

Language Acquisition and Literacy Policy



Leigh
Stationers' Academy

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Vision: A community where no student is left behind.

We are united by the belief that every young person should feel known, valued, and supported to succeed - academically, socially, and personally.

Mission

At Leigh Stationers' Academy, we develop principled, knowledgeable, and ambitious learners who contribute to their communities and the wider world. Rooted in the values of the International Baccalaureate, we empower students to strive for academic excellence, nurture their wellbeing, and embrace diversity. Through our distinctive college model and inclusive culture, every young person should feel known, valued, and supported to succeed - academically, socially, and personally, ready for life beyond school.

Values – The LSA Way

Our values define who we are and how we work:

1. **Leadership** – We develop confident, principled students who act with integrity, take initiative, and contribute positively to their community.
2. **Scholarship** – We nurture curiosity, independence and a love of learning that lasts a lifetime. Our students develop the habits of lifelong learners who think critically, reflect deeply, and seek to understand the world.

Achievement – We believe every student can succeed and we support them to realise their personal, academic and future goals.

Philosophy

At Leigh Stationers' Academy (LSA), we believe that language stands at the centre of all learning, shaping students' cognitive, social, and personal development. As an IB World School, we recognise that language is integral to the education of the whole person, fostering personal and intellectual growth while promoting intercultural understanding and global citizenship.

Language is the primary medium through which knowledge is constructed, negotiated, and shared. It empowers students to engage critically with the world, express their ideas with clarity and confidence, and navigate diverse cultural perspectives. At LSA, we foster a deep appreciation for linguistic diversity, recognising that every student brings a unique language profile that enriches our school community.

Language as a Foundation for Learning

We acknowledge that the development of a strong foundation in one's home language(s) is essential for cognitive growth, social belonging, and successful acquisition of additional languages. A secure foundation in one's first language enhances literacy, critical thinking, and academic achievement across disciplines.

Every Teacher as a Language Teacher

At LSA, we believe that language learning is embedded across all subjects, making every teacher a language teacher. All educators support language development by explicitly teaching subject-specific vocabulary and communication structures, ensuring that students are equipped with the linguistic tools to access, engage with, and excel in the curriculum.

Our Commitment to Language Learning

In all aspects of our language policy, we strive to:

- Promote inquiry-based, authentic language development.
- Foster transdisciplinary approaches to language learning, integrating language skills across all subject areas.
- Develop and interrelate the key skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and media literacy.
- Cultivate cultural awareness, respect for linguistic diversity, and international-mindedness.
- Encourage students to become confident, reflective, and creative communicators in multiple languages.
- Support students in developing lifelong language-learning skills that prepare them for a multilingual and interconnected world.

At LSA, we celebrate language as a means of building community, fostering inclusion, and developing globally minded individuals who can contribute meaningfully to society. Through this philosophy, we aim to empower students with the linguistic competencies and cultural understanding necessary for success in an ever-evolving world.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, this section seeks to clarify the definitions of the following key terms.

English as an Additional Language	English as an Additional Language (EAL) refers to the support provided for students whose first language is not English and who are in the process of developing full proficiency in English, the language of instruction. Within the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP), language development is viewed as central to all learning. At Leigh Stationers' Academy, EAL provision is designed to ensure equitable access to the curriculum by developing both academic and social language through targeted support, scaffolding, and inclusive teaching strategies.
First Language	First Language (often called Mother Tongue, Home Language, Preferred Language, Native Language, or Heritage Language) is the language a student primarily uses at home or

	outside school. It supports identity, cognitive development, and literacy, aiding additional language acquisition. In the MYP, the IB refers to this as First Language, acknowledging that many students use multiple languages daily.
Language A: Language and Literature	The MYP Language and Literature course develops critical thinking, communication, and analytical skills through diverse texts. Students explore literature, media, and non-literary works to enhance clarity, creativity, and global awareness. At Leigh Stationers' Academy, English is the Language and Literature course offered, ensuring strong literacy and analytical skills in the language of instruction.
Language B: Language Acquisition	The MYP Language Acquisition course builds communication skills, cultural understanding, and linguistic proficiency. Students engage with authentic texts to develop confidence in interpreting, interacting, and expressing themselves. At Leigh Stationers' Academy, Spanish is the Language Acquisition course offered, promoting multilingualism and global engagement.

Language Provision

First Language: English

As the language of instruction and the host country's primary language, English is central to learning at Leigh Stationers' Academy. All students engage in English language courses each year through scheduled MYP Language and Literature lessons, designed for first-language speakers and functional bilinguals.

Students with limited English proficiency upon entry receive targeted EAL support to help them develop academic language skills and access the curriculum. Recognising that language development is a shared responsibility, LSA provides professional development for staff to enhance their understanding of language acquisition and effective strategies for supporting multilingual learners. All teachers are language teachers and are expected to differentiate instruction to meet the diverse needs of students. This ensures that all learners can achieve academic success and participate fully in school life.

Language Acquisition

At LSA, we believe that learning an additional language is essential for fostering intercultural understanding, global awareness, and cognitive development. With the exception of a small number of students receiving targeted support to develop foundational competence in English, all students are required to study an MYP Language Acquisition course in Spanish.

Beyond its practical advantages, acquiring another language provides students with a deeper insight into different cultures, perspectives, and ways of thinking, offering them another "window on the world." This aligns with our commitment to developing internationally minded, reflective, and open-minded learners who can engage meaningfully in an interconnected global society.

Respecting, Developing and Maintaining Home and Community Languages

At LSA, we recognise that students' home and personal languages are central to their identity, cultural heritage, and cognitive development. In alignment with IB expectations, we are committed not only to respecting these languages but also to actively supporting their development and maintenance throughout the MYP. We do this by:

- Celebrating linguistic diversity through assemblies, enrichment events, and community engagement that include students' home languages.

- Maintaining an updated language profile for every student (see Appendix A), which informs classroom planning and language support strategies.
- Working in partnership with families to discuss and review each student's language profile, ensuring that home language development is supported both in and beyond school.
- Providing access to multilingual materials through the school library, including dictionaries, dual-language books, and media in home languages.
- Supporting students to pursue formal qualifications in their home languages through the GCSE Heritage Language programme, where available.
- Signposting families to community language schools and cultural organisations to promote ongoing language development outside of school.

This approach ensures students can continue to grow in their home languages while developing confidence and proficiency in English and an additional language.

EAL Provision

At LSA, students entering the MYP with limited English proficiency receive targeted support to develop their English language skills and access the full curriculum. English as an Additional Language (EAL) students are provided with one-to-one and small-group instruction to strengthen their English acquisition. Additionally, students have access to digital platforms and independent learning resources to support their progress.

EAL students follow the full MYP programme, including all required subjects. However, in certain cases, students may be temporarily exempted from other language acquisition courses to focus on reaching a functional level of English proficiency. This enables them to engage effectively in all subjects taught through the medium of English.

The progress of EAL students will be monitored by the EAL Lead (newly appointed from September 2025), in collaboration with subject teachers. Transitioning from the EAL course to English Language and Literature is flexible and based on individual student needs, occurring at any point in the academic year. Decisions are made in consultation with the student, their parents, and their teachers, ensuring a personalised and supportive approach to language learning.

Language Teaching

At LSA, all languages, including MYP Language and Literature and MYP Language Acquisition are taught by qualified speakers of the respective languages. This includes the GCSE Heritage Language programme, which allows students to opt for an additional GCSE in their home language. Language plays a central role in interdisciplinary learning, fostering connections across subjects and deepening students’ understanding of different disciplines. LSA’s language departments (English Language and Literature, EAL, and Language Acquisition) collaborate to develop meaningful cross-curricular links that enhance intellectual growth and global engagement.

Area of Responsibility	Staff Role
Delivery of the taught language curriculum	Director of Learning (DoL) for English Language and Literature DoL for Language Acquisition, Literacy Coordinator Class Teachers
Placement in language classes	EAL Coordinator (from September 2025) DoL for English Language and Literature DoL for Language Acquisition
Identification of students requiring EAL support	EAL Coordinator

	SEND Coordinator
Profiling of new admissions	Vice Principal for Culture and Behaviour SEND Coordinator EAL Coordinator
Review and development of the Language Policy	Senior Leadership Team (SLT) MYP Coordinator DoL for English Language and Literature DoL for Language Acquisition EAL Coordinator Parent Panel
Home Language enrichment	Enrichment Coordinator

Resourcing the Library

LSA's library plays a strengthening role in supporting language learning and multilingual literacy. Since March 2025, a librarian has been appointed to expand the range of resources and provision. A growing collection of print, digital, and audio-visual materials is available to support students' language development and provide access to diverse literary and academic texts. Efforts to enhance the integration of technology and ICT resources are also underway, enriching instructional approaches and promoting meaningful engagement with language.

The following resources are currently available to promote multilingualism, inclusive access, and academic success across the MYP:

- A curated collection of diverse fiction and non-fiction texts supports the development of English and other languages across the curriculum.
- A blend of physical and digital resources provides students with inclusive, technology-enhanced learning opportunities, tailored to varied linguistic and learning needs.
- The Sparx Reader platform is used to guide students and teachers in selecting appropriate texts based on reading and interest levels.
- Materials representing a broad range of cultures and international perspectives are prioritised to reflect the IB's commitment to intercultural understanding.
- Multilingual reference materials, including dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and translation tools, are available, with new items acquired in response to student demand and evolving linguistic profiles.
- A growing selection of Spanish-language resources supports MYP Language Acquisition.

Literacy and Language Data

Each student's developmental language profile is informed by academic admissions testing, a series of reading assessments, classroom disciplinary literacy (including oracy), and subject-specific classroom tasks

Using Reading Data to Inform Language Development

At LSA, reading data plays a crucial role in shaping language development and literacy support. To ensure students receive targeted interventions, we implement a structured reading assessment cycle across Years 7, 8, and 9, using a combination of Sparx Reader and the New Group Reading Test (NGRT) to track progress and inform support strategies.

Each October, our Literacy Lead coordinates a baseline reading assessment for all students in Years 7, 8, and 9 using Sparx Reader, which generates a reading age. Additionally, all new Year 7 students and the lowest-scoring 20% of students in Years 8 and 9 undergo NGRT testing. The NGRT provides a standardised national reading age score, serving as a baseline for intervention planning.

From November to February, students identified as significantly below their chronological reading age receive targeted interventions. These interventions focus on word-level skills, grammar, and reading fluency and are determined through a triangulation process involving the SENDCo and Literacy Coordinator to ensure an appropriate support plan.

In February, all Year 7, 8, and 9 students are reassessed using Sparx Reader. Students in interventions (approximately 70) and those newly identified as being below their chronological reading age undergo a second NGRT test. Based on these updated results, interventions are reviewed and adjusted to ensure continued progress.

Additionally, Year 9 reading data is used to identify students who may require further literacy support in Years 10 and 11, ensuring that those with persistent reading difficulties receive appropriate interventions as they progress into their GCSE studies.

This data-driven approach enables LSA to provide responsive, targeted language development support, ensuring all students develop the literacy skills needed to access the curriculum and thrive academically.

Disciplinary Literacy: Oracy

At LSA, oracy is recognised as a key component of disciplinary literacy, supporting students in developing subject-specific language, reasoning, and communication skills. A structured approach to oracy is embedded across the curriculum through CPD, led by the Literacy Coordinator in collaboration with the SEND team. Teachers are introduced to a consistent set of strategies - including Agree/Build/Challenge, Turn and Talk, and structured speaking frames - which promote inclusive classroom dialogue, support cognitive processing, and foster confident verbal expression across subject areas.

Oracy and extended writing strategies are embedded across the curriculum, supported by the LSA Literacy Toolkit. This staff-facing guide outlines practical approaches such as Say It Again, Better, Rehearse then Write, Think/Pair/Share, and the use of Single Paragraph Outlines (SPOs) to structure writing. These strategies promote clarity, inclusion, and academic confidence for all learners, especially those developing proficiency in English. A summary of these practices is provided in Appendix D.

Alignment with Other IB Policies

LSA's Language Policy works in alignment with the core IB policies to ensure that language development supports access, equity, and academic integrity across the MYP. The following connections are central to our approach:

Inclusion Policy

Language development is essential to inclusive practice. Students' language profiles, home language needs, and EAL support are identified and addressed through collaborative planning with the SEND and Inclusion teams. This ensures all learners, regardless of linguistic background, can access the full curriculum and participate fully in school life.

Assessment Policy

Assessment tasks are designed with language diversity in mind. Differentiation, scaffolding, and oracy-based approaches ensure that all students, including those developing proficiency in English, can demonstrate their understanding in valid and meaningful ways.

Academic Integrity Policy

Language instruction includes explicit teaching of citation practices, paraphrasing, and responsible research. Multilingual learners are supported in navigating the conventions of academic language and referencing, reducing the risk of unintentional malpractice.

Access and Admissions Policy

Language profiling forms a key part of the admissions process. Families are engaged in identifying home languages and language learning needs, and this informs placement decisions, support planning, and curriculum access from the outset.

Review Process

This Language Policy was developed collaboratively by key language stakeholders at Leigh Stationers' Academy, including the EAL Coordinator, Principal, Deputy Principal, Director of Language Acquisition, Director of Language and Literature, and the MYP Coordinator. Their expertise ensures that the policy aligns with IB standards, national requirements, and the needs of the Academy.

Before the review process, the following documents were examined by relevant specialists to ensure alignment with IB principles and LSA's context:

- Access and Admission Policy by EAL and MYP Coordinators
- Inclusion Policy by EAL and MYP Coordinators
- MYP: From Principles into Practice by MYP Coordinator
- IB Standards and Practices (2020) by MYP Coordinator
- Language and Literature Subject Guide by Director of Language and Literature
- Language Acquisition Subject Guide by Director of Language Acquisition
- Curriculum Policies by SLT representative

During the review process, two key documents informed discussions:

- IBO Standards and Practices (2020)
- IBO Guidelines for School Self-Reflection on Language Policy (2012)

Using these documents, along with insights from key language stakeholders, the following steps were taken:

1. Review IB Standards and Practices to ensure the policy aligns with the framework for multilingualism and inclusion.
2. Collaborate with staff, students, and families to refine LSA's Language Philosophy, incorporating feedback and research.
3. Evaluate current language practices and compile a school language profile to reflect linguistic diversity and student needs.
4. Review and update the existing policy, ensuring clarity, accessibility, and alignment with IB expectations.
5. Submit the draft to the SLT for review and approval, ensuring coherence with wider school policies.
6. Incorporate feedback from the SLT and make necessary amendments.
7. Communicate the finalised Language Policy to all stakeholders, including staff, students, and parents, and ensure its integration into school practices.

This structured approach ensures LSA's Language Policy remains inclusive, reflective of its community, and aligned with IB principles. The policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if significant changes occur in legislation, IB guidance, or school requirements. The Director of Language Acquisition, Director of Language and Literature and EAL Coordinator will lead the review process, working closely and consulting with students, parents, and external advisors where necessary.

The next full review of this policy is scheduled for August 2027.

Appendices

Appendix A: Leigh Stationers' Academy Language Profile

This appendix lists, in alphabetical order, the first languages spoken by students at Leigh Stationers' Academy. The data reflects the linguistic diversity of the school community and supports strategic planning for inclusive language provision and home language recognition.

Albanian/ Shqip - 6	Amharic - 1	Arabic - 8	Assyrian/ Aramaic - 1	Bengali - 2	Bulgarian - 12
Chinese - 7	Chinese (Mandarin/Putong hua) - 2	Danish - 2	Dari Persian - 2	English - 1512	French - 3
German - 3	Greek - 5	Gujarati - 4	Hindi - 3	Hungarian - 2	Igbo - 1
Italian - 3	Kinyarwanda - 1	Korean - 1	Kurdish - 10	Lithuanian - 12	Macedonian - 1
Malayalam - 1	Nepali - 1	Panjabi - 3	Polish - 7	Portuguese - 4	Romanian - 10
Romanian (Moldova) - 1	Russian - 10	Sinhala - 3	Spanish - 10	Swedish - 1	Tamil - 2
Telugu - 1	Turkish - 8	Ukrainian - 8	Urdu - 4	Vietnamese - 1	Yoruba - 3

Appendix B: Compliance IB Programme Standards and Practices (PSP)

This policy is aligned with the following IB Standards and Practices (2020):

Standard: Purpose (0101)

- Purpose 1: The governing body and school leaders articulate a purpose for learning that aligns with the IB's philosophy and mission. (0101-01)
- Purpose 3: The school community fosters internationally minded people who embody all attributes of the IB learner profile. (0101-03)

Standard: Leadership and governance (0201)

- Leadership 3: The school organises time for learning and teaching that provides a broad, balanced and connected curriculum and serves the changing needs of its community. (0201-03)
- Leadership 4: The school implements and reviews systems and processes to improve the operation and sustainability of its IB programme(s). (0201-04)
- Leadership 5: The school funds and allocates resources that sustain and further develop its IB programme(s). (0201-05)

Standard: Student support (0202)

- Student support 1: The school provides relevant human, natural, built and virtual resources to implement its IB programme (s). (0202-01)
- Student support 2: The school identifies and provides appropriate learning support. (0202-02)
- Student support 3: The school fosters the social, emotional, and physical well-being of its students and teachers. (0202-03)
- Student support 5: The school builds relationships with the wider community that are a source of wisdom and expertise to strengthen the implementation of its IB programme(s). (0202-05)

Standard: Teacher support (0203)

- Teacher support 1: The school ensures that teachers use current IB resources and regularly review their implementation of the programme. (0203-01)
- Teacher support 2: The school ensures that leadership and teachers participate in appropriate and timely professional learning to inform their practice. (0203-02)
- Teacher support 3: The school provides time and other resources for teachers to collaborate effectively in the implementation of IB programme(s). (0203-03)

Culture (03)

- Culture 1: The school secures access to an IB education for the broadest possible range of students. (0301-01)
- Culture 2: The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews an inclusion policy that creates cultures that support all students to reach their full potential. (0301-02)
- Culture 4: The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews a language policy that helps to foster intercultural understanding through communicating in a variety of ways in more than one language. (0301-04)

Standard: Designing a coherent curriculum (0401)

- Coherent curriculum 1: The school plans and implements a coherent curriculum that organises learning and teaching within and across the years of its IB programme(s). (0401-01)

Standard: Students as lifelong learners (0402)

- Lifelong learners 7: Students pursue opportunities to explore and develop their personal and cultural identities. (0402-07)

Standard: Approaches to teaching (0403)

- Approaches to teaching 4: Teachers promote effective relationships and purposeful collaboration to create a positive and dynamic learning community. (0403-04)
- Approaches to teaching 5: Teachers remove barriers to learning to enable every student to develop, pursue and achieve challenging personal learning goals. (0403-05)

Standard: Approaches to assessment (0404)

- Approaches to assessment 2: The school uses assessment methods that are varied and fit-for-purpose for the curriculum and stated learning outcomes and objectives. (0404-02)
- Approaches to assessment 3: The school administers assessment consistently, fairly, inclusively and transparently. (0404-03)

Appendix C: ATL Skills Connected To Language

ATL skills align with the IB Learner Profile traits of inquirer, thinker, and communicator, fostering multilingualism and intercultural understanding. They help students express ideas effectively, analyse language critically, and engage with diverse perspectives.

Communication Skills

- Using language to communicate effectively (reading, writing, speaking, and listening)
- Understanding and using non-verbal communication is essential for multilingual learners.
- Interpreting and using language in different contexts is essential to achieve a holistic education (academic, social, and intercultural).

Thinking Skills

- Critical thinking is utilised to analyse different perspectives in language and literature.
- Creative thinking allows young people to express ideas in multiple languages and explore linguistic diversity.
- Transfer skills are harnessed when students apply literacy skills across subjects and languages.

Research Skills

- Finding and selecting relevant information requires utilisation of language skills, especially for multilingual learners using multiple sources.
- Language is essential when using different media and resources including dictionaries, translation tools, and digital platforms.

Social Skills

- Respecting cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Collaborating with others in multilingual environments.
- Adapting communication styles for different audiences.

Self-Management Skills

- Time management for language learning and acquisition.
- Perseverance in language acquisition and literacy development.

Appendix D: Summary Of Key Strategies from the LSA Literacy Toolkit

The following practices, drawn from the LSA Literacy Toolkit, support consistent, inclusive approaches to oracy and writing across the curriculum:

- Say It Again, Better – Students refine verbal responses to improve vocabulary and clarity.
- Rehearse then Write – Students verbally rehearse ideas before writing, supporting planning and confidence.
- Think/Pair/Share – Structured discussion to deepen thinking before sharing ideas more widely.
- Turn and Talk – Low-stakes peer dialogue used to process ideas and check understanding.
- Agree/Build/Challenge – Promotes critical response, active listening, and respectful academic dialogue.
- Choral Response – Used to drill vocabulary, reinforce key terms, and promote recall.
- Single Paragraph Outline (SPO) – A planning tool for organising extended writing, promoting structure and clarity.

These strategies are introduced to staff through CPD and supported by collaborative planning with the Literacy Lead and SEND team.

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