



LANGUAGE POLICY

Westbourne College (Singapore), hereinafter, the College, is part of a global network of elite academic schools. Our admissions policy is designed to ensure that students are admitted based on their ability to thrive within the IGCSE and IB Diploma Programmes. We are committed to inclusivity and excellence, ensuring every student admitted receives an exceptional educational experience. The Principal reserves the right to adjust admissions procedures on a case-by-case basis to best serve applicants' unique needs.

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 to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners who understand that others, with their differences, can also be right.

The **mission** of Westbourne College (Singapore) is **to develop leaders of the future in STEM and business careers on the global stage.**

The College aims to become the world's first truly global network of elite academic schools. Building on our history at Westbourne School UK and a proven IBDP model for over 10 years, the College is uniquely positioned to deliver excellence.

We believe:

- That our students should receive an excellent academic, social, moral education in a caring, family-like community, which enables pupils to achieve their potential.
- Students flourish in a challenging learning environment, which provides opportunities for students to become independent learners and to function as part of a team.
- It is extremely important that parents, staff, and students work collaboratively.
- Central to the success of our students is the need to foster their confidence and self-esteem.
- It is important to develop well-rounded young adults who are prepared and ready to take their place in a modern-day global society.
- In developing inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young adults who help to create a more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

In encouraging students to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners, understanding that other people with their different cultures may also be right.

Language environment

Along with English, Chinese (Mandarin) and Spanish are among the UN official languages and are the languages of the 21st century. The College's goal for second language study, as well as all the benefits of second language acquisition, is to give students the widest possible global access to the widest possible range of global academic pathways and career options.

If there are students who enrol in the College who have "first or best languages" which are not able to be offered by the College, then students will be offered school support in their "self-teaching" of that language as a Language A: Literature course within the DP.

If there are students who enrol in the College whose "home/personal" languages are not offered within the DP subject choices, the College is committed to providing access for students to resources within Singapore which will support multi-literacy as appropriate for these students. Access to online resources, in addition to the comprehensive resources in multi languages which are available in Singapore's public libraries, will be enabled for all students. Individual students may be required to study a language through the online facilities of Pamoja Education.

In addition to the support given by teachers and the school, the language programmes at the College offer opportunities for students to develop their language skills and learning in line with the IB Learner Profile. Students are encouraged to be 'inquirers' by going beyond the syllabus and exploring material that is not explicitly taught. This promotes self-driven learning and curiosity towards the culture of the target language. Materials can include appropriate television programmes, video clips, songs etc.

Students are also encouraged to be 'open-minded'; to explore and view issues from different cultural perspectives, especially when they are learning the target language (Group B), its culture, traditions, value system and practices. Students will learn 'self-management' by developing a mindset whereby they are comfortable not knowing every word in reading passages but can apply the taught method of making educated guesses about the meaning of words, phrases and sentences. Students will also develop resilience and perseverance when making intelligent inference of meaning in unfamiliar texts.

1. Philosophy

1.1 We recognise that the study of language is the foundation for all learning. Language study enables students to develop knowledge, international understanding and cultural capabilities, all of which enhance personal growth and promote effective communication. As an IB World School, we aim to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

1.2 We create active, compassionate, life-long language learners who have the skills to independently develop their linguistic capacity. Language skills are transferable and language proficiency aids understanding across the whole curriculum.

1.3 All teachers are language teachers and are expected to promote global-mindedness actively. It is essential to use subject terminology and related command terms (e.g., 'evaluate', 'discuss', etc.). All non-language teachers adapt and extend the skills they use to confidently support language development in their mainstream classrooms. Specific techniques are promoted such as the use of pre-reading, glossaries, modified criteria in assessment and differentiation within the classroom. Assessment modification in the IB DP is limited by the external nature of the programme's assessment requirements.

1.4 All Diploma level students will learn another language in addition to their mother tongue/first

language, where possible. We appreciate that the development of the mother-tongue language is critical to maintaining a sense of cultural identity and increasing self-esteem.

1.5 Students are individuals and have different language needs. Differentiation to facilitate inclusion and access across the curriculum is integral to the school's nature.

2. Steering Committee

2.1 Decisions related to language groupings for each student will be made by the steering committee. The steering committee comprises the IB DP Coordinator and all language teachers. Other staff members can be requested to attend meetings (e.g. admissions staff, non-language teachers).

3. College Profile

3.1 Language development may be used as a tool for personal growth, social interaction and developing relationships within and across cultures. Language provides the vehicle for thought, creativity, reflection, learning and self-expression to foster curiosity, a lifelong interest and enjoyment in learning.

3.2 The medium of instruction at the College is English, consistent with English being one of the three languages in which the DP is offered. College considers English to be the host country language.

3.3 The College will benefit from an involvement in Singapore's very diverse local community, and from its multi-lingual, multicultural student body. Direct contact with the parents and families of all students is a priority in the College, as we take full advantage of the diversity of the Singapore community, and of our own college community as a subset of that. We will welcome connection with the expertise of all parents of our students, as we build a rich and collaborative community of learners, not only within the context of language.

3.4 The appreciation and promotion of languages in general and specifically modern, foreign languages, is at the heart of the Westbourne schools. Students are encouraged to be actively curious about and accepting of other cultures. The College will promote a wide participation in different languages and an understanding of different cultures through a number of activities and events throughout the school year, such as celebrating Chinese New Year, Singapore's National Day, and embarking upon cultural study tours. Connections will be made with a range of community groups within the context of the DP's CAS programme, especially associated with the students' emphasis on service.

3.5 All teachers are expected to speak English at mother tongue/first language/fluent level, with the possible exception of (non-English) Group 1 and Group 2 (language) teachers. It is expected that non-teaching management and administration support staff will be (at least) bilingual with English as the language of school administration.

3.6 It is recognised that some teachers as well as non-teaching staff may need up-skilling in addressing the language issues which arise for students and their families in the school. Professional learning opportunities, either IB or externally-provided, will be made available to ensure that all staff have the necessary understanding and capacity to provide the appropriate formal language learning, and/or administrative support for all students, according to their language circumstances.

4. Links to the Admissions Policy

4.1 Admission to the College by first language English speakers involves a skills-based test assessing reading and writing skills. For EAL students enrolling at the College, a language certificate of B2 level in the CEFR or equivalent is required. Students who are identified as having lower English levels may be asked to complete an ITEP assessment to further examine their English language proficiency and ability to access the delivery of the curriculum. This standardised test may identify students as having specific learning needs or the need for additional English support and will assess their suitability to be enrolled in the College. More detail can be found in the Inclusion Policy. Overall, The admissions and language placement process is conducted in full awareness of this Language Policy to ensure students are placed in a language pathway where they can be both challenged and supported.

4.2 The English test is marked by an English specialist. Decisions about enrolment are then made by the Principal in consultation with the DP Coordinator. Applicants are then either accepted or rejected based on this and other criteria.

4.3 Decisions about language subjects in Groups 1 and 2 for each student are made by the Principal and the IB DP Coordinator in collaboration with the language teachers. *(More detail can be found in the College's Admissions Policy.)*

5. Links to the Inclusion Policy

5.1 Students who require modification in teaching and assessment come under the umbrella of the Inclusion Policy and this should be read in conjunction with that policy.

6. Guidance on teaching students with English as an Additional Language

6.1 If there are students who are enrolled in the College who have English as an additional language, they may have some challenges accessing areas of the DP curriculum. Teachers should adopt strategies for these learners to enable them to take a full and meaningful part in lessons, and to confirm that they are able to be successful in the programme. Strategies to encourage this could include but are not limited to:

- modification of assessment tasks as appropriate in the DP context.
- modification of assessment criteria as appropriate to the student's level of language development in the DP context.
- modification of teaching materials as appropriate – generally this will mean minimising the length of reading to key concepts only.
- provision of pre-reading for topics.
- access to books written in the mother tongue allowing students to explore concepts in their own language and in English alongside.
- provision of glossaries of technical terms.
- Strategic use of translanguaging to confirm understanding of complex concepts.
- the use of vocabulary books.
- individualised explanation/assistance during lessons.
- teaching of techniques for reading for different purposes such as reading for meaning, skim reading.
- focus on command terms to help students answer accurately.
- allowing students to present work in alternative formats enabling them to play to their strengths.
- providing feedback on understanding of knowledge and concepts, not simple accurate English.

- the provision of additional resources for students to use at home to enable them to reinforce their learning.
- understanding the background and culture of the student to allow for appreciation of challenges/knowledge which may be particular to the place/culture of origin.
- using admissions information provided by the admissions staff to appropriately prepare for new students.

7. IB Diploma language pathway

7.1 English First Language (DP Language A): Students study English from entry until graduation at IB Diploma Level, having the option of studying English A. There are no formal prerequisites for this course other than having a language standard comparable (equivalent) to an IELTS level of 7.5. The College supports the learning of mother tongue (first language) and provides support for independent learning of a language not offered at the College (as a School-Supported Self-Taught Language A: Literature).

7.2 Second Languages (DP Language B and ab initio): The College's mainstream second language offering is Chinese (Mandarin), and Spanish. These are offered at ab initio level and/or possibly in language B. Students with more than 6 months (or one full semester) prior language study experience will undertake second language study at Language B level.

8. Bilingual IB diplomas

8.1 As an alternative to the standard IB diploma certificate, a "bilingual diploma certificate" can be awarded to a candidate who:

- completes two languages selected from group 1 with the award of a grade 3 or higher in both
- completes one of the subjects from group 3 or group 4 in a language that is not the same as the candidate's nominated group 1 language. The candidate must attain a grade 3 or higher in both the group 1 language and the subject from group 3 or 4.
- Pilot subjects and interdisciplinary subjects can contribute to the award of a bilingual diploma certificate, provided the above conditions are met.

The following cannot contribute to the award of a bilingual diploma certificate:

- an extended essay
- a school-based syllabus
- a subject taken by a candidate in addition to the six subjects for the diploma certificate ("additional subjects").

9. Validity of the Policy and review

This Policy enters into force on 13 April 2026. It is to be reviewed once every academic year.

Bibliography

DP language courses: overview and placement guidance. Published on behalf of the International Baccalaureate Organization, 2020