

Secondary School

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Dear Parents,

ESL Department – Mid Year Report

The BISI Secondary ESL department is quite compact, enabling students to benefit from maximum assistance from teachers and make excellent progress during their time studying within the department. Unsurprisingly, all ESL students rapidly developed their knowledge of, and ability to use, English during the first term of the 2010–2011 academic year with four of them graduating to the mainstream English department. This is a great step forward and requires students to be able to encode and decode language with accuracy and fluency and focus on the functions of English and the many genres of reading and writing.

Not all language acquisition takes place in the classroom; in fact, students who enjoy socialising in English with others, and have the opportunity to do so regularly, are far more likely to become successful with learning the language. Another very important learning strategy is to read English books for pleasure and discuss the basic storyline with parents and others.

In this second term, we have broadened our main focus to include reading, writing and analysing the selected texts, as well as the more structural and lexical approach with which we began the year. Students are better prepared for the mainstream English class as their outlook and experience of English is far wider. This also leads the students to higher order thinking and more complex structures. After all, to be able to structure and write a formal letter, or discuss the advantages and disadvantages of possible actions or situations, basic English would be far from sufficient to sway the reader's opinion.

Our Year 10 IGCSE Second Language students have just written their Mock examination which will determine whether they sit the Core or Extended paper this May. Excellent results are expected in the final examination this summer helping to prepare all students for the First Language English paper in Year 11.

The ESL and mainstream English departments work closely to ensure that ESL students make early transitions to the mainstream English and Modern Foreign Languages departments. If your son or daughter is an ESL student and you would like information on how best to help him or her, we are always willing and available to speak to you.

Yours faithfully,

Joan Christianssen