

St. George School Language Policy



THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF CATALUNYA

Last reviewed: January 2025

Next review: September 2025

St. George Language Policy

The purpose of this document is to outline the school's language principles; inform the teaching and learning of languages in the classroom; guide the development of the curriculum; and involve all members of the school community in the goal of educating all students in an international environment.

Philosophy

St. George School is a British International School where the language of instruction is English. We believe that language plays a fundamental role in the education of young people and our wider school community. We recognise that every student has individual and cultural experiences, skills and interests which are considered important factors in fostering international-mindedness through the promotion of cultural identity, intercultural awareness and global citizenship. It is through language that students can explore concepts and theories, solve problems, explore discoveries, express opinions, organise information and ideas and communicate effectively in the school and wider community.

We believe all teachers are language teachers, contributing to the development of students' linguistic capabilities across the curriculum. Through inquiry-based learning, we aim to develop confident and effective communicators who can express ideas, solve problems, and engage globally. The process of learning language is dynamic and underpins the entire curriculum as the acquisition of language is developmental in nature, existing in a fluid and transitional state, responding to changes in culture, technology and society. Language is always taught in a meaningful way, within a set context. These contexts vary, but often involve the use of real-life scenarios, native speakers and a wide variety of texts.

As a school in Catalunya, we are strongly committed to providing students with access to Spanish and Catalan Language learning, in line with local government legislation, and utilising the local community for language and cultural experiences through the curriculum. Equally important to St. George is the belief that each student should have the opportunity to maintain and develop their mother tongue(s). The acquisition of additional languages allows students to further reflect upon and explore different cultural perspectives.

Profile

St. George School is a culturally diverse school with over 600 students from a range of cultural backgrounds. We are a British International School where English is the main language for communication and instruction, supported by Spanish and Catalan instruction in line with local regulation. Many students are bilingual or multilingual, with diverse mother tongues. We aim to provide opportunities to maintain and develop these languages alongside English. We recognise the importance of native tongue teachers at St. George School, and as such, most of the teaching staff are English native speakers from a range of backgrounds. We also employ Spanish, Catalan and French mother tongue speakers to facilitate students' learning and development in those languages.

At St. George School, English is the main language of communication and instruction. From Pre-Nursery upwards students learn and communicate in English, but also take part in an extensive programme of Spanish and Catalan in line with local regulations. In the secondary phase of the school, students continue to advance their learning of Spanish to pass the 'ESO' and ensure that they can access higher education both globally and in the host nation. For those students for whom Spanish is not their mother tongue, we offer Spanish as an additional language programme for students to communicate effectively with their peers at school and live their lives efficiently in the host country. Similarly, we also offer intensive programmes of study and support for those whom English is also an additional language. Developing the attributes of the IB learner profile is also integrated into the teaching and language learning since it develops the necessary skills for students to learn effectively and become internationally-minded citizens.

As an IB School, delivering the Diploma Programme, we are committed to the following practices:

- The school promotes open communication based on understanding and respect (Standard A: 6).
- The school places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, host country language and other languages (Standard A: 7).
- The school develops and implements a language policy that is consistent with IB expectations (Standard B1: 5b).
- The school provides qualified staff to implement the [language] programmes (Standard B2: 2).
- Collaborative planning and reflection recognises that all teachers are responsible for language development of students (Standard C1: 8).
- The written curriculum promotes students' awareness of individual, local, national and world issues (Standard C2: 7).
- Teaching and learning addresses the diversity of student language needs, including those for students learning in a language(s) other than the mother tongue (Standard C3: 7)
- Teaching and learning demonstrates all teachers are responsible for language development of students (Standard C3: 8).

Language Pathways

For the Language A Course students can choose from: Spanish Language and Literature or English Language and Literature (at higher or standard level). This reflects St. George School's commitment to the language of the host country and to English as our primary language of instruction.

To reflect the importance of a student's native language, St. George will provide students with the opportunity to follow the Language A School Supported Self Taught (SSST) SL course. The SSST supervisor will liaise with the external tutor (where applicable) and support students by assisting them with the design of the course and guide them through the internal and external assessment process.

When the Secondary School receives a request for a School Supported Self Taught course in the mother tongue, the SSST supervisor will manage the following process:

- The school will commit to identifying a tutor, and will provide that tutor with the materials and training to deliver a suitable course which will appear on student transcripts.
- Students will have a weekly lesson with the SSST supervisor.
- The parent(s) will commit to paying the tutor for his/her services. The SSST supervisor will place families with common language goals in contact with each other, so that costs can be shared. This is private arrangement between the tutor and the families for which the School has no responsibility*.

*When external tuition is organised as a replacement of one of the Language A or B course requirements for the IB DP, tutors are required to provide evidence of student learning in line with the SSST [contract](#).

For the Language B Course, students will be able to choose from English, Spanish, French or Spanish ab initio.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We accept students who have English as an Additional Language throughout the school. To facilitate the integration of these students into the school community each student's English is assessed on entry and where necessary an individualised EAL programme is provided to enable them to access the curriculum. This support takes the form of intensive withdrawal lessons on a one-to-one or small group basis. Because of the demands of study in IGCSE years we only accept students in need of additional English support until year 9. It is the responsibility of the Admissions Officer in conjunction with the Head of School and SENCo to identify students who require support and the level of their need.

Links to other policies: [Assessment Policy](#), [Inclusion Policy](#).

Collaboration on this policy: *Admissions, SENCo, Senior Leadership Team, SSST.*

Bibliography

IBO. (2008) *Guidelines for developing a school language policy*: [Link](#)

IBO. (2018) *Programme Standards and Practices*: [Link](#)