



SENIOR SCHOOL LANGUAGE POLICY

Date of Latest Review: 1 September 2021

Responsible Person: Deputy Head Academic

What the school believes about language

Warminster School believes language is not only central to learning, but also essential to living and being with others. The school has at its heart a strong sense of community and, within boarding houses and academic houses, interaction between the numerous nationalities is fostered. This interaction takes place in English, but it is believed that ‘home’ pupils should, too, be international-minded and embrace the opportunity they have to learn another language, speak to people of another nationality and broaden their horizons.

How the mother tongue is supported at Warminster School

The school has pupils from multiple nationalities with multiple languages, such as German, Italian, Mandarin, Thai and Russian. The mother tongue is supported through days such as the European Day of Languages, which includes an assembly where different languages are celebrated, and in supporting students who want to pursue their own languages, such as having Self Taught Languages in the IB.

Language in lessons and around the school

i) In lessons

To a degree, all teachers are language teachers in the sense that all those who are instructing pupils are modelling good language practice. As such, in lessons the language of the host country—English—is used for all instructions except when teaching foreign languages. This is to enable pupils to become conversant and capable in the host language.

ii) Around the school

Outside of lessons, support staff aid the learning of languages, such as librarians providing resources for learning not only English, but also other languages, too. English as the host language is promoted through readings in church, events such as Curriculum Enrichment Day and Competitions such as the Literacy Talent Show and the RS Poetry Competition. Moreover, even challenging material in the English language is open to pupils from all nationalities and cultures through drama, with a diverse range of pupils getting involved in school plays. Other languages reflected in the school community are celebrated in events such as European Day of Languages.

How languages are learned at Warminster School

Principal European languages are taught at Warminster School, and these are French, Spanish and German. Opportunities to learn another language begin in Y7 (and earlier, if a pupil has attended the prep school), and continue to post-16 education where pupils who take the IB Diploma as their programme of education have access to the Spanish *ab initio* course.

i) Prep School

In the Prep School, French is taught from Reception to Year 6, with the main aim being to expose the children to the French language and culture from an early age, instilling a life-long love of language learning. The priorities are building confidence, enhancing communication skills and inspiring cultural and intellectual curiosity. Stress is laid on the acquisition of oral and aural skills to deal with notional and functional situations likely to arise in a visit to a foreign country, or helping a foreign visitor here in this country. Great emphasis is placed on pronunciation through the use of phonics and the use of authentic materials is encouraged. Grammar remains important but it will be implicit in meaningful situational French and not presented in arid, rote-learning form.

ii) Lower School

Onto this base, between Years 7 and 9, more emphasis is increasingly laid on the linguistic foundation necessary for advanced study. Accuracy of written structures and a deeper understanding of linguistic skills in preparation for public examinations come to the fore.

All pupils in Years 7 and 8 follow two languages from French, German or Spanish. Pupils with specific learning difficulties may choose to only study one language and have learning support instead. Year 9 pupils all study one language and can opt in to a second language.

iii) Middle School

From Year 10 onwards pupils will have opted to pursue one or two modern foreign languages to GCSE. Pupils are taught their first choice of language within the mainstream language options and join a specific French option class for French. The School follows the Edexcel IGCSE syllabus, presenting pupils for the IGCSE examination at the end of Year 11.

Details of the Edexcel IGCSE syllabus can be found on the examination board's website: <http://qualifications.pearson.com/>

iv) Post-16

AS/A2

Pupils who have gained a satisfactory result at GCSE can go on to study French, Spanish and German at A level. The Department follows the AQA A Level syllabus. The ultimate goal of Sixth Form study is to produce students who are capable of working by themselves effectively so that they are ready for the next stage in their development whether in higher education or the field of work.

New study skills are introduced. For example, students are encouraged to read more widely and to read "to some purpose", which will require the student to find and evaluate information for themselves, questioning what they read, and forming their own opinions and ideas about the foreign country's political, social and artistic standing.

Details of the AQA GCE A Level syllabus can be found on the examination board's website: aqa.org.uk

International Baccalaureate

Pupils studying for the IB are required to study a language from both Group 1 and Group 2 of the IB hexagon, the former usually being the pupil's native language and the latter being studied at a variety of levels from beginner's to an advanced level. There is a range of languages offered at differing levels of fluency, which caters for the diverse requirements of IB students coming into the School from differing linguistic backgrounds, as well as those pupils who have completed their education in the lower years at Warminster School or other English-based schools. Languages currently offered by the Department, depending on demand, are:

French Language B at Standard and Higher Levels

Spanish Language B at Standard and Higher Levels

Spanish ab initio

German A

There is also the possibility of studying languages as a self-taught option within Group 1. Currently we have pupils who are studying Self-Taught French, Russian, Mandarin and Italian.

How languages are assessed at Warminster School

As with other subjects at Warminster School, they are assessed in accordance with Section 1.1 of the school's 'Assessment Recording and Reporting Policy,' in other words, they are department specific. The three departments in question are Modern Foreign Languages, English and EAL. Each department will have their own standardised means of assessment which adhere both to the school's policies and to the external examination boards (GCSE, A Level, IB). Especially with languages, it is important to recognise that assessment of languages should be regarded primarily as a process and secondarily as something which should pertain to summative assessment, as is reflected in Section 1.3 of the aforementioned 'Assessment Recording and Reporting Policy.' In Modern Foreign Languages and EAL, the following skills would be formally assessed, both during formative and summative assessment:

- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking
- Listening

Concerning English, Writing would be the principal skill assessed with specific criteria, although other skills may be assessed in the light of completion of specific tasks during the course, such as giving presentations.

Additional support for learning a language

For international students, additional support is available for learning English through the EAL department; extra lessons can be negotiated and language assistants can be requested for pupils in specific lessons. Both international students and home students are also entitled to help, upon assessment, from the SEN (Special Educational Needs) department; for further details, please see the 'Identification' section of the school's SEN policy. SEN assistance for a pupil will not primarily be for language learning, but the additional support might be requested for an MFL lesson.

Resources

For the IB Language B courses, the Department uses *Le monde en français* principally together with *Français B* and *French B*. The Spanish course follows *Mañana*. All courses are supplemented by authentic materials from magazines and newspapers, as well as articles from Authentik magazines, television broadcasts in the target language and films. A number of other publications by the Advance materials written specifically for the IB programme are also used. We work extensively from current newspapers and periodicals. CDs, the Internet, satellite TV and a host of personally collected materials all contribute extensively. The Department subscribes to several online resources also, such as *Textlink* and *This is Language*.

Every opportunity will be taken to put the target language into a clear context in a rich, realistic and meaningful way by use of as wide a variety of examples as possible such as:

- Use of skype to converse with partners in our link schools in France and Spain
- Participation in exchange programme
- Conversation sessions with native speakers in the school
- Conversation sessions with Foreign Language Assistants
- use of available television material
- use of radio programmes
- CDs
- films
- encouraging trips/visits abroad

- using magazines and readers for wider reading
- the building up of displays of posters and students' work,
- exhibitions of foreign paraphernalia, in classrooms
- the carrying out of as much of the routine classroom business as possible in the target language (e.g. enquiries about absence, apologies for lateness, seeking information about prep and meanings of words etc.)
- use of satellite broadcast TV programmes from Europe
- computer software

Access to programmes for non-native speakers

EAL support

The school's EAL department offers help to pupils who are non-native English speakers. For 11-16 pupils and A Level pupils, depending on their level of proficiency they will have timetabled lessons. Help for IB pupils is available upon request but is not built in to their timetable, such as support for international IB pupils who require the IELTS test for university entry. If a non-native English speaker wanted to join the school and had a low level of English language proficiency, EAL lessons could be negotiated as part of their timetable.

Translation aids

i) Dictionaries

The use of bilingual dictionaries throughout the school is promoted. There are a selection of bilingual dictionaries available in the EAL department for the EAL pupils to use, however it is strongly recommended that dictionaries are bought when starting at the school.

In regards to dictionaries and external examinations, the rules are getting stricter. In order to prepare lower school pupils for the expectations of their GCSE and A-level exams, dictionaries are allowed in exams, except for: English, MFL, History, Geography and RS.

For GCSE, bilingual dictionaries are allowed for all international pupils in external examinations, except for GCSE English, MFL, History, Geography and RS. The dictionaries used must be a basic translator style dictionary with no pictures, grammar sections or lists of facts, for example: lists of countries etc. These rules apply for international pupils sitting A-levels

For the IB

The use of a bilingual or monolingual dictionary and reference material is permitted during research and in the production of the written assignments for Language B essays for the IB Diploma. Dictionaries are not permitted in the 15 minute preparation time for IB language orals.

A basic translating dictionary is permitted for examinations in groups 3 to 6 (not groups 1 and 2) and is only permitted if the response language of the examination is not the best language of the Candidate.

ii) Translate on electronic devices

The use of electronic devices are permitted in the school at the discretion of the subject teacher. The translators usually take the form of mobile and smart phones. Dependence of the electronic translation devices are discouraged as they are not permitted in examination situations.

According to JCQ, electronic translators are permitted in all external examinations except for English, MFL, History, Geography and RS. However obtaining a electronic device with the requirements stated by JCQ is challenging. JCQ states that the electronic translators should have no memory available, however this is difficult to avoid. The basic ones are available however do not cover the languages required by the international pupils.

Again, as with the use of dictionaries, if the correct electronic translator was made available they would be permitted in all examinations, except for English, MFL, History, Geography and RS in the Lower

School. In external examinations, the same rule applies. If the correct device is used, it would be permitted in all GCSE and A-Levels, except for GCSE/ AL English, MFL, History, Geography and RS.

For the IB

Translation devices are allowed in the research and in the production of the written assignments for Language B essays for the IB Diploma, but are not allowed in examinations because of the capability of stored memory which would contravene academic honesty arrangements.

Ways the school involves parents/guardians in developing pupils' language development profiles

The school communicates progress concerning language development regularly to parents through grade cards, reports and parents' evenings. If any extra action needs taking, a representative from the EAL department, after consultation with other teachers such as form tutors and heads of school, will contact parents and/or guardians to liaise with them concerning what is best for the individual pupil concerned; targets will be set, or extra provision put on in school and/or in holidays.

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