

LANGUAGE POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION

École Jeannine Manuel UK (“the School”) is consubstantially a French school and a bilingual (French | English) international school. As a French school, it follows the French Ministry of Education’s national curriculum for “*Sections internationales*.” As an international school, it is a UNESCO “associated” school, accredited by the Council of British International Schools (COBIS).

École Jeannine Manuel UK is also an IB World School offering the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP). IB World Schools share a common philosophy – a commitment to high-quality, challenging, international education – that we believe is important for our pupils.

2 PHILOSOPHY

The School’s mission statement is: **To promote international understanding through the bilingual education of a multicultural community of students, and to foster pedagogical innovation by exploring best practices in an ever-changing global environment.**

Since the founding of our Paris sister school in 1954, the vision expressed in this mission statement was inspired by Jeannine Manuel’s conviction that “The more one understands, the less one fears” and “learning a foreign language is, by itself, important; it is also a means to better understand others, to be able to think like them—it provides access to the world.” These ideas continue to shape the culture of our School and guide its language philosophy.

The bilingual (French | English) education of our pupils permeates all aspects of the School’s ethos and curriculum. Bilingualism at École Jeannine Manuel has a specific meaning in terms of language skills: it is the ability to express oneself, orally or in writing, with native ease and compelling effectiveness.

This focus on two core languages and the multicultural capital they express entails the centrality of language to learning. Since many subjects, including experimental sciences, social science, history and geography are taught in both languages in primary and in middle school, teachers are all, in practice, language teachers. Beyond the language of instruction, they bring to their practice the diversity of cultural backgrounds and cultural perspectives that enrich each pupil’s learning experience.

The School is also committed to open an early window on a non-western civilization through Chinese (Mandarin) instruction beginning in Year 4 for all pupils. In Year 7, pupils may choose to continue Chinese instruction or begin to study Latin instead.

The School values the unique language, culture and skills that each pupil brings. We therefore embrace the development of other mother tongues and, beginning in Year 8, the acquisition of additional languages. The corresponding language skills are empowering tools to becoming open-minded, caring and reflective learners and citizens of the world. Where the School cannot offer at-school language instruction, it supports such instruction, and is committed to coordinate pupils’ progress with third-party instructors as needed.

Pupils are encouraged by the School to validate their language acquisition through external language examinations offered or sponsored by the cultural institutes of the countries where these languages are official national languages. IGCSE, DELE, GOETHE, DELF, YCT and HSK are the most frequently pursued examinations, all of which (except the Mandarin YCT and HSK) are calibrated by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The school is an exam centre for several of these examinations.

As an international and UNESCO ASPnet school, we are committed to welcoming families in transition. Our Admissions Policy provides that we strive to reserve space for international applicants (e.g. university faculty on sabbatical, visiting scholars or research fellows) whose families expect to remain in London for a limited period of time and wish to combine a cultural immersion in a bilingual education with the ability to re-enter their own school systems and excel.

3 SCHOOL LANGUAGE PROFILE

A diverse, multicultural student body is essential to the pursuit of the School's mission.

Now in its fourth year, our School welcomes pupils from over 40 nations. Among the pupils who enrolled over the past three years (September 2016 to September 2018), 34% have two French parents, 41% come from bi-national families including a French parent, and 25% have no French family background. As the School becomes better known in London, it is expected that the latter category will continue to grow its share of our student population, particularly in the Upper School now that IBDP authorisation has been granted.

From a language standpoint, over 70% of these pupils come to the school with a native or near-native command of French and a similar proportion enrol with a native or near-native command of English. Intersecting these two groups, almost 60% of pupils are dual-native speakers. Less than 3% of students have joined the School with no English or no French, and then only in EYFS years where immersion combined with differentiated instruction rapidly succeeds in bringing young children on par with their peers.

Although we are an academically selective school, we do not discriminate entry in terms of a pupil's command of French or of English up to and including Year 7. Beginning in Year 8, a decent command of English is required since both sixth form tracks (International option of the French baccalaureate and the School's IBDP course offerings) demand a strong mastery of English. Pupils with no French, however, may be offered admission in all year groups.

4 LANGUAGE SUPPORT IN FRENCH OR IN ENGLISH

Our pupils' language histories are collected during the admissions process and differentiated instruction is put in place to support pupils whose command of French or English requires it.

Capitalising on more than sixty years of bilingual education experience at its Paris sister school, bilingualism is pursued through a two-pronged strategy: immersion and specific differentiated language instruction. Immersion enables pupils to learn in the language of instruction in mixed ability groups and differentiated structured language instruction provides the necessary support to more homogeneous, smaller groups of pupils who have not yet reached the level of fluency we expect them to achieve.

Beginners in either language of instruction (French or English) take part in the School's Adaptation programme where they benefit from additional language instruction.

5 LANGUAGE IN THE IB

The proposed subjects, both in French and in English are Literature (SL and HL) and Language and Literature (SL). **It is anticipated that most students will choose both French and English Language A subjects and thus aim for a bilingual diploma.** French B will be available to non-native French learners who might have joined our School too late to achieve fluency in French. Offering French Ab initio will be considered in the future.

All other subjects will be offered in English only at this stage.

6 LANGUAGE POLICY AND IB STANDARDS

The development of this policy has been informed by several IB publications, including *“Language options and language support” in The Diploma Programme: From principles into practice, (2015); Guidelines for developing a school language policy; Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes; Guidance for the support of mother tongue in the Diploma Programme and Language and learning in IB programmes.*

This language policy reflects the aims of the IB learner profile, particularly with respect to helping shape inquiring, open-minded, caring thinkers and communicators; it also takes into account the following IB standards:

Standard A7: The school places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, host country language and other languages.

Standard B2.6: The library/multimedia/resources play a central role in the implementation of the DP programme.

In addition to its own library, the School has online access to the broad resources of its Paris sister school, including a special well-developed section for IB-specific material. The three Paris-based librarians who will support our pupils are all bilingual.

Standard B2.11: The school utilizes the resources and expertise of the community to enhance learning within the DP programme.

Examples of language and cultural partnerships and initiatives in the School include but are not limited to:

- The Globe Theatre in London,
- Language and cultural trips and exchanges to various countries, including France, Spain, Italy, and China where we have access to our sister school’s six partner schools in China.

Standards C1.8, C3.7, C3.8:

In the context of the School’s culture, ethos and ambitious bilingual goals, non-language teachers are aware that they play a significant role in pupils’ language development. They provide subject-specific feedback as well as comments on writing style, syntax, grammar, and word choice.