

The British International School Istanbul English as a Second Language Policy

The ESL departments of Primary and Secondary provide students, whose first language is not English, with the facility to accelerate the learning of their new school language as rapidly as possible. This enables students to take advantage of, not only the school curriculum, but also the social environment of The British International School. The ESL department acknowledges that the language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing are interrelated and interactive and the development of linguistic skills depends on a holistic approach that incorporates all four elements. The ESL department recognises the importance of the development of the student's home language as being essential to cognitive growth, as well as enabling the student to retain cultural and emotional stability.

➤ **Assessment for Learning**

In order to apply this principle we:

- Recognise that the beneficial outcomes of language immersion programmes are cumulative and individual.
- Maintain an ongoing assessment of student language progress and needs. Each student is assessed in reading, writing and oral language through contributions in class, formal key time and stage assessments to make sure that developmental linguistic progress is being made.
- Send reports out twice a year alongside parent/teacher/student progress interviews twice a year.

➤ **Effective Teaching and Learning**

The ESL Teacher is the specialist in the school for teaching English as a second language. However all class teachers are also involved in the provision of English language teaching to those students whose first language is not English.

In order to apply this principle we:

- Identify ESL students in conjunction with the class teacher, addressing their language needs and providing social and emotional support, especially during the first weeks of school.
- Gather background information about the ESL students by meeting the parents and filling in the student profile form.
- Liaise with class teachers in order to:
 - a.) gather information and materials to reinforce, support and extend class work in terms of content and skills.
 - b.) exchange information and discuss the specific needs and progress of individual ESL students.
 - c.) arrange suitable provision of homework .
- Develop and implement ESL programmes which demonstrate current ESL methodologies using appropriate materials.
- Identify and report on ESL student progress.

➤ **Curriculum Entitlement and Choice**

In order to apply this principle we:

- develop proficiency in English to enable the ESL student to effectively participate in mainstream academic activities.
- develop confidence and skills necessary for the ESL student to become fully integrated in the social life of the school.
- recognise and provide support for the social and emotional needs of the ESL student, especially during the first few weeks of school.
- liaise closely with class teachers in order to:
 - a) reinforce, support and extend class work,
 - b) provide information and discuss the specific needs of individual ESL students.
- liaise closely with parents to discuss:

- a) the appropriate support they can offer their child at home to support the acquisition of English,
 - b) the importance of maintaining the ESL student's home language.
- acknowledge and respect the home language.

Practical Organisation

Wherever possible, in both Primary and Secondary ESL students are divided into beginner, elementary and intermediate level groups. These are determined according to age, level and class. Groups are small (recommended maximum of 6, but ideal of 4) to allow for individual attention meeting the needs of diverse abilities. When possible, dependent on class sizes and availability of teachers, ESL students will be grouped with chronologically aged peers. If this is not possible, then classes will be levelled and vertical.

Beginner at EYFS (Early Years)

The teachers work with the children in the class and build on communication and language skills to improve their English Language through play and focused activities.

Beginner at EYFS 2 (Reception) and Key Stage One

Beginner lessons take place everyday for 30 minutes at an appropriate time during the day. This time should be early when possible and not during specialist classes. These students focus primarily on speaking and listening skills following the internal beginner ESL Language Programme.

If a child is finding communication in English difficult, teachers will work with parents to find out about and encourage the development of the child's home language skills.

Intermediate at Key Stage One

Intermediate group lessons take place 2 or 3 times a week for 40 minutes. Students follow the ESL Language Programme but content and context wherever possible is drawn from the mainstream class topic areas. When children are ready (usually in year 2) ESL also supports literacy skills for these students.

Beginner at Key Stage Two

Beginner lessons take place at least 5 times a week, ideally everyday for 40-60 minutes during class literacy time. KS2 students focus on all skills, reading, writing, speaking and listening with special attention given to weak areas. Language development is guided by the ESL Language Programme for KS2 using mainstream focus areas for context wherever possible.

Intermediate at Key Stage Two

Intermediate group lessons take place 2 or 3 times a week for 40 minutes. Two periods are during class French time. The third may be a withdrawal lesson or in class support. At this level the focus is on students' weaker skills using classroom content areas as context where appropriate. There is a clear focus on supporting reading and writing skills alongside speaking and listening skills.

Secondary

Key Stage Three

Initially, students are formally assessed for their knowledge of English structure and ability to write the language. Alongside this, students are tested to assess their current acquisition to determine their level to access the language of instruction. If a student has not reached the standard to enter all mainstream classes, a programme is created for that student which will best meet his or her needs. However, all ESL students will experience ESL mathematics, ESL science, art, physical education, and drama with the idea of acquiring language as needed and to provide a sense of belonging to a larger school community rather than a smaller ESL one. Should a student require greater assistance in E2, then they will spend greater time in an ESL setting. For students who have progressed/ been assessed as intermediate, they will be placed within the mainstream curriculum with the exception of MFL and Turkish. This will allow the ESL students at this tier to benefit from an additional 4 hours of English support to hone language skills and grammar.

There are currently three ESL classes organised for Years Seven, Eight and Nine. Students studying in these classes have different needs and attend some, or all, of the ESL classes according to their individual timetables. ESL students at Key Stage Three study with their peers but may not be studying for the same amount of time each week for the following reasons:

1. A student who needs to consolidate the English they have learnt will study ESL instead of a modern foreign language.
2. More intensive ESL may be required if a student does not have the literacy skills required to join the mainstream English class.
3. Students who join us with very little experience of English may need further ESL which means that they also study ESL instead of humanities.

Each student's programme is discussed regularly in order to ensure that the needs of the student are being met and good progress is being made. Students can have more or less ESL depending on individual needs but progression to full mainstream classes is by formal, written assessment twice yearly, in January and April.

Key Stage Four

ESL students wishing to join BISI at Key Stage Four are assessed for their ability with the four skills of English, listening, speaking, reading and writing. Since this is the IGCSE group, students are required to have a clear understanding of the structure of English and a good ability to express themselves, particularly when writing English.

To be offered a place at Key Stage Four, a new ESL student requires the ability to cope with both the IGCSE level of study and a high standard of English. A placement/ entry test is administered for this assessment alongside external diagnostic testing such as the CAT test.

ESL Implementation Practices throughout BISI

Entry to the programme

Applicants are screened through:

- a student profile form filled in with parents to discuss the student's prior language learning experience
- discussion with the class teacher based on initial impressions
- an informal oral test, and written test where appropriate

Exiting the ESL programme

- Exit from the support programme is based on the assessment procedures and consultation with the class teacher.
- Parents are informed.
- Within Primary, the student is awarded a certificate.
- Students may return for ESL support if they are subsequently struggling in the mainstream class.
- Within Secondary, the student will have passed a final placement test and have met the standards to engage in full mainstream. Prior to movement, a transition programme will be established. In addition, movement takes place only between units of work and at the beginning of Term 2 (January) or Term 3 (April).

Beyond the Classroom

In order to apply this principle we:

- Design and teach programmes to develop confidence and skills necessary to enable the ESL students to become fully integrated into the social and academic life of the school.
- Promote respect and appreciation of the languages and cultures represented by the school community.
- Inform parents and new teachers of the school's language programme and language issues such as the importance of ongoing development of the mother tongue.
- Support and provide training as requested/needed to mainstream teachers re programmes and practices which support ESL students and SLA research.