

ISM Language Policy

The ISM is committed to the development and learning of language throughout our entire school. We believe language is at the heart of understanding and this belief is central to our curriculum and instruction. Consequently, we provide as many opportunities as possible for our students to use language within the context of the curriculum, and in daily interactions with students, teachers, community members, and parents. In the modern world, command of English is an important way to access information and communicate internationally. Every student at the ISM has the right to equitable access to the curriculum in order to reach their full potential.

- Proficiency in English is of the highest priority for all students
- The language of instruction at the ISM is English, except in specific language classes
- The teaching of language is the responsibility of all teachers

The school serves and represents a diverse multi-cultural community for whom English is recognized as the common language. While a student's first language can be helpful to support their initial understanding of a new concept or idea, it is important to ensure that English is the classroom language used when the target language is English.

We appreciate and support the diversity of language within our school and the world as a whole, and promote the concept that although languages may differ in terms of culture and localities, they can lead to greater acceptance of both. With the aim of promoting international mindedness and appreciation, the ISM seeks to promote the development of all languages.

Procedure/Implementation

According to the International Baccalaureate Organisation, *the ability to communicate in a variety of modes, in more than one language, is essential to the concept of an international education.* ISM believes that multilingual skills are necessary for students to be competitive in a global context. In order to cater to the wide variety of linguistic backgrounds of students, the Language program consists of Language and Literature, Language Acquisition and Language ab Initio courses.

At ISM, Language refers to the student's first language and is typically spoken at a native/near-native level with a high degree of fluency. The aim of the programme is to develop students' CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency). English and German are available as Language and Literature Courses. In special cases, it is possible to take another language as a School-supported Self-Study Literature Course in the IB Diploma Programme.

Language Acquisition and Language ab initio courses are language acquisition courses in which Language Acquisition refers to a second or additional language where the students are still acquiring the skills to communicate fluently, and Language Ab Initio refers to beginner level entry into a language course where no prior knowledge is assumed. Progression in language acquisition follows the IB Phases of Language Acquisition global proficiency table from Emergent Communicator (Phase 1/2) to Proficient Communicator (Phase 5/6) which align to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) A1-C2 levels. English, German, Spanish (from grade 6) and French¹ are offered as Language Acquisition classes

¹ French only in Grades 11/12

Placement

- Upon enrollment at the ISM students will complete a language profile questionnaire, and, if English is not their mother tongue, an ELL Assessment
- Students will be grouped in classes as deemed appropriate by the Language and Literature / Mother Tongue teachers based on the assessments in addition to:
 - Previous school or kindergarten reports
 - Grade 1: Phonemic Awareness Test
 - Grade 2 - 5: "Grundschuldiagnose"/Elementary School diagnostic assessment
 - Input from parents

The school makes the final decision about the placement of a student.

- Placement on transition from Primary to Secondary School in Grade 6 will be based on the available assessment data. The decision will be made by the Language Coordinators with input from the language teachers and supported by the School coordinators and the Head of School in consultation with students' families.
- The Language (language and literature) programs in grades 6 – 10 are designed to accommodate English/German mother tongue speakers. One Language and Literature class is mandatory.
- The programs also accommodate bilingual students with English or German as a first or strong second language. This is subject to teacher recommendation. Students may be asked to take a test to ensure appropriate placement.
- The proficiency level of Language Acquisition students transitioning from Language Acquisition to Language and Literature will be based on the IB Phases of Language Acquisition global proficiency table along with a portfolio of their writing. Other information, such as the recommendation of the grade teacher and formative and summative assessments, will also be taken into consideration.
- A transition from Language Acquisition to Language and Literature will only be considered if the student is able to succeed on the Language and Literature criteria
- Where possible, phase 1 students will not be placed with other phases.

Assessment

Primary School

Students will be assessed on the PYP Language Continuum:

- Oral Language - Listening and Speaking
- Visual Language - Viewing and Presenting
- Written Language - Reading
- Written Language - Writing

Secondary School

Students in Grades 6-10 Language and Literature will be assessed on the MYP Language and Literature Criteria:

- Criterion A: Analysing
- Criterion B: Organising
- Criterion C: Producing Text
- Criterion D: Using Language

Students in Grades 6-10 Language Acquisition will be assessed on the MYP Language Acquisition Criteria:

- Criterion A: Listening
- Criterion B: Reading
- Criterion C: Speaking
- Criterion D: Writing

Students in Grades 11-12 will be assessed on the Language and Literature/Language Acquisition criteria for the components of the respective Group 1/Group 2 courses.

English Language Program

The language of instruction at the ISM is English. Upon enrollment in the ISM, students are supported in their development of the English language in a variety of ways. In the primary and secondary levels, specific English-language benchmarks are identified, which promote high expectations and standards for all students. English language instruction is differentiated to meet the individual differences and learning styles of each student. All of our English language instruction is centered on reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. In particular, interactive discussions, group-work dialogue and classroom communications between students and with the teacher should always be in English. This is to ensure that all members of the class are included in discussion and to strengthen and improve the development of English language skills.

1. Purposes and Beliefs

- To support students' multilingual language profiles
- For all students in the Language and Literature / Mother Tongue Program to experience success and enjoyment in their courses up to Group 1 IBDP level
- For all students to receive differentiated instruction, which provides an environment to enable appropriate challenge for all students
- To engage students in the language and literature learning process using the support of specialist Language and Literature trained teachers
- To ensure that our pedagogical structures and professional development recognize and are designed to promote academic language acquisition
- Students needing academic support may be excused from the German/Further Language programs to attend ELL support lessons.²

2. Placement

- Students will be grouped in classes as deemed appropriate by the Language A / Mother Tongue teachers. Differentiated instruction will ensure students are appropriately challenged

² See [ELL Guidelines and Procedures](#) for details

- In Grades 6-10, students will be placed into a Language and Literature or a Language Acquisition group

German Language Program

The ISM offers German as a language of study in all grade levels. In the primary, middle, and upper grades, German language skills are promoted through the development of skills and knowledge in addition to exposure to German culture. The objective of German Language Acquisition classes is to develop students' BICS (Basic interpersonal communicative skills) for them to be able to independently communicate in the host country. The language of instruction in German class is German and parents are encouraged to support German language development at home.

1. Purposes and Beliefs

- To support students' multilingual language profiles
- For all students in the Language and Literature / Mother Tongue Program to experience success and enjoyment in their courses up to Group 1 IBDP level and work towards the learning goals of the Bavarian curriculum, while recognizing that English is the main language of instruction
- For all students in the Language Acquisition Program to experience success and enjoyment in their courses up to Group 2 IBDP level and to acquire a working knowledge of German as the host country language and culture.
- To engage students in the language and literature learning process using the support of German Language and Literature/Language Acquisition trained teachers
- To foster an understanding and appreciation of German culture within our intercultural context and thus to foster intercultural awareness.
- To ensure that our pedagogical structures and professional development recognize and are designed to promote academic language acquisition.

2. Placement

- Students will be placed into a Language and Literature or a Language Acquisition group
- Differentiated instruction will ensure students are appropriately challenged

Pathways

Pathways from the PYP through the Middle Years to DP Groups 1/2 in our English and German language programs:

PYP	Middle Years	DP	
PYP Phase 1 - 5	Language A	Language A: literature SL/HL Language A: language and literature SL/HL	
PYP	Middle Years Lang. Acq. G 6/7/8	Middle Years Lang. Acq. G 9/10	DP

PYP Phase 1 - 3 (CEFR A1.1 - A2.2)	Phase 1 (CEFR A1)	Phase 1 (CEFR A1)	Ab initio (CEFR A1.1 - A1.2)
	Phase 2 (CEFR A2)	Phase 2 (CEFR A2)	Ab initio (CEFR A2.1) Language B SL (CEFR A2.2)
	Phase 3 (CEFR B1) Language and Literature*	Phase 3 (CEFR B1)	Language B SL
	Phase 4 (CEFR B2) Language and Literature*	Phase 4 (CEFR B2)	Language B SL/HL
	Phase 5 (CEFR C1) Language and Literature	Phase 5 (CEFR C1) Language and Literature	Language B SL/HL Language A: literature SL Language A: language and literature SL
	Phase 6 (CEFR C2) Language and Literature	Phase 6 (CEFR C2) Language and Literature	Language A: literature SL/HL Language A: language and literature SL/HL

- All students of the Language and Literature / Mother Tongue Program who experience success will have access to Group 1 IBDP courses.
- Language and Literature / Mother Tongue teachers recommendations will inform student course selection for the DP Group 1 or Group 2 programs in Grades 11/12. Final decisions are made by the Language and Literature and Language Acquisition coordinators.
- In specific cases, the DP Coordinator may review the course selection for the DP. If there is disagreement, the Head of School will make the final decision.

Further Language Acquisition Program

A Spanish Language Acquisition program is offered to students in grades 6-10 culminating in the option to take the IGCSE Spanish as a 2nd Language examination in Grade 10. At the IB DP level, there are a range of options for studying Spanish either as an ab initio or Language Acquisition course through a partner institution. The language of instruction is Spanish.

In the IB Diploma Programme Language Acquisition in French at ab initio level is also offered. The language of instruction is French.

Mother Tongue Support

The mother tongue is defined as the language that the child considers to be their strongest or preferred language. It is the language in which the child has developed the concepts and an understanding of the world, and will refer to in order to increase that conceptual understanding. Mother tongue language development is an integral part of the learning process, and the ISM believes that supporting continued mother-tongue language development helps create a well-balanced, confident student. The ISM understands that mother-tongue language growth helps

facilitate greater understanding and comprehension across cultures. The ISM encourages families to participate in the continued development of the mother-tongue language at home by speaking with their children in their mother tongue. We also request that families provide additional materials at home in their mother tongue which are relevant to the educational program being provided at school.

- Media Center - The library has a small but growing number of books in the mother tongue languages of the ISM students.
- In Class - Where possible teachers seek to provide support in mother tongues so that students can fully understand the concepts being taught.
- Classroom - When appropriate, students label classroom items in the variety of languages represented in a class.
- Guest Speakers - Teachers will contact guest speakers in the language of the mother tongue to speak and present in the classroom on topics which are being covered.
- Unit Support - Teachers will choose books from languages represented in their classes and invite students or their parents to read aloud to students.
- Referrals - ISM maintains a list of language organizations in Schweinfurt and surrounding area to share with non-German families. This allows them to connect with other expats of their language group and culture.

How is this Policy Reviewed?

This policy is under continuous review from the ISM Leadership Team in particular on an annual basis to ensure compliance with the policies of the external programmes offered. The policy is also subject to a detailed review in line with the ISM policy review cycle every 2-6 years (dependent on need) incorporating the views of all stakeholders.