



# BISS Gausel Language Policy



**BRITISH  
INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOLS**  
OF STAVANGER





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*‘Creating role models for the future’*



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## 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.

## BISS Mission Statement

At the British International Schools of Stavanger, we take our responsibility to prepare children for life in the 21st century seriously. The acquisition of fundamental values lies at the heart of everything we do, and all areas of the curriculum are a vehicle for underpinning these values.

## Language Philosophy and Practice

At BISS we celebrate the many languages students have and recognize benefits of multiculturalism within the school. We believe in the importance of language teaching and that all teachers are teachers of language.

To enable language to develop throughout the school, we:

- Encourage native speakers to improve their skills through the setting of high expectations.
- Encourage learners of English as another language to develop and achieve fluency through scaffolding and a well implemented English as an additional language programme, where school works closely with parents.
- Encourage students to maintain their mother tongue language (where relevant), as this is vital for cultural identity and the personal growth of the student.

## Language Profile

BISS is a multi-cultural international school catering for a multi-national market. We have a student body of approximately 500 students ranging from 2 years to 16 years of age, representing approximately 47 nationalities.

We have a teaching faculty of approximately 40 teaching staff, representing a cross section of ethnicity and language experience.

## Taught languages

At BISS students who are fluent in both Norwegian and English will undertake both languages at Language A in PYP and MYP. Language A is either the student's mother tongue or one in which he/she has near-native proficiency.

Students not fluent in Norwegian will follow language B Norwegian in both PYP and MYP. In MYP students study an additional Language B (German).

## English language learning at BISS

English is the language of instruction and language learning pervades all areas of the curriculum, as well as English being taught as a discreet subject throughout the school.

If English is not the students' mother tongue students will be assessed on entry to determine to what extent they can access and understand the curriculum delivered in English. We understand that all students analyse, comprehend and progress in a new language at different rates, but developing a fluency in the language of instruction is the end goal for all BISS students.

## English language learning for learners who are learning in a language other than their mother tongue

Students entering BISS without English are encouraged to acquire BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) as quickly as possible so they can interact with their peers and teachers. School understands that it takes between 4 and 7 years to become fluent and to operate at the same level as a native speaker. At BISS a modified mainstream curriculum, as well as discreet language lessons are methods used to allow students to access the English language.

Scaffolding methods are used in mainstream classes to enable learners to accomplish tasks. They include:

- Peer coaching
- Use of Information technology
- Students are given rubrics with modified criteria in order to access the curriculum,
- Structures and frameworks are offered to allow students to develop ATL (Approaches to learning) skills
- Subject specific vocabulary is displayed and given to the students
- Students are paired with others who have the same mother tongue, if possible, for some tasks
- Students are encouraged to use a bilingual dictionary and, in some subjects, Google translator
- School facilitates the learning of mother tongue languages through clubs offered after school

## English as an additional language- lessons

The lessons are taught by trained English as additional language teachers and follow a structured programme appropriate to proficiency. The aim of the course is to support language learning and to accelerate language skills in order to allow the students to access the mainstream curriculum as quickly as possible. The programme integrates the four main aspects of languages (speaking and listening, reading and writing).

## Assessment

The school follows the European Common Framework Assessment Criteria for languages.

## Entry and exit criteria onto the English as an additional learning programme

Students are assessed on entry into the programme and depending on need are offered support lessons during the school day. When a learner of English can cope sufficiently in a mainstream classroom they are reintegrated into mainstream lessons. (See admissions policy)

## Host country language

All students learn Norwegian, the language of our host country. Depending on fluency students are divided into either Language A or Language B

## Language A Norwegian

This programme follows Kunnskapsløftet.

" This programme is regarded as important school for cultural understanding, communication, education and development of identity. Through active use of the Norwegian language when working with their own texts and in the encounter with the texts of others, children and young people are introduced to culture and social life.

The Norwegian subject curriculum opens an area where they can find their own voices, learn to express themselves, be heard and receive feedback. Thus the subject represents a democratic public arena that equips students with the necessary background for participation in social and working life. More than ever before, society needs individuals who master language and texts.

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## PYP Assessment

Formative assessment takes place throughout all PYP Norwegian lessons. This is to ensure that each student is placed in the correct language class in accordance with their language abilities.

New students to BISS who are fluent in Norwegian will be automatically placed in Norwegian Language A classes. Students with no prior knowledge of Norwegian will be placed in Language B Norwegian.

PYP students may show their abilities at the end of a Norwegian unit for example by giving a presentation in Norwegian. Assessment pieces in PYP are not graded but students should receive oral or written feedback.

## MYP Assessment

Each term students are graded on the three assessment criteria outlined above. At the conclusion of the course, criteria grades are combined to produce an overall MYP Language 'A' attainment level.

## MYP Language B – German and Norwegian

- To understand and communicate in another language
- To develop an understanding of the diversity of language

Learning another language contributes to mutual understanding, a sense of global citizenship and personal fulfillment. Students learn to appreciate different countries, cultures, communities and people. The ability to understand and communicate in another language is a lifelong skill for education, employment and leisure throughout the world.

Every student at BISS will have the opportunity to learn an additional language over and above English and Norwegian. This experience is essential to the international experience and enables students to understand the thinking, norms and traditions of another culture. As the student gains an appreciation for a new language and culture they are then part of a more diverse community which will assist them in interacting and communicating with the culturally diverse world they live in today.

The assessment process follows the MYP published assessment criteria and the course content follows the aims and objectives of the Language A programme. In addition to this assessment, students in MYP years 1-3 take end of year exams known as SAT (standard assessment tests) tests. All results are recorded and the data is used to inform teaching and learning. (Refer to Assessment Policy)

## PYP Language B- Norwegian

Students, who do not follow the double Language A programme are required to study Language B Norwegian. It is a legal requirement that all students study Norwegian. Therefore, all students on the MYP programme study an additional Language B – German.

The Language B course covers the main aspects of languages (speaking and listening, reading and writing) and is assessed using the Language B criteria. International and cultural understanding is enhanced through the use of film, speaking and listening activities, role play, poems, songs and educational visits to bring the language alive.

Language B is organized into six phases. The phases represent a developmental continuum of additional language learning (language B). Students may commence their language B course in any phase on the continuum and may exit from any phase on the continuum. (See p. 5 Language B guide)

## New students to the MYP - Norwegian

- New students to BISS who are fluent in Norwegian will be automatically placed in Norwegian Language A classes.
- New students to BISS with no prior knowledge of Norwegian will be placed in Language B Norwegian.
- Students with some knowledge of Norwegian will be assessed using the global proficiency table and the Language B Norwegian continuums and placed accordingly.

When a student has reached phase 5 before their final year at BISS, they will have an initial trial period in the Language A Norwegian class and assessed according to the Language A Norwegian criteria. The student may then, if appropriate, move into the Language A Norwegian class. Exceptions can be made at the teacher's discretion. Language A students in MYP1 - 3 who are consistently not meeting the requirements/criteria may be temporarily placed in the Language B Norwegian class.

A student should be placed in a language phase which is challenging, something which is going to benefit their progression. Students can move up into another phase mid-term if they are considered borderline between two phases. The student will then be assessed on two different phases within an academic year. Students are expected to move up one phase each academic year.

MYP students in their final year will be placed and certified in a specific phase where the teacher is certain that the student can succeed. The students will stay in this phase throughout the academic year.

## Mother tongue

At BISS we also recognize that a strong level of knowledge and understanding in the students' mother tongue is vital to the students' development of an additional language. The school recognizes the importance of the mother tongue and understands how the use of additional languages can enhance the development of the student as well as allowing the student to maintain cultural identity. In the MYP programme students are encouraged to continue learning in their mother tongue outside of the school day. A variety of different language clubs, organized and run by natives of that language are in operation throughout the school year. BISS provides contact numbers and information regarding mother tongue classes where available. EAL teachers recommend that students keep a journal in their own language at home in order to maintain their skills in their mother tongue.

Within the curriculum there are opportunities for students to study particular units in their mother tongue, whilst students new to English are able to work in their mother tongue, in non-language subjects, until they are able to cope with the mainstream curriculum in English. All subject teachers are expected to promote the use of a student's mother tongue language as an aid. Teachers are encouraged to ask students to keep a glossary of subject specific words in both English and their mother tongue.

Students are encouraged to use a bilingual dictionary which they take to all classes. Students are encouraged to look up information in their own language in order to have a better understanding of the subject material in English.

Students are supported to initially express themselves in their mother tongue (especially if this is their only language of communication) through peer buddying, access to staff who speak their language and encouragement to use their mother tongue e.g..... when counting, where appropriate. Students are invited to spend lunches with other children who speak their language and to attend after school language clubs. Reference is regularly made to home country cultures through the PYP units of inquiry and through discussion of celebrations and traditions, for example in assemblies.

## Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Children are tracked closely to monitor progress through informal and formal assessment. Where children are identified as requiring additional language support a variety of intervention packages are used to help those students make progress. Teachers identify them in their planning and provide differentiated tasks and resources.

## Media centre and language

Students use the library facilities to aid language development. The library is well stocked and is available both during the day and after school for students to complete work. A variety of media is available to the students including books in a variety of languages, ICT facilities with access to the internet, reference books, and current journals. A qualified librarian is employed to support the students in their learning.

## Preferred bibliographic style for MYP

BISS MYP students should use the Harvard referencing system.

## Language Summary

The British International School of Stavanger will:

- Reinforce the importance of language in all subjects.
- Monitor the teaching and learning of language. Have teachers that commit to the importance and responsibility of language development in all subjects.
- Provide opportunities for all students to learn an additional language to their mother tongue or language of instruction (English).
- Offer referrals of teachers, tutors and after school activities that ensure the students maintain a continuous learning and understanding of their own mother tongue.
- Maintain a global awareness and understanding of students' culture and other cultures
- Provide guidance and continuing education to subject staff about the expectations and milestones of all language learners.
- Provide staff with exercises, ideas, techniques and scaffolding which will allow the students to improve their language learning.
- Recognize that students need to be permitted to comprehend language through listening, reading, viewing and writing.
- Give students the opportunity to increase their confidence to express themselves using all language skills.
- Use EAL support to; provide additional support within the classroom for individual or small groups of students; combine pull-out and additional EAL support within the classroom; withdraw from classes for those learners who require intensive English language assistance; adapt classroom environment and materials to suit EAL students' needs; and maintain a constant line of communication with mainstream/subject teachers, parents and administration.

## Communicating the policy

There should be consideration of how to keep the whole school community informed of the policy process and how they might make contributions.

The policy documents at BISS are discussed and referred to on a regular basis in the following fora:

- MYP and PYP FAU meetings
- SLT meetings
- Staff meetings
- Stakeholder group meetings
- Board meetings
- Student council meetings

## Equal opportunities:

Teachers will ensure that all students have equal access to the curriculum. Students will be encouraged to enjoy contributions and experiences from different cultures and respect similarities and differences. The school will seek to develop tolerance and concern for others regardless of sex, race, culture, religion or class, and to avoid stereotypical views.

## Links to other policies:

The language policy is linked to:

- Assessment
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) policies.



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This policy is a working document and has been produced by HODs (Foundation, PYP, MYP DP programmes) and administration. The policy is reviewed bi-annually.