

# Policy:

## Fostering Language Diversity and International Mindedness

### 1. Introduction

At Thames British School, we are proud to educate students from over 30 countries, each one of whom has a unique cultural and linguistic background we actively support.

Thames British School recognizes that language is fundamental to all learning. Across campuses, grade levels, and throughout our curriculum, we promote the development of a student's mother tongue, world languages, and English (the language of instruction). This language support structure nurtures the hallmarks of international mindedness and the multi-cultural environment of Thames British School.

**At Thames British School Warsaw, we c | a | r | e**

### Our Principles:

We care:

- that every one of our students reaches their full potential, academically, socially and emotionally;
- that every student is safe and feels safe at school which means we are all responsible all of the time;
- that communication and our choice of language is inclusive and respectful;
- about our behaviour and what it may communicate to others. We conduct ourselves in an ethical manner and with integrity at all times;
- about our communities, culture, behave in a manner which fosters our values and insist that all members of our community do the same; and
- about learning first and foremost. Teachers are considered facilitators of

**Our values:**

<b>c</b>	<b>Collaborative &amp; Compassionate</b>	We work together when needed to get the job done. We value the work of others, are compassionate, and recognise that success is mutually beneficial
<b>a</b>	<b>Authentic</b>	We are real, genuine and honest. We are true to ourselves and our community and represent our-selves as such with integrity
<b>r</b>	<b>Responsible &amp; Resilient</b>	We have an obligation to reach our potential and fight to do so. We are accountable for our actions and utterances, and demonstrate respect for others needs and our environment. We don't give up.
<b>e</b>	<b>Enlightened</b>	We act on evidence, are factually well-informed, tolerant of alternative opinions, and guided by rational thought.

## 2. Our Definition of Learning

Learning is a continuous and dynamic process of intellectual, emotional, and social growth, where individuals acquire, understand, and apply knowledge, skills, and values. This transformative journey, shaped by both intentional and diverse experiences, fosters lifelong development, adaptability, and the ability to act in a global and culturally diverse world.

## 3. Languages of Instruction / Inclusion

The language of inclusion for all members of the community is English. We will always try to support those for whom English is not inclusive by providing appropriate support such as translators, etc.

In the Cambridge Primary, Cambridge Lower Secondary, Cambridge IGCSE programme and the IB DP programme, Language A and Language acquisition courses are delivered in the relevant languages. All other courses are taught in English.

A vital part of the Thames British School approach to language support is the fact that all teachers are language teachers. This means that students are actively supported in their development of English by all subject teachers.

The History of Poland and the Geography of Poland courses required by the Ministry of Education are taught to Polish citizens through the Polish language.

#### **4. English Assessment & Proficiency Requirements for Admission**

Admissions criteria regarding English proficiency at Thames are as inclusive as possible, but bound by the curricula of the courses on offer.

#### **5. AS & A-levels and IBDP Programme English Proficiency Entry Requirements**

Candidates to the AS & A-level and IBDP programs at Thames should demonstrate English proficiency at C1 in listening, reading, writing and speaking. Students scoring below a C1 may be provisionally admitted with the understanding that they take extra English language tuition with the goal of achieving a C1 on the Cambridge Advanced exam by the end of the first semester of IB1.

#### **6. IGCSE Programme English Proficiency Entry Requirements**

Students entering IGCSE should have a demonstrated English proficiency equivalent to B2 on the Cambridge English entrance exam (CEPT). Students who are assessed at B1 are required to take EAL support classes and demonstrate a B2 by the end of the first semester of the IGCSE programme. Students assessed at a B2 may take the IGCSE at Thames without required EAL courses.

Students entering IGCSE will take the IGCSE curriculum most suited to their academic abilities and English proficiency. Students assessed at the B2+/C1 will take the English as a First Language course curriculum, while students assessed lower than B2+/C1 will take the ESL course curriculum.

Students entering Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 should score a minimum B1 on the Cambridge English entrance exam (CEPT). Students who are assessed at A2+ are required to take EAL support classes.

Language proficiency assessment at Thames takes place during admissions, and at regular intervals throughout the program, through both summative and formative assessment. Graduating to the next educational Key Stage or program year at Thames requires students reaching internationally recognized language proficiency benchmarks. Thames reserves the right to refuse entry to any particular subject choice based on past student performance and language proficiency exam scores.

## 7. Polish Language Support

Polish language instruction is one way Thames British School shows its support of and respect for Polish culture, multiculturalism, and international mindedness. The Polish language is promoted in the IBDP through Polish Language A: Literature, the courses in Polish for native Polish speakers, and Polish for Foreigners.

Attending Polish language classes is required of all students regardless of nationality by the Polish Ministry of National Education.

Students are placed in Polish language courses based on their proficiency as assessed by the Polish teaching cohort. Students' proficiency level is assessed through:

- an interview with the candidate and their parents;
- analysis of grade transcripts and school reports from previous schools;
- a diagnosis of language fluency conducted by a Polish language teacher.

## 8. IB DP Language Courses

### 8.1. Group 1: Language A - Native Language Development

Thames British School places priority on the development of the student's native language.

Thames British School offers Language A Literature in Polish, English, and the Self-taught, School-supported Language A options. Further information on these courses can be found below.

In the IB DP, students who are not eligible to do either Polish A Literature or English A Literature courses are assisted in the development of their mother tongue through the Language A School Supported Self-Taught option. The Self-Taught School Supported Language A option is Standard Level by default.

If there is a minimum required number of candidates (5) eligible to do a course in a different language A, the school tries to assure that the language becomes available as a traditional class. The provision of such a course also depends on the availability of a qualified teacher.

### 8.2. Polish Language A: Literature

Polish Language A is appropriate for native or near native speakers of Polish with experience in analysing literature in Polish. Students wishing to take the course, but who are unsure of their language and literature analysis ability, will be invited to take

an entrance exam and sit an interview with the course teacher.

The course concentrates exclusively on literature. It uses a variety of approaches to textual criticism, exploring the nature of literature, the aesthetic function of literary language and textuality, and the relationship between literature and the world.

Adapted in part from Literature guide first assessment 2020 (published February 2019 Updated August 2019, May 2021)

### **8.3. English Language A: Literature**

English Language A: Literature is appropriate for native or near native speakers of English who are able to analyse and respond to complex text and other forms of English language. As this is a requirement for entry into the IBDP all students should be about to study English at this level. Students wishing to enter the IBDP, but who are unsure of their language or literature analysis ability will be invited to take an entrance exam and sit an interview with the course teacher.

The course concentrates exclusively on literature. It uses a variety of approaches to textual criticism, exploring the nature of literature, the aesthetic function of literary language and textuality, and the relationship between literature and the world.

### **8.4. Language A: School Supported Self-taught (SSST)**

This course option is offered to support students whose native language is not offered as a regular class at Thames British School, and who want to deepen their understanding of their home culture and language through the self-directed study of literature.

The school offers regular, timetabled advisory meetings designed especially for the needs of self-taught candidates. The sessions are conducted by the Language A Coordinator or a Language A Literature teacher.

At the beginning of Year 12 (IBDP year 1), self-taught students are introduced to the structure of the course, its objectives, and assessment procedures and criteria, all of which are set in the context of the IB Approaches to Learning, the Learner Profile and Academic Honesty regulations. The students' progress in compiling their reading lists as well as progress in reading the selected literature from the generated courses of study is monitored by the Language A Coordinator and/or the allocated Language A Literature teacher.

The students are provided with the necessary:

- guidelines and support on how to construct a proper course of study,
- information about assessment and examinations,
- Calendar of Deadlines with emphasis on the Language A SSST requirements,

- practice of literary analysis,
- practice of presentation skills,
- documentation.

Thames provides support contacting IB-experienced language teachers who are capable of assisting the development of their mother tongue.

Language A: literature SSST is very much like the Polish and English Language A: Literature courses offered at Thames. All of these courses are organized around concepts, which facilitates forming connections between subjects and between parts of a course. In the SSST Language A course, the central concepts are culture, communication, transformation, perspective, creativity, representation and identity. When reading and studying a literary work, students explore how the work relates to these concepts. Adapted in part from Diploma Programme Language A: literature school-supported self-taught student guide (published February 2019)

## **9. Group 2: Foreign Language Acquisition**

### **9.1. Language B / ab initio**

Due to advice published by the IB regarding the placement of students in language courses students 'who are already able to read, analyse and respond to complex literary and non-literary texts in a given language must be placed in a studies in language and literature course for that language. If a student can already communicate successfully in the language on a range of topics in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar contexts, then a DP studies in language and literature course must be considered the appropriate placement.

The language ab initio and language B courses are language acquisition courses—designed to provide students the opportunity to develop in a language in addition to their home/personal/best language(s). They are not designed for students entering the course who already have the ability to communicate confidently and proficiently in that specific language.<sup>1</sup>

### **9.2. German / Spanish B**

Language B is offered in German and Spanish. The Language B acquisition course is designed for students with previous experience of Spanish or German. Students further develop language fluency through the study of five prescribed themes: identities, experiences, human ingenuity, social organization and sharing the planet.

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<sup>1</sup> DP language courses: overview and placement guidance, International Baccalaureate Organization 2020, p.4.

The goals of Language B are to develop international-mindedness through the study of languages, cultures, and ideas and issues of global significance, to enable students to communicate in the language they have studied in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes, to encourage an awareness and appreciation of a variety of perspectives of people from diverse cultures, to develop students' understanding of the relationship between the languages and cultures with which they are familiar, to develop students' awareness of the importance of language in relation to other areas of knowledge, and to provide students with opportunities for intellectual engagement and the development of critical- and creative-thinking skills through the study of a second or third language. Adapted from Language B Guide. First assessment 2020 (published February 2018 Updated May 2019, August 2021)

### **9.3. German / Spanish ab initio**

The ab initio courses are SL level by default. Students will acquire productive and interactive communicative skills at a beginner's level, while also training their receptive skills such as listening and reading comprehension.

Students will be exposed to short extracts of literature and cultural experiences with the main purpose to enrich their knowledge of language and the cultures enclosed in it while developing appreciation of different cultures apart from their own. Students will use critical thinking and inquiry among other skills to develop their IB learner profile. Adapted from Language ab initio guide. First assessment 2020 (Published February 2018 Updated May 2019, August 2021)

A minimum enrollment of 5 students is required for the school to run any one of the classes described above.

## **10. EAL Support Program Exit Requirements**

To graduate from the EAL support program, students will sit the Cambridge B2/C1 exam appropriate to the program they are in after they have completed an EAL course.

Students who achieve the appropriate benchmark in the Cambridge B2/C1 exams (B2 for IGCSE, C1 for IBDP) will no longer be required to attend language support classes, but may choose to if they wish.

Students in the EAL support program may sit the Cambridge B2/C1 certificate exams at any time during the program, if they feel they are ready. The cost of the exam is borne by the student. Students must provide certification of results if the exam is taken through an outside provider.

## **11. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the school leadership team and staff. Adjustments will be made to align with educational research, curriculum updates, and school needs.