scaffold to access learning
- means to deepen understanding
- way to develop students' linguistic competence.

Translanguaging is more than translating. Translating involves the one-to-one correspondence of words between languages. Translanguaging refers to a mental process through which students construct understanding, drawing on all their linguistic resources.

RELATED POLICIES

- 1001 BBIS Mission and Guiding Statements
- BBIS Admissions Policies folder
- 7700 BBIS Inclusion Policy

References
Language and Learning in the IB Programmes
Multilingual-Mindedness Evaluation Tool