

## Leigh Academy Hugh Christie Language Acquisition Policy 2025-26

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### Revision Log

<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Brief detail of change</b>
August 2024	1	Transfer policy details to the new format.
July 2025	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporating additional MYP information and updating to meet all IB guidelines</li> <li>• Changing Language A and B wording</li> <li>• How interdisciplinary units support language learning</li> <li>• Teaching, management, and implementation.</li> <li>• Budget impact</li> <li>• Review Process and timeline - Stages</li> </ul>

Education for a better world

# Language Acquisition Policy

Leigh Academy Hugh Christie

## 1. PHILOSOPHY

As a candidate for IB School, Leigh Academy Hugh Christie recognises that language is integral to “the education of the whole person”, promoting personal and intellectual growth through exploration of cultural identity (aided by the study of at least two languages) within a context of active and deepening intercultural understanding. At Key Stage Three, students follow the full curriculum offer which includes the study of German or Spanish (in addition to English as their main language) until the end of Year 9. Almost half of our students at Key Stage 4 continue to study an additional language and it is our intention to increase this further as we develop our MYP curriculum.

The Academy’s curriculum is designed to implement fully the IBO mission statements, in accordance with the principles enshrined both in its own published educational philosophy and objectives, and in IB documentation governing delivery of the Middle Years Programme (MYP). In relation to language-acquisition, linguistic development and literary understanding, these practices are rooted in an awareness that, as well as being the main medium of social communication, language-skills are tightly linked to cognitive growth, since they are the means by which meaning and knowledge are negotiated, constructed and shared.

In recognising that language is central to learning, the academy acknowledges that all teachers are language-teachers, with responsibilities in facilitating communication.

In addition, the Academy believes that it is essential for all to have a strong foundation in one’s own language (mother tongue), and therefore encourages and supports this development, wherever possible, through an ethos of acceptance and celebration of linguistic diversity within a genuinely international community. The students at the academy are predominantly English speaking (93.8%) with a small population speaking a variety of other languages (including, but not limited to Chinese, Italian, Polish, Lithuanian, Romanian and Russian) as their mother tongue. Students’ mother tongue is entered into the database and is available to all teachers and staff. The linguistic ability and cultural identity of these students are celebrated and where possible, students are entered for external examinations in their mother tongue, for example Polish.

At Leigh Academy Hugh Christie, in all aspects of our language teaching we strive to:

- Language learning takes place in all subjects across the curriculum
- Promote inquiry based authentic language development.
- Focus on the trans-disciplinary nature of language development.
- Focus on the interdisciplinary nature of language through the MYP Interdisciplinary Project at key stage 3. Develop and inter-relate the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and media literacy. Supporting those students who are not proficient in the language of instruction.
- Promote consistency of practice in the teaching and learning of language.
- Provide appropriate feedback to support learning languages.
- Integrate language learning with interdisciplinary planning, where Interdisciplinary units support

- language learning.
- Develop and promote cultural awareness and understanding.
- Develop lifelong learners.

### **Summary of our philosophy At Leigh Academy Hugh Christie**

We believe that all teachers are language teachers. Language development is central to all learning, enabling students to access knowledge, express themselves, and engage with the world around them. We value language as a means of communication, a tool for learning, and an essential part of cultural identity.

Our aims are to:

- Foster students' confidence and competence in multiple languages.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for language learning across the curriculum.
- Support mother tongue development and respect linguistic diversity.
- Prepare students to be internationally minded, open-minded communicators.

## **2. DEFINITIONS**

In **Language & Literature**, English is the language of instruction and is taught through Literature and Language. The emphasis is on the study of literary and (where relevant or appropriate) non-literary texts and on the development of mature powers of appreciation and analysis, as well as the ability to convey these effectively in speech and writing. Other forms of writing – creative, expository – are fostered and assigned, as integral elements in a balanced Language Arts curriculum, complementing studies in the main literary genres. As well as becoming acquainted with a range of major authors, which covers different epochs and (where applicable) the various countries where that language is spoken, students in each Language A are required to read works of World Literature in Translation, to develop international-mindedness through comparative literary studies.

In **German & Spanish**, students learn at least one language at Key Stage 3, in addition to their mother tongue. A majority of students will also continue to study a modern foreign language in Key Stage 4 as part of the EBACC. The emphasis is on transactional linguistic competence and cultural studies. The Academy maintains a positive and stimulating environment for language-learning, and provides a varied, personalised approach, integrating listening, speaking, reading and writing as well as direct contact with other countries through trips, exchanges and written communication. As part of the pastoral programme, all students in Years 7-9 will complete a Service as Action project and Service learning project where communication with others will be vital.

All students participating in the MYP study at least two languages: The first Language and one other language. The National Centre for Excellence for Language Pedagogy (NCELP) programme is followed in KS3 with a focus on phonics, vocabulary and grammar. Exceptions to this policy are made for ESL students and/or those students who require additional English support. Such students will be required to take a specially designed ESL course and, if deemed appropriate, to audit English A classes until such time as their English proficiency allows them to access the whole curriculum in a meaningful way. Language combinations are arranged according to the needs of the student and the availability of language teachers in the target languages.

## **3. LANGUAGE-PROVISION**

Language development is embedded across all subjects. Teachers support students in using subject-specific vocabulary, improving reading comprehension, and developing oral and written

communication skills. Collaborative learning, questioning, and discussion are used to build language confidence.

## **Language and Literature Course**

English is delivered through the Language and Literature framework, developing students' ability to read, analyse, and produce a range of literary and non-literary texts. This develops critical thinking, creativity, and sophisticated use of language.

All students are required to take courses each year in English, either as English Language (mother-tongue speakers and functional bilinguals) or Spanish/German (second language). Students who, on entering the Academy, have limited competence in English are given additional initial language support (schedule permitting) to enable them to learn effectively and confidently in their other subjects as soon as possible. Staff are provided with opportunities to learn about language-learning and language-teaching as part of the School's CPD; classroom teachers are, thus, aware of ESL students' needs, and modify or differentiate lessons accordingly. In this way students are enabled to achieve competency in meeting academic goals, and to participate fully in the Academy culture, thereby becoming integrated members of the Leigh Academy Hugh Christie community.

Mother-tongue instruction or support in other first languages - the academy actively seeks to support the mother-tongue development of its students, and in fulfilment of this commitment is able to support individual student to obtain a national qualification in the language of their mother tongue, where available (at Key Stage 4).

## **Role of the Library**

The library at Leigh Academy Hugh Christie plays a vital role in supporting language acquisition and literacy development across the curriculum. It provides a welcoming and inclusive space where students can access a diverse range of literary and non-literary texts in multiple languages, including materials in students' mother tongues where available. The library actively promotes reading for pleasure, information literacy, and independent inquiry by curating texts that reflect global cultures and perspectives, in line with the IB's mission to foster international-mindedness. It also supports curriculum delivery by providing subject-specific resources, digital tools, and research databases that enable students to deepen their understanding of language and content. Library staff work collaboratively with teachers to develop students' information-seeking, referencing, and critical literacy skills, and they play an essential role in encouraging students to become confident, lifelong learners and communicators.

## **Language Acquisition Courses**

Students in Years 7–9 study Spanish or German. These courses build listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, along with cultural awareness. EAL students receive additional English language support tailored to their needs.

All students (except a very small group, those acquiring minimum functional competence in English, as a temporary arrangement) are required to take a second language. As well as the obvious practical benefits, the intrinsic value of studying a language other than one's mother-tongue is that doing so enables a student to discover another culture at first hand, and so acquire another "window on the world".

## **MYP Language and Literature**

Mother-tongue will be English and the second language will normally be German or Spanish. Students who are bilingual, or nearly so may opt for a second Language to English (instead of Spanish and German). Students are encouraged to take formal examinations in their mother-tongue/other spoken languages and provided with support. This can be delivered one-on-one or in small groups.

## **Language in Other Courses**

Language learning extends beyond language classrooms. All subjects promote language growth through structured talk, writing tasks, subject literacy, and the teaching of key vocabulary. Teachers scaffold language learning, particularly for EAL and SEND students.

## **4. EAL Provision within the MYP**

Students entering Leigh Academy Hugh Christie with limited proficiency in English receive appropriate additional support within the curriculum. English as an additional language students (EAL) are provided with one-to-one and small group support to develop their English acquisition skills and have unlimited access to programmes such as Rosetta Stone to assist their independent work.

EAL students follow a full programme in all required subjects. [Exception: by possibly being temporarily withdrawn from pursuing other language-options, enabling them to concentrate on achieving as soon as possible the level of functional competence in English needed to facilitate satisfactory learning in their “non-language” subjects, which are all taught through the medium of English.]

When a student is in transition from EAL/Eng B to English A, they may – for a limited period – take both EAL and English A courses. During this transitional period, they may be dispensed from pursuing other language-options.

Teachers within the EAL/SEND Department monitor the progress of EAL/English B students through meetings and conversations with other subject teachers. Students transition from English B to English A on a flexible and reactive basis at any point in the academic year and always in conjunction with the students themselves, their parents and their teachers.

## **5. LANGUAGE-TEACHING**

All languages are taught by qualified speakers of the languages.

Language plays a key role in interdisciplinary learning, and the Academy’s various departments of languages (English, EAL/English, and Modern Languages) are ideally placed to play an active part in developing, designing and discovering valid cross-curricular links aimed at empowering students’ intellectual growth.

- **Responsibilities and roles**
  - The taught language curriculum DoL for English; literacy coordinator,

class teachers Placement in language classes DoL for MFL, for EAL support SEN Coordinator

- Profiling of new admissions SEND Coordinator
- Review of language policy Senior Leadership Team, each academic year.

## **6. RESOURCES and BUDGET IMPACT:**

The teaching of languages is supported by a wide range of audio-visual materials and online platforms, including the consistent use of Google Classroom for instructional delivery and homework. Instructional methods are enhanced through access to appropriate and effective ICT tools, which are regularly maintained and updated as part of the academy's digital learning strategy. The library budget also includes provision for multilingual texts and resources that support both language acquisition and mother-tongue development.

Student-led assemblies, participation in drama productions, and involvement in co-curricular activities offer meaningful opportunities for students to develop their communication skills and confidence in using language across different contexts. These experiences are planned within the wider academy curriculum and budgeted for through departmental and whole-school enrichment funding.

The academy allocates annual departmental budgets to support the continued development of high-quality language teaching, including training opportunities for staff, purchase of updated resources, and provision for examination entries in heritage languages. This strategic budgeting reflects our commitment to fostering a linguistically inclusive and internationally-minded community.

## **7. Beyond the Curriculum**

As part of our engagement strategy for Language Acquisition, we are currently pursuing accreditation for the British Council's International School Award. This includes multiple projects involving all members of the school community to engage with developing cultural capital across the curriculum. One key aspect of this involves a working partnership with a school in Brake, near Bremen, Germany. Our partnership includes exchanges with the school and collaborative projects between students.

## **8. Review Process and Stakeholder Engagement (Stages of Development of our language Acquisition Policy)**

At Leigh Academy Hugh Christie, we recognise that the Language Acquisition Policy must remain a living document that evolves in response to the needs of our learners and wider school community. As such, the policy is reviewed on an annual basis by the Senior Leadership Team in collaboration with the Director of Learning for MFL, the MYP Coordinator, and representatives from the English and EAL departments.

As part of the review process, we actively seek feedback from all key stakeholders, including:

- **Students**, through advisory feedback, focus groups, and surveys.
- **Parents and carers**, via consultation during information evenings and online feedback forms.
- **Teachers and staff**, through departmental meetings and CPD discussions.

This feedback is carefully considered to ensure the policy reflects the needs, values, and aspirations of our diverse school community. Any proposed updates are shared with staff and published to the academy website for transparency. This cyclical process ensures that our language policy remains inclusive, reflective, and aligned with IB principles of international-mindedness and multilingualism.

### Review Procedure and Timeline

The review follows a structured annual cycle:

- **September:** Initial review by policy leads (DoL for MFL, MYP Coordinator) to assess progress and gather informal feedback from the previous academic year.
- **October – November:** Collection of formal feedback from students, staff, and parents through surveys, forums, and departmental discussions.
- **December:** Draft revisions are shared with SLT and Heads of Department.
- **January:** Finalised policy is approved by SLT.
- **February:** Updated policy is published on the academy website and shared with all stakeholders.
- **Throughout the Year:** Ongoing monitoring and feedback are welcomed and documented to inform the next review cycle.

This review process ensures that the policy remains responsive, relevant, and aligned with the IB mission to promote multilingualism, intercultural understanding, and lifelong learning.

### Stages of Developing Our IB Language Policy

As part of our annual review and update process, we undertake the following structured stages:

Stage	Description of what we undertake
<b>1. Audit / Profiling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify languages spoken in the community (students, staff, families)</li> <li>- Identify current provision</li> <li>- Analyse support needs (e.g. EAL learners, mother tongue)</li> </ul>
<b>2. Philosophy &amp; Vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Articulate a shared belief that all teachers are language teachers</li> <li>- Emphasise language’s role in identity, intercultural understanding, and learning</li> </ul>
<b>3. Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Define how language provision is structured (which languages, when, for whom)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plan for mother tongue and host language support</li> <li>- Ensure differentiation and access</li> </ul>
<b>4. Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integrate language development across subjects</li> <li>- Provide professional development for staff through our CPD programme</li> <li>- Communicate expectations to students and families, for example during parent information evenings.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collect feedback from staff, students, and parents</li> <li>- Monitor student outcomes (progress in language acquisition)</li> <li>- Adjust practice where necessary, through CPD</li> </ul>
<b>6. Review &amp; Update</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Update the policy every year or as curriculum changes</li> <li>- Ensure alignment with IB standards and practices. Keep up to date with these.</li> </ul>

By embedding these stages within our annual review cycle, we ensure our Language Acquisition Policy is both strategic and responsive, meeting the evolving needs of our learners while upholding the values of the IB.

Link to Language Acquisition with the IB

[https://resources.ibo.org/data/g\\_0\\_iboxx\\_amo\\_2312\\_2\\_e.pdf](https://resources.ibo.org/data/g_0_iboxx_amo_2312_2_e.pdf)