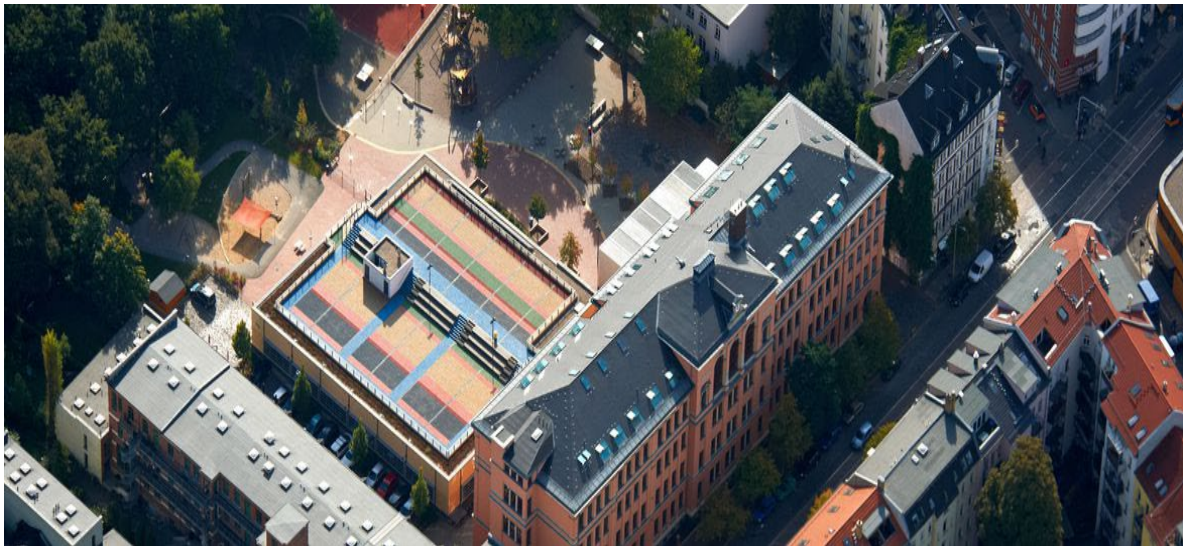


LEIPZIG INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



Secondary School Philosophies, Policies & Procedures
for Learning Languages at LIS.

Our Mission

Leipzig international School is an inclusive learning community which empowers and inspires today's learners to make meaningful impacts in tomorrow's world.

Our Vision

Learning to be a Citizen of the World.

OUR VALUES

COURAGEOUS

- ✓ We have the courage to listen, empathize, persist, follow our passions, and grow.
- ✓ We have the courage of our convictions knowing that we are members of a supportive and respectful learning community.

INCLUSIVE

- ✓ We embrace diversity by celebrating our common humanity, empowering all learners on their personal journeys of growth.

PROUD

- ✓ We recognize the unique opportunity we have as members of the LIS community and we enthusiastically embrace our responsibility to make a positive impact on ourselves, each other, and the world.



L.I.S. Learner Profile

As an IB World School, we adhere to the values of the IB mission statement. This declares that the aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally-minded young people who, recognising their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

IB learners strive to be:

Inquirers

Knowledgeable

Thinkers

Communicators

Principled

Open-minded

Caring

Risk-takers

Balanced

Reflective



L.I.S. Learning Principles

Our principles of learning

1. We teach for learning of concepts and ideas through the process of guided inquiry, so that students can apply understanding to new areas of study.
2. We teach for learning of skills and competencies through modelling, deconstruction and joint reconstruction, so that students can apply skills independently and practise to achieve mastery.
3. We teach to promote individual critical thinking and research capacity, so that students can explore local and global contexts and develop innovative solutions to the challenges of our time.
4. We teach and model for learning of effective student character traits that align to our values and promote a healthy, happy and meaningful life.
5. We teach learning dispositions and skills to enable students' self-management, for them to be rigorous, responsible and resilient in their learning behaviours.
6. We teach for learning of communicative, collaborative and social skills, to enable students to live and work effectively in their future personal and professional teams.
7. We teach for learning inclusive of all, differentiating learning and using formative and summative assessment to direct feedback and inform growth.



L.I.S. Our Promises

Include. Inquire. Inspire.

Include:

- Teaching for learning is differentiated;
- Instruction and feedback are growth-oriented, with the presumption that all are capable of making progress;
- Students are given realistic advice to enable their success, but will be supported in their desires to challenge themselves;
- Students are considered to be individuals with unique learning capacities and situations.

Inquire:

- Learning is not merely the filling of empty vessels with knowledge, but students are taught to generate questions, research existing understanding, create solutions and apply understanding to new situations;
- Students are taught to reflect on their learning;
- Students and professional learners are given targeted feedback and intervention to improve.

Inspire:

- Learning is built upon a body of knowledge, understanding and heritage;
- Learning is aspirational and inspirational, with a strong focus on making learning engaging and fostering a passion for learning;
- We provide an environment of academic and holistic rigour appreciative of the need for strong foundations and maintenance of quality, in order that students will have the capacity and motivation to develop innovative solutions to the challenges of our time.



Statement of Beliefs

The following statements outline what we believe about language, language learning and education. They provide the basis for our practices and procedures.

1. Language is our main means of thinking and communicating, so it is intrinsic to the learning of all subjects.
2. Language learning is a complex, interactive process. It involves expressing thoughts and ideas and understanding them in social and academic contexts through speaking, writing, reading and listening.
3. A second language is best acquired when:
 - a. there is a safe and positive environment
 - b. students have a strong mother tongue base
 - c. the school cultivates an atmosphere of open-mindedness and respect for linguistic and cultural diversity, and values a student's home language and culture
 - d. students have the opportunity to learn through and about language across the content curriculum
 - e. it is contextualised within content material and, where appropriate, focused on to encourage language development and clarify the linguistic demands made upon the learner
 - f. appropriate second language support is in place
4. At LIS, English is the primary language of instruction and communication and is critical to our students' academic success. We value all languages, including our student's mother tongues the host country language and foreign languages taught in the school.
5. All staff share responsibility to support language development. There is a potential for language to be developed in every subject area and we are committed to doing this.
6. We aim to have a curriculum that is appropriately challenging for native English speakers and supportive of non-native English speakers. The same aim holds true for our teaching of the host country language, German.
7. Each student's mother tongue has a critical role in:
 - a. establishing the foundation for thinking processes;
 - b. cultural identity;
 - c. developing second language proficiencyWe therefore value bilingualism, specifically, a bilingualism that *adds* English to the mother tongue, while the mother tongue continues to be developed.
8. LIS families have a key role to play in supporting their children's language development and celebrating their cultural identities.



Admissions Policy

Priority admission categories:

Category 1: International arrivals

Applicants who are transferring to LIS from abroad or directly from another international school are given priority over all other applicants. These applicants could have any nationality, including the German nationality.

Category 2: English mother tongue / proficiency in English

These are applicants who are fluent in English, either because they communicate in English with one of their parents or because they attended at least one year of their schooling in an English-speaking country. These applicants could have any nationality, including the German nationality.

Category 3: Non-Germans

These are applicants from within Germany whose parents both have a non-German nationality and who speak another language than German at home.

Category 4: Siblings

After having processed all applicants from priorities 1-3, siblings of LIS students are given priority over other applicants.

Category 5: Bi-nationals

These are applicants from within Germany where at least one parent has a non-German nationality.

Category 6: Local applicants

These are applicants from local German families.

Priorities within each category

Within each category, applications from sponsors of the school and their employees are processed first.

All other things being equal, we will give priority to the reduced fee applicant if the overall percentage of reduced fee students in the grade is below 25% and we will give priority to the regular fee applicant if said percentage is above 30%.

All remaining applications within each category will be considered in order of receipt of application.



Mother Tongue

The role of ongoing mother tongue development in student learning is firmly established.

Students who see their first language skills acknowledged by teachers and parents are able to view English as an addition to their first language, rather than as a substitution for it. They are more likely to feel confident, and to take the risks involved in learning a new language. Furthermore, research clearly shows that language skills can transfer from one language to another, and that students with developed literacy skills in their mother tongue tend to be more successful in learning a second language. Parents play a crucial role in helping develop and maintain oral and literate mother tongue skills in their children. Therefore, LIS encourages families to develop and maintain mother tongue literacy skills for all students.

LIS informs parents of the reason for maintaining a strong mother tongue, and of specific ways to do this. We disseminate this information through the school website, parent evenings and special presentations, school publications such as the LIS Observer, and via postings and hand-outs for the parent community. LIS welcomes parent volunteers of different mother tongues to classrooms to read to students in the home language during school. LIS offers older students the possibility of working with younger learners in mother tongue development.

We are currently developing our enrichment programme and seek to offer additional support to mother tongue students wishing to further their own mother tongue development. This is supported by our support of students wishing to undertake the Self-Taught Language A course in the IB Diploma, and by our extensive and developing library collection providing works and materials in a wide range of languages including German, French, Dutch, Hebrew, Spanish and Russian.



Learning of German

The German host country language programme is taught throughout the school, from the Early Years through to Grade 12.

It includes both German as an Additional Language (GAL) and German for native speakers. It is taught by German native language teachers in grade level groups. GAL students who have achieved sufficient proficiency, judged by the GAL teacher and the German department, may be moved into the German for native speakers' group. Given the demographic of the school and its clientele, it is usually clear into which category new students should fall, however, the subject area leaders will assess and place appropriately as required.

As the school develops internationally, so the GAL programme continues to expand. Currently, in August 2020, we have two GAL groups in each Middle School year-group, differentiated by competence and prior experience with the language. These GAL students are taught in grade levels, and the lessons focus on developing oral and written skills, with the aim to develop a knowledge and appreciation of German-speaking culture.

German for native speakers in Grades 6 to 8 focuses on increasing students' reading and writing skills, as well as their academic oral language skills. Lessons include language and literature work, as well as several projects designed to explore the German language with respect to dialect and language change. IGCSE German is offered in Grades 9 and 10; Grades 11 and 12 offer German A, German B and German ab initio.

Other Languages: *The aim is to provide every student at LIS with access to learning a third language at school, in addition to English and German.* French or Spanish as a foreign language is part of the curriculum for all students in Grade 6 to 8, and is optional in Grade 9 to 12. The vast majority of all students at LIS starts with either French or Spanish in Grade 6 and is able to do very well in these languages.

We do recognise that in some exceptional cases it may not be appropriate to follow lessons in French or Spanish. For example, students struggling with both English and German (and attending EAL and GAL classes) would better focus on these languages. Students with diagnosed learning difficulties may attend Learning Support at this time. For some students, with either too much or too little prior experience when admitted to the school, we are working on developing our differentiated provision to support continued learning.



Implications of Language Policy in Practice

Given our promises of being an inclusive school, and our admissions policy geared towards supporting international families in their new community, the following procedures and practices exist:

1. LIS is an English language instruction school, and it is insisted upon that students and teachers use the language of English around school, in written and spoken communication, and in all but German and other language classrooms.
2. Upon applying for a place at LIS, potential new students are given a trial day during which they are tested for their English Language level, communicated by the English as an Additional Language (EAL) teacher to School Principals and Assistant Principals according to the Common European Framework referenced levels. This information is communicated to teaching staff as appropriate. However, it is important to note that no student will be refused entry to the school based on a low level of English (or additional) language. The test is merely to support the accommodation of that student in the most appropriate manner.
3. Once admitted, we offer “pull-out” classes of EAL and German as an Additional Language (GAL), as well as beginners’ courses in French and Spanish for Middle School students. As part of the school’s strategic development, we aim to introduce after-school classes of these additional languages to beginners older than Grade 7 and to mother tongue language students wishing to expand and develop their first language. In the IB Diploma years, we offer German ab initio courses to new students and users of the language, and adult learning of German for all abilities is offered in the school.
4. Students move from EAL or GAL classes into mainstream English and German when the teacher assesses that they are ready. As part of the school’s strategic development, we are working on more “push-in” programmes, as well as systematic training and coaching of teachers across the curriculum to all be teachers of language in order to support the students’ academic language acquisition, use and accuracy.
5. As students progress through the school, they take Cambridge IGCSE First Language or Second Language courses in English and German as appropriate, as well as a third language (except in rare cases of students arriving with neither English nor German after Grade 7) as an IGCSE Additional Language (French or Spanish). Currently, though under review, we only aim for this third language to be taken at Language B level for the IB Diploma.



Language for the IB Diploma

Once our students enter into Grade 11, they make subject choices for their studies for the IB Diploma. Here we outline our policy for choosing Language A or Language B in English and German:

1. The IB does not refer to “mother tongue” nor make hard and fast rules on which courses students should study, relying instead on the Centre making decisions about appropriate challenge. They have always said that the language profiles of the Language A students 'will vary' and that the A courses 'are designed for students from a wide variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds' (Language A: Language and Literature Subject Guide - first examinations 2021). Crucially, they mainly differentiate between students who have 'some familiarity' with the target language (Language B) and students 'who have experience of using the language of the course in an educational context' (LangLit Subject Guide, p.6).
2. Historically at LIS, we have made the mistake of allowing students to choose based on whether or not it is their mother tongue. We are not the only school to have done this, but from the M21 students onwards this change of practice was already in place. The key wording can be found in the subject guides of the Language Acquisition (Group 2) courses: 'Students enter language acquisition courses with varying degrees of exposure to the target language(s). It is, therefore, important that students are placed into a course that is most suited to their language development needs and that will provide them with an appropriate academic challenge' (Language B Subject Guide - first examinations 2020).
3. Please note the 'students are placed' phrasing. Students do not choose what language course they take, but instead we as a school place them. This may then be different in German, but most students who have been at the school throughout the Secondary School should be taking English A at the IB Diploma level. Any student who has studied an English First Language course and a Literature course in English for the previous two years, who has submitted coursework for IGCSE in Literature is certainly closer to 'experience of using the language in an educational context' than 'some familiarity in the language'. Indeed, the LangLit Guide also says, 'While it is recommended that students have had experience of writing critical essays about texts, not having done so should not exclude them from studies in language and literature' (p.11). If LangA courses are suitable for students who may not have written critical essays, they are certainly more appropriate in terms of level of challenge for students who have written critical essays many times during the previous two years.
4. Finally, we support students if they wish to pursue a study of their mother tongue with the Language A: Self-Taught programme by means of finding them a suitable tutor and supporting all other aspects of programme access and understanding.



Appendix: Common European Framework of Reference

The CEFR distinguishes three broad divisions which further divide into six levels.

A1 BASIC USER / Breakthrough / Beginner

Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

A2 BASIC USER / Waystage / Elementary

Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.

B1 INDEPENDENT USER / Threshold / Intermediate

Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

B2 INDEPENDENT USER / Vantage / Upper Intermediate

Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

C1 PROFICIENT USER / Effective Operational Proficiency / Advanced

Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.

C2 PROFICIENT USER / Mastery / Proficiency

Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in the most complex situations.

For more information about the Council of Europe and Common Reference levels, go to <http://culture.coe.int/portfolio>

