

LANGUAGE POLICY

BELS recognizes that language is central to learning. We also recognize that all teachers are in practice language teachers and as such need to have the appropriate support. As a result, language becomes an integral part of that interaction.

Within the school, both English and Turkish languages exist side by side and students are encouraged to compare their languages and the cultures associated with them. German is offered as a second foreign language in grades 5 through 12.

The school stresses the importance of mother tongue development. The school has a strong Turkish language programme. Quality education in English for children from a variety of cultural backgrounds implies, from the school's side, a commitment to providing support for students that are weak in English and the recognition of the important role that teachers play in developing language acquisition.

Language lessons at BELS not only provide a medium for the acquisition of language, but also support a holistic approach to education. This occurs as a result of the fact that it is not only language that is promoted but also the recognition and understanding of the culture that accompanies it. Throughout their language studies students also attempt to explore, when appropriate, the links with other subject areas.

As BELS accepts students with a wide variety of linguistic aptitudes, it is extremely important that its language policy is as flexible as possible, thus allowing the students to build up their language skills to a level at which they can then pursue English and Turkish as an academic language.

Current Language Courses:

Language (PYP), Language and Literature (MYP), First Language and Literature (IGCSE) and Language A(DP) indicate that the language is taught in a way appropriate for students:

- for whom that language is their mother tongue
- as one of their mother tongues
- who have reached native or near native competency in the language

English and Turkish are taught as Language A.

Language Acquisition indicates that the language is taught in a way appropriate for students:

- for whom that language is not their mother tongue
- in the DP, IGCSE, Preparation classes and Middle school, German is taught. In elementary and middle school, English is taught.
- the classes are taught in the target language.

Preparation Class English (Prep Year) prepares students for competency in first language courses in the IGCSE and IBDP. Through intensive English studies students are expected to develop a near-native skill level in English. The vast majority of our students enter the school at the end of grade 8. They take the one year English Preparation programme before starting their IGCSE courses. Students in Preparation classes also have the opportunity to practice spoken English within their club activities. English is the language of instruction for Math and Science and some club activities.

Standard Forms of Language

Students should be exposed to the language and culture of different countries. It is necessary for students to appreciate the different forms of a language. Teachers will point out differences in expression or spelling of a language where appropriate. The guiding rule is uniformity of use within a given document. British and American English are both equally accepted as standard forms of English throughout the school.

Handwriting

The elementary school follows the Ministry of National Education regulations on teaching handwriting. Students produce a variety of different forms of handwriting dependent on previous school experience. In the middle and high school, all forms of handwriting are acceptable, provided that the writing is neat and legible.

Languages of Instruction

English and Turkish are the languages of instruction throughout the school. To experience success in other areas students need to have a high competency within these languages.

Language lessons have an obvious role to play in teaching and reinforcing language skills needed in other mainstream subjects. However, subject teachers are also language teachers and should be developing students' language skills. It is especially important to take into account those language skills required in their particular subject area(s). In addition to this, teachers are responsible for adapting their materials and teaching styles to take into account the needs of students who are not native speakers. Subject teachers are encouraged to correct mistakes in the language of instruction as well as content of written work and to provide missing vocabulary where appropriate.

Teachers should encourage students to only speak the language of instruction in the class. The school also encourages teachers who teach in English to use English for the extracurricular activities or in any casual conversation outside of class at school. This is designed to support further English language development for academic success.

Language Courses Offered by the School

English and Turkish, are the languages of instruction throughout the school. It is the goal of the school for students to obtain fluency in both languages by the end of middle school. Prep students are expected to be near fluent in English by the end of Prep year. All students in grades 9 through 12 take first language Turkish and English. All math and science courses taught in English at all levels.

All students are required to learn an additional foreign language at the school. The school currently offers German as a second foreign language from grade 5.

Language / Academic Support Programs

For English, language support is available in the school. Students are either referred by the teachers (see student referral form) or are selected based on whole school testing. The counsellors in consultation with the program coordinators, teachers and parents, develop an action plan which is best suited for the students' needs. This is generally done through remedial classes (available for all international program subjects) or in-class support. At all levels the program aims to provide continuity of instruction and develop communicative competence.

For Turkish, language support is provided by the Turkish teachers on a needs basis.

Assessment

Assessment in language like all other subject areas within the school is carried out in accordance with the school's assessment policy guidelines. These guidelines follow the general principles of international programs and the Ministry of National Education Program (MoNEP).

Policy Review Cycle:

The Language Policy is reviewed at the start of each even numbered academic year by the curriculum committee and shared with the faculty for input. Final approval is made by the BLT.

Approved by the BLT 10.01.2019