



EISB Language Policy

Updated 2022

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.

The EISB mission statement

EISB is an English-speaking, innovative international school which delivers a very high- quality, university-preparatory education to a diverse, international group of students in an empowering environment of creativity and discovery, which inspires a passion for learning, fosters a sense of wonder and curiosity, and teaches responsible global citizenship.

Premise

The primary language of instruction and communication at the English International School of Bratislava (EISB) is English. All standard forms of English are recognized and accepted, and all courses aside from Language Acquisition are taught in English by teachers with native or at least C1 level (European framework) English capabilities.

Although EISB is an international school, the largest school population comes from the host country. Their first language is Slovak, and the school recognizes that the Slovak language is also important. Therefore, EISB has the dual objective to combine an international program with a strong Slovak language and culture base so that students are able to benefit from the values and advantages of both the IB approach and Slovakia's rich cultural heritage.

The other half of the school population comes from all over the world. The school community is encouraged to use English for all communication, and it is preferred that only teachers of Language Acquisition communicate in languages other than English with both students and fellow staff members, except of course where translation is needed to help members of the EISB community.

Our Language Philosophy

At EISB, the pedagogical team firmly believes we must use a language in order to adequately learn it. We encourage teachers, students, and staff to use English as their language of communication in all circumstances. Students are surrounded by their native language when not at school or when with their families. Therefore, we want to ensure that students are firmly placed in an English-speaking environment while at EISB.

We believe that languages are a fundamental tool for the development of internationally-minded students, and we encourage students to study three languages in both the Primary and Academy programs. The school encourages non-native English-speaking teachers to teach subjects other than their own language, as this is seen as a way to promote cultural exchanges that enrich the environment and are beneficial to the students.

All teachers at EISB are considered to be language teachers, and language learning occurs both within the instruction of a class and outside. This is through both constructivist and inquiry-based approaches that encourage learning experiences that encourage language development.

Language and Admission

The assessment of students' readiness and overall work ethic takes precedence over language abilities during the admission process. Language needs do not in any way hinder a student's admission.

EISB is a non-selective school that considers its status as an international school a duty to be inclusive and support the enrollment of both foreign and domestic students who wish to have an international education. As such, there are no minimum English requirements for admission up to DP. EISB wishes to provide students who are not fluent in English with the opportunity to join the program. All Y7 students and any new MYP students are tested using the Oxford English Testing system.

- Y7-9/MYP 1-3: Students who score below European framework level B1 are placed in ELA classes.
- Y10-11/MYP 4-5: Students who score below European framework level B2/C1 (can differ depending on individual scores) are placed in ELA classes.

The purpose of EAL classes is to help students achieve the appropriate level of English as quickly as possible. Students may also receive in-class differentiated activities, extra English support in place of German or Slovak, and/or additional extracurricular EAL lessons. Each situation will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and teachers will implement the best individualized solution for each student.

Students wishing to enter the DP must have written and oral English skills of minimum level B2.

Language Conventions

All standard forms of English are acknowledged and recognised within the school. For research work/bibliographies, EISB uses MLA style.

Native Language Support

Native languages other than English or Slovak are supported throughout the school. EISB provides a wide range of multilingual resources to support the learning of multiple languages. Under certain circumstances, particularly in the case of Czech, students are allowed to do independent study in their own language instead of either German or Slovak. Families are also encouraged to use their native languages at home.

Our school libraries support students at all levels with resources in the target language: English and many of the native languages spoken by our school population. The school also provides access to different electronic reading resources, which include online magazines and reading apps; students are able to access this information in languages other than English.

Languages in the Primary

Language is essential for young learners in order to construct meaning and make connections that can support their learning and development. The learning for Primary includes three interrelated language strands: oral language, visual language, and written language. These three strands all consider both the receptive and expressive aspects of language, encouraging balanced approaches to the development of language.

Language instruction aims to develop balanced learning and includes phonics, grammar, guided reading, subject-specific vocabulary development, reading a variety of texts for topics and enjoyment, authentic writing experiences, writing for different purposes, learning strategies within the writing process, and providing multiple outlets for creative expression. Lessons are differentiated to meet the needs of all students, and classroom teachers regularly assess the language development of their students throughout the year to inform both individual and small-group instruction.

The language of instruction at EISB is English. All primary students have 5 hours of Slovak per week and 2 hours per week of German. Other languages are available as part of our club program.

When students enroll at EISB, they are placed in mainstream classes with careful consideration of their English language abilities. Students are observed and assessed as to their English language level. They are provided with mainstream support and, if appropriate, students are withdrawn from class to receive direct English support. Student assessment is ongoing and students move between levels as appropriate for their individual needs. Support is given by the intensive English teacher who assists subject teachers to modify and differentiate learning outcomes so that students meet with success.

Languages in the MYP (Years 7-11)

Language is divided into two departments: Language & Literature and Language Acquisition. Every student in the MYP is expected to take three languages, though accommodations are made for both SEN students and those who are still learning English. The allocation of students into either of these courses is directly related to their level of fluency in the specific language (as indicated by prior test scores *or* our placement tests).

The primary language of instruction for all courses is English, and all MYP students are required (by Slovak law) to take one language course in Slovak. Native-speaking Slovak students follow an IB MYP Slovak Language & Literature course that meets the standards of the national curriculum. Students who do not speak Slovak natively or do not have a high level of fluency in Slovak follow the Language Acquisition course.

Language Acquisition

Currently, there are language acquisition programs to support the learning of the following languages: Slovak, German, Spanish, and French (on request). Students are placed in Language Acquisition classes according to the IB's continuum of language learning phases.

Moving from Language Acquisition to Language & Literature

At the beginning of the school year, students will be placed in the relevant phase according to their level. It is at the school's discretion to group students in the six phases. It is also essential to consider reasonable differentiation and manageable combinations of proficiencies within one class. This means:

- Students who are placed into one phase may move into another phase throughout the year, depending upon their development across all areas of language.
- Students who meet all criteria for one phase in the Language Acquisition continuum will be placed in the next phase.

- Students in phase 6 of the Language Acquisition continuum for Slovak may be placed in the Slovak Language & Literature class.

Languages in the DP (Years 12-13)

While EISB is a non-selective school, it does have one requirement: all students entering the school in the DP must have a level of competence in English (B2) that allows them to adequately study in the DP.

Language proficiency tests will be administered when students apply for the DP in order to assess their competence in English and/or Slovak. Results from these tests will be used to place students appropriately in either Language A (Language & Literature or Literature) or Language B.

The DP Coordinator will support students and families in choosing the most appropriate course when making decisions for their DP subject choices.

Language and Inclusive Education

Support is provided for non-native speakers by providing the teaching and learning strategies necessary for overall language development at all levels, and to accommodate students with particular inclusive education needs.

Language and Assessment

Teachers differentiate assessments in order to accommodate the needs of all language learners.

Language and Academic Honesty

At EISB, the effective citing and referencing of material is taught through explicit instruction by teachers. Expectations about academic integrity are clearly communicated and authentic students' work is highly regarded. Consequences for academic dishonesty are clearly communicated by all teachers.

Policy Review

The school leadership team (Director of Education, Program Coordinators) is in charge of the policy revision process. The policy will be revised yearly as needed, and the leadership team is in charge of approving the new version and sharing it with the school community.

Works Used (IB Publications)

DP: From principles into practice (published April 2015)

DP: Assessment procedures 2020 (published September 2019)

Language policy: Information on the International Baccalaureate's support for languages, language courses and languages of instruction (updated February 2014)

MYP: Assessment procedures 2020 (published September 2019)

MYP: From principles into practice (updated September 2017)

MYP: Language acquisition guide (updated September 2017)

MYP: Language and literature guide (updated September 2017)

MYP: Programme standards and practices (updated March 2016)

PYP: From principles into practice (updated October 2021)

Reviewing a Language Policy (published October 2018)

Guidelines for developing a school language policy (published April 2008)

Guidelines for school self-reflection on its language policy (published 2012)