



Bucharest – Beirut International School

Language Policy

BBIS Mission

Our mission is to build a knowledgeable, self-confident and principled student who is willing to take risks and face up challenges, urged by curiosity, integrity and a passion for learning.

As educators, it is our responsibility to encourage our students to be caring, thoughtful and respectful, to become open-minded global citizens and to promote multicultural understanding, and national identity.

Language Philosophy

We acknowledge the role of languages in connecting all the cultures in our school, as well as all the knowledge acquired throughout the school years by each student. As language is a significant part of each individual's identity, as well as a way to get a better understanding of other cultures, we encourage our students to value their mother tongue and to be aware of the importance of language learning. As a Lebanese school, Arabic language is taught for all students, at all levels, including the emergent level.

Beliefs and Aims

All teachers are language teachers regardless of the subject they teach.

As we see language as an instrument of empowering students to learn and communicate, to analyze ideas and express feelings, our aims are

- to develop students' oral and written communication
- to enhance a rich cultural and linguistic background
- to provide connections between different areas of knowledge
- to encourage students to become more creative and diverse, and to use their language skills in different contexts
- to encourage students to read, understand, analyze and value literature

School Language Profile

Language learning is at the heart of building a sense of self, identity and community. As a multilingual school, BBIS has a strong language learning focus which is reflected in our curriculum.

For our students coming from more than 20 different countries, English is the language of instruction in all subjects, with the exception of language classes such as Arabic, Chinese, Turkish, Romanian and French, where the target language is used. English is also the main language of communication within the school.

Our teachers come from different countries/cultures. Arabic, Chinese, Turkish and Romanian teachers are native speakers, while English teachers have different nationalities.

The school, in accordance with the IB curriculum, offers two different language programs: “Language and Literature” and “Language Acquisition”. The first is designed to support native (or mother tongue) speakers and is based on the study of literature; the second is designed for students who are still learning the language and is aimed at improving language usage.

MYP Language Requirements at BBIS

Students are required to study three language courses, at least one of which must be a Language and Literature course by Grade 9 and 10.

Students who are in danger of not meeting this requirement are notified at reporting time.

Language Placement

The Heads of Department for the languages (English, Romanian and World Languages) work with the MYP teachers to assign students to classes based on their current level of proficiency. New students will have a diagnostic test at the start of the year to form a base line.

Moving Into the Next Phase or Course

Levels of proficiency are categorized according to the IB’s “Continuum” of language learning. Students’ progress through “phases” as their language proficiency levels increase, from Phase 1 (Beginner) to Phase 6 (Proficient).

Student movement from one phase to the next, or one course to the next, is only possible at reporting times. Teachers will decide in consultation with the Head of Department if a change is appropriate and beneficial for a student.

As soon as a student joins a Language and Literature class and demonstrates success at this level over an extended period of time, they will no longer be able to return to a Language Acquisition class for that language.

Students exiting the MYP after Grade 10 (MYP5) in a Language and Literature class, and having demonstrated success at this level, will not have access to IB DP (Grade 11) Language B classes.

MYP Language and Literature students are expected to enroll in an IB DP Language A class.

Students Study Three Languages at BBIS

In Grades 6-10 (MYP1-5), all students must study the following two languages:

- English: the language of instruction
- Romanian: the language of our host country

In addition, all students must choose one language program from the following options:

Option 1: One Language & Literature course offered by the school

- Arabic or Chinese

Option 2: One Language Acquisition program offered by the school

- French

Admission policy

English language

When joining our school, students are required to complete a survey aimed to generate a student's language profile (mother tongue, language/s spoken at home, foreign languages studied before). Applicants also take a placement test which determines their level of English, Romanian and Arabic.

At BBIS we offer English only as a main language. Students whose level of English is comparable with the standard grade level will join the respective class. Where the level of English is lower than the standard grade level, students will join ESL classes while joining the respective class for the rest of the subjects. ESL students are offered as well support consisting in after-school English classes. If the student has no prior knowledge of English, they will attend a one-year English support programme which consists in an intensive English course of 4-5h/day. At the end of the first semester they are assessed and if their mark is above 70% they can enroll in the chosen grade. If they score under 70%, they will be able to enroll in the grade the following academic year.

Mother Tongue Support

For students whose mother tongue is not Arabic or Romanian, neither Chinese nor Turkish, the school supports the child in keeping in touch with their mother tongue and culture by raising awareness about cultural diversity, encouraging them to make references to different concepts/ terms in their native language (proverbs, superstitions, beliefs, projects) within different classes, and providing help in finding online self-study language courses.

Students are given the opportunity to perform in their native language during the end-of-year talent shows, thus maintaining their cultural identity, promoting their cultural values and together celebrating diversity.

We also encourage parents to donate books, magazines and other materials in their mother tongues to the school library, in order to ensure student's constant contact to their mother tongue.

Assessment

Language assessment is in alignment with BBIS assessment policy.

The scope of every language and the sequence of concepts and competencies will be assessed according to grade-level standards and expectations using national and international documents such as IB scope and sequence and the Lebanese integration curriculum.

Language assessment should make use of numerous strategies and tools (*Ref* BBIS assessment policy). It is formative and summative and is both a process and a product. Assessment tasks should be as close as possible to real life tasks. They should be informative, integral to the curriculum, developmentally and culturally appropriate, recognize self-evaluation and invite active collaboration and be on-going.

