



Leigh Academy  
**Longfield**

## **Language Policy: Language Acquisition**

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# Language Acquisition

## Philosophy

As an IB World School, Leigh Academy Longfield 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.

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. We also find that by learning a second language, students learn the constructive elements of language, which improve their capacity to use their mother tongue.

In recognising that language is central to learning, the academy acknowledges that all teachers are, in practice, 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 both 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 with a small population speaking a variety of other languages (including, but not limited to, Urdu, Polish, French and Lithuanian) as their mother tongue. A student’s 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.

In all aspects of our language teaching we strive to:

- Promote enquiry based authentic language development
- Focus on the trans-disciplinary nature of language development
- Develop and interrelate the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and media literacy
- Promote consistency of practice in the teaching and learning of language
- Provide appropriate feedback to support learning languages
- Integrate language learning with interdisciplinary planning
- Develop and promote cultural awareness and understanding
- Develop lifelong learners

## Definitions

In Language and Literature, English is the language of instruction. 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, such as creative and expository, are fostered and assigned as integral elements in a balanced curriculum, complementing studies in the main literary genres. As well as becoming acquainted with a range of major authors, which cover different epochs and (where applicable) the various countries where that language is spoken, students are required to read works of world literature in translation, to develop international mindedness through comparative literary studies.

In Language Acquisition (French and Spanish), students learn at least one language at Key Stage 3 in addition to their mother tongue. The vast majority of students will also continue to study a modern foreign language in Key Stage 4. 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.

## Language Provision

### First Language: English

As the academy's language of instruction and the language of the host country, all students are required to take courses each year in English. 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 academy's literacy CPD; classroom teachers are, therefore, aware of ESL students' needs and adapt 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 Longfield Community.

### Second Languages

All students (except a very small group who are developing their English) 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

Language and Literature will be English and the second language will normally be French or Spanish. Students are encouraged to take formal examinations in their mother tongue/other spoken languages and are provided with support where possible. This is delivered one-on-one or in small groups.

### EAL Provision within the MYP

Students entering Leigh Academy Longfield 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.

## 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 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: Director of Learning for English; Literacy Coordinator; class teachers
- Placement in language classes: Director of Learning for MFL; Senior Leader (Curriculum)
- Identification for EAL support: SEN Coordinator
- Profiling of new admissions: SEN Coordinator
- Review of language policy: Senior Leader (MYP)

## Resources

The teaching of languages is supported by a wide range of audio-visual resources. Instructional methods are enhanced by the deployment of appropriate and effective ICT resources. Student-led opportunities provide regular opportunities for all students to become confident communicators to a large audience. Participation in drama productions allow them to fully experience the expressive beauty and power of language skillfully used, and students come to appreciate the vital role of language as the major vehicle for thought and expression in their everyday reality. The academy celebrates diversity in all its forms through the delivered curriculum, extracurricular and cocurricular programmes, as well as our PSHE programmes.