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**BCB Language Policy**

**Mission**BCB is a caring and inclusive international community that empowers children to succeed and flourish through a world class education.

**Vision**To shape a generation of creative and resilient global citizens - a generation that will change our world for the better

**Values**

* Welcoming
* Caring
* Collaborative
* Community
* Warm
* Principled

| BCB POLICY STATEMENT | | **Language Policy** | |
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| **Created:** | May 2018 | | Author: Iain McGowan |
| **Reviewed** | June 2021 | | Reviewed by: Marília Oliveira |
| **Last review:** | August 2023 | | Reviewed by: Paul McDaniel, Andrew Mullan |

Our School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The School expects all teaching staff, non-teaching staff and volunteers to share and uphold this commitment. If a child cannot feel safe they cannot learn to their full potential.

**1. Introduction**

This language policy is intended to provide all stakeholders with an overview of language learning at The British College of Brazil (BCB). The importance of language learning cannot be overstated in any school, especially one such as BCB where the majority of pupils learn in a language which is not their mother tongue. This language policy validates the equal status of all languages. It endorses an awareness of the host country’s culture and language by teaching Portuguese and Brazilian Social Studies at all acquisition levels throughout the school. The mother tongue programme in each section of the school reinforces literacy and cultural identity and reflects the multilingual, diverse community we live in.

At BCB we believe that learning a language provides a valuable educational, social and cultural experience for our students. It helps them to develop communication skills of speaking and listening and extends their understanding of the importance of language. We believe that the early acquisition of a language enhances and enriches the overall learning experience for all students at BCB. Learning another language gives students a new perspective on the world and develops understanding and respect for other cultures. Increased acumen in the use of languages allows transfer of cognitive skills from the mother tongue to English. Command of language empowers pupils to understand, interpret and respond to ideas, attitudes and feelings. It promotes innovation and creativity, independent learning, the ability to solve problems, evaluate and articulate individual metacognition, and the development of a lifelong approach to learning.

**2. Aims & Objectives**

* Encourage an interest in Language learning throughout the school.
* Stimulate curiosity and creativity around language use
* Develop communication skills
* Promote intercultural understanding and awareness
* Deliver a systematic purposeful and diverse curriculum that facilitates personalised learning
* Share best practice to engage learners

Staff with a responsibility for shaping the approach to languages within BCB have had the opportunity to contribute, read and provide feedback on the Language Policy. The Policy has also been shared with all stakeholders within the BCB wider-school community, including parents. It is to be reviewed on a yearly basis to ensure that it accurately reflects the school’s current philosophy about language.

**3. Roles and Responsibility for the Policy**

3.1 Role of the Principal and Senior Leadership Team

a. ensure all school personnel are aware of and comply with this policy

b. ensure compliance with the legal requirements of Brazil

c. provide leadership and vision in respect of equality

d. provide guidance, support and training to all staff

e. annually review the success and development of this policy with the relevant stakeholders

3.2 Role of the Language Subject Leaders

a. lead the development of language acquisition throughout the school

b. be accountable for and monitor standards in this subject area

c. ensure continuity and progression throughout the school

d. participate in appropriate and relevant professional development

e. keep abreast of new developments

3.3 Role of Teachers

a. comply with all aspects of this policy

b. work closely with the policy/subject leader to develop language proficiency

c. devise medium and short term planning that accounts for a rich language environment

d. remain mindful of the need to develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary in all subjects

e. indicate to pupils which types of reading or writing expected to complete tasks

f. to promote/ raise awareness of intercultural competence in order to validate languages and varieties of the languages

3.4 Role of Pupils

a. be aware of and comply with this policy

b. be encouraged to work in partnership with the school by making decisions and exercising choice in relation to their educational programme

c. listen carefully to all instructions given by the teacher

d. ask for further help if they do not understand

e. participate fully in all lessons

f. participate in discussions concerning progress and attainment

g. treat other cultures with respect

3.5 Role of Parents/Carers

a. be aware of and comply with this policy in their support of language acquisition

b. be asked to contribute to periodic surveys conducted by the school on language development

c. encourage effort and achievement in language development

d. provide the right conditions for homework to take place

e. join the school in celebrating success of their child's learning

**4. English**

BCB is committed to English language learning through immersion for EYFS, KS1 and KS2 pupils. In order to facilitate pupils’ participation in mainstream classes, there is considerable support on offer. At BCB, we identify the students with little prior English language skills. They are then immersed in 5 EAL classes each week, delivered as two blocks of one hour each and one 30 minute session. These classes are personalised based on prior knowledge of the students. Some students work on basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS), while others are more focused on developing their cognitive academic language proficiency (CALPS). These EAL lessons will continue until the classroom and EAL teachers have seen sufficient progress in the student’s English language.

4.1 Support for English language learners

EAL is about English language acquisition, it has no connection with SEN (special educational needs) and it is not a programme for ‘uncommunicative’ pupils. It is a specialist area where once pupils move into Key Stage 1, specific methodologies and action plans must be put in place by qualified EAL teachers to enable the EAL pupil to acquire their second or third language. Such factors are particular to each EAL pupil and so each pupil is developed through a case by case process of language acquisition.

Mixed ability EAL groups are a part of that methodology, primarily intensive groups. Pupils are taught the patterns of English and its rules and are provided with the tools to decode its usage. EAL pupils are taught all the skills of communication in academic contexts (science, history etc.) and in general contexts also (celebrations of different cultures, family, the media etc.). EAL instruction specialises in developing pupils in a creative non-prescriptive way, where any aspect of English is encouraged. EAL is therefore descriptive learning rather than prescriptive.

Direct instruction lessons regularly occur, however negative feedback is discouraged (‘mistakes’ etc). The EAL department is a specialist unit within BCB and acknowledgment, engagement and collaboration with that unit is a part of every teacher’s job; as it is the job of EAL teachers to accelerate and track the English acquisition of EAL pupils in preparation for subject specific streams of academic learning. Collaboration is essential.

The aim of our EAL programme is to provide a basis for entry into our mainstream programme.

**5. Admissions**

All pupils in Pre-Nursery to Y6 are interviewed by the Head/Deputy Head of Primary with The Head of Secondary interviewing pupils entering Y7 above. The procedure for both is as follows: A short Q&A with the candidate.

5.1 In Primary:

During the Primary interviews, the Head/Deputy Head of Primary uses a range of assessment for learning (AfL) strategies to identify the level of English each student has. This is done through open and closed questioning. Following this call, parents are informed about whether their child needs to be formally assessed by our EAL teachers when they first join the school. If so, our EAL teachers, with the agreement of class teachers, will assess the English level of these students and inform parents if EAL lessons are needed.

5.2 In Secondary:

The reports of all potential applicants are reviewed by the Head of Secondary. If the Head of Secondary has concerns about the pupil’s level of English, then the EAL Coordinator is invited to assess the pupil. This is done using the appropriate level WIDA Screener. A recommendation is then given on whether EAL intervention is required and at what entry level. The Head of Secondary approves or declines the application based on reports and comments from the EAL Coordinator.

Potential pupils are then invited to have an interview with the Key Stage Coordinator.

**6. Curriculum and planning**

The formal curriculum supports English, Portuguese, and Spanish.

6.1 English

English is the language of instruction and the common language at BCB.

6.2 Portuguese

Portuguese is compulsory for all pupils, as mandated by Brazilian Law. From EYFS upwards, Portuguese is offered for all pupils. In Primary and Secondary, there are two programmes:

1. PL: Portuguese First Language (Native speakers and pupils at advanced levels)

2. PAL: Portuguese as an Additional Language (Non-native speakers)

At IGCSE, Portuguese First Language and Portuguese as a Foreign Language are offered. At IB, Portuguese language is offered in group A and B.

The Portuguese programmes have been inspected and accredited by Cambridge (CIE) and Secretaria da Educação (Ministry of Education). The Portuguese curriculum is up to date and meets the requirements of the new BNCC (Brazilian National Curriculum), approved in 2018 by the Ministry of Education.

6.3 Spanish

All pupils at BCB are taught Spanish as a second language from Y7. It is also an option choice at IGCSE and IBDP but is mandatory for all pupils until the end of Year 9. This means that all pupils at BCB have studied at least 2 additional languages in addition to their mother tongue. Spanish has also two programmes, based on the curriculum of the city of São Paulo:

1. Spanish First Language (Native speakers and pupils at advanced levels)

2. Spanish as a Foreign Language (Non native speakers)

At IGCSE, Spanish first language and Spanish as a Foreign Language is offered. At IB, Spanish A and B are offered, depending on the number of students and interest.

6.4 Language and culture in the curriculum

There are a number of annual events to promote the culture of the languages taught at BCB, these include Carnival, Festa Junina and International Day. Schemes of work, such as the International Primary Curriculum, promote an international mindset, drawing context and examples from multiple cultures that reflect the diversity of the student cohort. Pupils also take part in competitions that celebrate cultural and language diversity such as poetry, art and contests for Portuguese and Spanish.

**7. Communication with Non-English Speaking Parents and Guardians**

BCB recognises the value of effective and timely communication with parents and works to foster such communication. In the case of communicating with parents who do not speak English:

a. Identified staff, wherever requested, will fill the role of translator between the schools and parents

b. Where necessary or appropriate, BCB will seek out families in our community who have the required language proficiency to act as translators

c. If required, professional translation services will be employed

d. All mass community communications are provided in both English and Portuguese, including the Principal’s weekly newsletter.

e. Class Dojo is used throughout the Primary school, offering instant translation of key notices.

**8. Teaching & Learning**

Language learning at BCB is an integral part of the curriculum and integrated into everyday school life, with all stakeholders using and experimenting with their knowledge of different languages whenever the opportunity arises. Teaching will provide an appropriate balance of spoken and written language and will enable the children to understand and communicate ideas, facts and feelings in speech and writing, focused on familiar and routine matters, using their knowledge of phonology, grammatical structures and vocabulary.

8.1 Language learning

a. Providing sufficient exposure to high quality materials in the target language and culture

b. High quality personalised learning and streaming of children according to their ability and mother tongue, where appropriate and desirable

c. Develop language learning skills which they can transfer to the study of other languages in their schooling career

d. Use active learning to engage motivation

e. Embedding languages in class routines and school life

f. Providing an environment in which children feel happy to take a risk and experiment with new languages

g. Understanding, valuing and using a foreign language as a means of communication

h. Integrating approaches through language lessons, cross curricular links and incidental language opportunities where children are given the opportunity to use and develop their language in stress free real life contexts

i. Maintaining a stock of good quality library books in all taught languages, and developing a collection of books in other key community languages

**9. The Language Policy within the IB Diploma Programme at BCB**

9.1 Philosophy

*‘A language policy is derived from the school’s language philosophy and is a statement of purpose that outlines goals for language teaching and learning. It is constructed around pedagogical and learning beliefs and is therefore also a statement of action describing practices for achieving and evaluating goals.’*

(1 - IBO. 2010.)

At BCB, we have a philosophy that all teachers are language teachers and at all times pay very close attention to the language requirements/needs of the students in their care.

At BCB, we place great importance on the support and maintenance of students’ mother tongue languages. The requirement of the IB Diploma for students to study at least one language in addition to their mother tongue requires a need for inclusion and equity of access to the learning of languages at BCB.

9.2 Language factors and Procedures

At BCB, we are very aware of the benefits of having a clear understanding of a whole-school language profile that reflects the socio-cultural circumstances that permeate within and throughout our whole- school community.

The language curriculum and IBDP Subjects that BCB offers was based on a number of key factors.

9.2.1 Legal Requirements

Any legal requirements/compliances have been adhered to as a result of government legislation so that the school can legally and successfully operate.

9.2.2 Curriculum capacity

The constraints in resources, human, and physical to deliver a timetabled curriculum provision.

9.2.3 Mother Tongue Support

BCB acknowledges the importance of developing a student’s mother-tongue language in promoting personal identity, cultural heritage, and overall learning. Information regarding students’ mother-tongue resides in the school’s student database (iSAMS) and is accessible by all school staff. At the beginning of each academic year, teachers receive a list of new students’ mother-tongues other than English. Teachers are encouraged to use this information in developing lesson plans that emphasise differentiated instruction and that honour multicultural diversity. Besides English, Portuguese and Spanish, BCB does not currently offer any additional mother-tongue face-to-face teaching for languages at school.

*1 - Guidelines for developing a school language policy. p. 1 2 – School Supported Self Taught (SSST)*

BCB are very supportive of the SSST option within the IB Diploma Programme and work alongside families to explore/arrange for mother-tongue language support, where necessary, through all potential avenues that are available in our region and beyond. The opportunity for students to consider School Supported Self- Taught at Standard Level will also be presented to students through informal and formal IB Information Evenings and BCB will continue to encourage students to explore this option. Please refer to the link below for a full summary of the SSST option:

<https://ibpublishing.ibo.org/server2/rest/app/tsm.xql?doc=d_1_ssstx_tsm_1410_1_e&part=2&chapter=2>

9.2.4 Host Nation Language and Culture

BCB is hugely supportive of students who wish to continue the study of their mother tongue language of Portuguese - the language of the host country of Brazil - and those that want to learn the language and culture of their host country.

As well as the Portuguese curriculum delivered across the school, Brazilian Social Studies is available at all levels. These lessons serve to deepen students’ understanding of the history, society and geography of their host / home country. The curriculum objectives are delivered through vocabulary-rich lessons, with Primary staff employing an approach more in line with Translanguaging than that which is employed during more formal teaching of Portuguese language skills.

BCB has introduced initial Portuguese language lessons for new staff. The aim of these sessions is to provide staff with a grounding in the language, introduce Brazilian culture and provide the impetus for continued Portuguese language learning. BCB has also initiated a programme of English language study for non-teaching staff. This will be led by school staff with the aim of increasing understanding and communication across the school.

9.3 IBDP Language Offerings at BCB

BCB offers the following language subjects within the IB Diploma Programme:

9.3.1 Group 1: Studies in Language and Literature

At BCB, Portuguese and English instruction currently begins in Pre-Nursery (2-3yr olds) and continues up to Year 13 (15-18 year- olds). BCB offers Portuguese, English and Spanish at both Standard & Higher Level as the classroom courses for Language and Literature A.

9.3.2 Group 2: Language Acquisition Language B

BCB offers Portuguese, English and Spanish at both Standard & Higher Level as the classroom courses.

Language ab initio

Under exceptional circumstances, BCB can offer ab inito in Spanish; however, this will need to be communicated with teachers and HoDs prior to admission in order to best accommodate the student and teacher needs.

**10. Curriculum and Planning**

Our Language provision and curriculum is for both advanced and second language learners. The curriculum is flexible to ensure that the curriculum is progressive in developing pupil capability. In line with language acquisition guidelines, all students learn languages for no less than 80 minutes per week from Pre-Nursery, and increases through Key Stages. Schemes of work are regularly reviewed ensuring there is continuity and progression in both skills and content across all years. Departments collaborate over planning, sharing ideas for activities, resources and special events to enhance the curriculum. Published resources and interactive software are used to support language development and engagement.

Languages in Early Years Language teaching is conducted in a vivid way under an immersion philosophy of language and culture in and out of the school environment. A variety of curriculum-based activities are adopted in the Language lessons to ensure that delivery is not only student friendly but also through a systematic and consistent curriculum that is engaging and fun.

10.1 External Links

At BCB we are part of a global community of over 80 schools worldwide. Through this global community, we share ideas and expertise with other language specialists on curriculum development and teaching methodologies. This also provides a learning platform for students to link with the other schools to exchange information, pictures, work and competitions with their counterparts and learn firsthand about their lives. We enrich the curriculum through the children sharing their own experiences from visiting or living in other countries, welcoming visiting speakers, or embarking on language trips, residentials or exchanges.

10.2 Assessment

Assessment Progress in languages is monitored and tracked against the four attainment targets of

▪ Listening and responding

▪ Speaking

▪ Reading and responding

▪ Writing

10.2.1 Formative assessment

Assessment for learning opportunities are offered during lessons and children are encouraged to self and peer assess. Teachers also keep notes, which inform planning, grouping and differentiation.

10.2.2 Summative assessment

Feedback and targets are shared with students and they work towards them in class. This allows us to personalise learning, providing appropriate levels of challenge in a supportive environment. End of unit assessments are used to review each child’s attainment and to identify patterns and trends where intervention is required to ensure each child makes optimum progress.

10.3 Homework

At BCB, the aim of homework is to provide opportunities for independent learning to be undertaken outside of curriculum time that reinforces, extends and enriches current language learning. The homework set addresses all four language skills.

**11. Libraries**

The Primary and Secondary libraries have an expanding selection of Portuguese and Spanish books of various levels and an increasing range of books in other key languages at the school, such as Korean and Japanese. The libraries provide a critical role in developing language and guiding students in research literacy, and formatting structure.

a. that school supported self taught resources are available in order to maintain students’ mother tongue development

b. there are wide-ranging opportunities for the learning of Ab initio and B languages

c. that there is strategic planning of/for language courses for learners with consistent spelling and referencing protocols and preferred bibliographic styles

d. there are clear rules and expectations about the use of all languages in and around the school

**12. Equal Opportunities**

All children regardless of race or gender, shall have the opportunity to develop languages capability through:

a. Appropriate differentiation in all lessons to ensure children are suitably challenged

b. Children grouped across the year by ability (advanced, intermediate and beginner and years of learning a language), where beneficial and desired.

c. Using a variety of teaching methods and resources effectively

d. Provide intervention and curriculum personalisation when required

**13. Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy**

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the lead person, the Heads of School, the Principal or other stakeholders.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Principal for further discussion and endorsement. (See Policy Evaluation)

References:

1 – IBO. 2010. ‘*Guidelines for developing a school language policy*’.