



Language Policy

Beijing Enlighten School Mission, Vision, and Value

Mission: Committed to the development of thoughtful learners and caring global stewards, within a community that is a model for the future in which we all live and grow in harmony.

Vision: A vibrant learning community, blending and balancing wisdom, beauty and culture of East and West.

Values: Cultivate oneself and others; unity of thought and action; be honest with oneself and others

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.

Language Philosophy

At Beijing Enlighten School (BES), all teachers are language teachers. This philosophy aligns with the IB's aims and mission. Since language is essential to the development of the whole child, the school is responsible for supporting the students' language development – and learning through languages – during this process. Students at BES can effectively use their speaking and writing skills to express themselves, finish their schoolwork, and work on projects in or outside of school.

To achieve these aims, reading must be a key part of the learning process. BES will supply rich reading resources at the appropriate language level for each student. "Learning language is ongoing and further fostered through reading."¹ Within the context of the Primary Years Programme (MYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP), and Diploma Programme (DP), students concurrently develop cognitive academic language proficiency² and the ATL skills, thus intimately linking language and the learning process.



BES encourages students to learn and use their home and family language(s), and other languages, both within the school environment and outside of school. In line with the school mission and vision, we recognize the importance of cultural understanding that fosters global understanding and respect for the world. Since home and family language is a central part of students' identity awareness, we are committed to multilingualism as a way for students to be internationally-minded.

Language and Culture

International-mindedness is an important part of learning at BES. We also recognize the importance of cultural identity. We strive to create an atmosphere where all languages and cultures are celebrated through events like:

- Chinese New Year
- International Day
- Music and Art concerts and festivals
- Family events

The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) is a strong promoter and supporter of community events which promote cultural awareness. We recognize that the school community is an invaluable resource especially for language support. The school will provide the necessary services and materials to ensure that a multilingual environment is fostered and supported.

Language Profile

Types of language learners at BES

- Home and family language Chinese (90%): most of the students at BES. In general, these students are enrolled in BES because parents want them to have a strong cultural identity and fluency in Chinese while acquiring English as an academic language.
- Home and family language English (8%): Currently, all these students are teachers' children.
- Other languages: These students come from a variety of other countries.



School Language Policies

Languages of learning and teaching

As students move up in school, the focus on English as an academic language increases. Chinese Language courses will use the PYP, MYP, and DP as the curriculum framework and, where beneficial, be informed by the Chinese National Curriculum.

Early Childhood Center

Students spend around 50% of their learning time in Chinese and 50% in English. There are English and Chinese teachers assigned to each class who collaborate to ensure cohesiveness of learning.

Elementary School/PYP

Students in the Elementary School (ES) spend around 50% of their learning time in Chinese and 50% in English. Subjects taught in Chinese are:

- Chinese Language or Chinese Language Acquisition
- Calligraphy
- Chinese culture

Subjects taught in both Chinese and English are:

- Math
- Science
- Social studies
- ICT
- Arts
- Physical Education (PE)

Middle School/MYP

Students in the Middle School (MS) spend around 35% of their learning time in Chinese and 65% in English. Subjects taught in Chinese are:

- Chinese Language and Literature
- Chinese Language Acquisition
- Chinese Morality



Subjects taught in both Chinese and English are:

- Math
- Individuals and Societies
- Science
- PE
- Visual Arts

All other subjects are taught in English.

As the school grows the option for offering an additional world languages for MS students will be explored as well as an adaptive policy with respect to home and family language support.

High School/DP

Students in High School (HS) will follow all requirements of the DP program. In general, most subjects will be taught in English, as most of the culminating exams and assessments will be administered in English.

Admissions

BES admits students based on previous school records as well as the oral and written language assessments. (Exception: Kindergarten or Grade 1 students are not required to take written assessments.) The school will place students in either Language Acquisition or Language and Literature based on the admissions test scores. We monitor students' progress regularly with the intent of flexibility in class allocation.

BES tries to ensure that all students admitted to the school have sufficient language proficiency to be successful. Please see the Admissions Policy for further details.

Language Assessment

During the admissions process, a student's language proficiency is assessed through written and listening tests as well as an oral interview. The ES and MS currently use MAP data to assess students' English language development and to group students accordingly for instructional purposes.

Language Support

Home & Family Language - Chinese

In addition to the subjects taught in Chinese, students engage in a variety of activities that showcase and promote their language and culture. Some examples are:



- Chinese traditional festivals/celebrations
- Speech and poetry showcases
- After-school activities
- Field trips

Home & Family Language - English

In addition to the subjects taught in English, students engage in a variety of activities that showcase and promote their language and culture. Some examples are:

- Cultural festivals (e.g., Halloween)
- Speech and poetry showcases
- After-school activities

Chinese Language Acquisition

Starting in Grade 1, students in the PYP whose home and family language(s) do not include Chinese must take Chinese as a Second Language (CSL). In the MYP, students who do not demonstrate sufficient proficiency to access the Language and Literature curriculum will enroll in Chinese Language Acquisition.

English Language Acquisition in the PYP

Support for PYP students is given in form of English as a Second Language (ESOL) classes, which can be either push-in or pull-out.

English Language Acquisition in the MYP

Students who do not demonstrate sufficient proficiency to access the Language and Literature curriculum will enroll in English Language Acquisition. Over the five-year MYP, increasing emphasis will be placed on learning English, in order to adequately prepare students for the language of instruction in the DP.

English Language Acquisition in the DP

Students choose their most fluent language for their "Language A" requirement and their next most fluent language for their "Language B" requirement. Typically, these will be English and Chinese but could include other languages as the school grows. The school will offer other languages via online platforms if required. Students will have the option to choose two "Language A" subjects to obtain a Bilingual Diploma. Depending on the specific home and family languages of our student population, and their prior learning experiences, the school may offer *ab initio* language classes to meet their learning needs.



Language in Context

In addition to specific MYP language courses in Chinese and English, MS students take Mathematics, Science, and Individuals and Societies in both Chinese and English.

Support for Beginning Language Learners

For students that have difficulty accessing the curriculum due to language skills or learning difficulties, individual education plans (IEPs) will be established in consultation with the student and family. Please see the Inclusion Policy for more information.

Communication

BES wants parents to feel included in school activities and events. School communication to the parents uses both English and Chinese. All school meetings with parents are bilingual (Chinese and English). Additionally, school media is bilingually presented (Chinese and English). As the school grows, the school may offer translation support for parents in other languages, based on the needs of the parents.

Multilingualism

The school acknowledges that all students need support in their mother tongue or home and family language. While the school may not offer classes in every student's mother tongue, the school will offer support for mother tongue language development. This support could include after-school activities, enrichment programs, or services from out-of-school providers.

Professional Development

The teaching staff and Pedagogical Leadership Team have identified a need for ongoing professional development (PD) in language acquisition and teaching strategies for language learners. PD could include internal and external speakers, workshops for staff and parents, or online training.

Since all teachers (including the Librarian) at BES are language teachers, one of the responsibilities of the Head of English is to support teachers in building academic vocabulary and language strategies in the subject areas. The Head of English will coordinate PD training in strategies such as Robert Marzano's "Six-Step Process."

Language Resources

BES is currently adding to its library collection (both print and digital materials) to include languages other than Chinese and English. The administration and the Librarian aim to ensure that the collection reflects the diversity of languages present in our school. In



In addition, all teaching staff, students, and parents are encouraged to suggest additions to the library collection that will facilitate language learning.

The school has language acquisition resources that support English Language Learners along the continuum of emergent learners to proficient learners. These resources address the needs of students in a multilingual school environment and cover language needs across the curriculum.

Roles and Responsibilities

The BES Language Policy is formally evaluated and reviewed by the teaching staff and the Pedagogical Leadership Team (PLT) each year. During the annual review process, the school will evaluate its current language profile and teaching practices, such that the needs of the school community, and government regulations, are being met.

As the school grows, interested students, parents, and other community members will join program coordinators, librarians, and administrators to form the Language Policy Steering Committee (LPSC). The LPSC will gather, organize, and communicate the views of the school community at least annually. This data may be gathered in a variety of ways (e.g., surveys, informal discussions, interviews) from students and members of the school community. The finding of the LPSC will drive the reflections, and revisions, of the BES Language Policy.

Works Cited

¹ *Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes*. International Baccalaureate, 2008.

² *Language and learning in IB programmes*. International Baccalaureate, 2012.