International Baccalaureate

Middle Years Programme/Career-related Programme

Language Policy

Our mission is to teach those that we have the privilege to care for to do the right thing, to make courageous choices and to ignite their curiosity and imagination.

At Leigh Academy Tonbridge we have a commitment to fostering language development and proficiency among our students within the context of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme and Career-related Programme. This policy has been developed alongside our literacy lead, Laura Elstone, Assistant Principal, Ben Racher and MFL curriculum leader, Michelle Beard.

Our language policy is guided by the principles of the MYP/IBCP, emphasising the importance of language as a fundamental tool for communication, learning and expression. The policy aligns with the IB learner profile attributes, encouraging students to become effective communicators, open-minded individuals and reflective thinkers.

Students are offered opportunities throughout their studies to expand their knowledge of the culture that underpins the additional language learnt, at this school Spanish. We are committed to seeking ways in which students can be further exposed to Spanish culture through events such as a trip to the British Film Institute to learn more about Spanish short film or through trips to Spain. A language is a reflection of culture and cannot be fully understood and appreciated without knowledge of the society in which it is used.

The school recognises that students may be accessing the curriculum who are not proficient in the language of instruction. The literacy lead and SENco work together to identify these students and their needs as quickly as possible and support them through appropriate interventions and immersion. Staff are encouraged to create vocabulary maps in mother tongue and language of instruction and students are taught to use translation technology to aid their understanding and learning.

In order to ensure that our language courses are meeting the needs of all our students, we regularly reflect on the following:

- **The linguistic diversity of our community:** We have a diverse student body, with 73 students (8.2%) who have English as an additional language (EAL). We offer a variety of support services to help these students succeed in their studies, including EAL support classes, access to technology, and translated materials.
- **The individual needs of our students:** We recognise that all students have different strengths and weaknesses. We offer a variety of assessment methods to help us identify the needs of each student so that we can provide them with the support they need to succeed.

- **The aims and objectives of the MYP:** Our language courses are aligned with the aims and objectives of the MYP, which emphasise the importance of language as a fundamental tool for communication, learning, and expression.

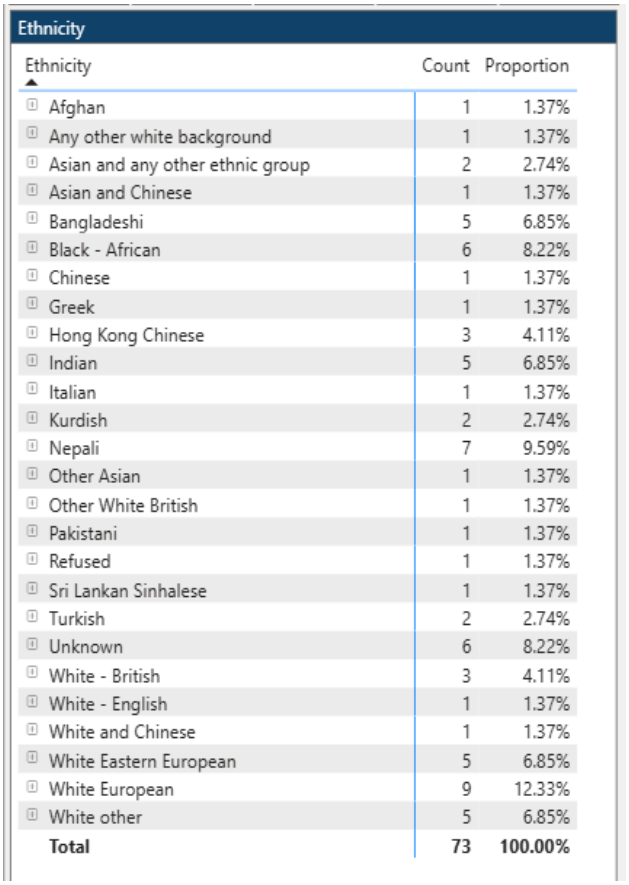
Based on our reflections, we have made the following adjustments to our language courses:

- **Increased EAL support:** We have increased the number of EAL support classes that we offer. We have also made sure that all of our teachers are aware of the needs of EAL students and are able to provide them with the support they need.
- **Differentiated instruction:** We are committed to providing differentiated instruction in all of our language courses. This means that we provide different levels of support to students based on their individual needs.
- **Focus on inquiry-based learning:** We use an inquiry-based approach to learning in all of our language courses. This means that we encourage students to ask questions, explore different perspectives, and develop their own understanding of the subject matter.

We screen all of our students to determine their reading ages and complete additional screenings for students with low reading ages to determine intervention needs. These are implemented by the literacy lead and SENco to ensure students can access the curriculum.

We provide direct instruction in vocabulary, grammar and reading and writing skills in Language and Literature and Language acquisition to equip students with low levels of literacy with the skills to succeed.

We provide language offerings that reflect the linguistic diversity of our community and support the MYP/IBCP language objectives. These include the study of the school's primary language (English), additional language (Spanish) and the development of mother tongue proficiency. 73 (8.2%) of our students have English as an additional language (EAL). The breakdown of these 73 students and their home language is below:



Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Count	Proportion
Afghan	1	1.37%
Any other white background	1	1.37%
Asian and any other ethnic group	2	2.74%
Asian and Chinese	1	1.37%
Bangladeshi	5	6.85%
Black - African	6	8.22%
Chinese	1	1.37%
Greek	1	1.37%
Hong Kong Chinese	3	4.11%
Indian	5	6.85%
Italian	1	1.37%
Kurdish	2	2.74%
Nepali	7	9.59%
Other Asian	1	1.37%
Other White British	1	1.37%
Pakistani	1	1.37%
Refused	1	1.37%
Sri Lankan Sinhalese	1	1.37%
Turkish	2	2.74%
Unknown	6	8.22%
White - British	3	4.11%
White - English	1	1.37%
White and Chinese	1	1.37%
White Eastern European	5	6.85%
White European	9	12.33%
White other	5	6.85%
Total	**73**	**100.00%**

The school recognises the importance of supporting students in the development of their mother tongue(s). We offer opportunities for mother tongue development through literature, use of their chromebook translator and cultural activities. Students are also able to sit a GCSE exam in their home language, if there is a suitable exam board that offers that language. Our library also contains books in other languages most commonly spoken at the academy. We also aim to recognise these languages as part of our celebrations to mark the European Day of Languages every September which provides a fantastic opportunity to get students to reflect on their place as global citizens.

We use additional software that includes, but is not limited to, Sparx reader, lexia, google read&write and language nut. Our lead teaching assistant for Literacy is Lorriane Nikhwai, working with Laura Elstone & Vic Sage (Acting SENCo) to coordinate these interventions. Students spend 1 hour and 30 minutes completing these interventions both in school and at home every fortnight.

All staff contribute to language development and vocabulary through their subject disciplines, this includes explicit vocabulary instruction and knowledge organisers, as well as encouraging students to be curious and inquisitive about the language of their subjects. Students are also encouraged to sign up to be part of the leadership team which presents them with a myriad of opportunities to present and develop their language skills.

The academy incorporates language development within the MYP/IBCP Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills, fostering skills such as communication, research and self-management across all subjects.

Assessment practices align with MYP/IBCP guidelines, emphasising both formative and summative assessment to gauge students' language proficiency, including their ability to listen, speak, read, and write.

The academy supports ongoing professional development for language teachers, ensuring they are equipped with the latest pedagogical strategies and methodologies to enhance language instruction.

The academy actively involves parents and the wider community in supporting language development, recognising that language proficiency is a collaborative effort between school and home.

Leigh Academy Tonbridge is committed to creating a language-rich learning environment that empowers students to become effective communicators, critical thinkers and lifelong learners within the framework of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme and Career-related Programme.