



FELIX-KLEIN-GYMNASIUM

Felix-Klein-Gymnasium

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

Language Policy

1. School Language Philosophy

The main objective of teaching languages at FKG is to enable students to make use of language as their crucial means of individual, social and cross-cultural communication and understanding in their local surroundings and a globalized world.

Language is integral to exploring and sustaining personal development, cultural identity and intercultural understanding. As well as being the major medium of social communication, it is tightly linked to cognitive growth because it is the process by which meaning and knowledge is negotiated and constructed. It is the main tool for building our knowledge of the universe and our place in it. Language then, is central to learning, as well as to literacy, and is thus closely related to success in school.¹

The school community at FKG is shaped by multilingual individuals among students, parents, and staff, respects language variation as a basic right and recognizes how an individual's linguistic background shapes their identity.²

All teaching staff are aware that they are language teachers regardless of their teaching subject and support students in their language learning through recognition of the integral nature of language in all subjects, motivating students to explore their identity and make use of learning opportunities through their native language or acquired languages, and supporting them in developing their individual language profile. All teaching staff are aware of their responsibilities in facilitating communication and are required to attend professional development courses that include strategies for supporting the language development of the students.

2. School Language Profile

All students of FKG should be able to speak, write and read German on a level that allows them to take an active part in the community inside and beyond the school. Most classes in Grades 5-13 are taught in German; naturally, the regular German classes are designed to improve the German language proficiency of the students. The language of communication in the school community is mostly German.

German as a Second Language

FKG offers a special support system for students who are native speakers of languages other than German; here, they are taught German as a Second Language and are prepared for their participation in the subject-specific classes taught in German via CLIL classes (Maths and Biology for German learners). Every student who comes from abroad and is not able to attend the regular German class finds a bridge to German culture here. This includes children of employees of international companies in the area and the university as well as refugees and second-generation immigrants, who mostly speak German at

¹ IBO (2008): "Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes", Preface.

² Cf. IBO (2024): „IB language tenets“.

home, but also have a high command of their parents' mother tongue (e.g. Turkish, Farsi, Italian, Arabic, Chinese, Vietnamese, Finnish, Russian, Polish).

English as a Second Language

All FKG students are taught to speak, write and read English as it is an important lingua franca in an increasingly globalized world. Therefore, learning English is obligatory from the beginning for all FKG students. English is taught 4 lessons (45') a week on average. Students can choose to attend a preparatory course for passing Cambridge English exams, such as CAE or FCE, a qualification that is highly appreciated by German companies.

FKG has a long tradition in bilingual education. Since 1990, our school has been offering CLIL classes in English for those students who want to improve their proficiency of English as a second language. In addition to an increased number of English lessons within the bilingual stream for Grades 5-10, English is used as the language of instruction for teaching the following subjects in this section:

- Chemistry
- Geography
- History
- Physical Education

This provides an excellent preparation for students of this stream to successfully complete the IBDP after grade 10 or 11.

Other second languages taught at FKG

Learning foreign languages promotes intercultural understanding and communicative competence in the world of today. Both aspects are central to our school programme and are catered for by our choice of foreign language courses, our bilingual stream and the range of international exchanges, experiences and projects we offer to develop the international-mindedness of our students. All students of FKG have the opportunity to choose from a variety of different languages.

Second languages taught at our school are:

- English (from Year 5)
- French, Latin or Spanish (from Year 6 or optional from Year 8)
- Italian, Russian, Mandarin, Classical Greek (in cooperation with other schools in Göttingen)

In these classes, the language of instruction is the target language.

Language Practices at FKG

- Learning foreign languages is further promoted by various visiting and exchange programmes with the UK, France, Spain and Ethiopia.
- Furthermore, students are offered the opportunity to partake in various language competitions (*Bundeswettbewerb Fremdsprachen*) and obtain language diplomas (DELF, DELE, TELC, *Cambridge Certificate* and *Deutsches Sprachdiplom I*)
- Assistant teachers from English-, French- and Spanish-speaking countries help our students to improve their foreign language skills and to develop intercultural understanding as well as international-mindedness.

Special arrangements for students with educational needs like dyslexia are regulated by circular from the Ministry of Education. These include remedial courses and special assessment arrangements (extra

time for tests, technical equipment) to ensure that all students can show their true potential in examinations and are not disadvantaged.

3. Language Learning in the IBDP

Course Profile

At FKG we offer German A: Language and Literature SL/HL, English A: Language and Literature SL/HL as well as German B SL.

To foster the development and maintenance of multilingualism and home or personal languages other than English or German, students have the option to enroll in a school-supported self-taught Language A Literature at Standard Level³. During the admissions process, students are counseled regarding their language profile and supported in their course selection by a language teacher (see Admissions Policy).

The curriculum for German A and English A is in line with the DP aims of Language A Language and Literature⁴:

1. engage with a range of texts, in a variety of media and forms, from different periods, styles, and cultures
2. develop skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, presenting and performing
3. develop skills in interpretation, analysis and evaluation
4. develop sensitivity to the formal and aesthetic qualities of texts and an appreciation of how they contribute to diverse responses and open up multiple meanings
5. develop an understanding of relationships between texts and a variety of perspectives, cultural contexts, and local and global issues and an appreciation of how they contribute to diverse responses and open up multiple meanings
6. develop an understanding of the relationships between studies in language and literature and other disciplines
7. communicate and collaborate in a confident and creative way
8. foster a lifelong interest in and enjoyment of language and literature.

Similarly, the school curriculum for German B meets the DP aims of Language B⁵:

1. Develop international-mindedness through the study of languages, cultures, and ideas and issues of global significance.
2. Enable students to communicate in the language they have studied in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes.
3. Encourage, through the study of texts and through social interaction, an awareness and appreciation of a variety of perspectives of people from diverse cultures.
4. Develop students' understanding of the relationship between the languages and cultures with which they are familiar.
5. Develop students' awareness of the importance of language in relation to other areas of knowledge.
6. Provide students, through language learning and the process of inquiry, with opportunities for intellectual engagement and the development of critical- and creative-thinking skills.

³ IBO (2019, last updated 2023): Language A: Language and Literature Guide, p.14.

⁵ IBO (2018, last updated 2021): Language B Guide, p. 13.

7. Provide students with a basis for further study, work and leisure through the use of an additional language.
8. Foster curiosity, creativity and a lifelong enjoyment of language learning.

International students enroll in German B, which is offered at Standard or Higher Level depending on demand and resources. Candidates should be aware that for university access in Germany, an additional German language certificate such as DSH will be required.

A Language ab initio as a second language in Group 2 is not accepted in Germany (Agreement of the Standing Conference of German Ministers of Education). Students without prior knowledge of the German language have the option to attend classes provided by the City of Göttingen before starting the IBDP. FKG will support families in finding suitable classes and developing a language learning timeline prior to enrollment (see Admissions Policy).

The development of non-native students of English towards additive bilingualism is reinforced through using English as the language of instruction for all subjects other than German A and German B.

Admission, placement, assessment, and support

- Language A school-supported self-taught Literature SL

FKG is committed to foster and maintain mother-tongue development. Students have the option to enroll in a Language A SSST Literature SL course for Group 1 or 6 if they have a very good command of a language other than English and German and have previously received education in the literature of this language or education with this language as the language of instruction. Students will have an in-school counsellor who is a languages teacher, will be enrolled in another Language A course (German A and/or English A) and have a designated SSST tutor who is proficient in the target language and familiar with the IB language tenets, language teaching and assessment aims, the Language A: Literature Guide and all further relevant rules and regulations.

- English A

With English being the language of instruction in all subjects other than German A and B and Language A SSST Literature, and the important role of English in the students' further education and life, a very good command of English is expected from all students when they enroll in the IBDP at FKG. This also makes them eligible for English A as a subject, which can be chosen at Standard or Higher Level for Group 1. The levels not only differ in scope, but teachers will choose more accessible literary and non-literary works at SL as compared to HL.

Students must provide proof of advanced English language skills before enrolment. In the case that a student is not confident they can manage an English A course, it is also likely they will see English as the language of instruction as a challenge. Individual counselling is offered for those applicants who do not yet meet the language requirements. Preparing for the IB DP beforehand by taking English language acquisition courses at one of the various educational institutes in Göttingen is highly recommended; FKG will support families in finding suitable classes and developing a language learning timeline prior to enrollment (see Admissions Policy).

- German A

As an international school funded by the German state and located in Germany, much of the daily life at FKG is shaped by the German language and culture. All students at FKG enroll in one of the two available German courses. Students are eligible only for German A if they can successfully communicate and

respond to texts in German and/or if they have passed a middle school certificate in Germany or at a German school abroad with German as the language of instruction. If an international student has been a student of FKG and passed Year 10 or 11, they are a German A candidate. It is important to note that while a Language A course is not a language acquisition course, it will further develop the student's language proficiency and students are not required to already show the level of language proficiency they need for successful examinations at the beginning of the course.

Taking German A as part of their Diploma will supersede a German language certificate for enrollment at most German universities.

- German B

Students are eligible for a German B course if they have previous experience in the target language

Students will be placed in German A or German B at the discretion of the Coordinator after individual counselling and careful consideration of the student's language background and skills, including counselling their parents or legal guardians regarding and in accordance with the IB guidelines published in the document "DP language courses: overview and placement guidance".

FKG's general policy requires all students to take either German A or German B. This supports their integration into the local community and culture and will ease access to institutions of tertiary education and the job market. At FKG we recognize that learning German as an additional language can pose a challenge to students whose First Language is different from the language of instruction (English), or to students who have special educational needs in the area of language development or hearing. In these cases, based on adequate documentation and at the discretion of the Coordinator, it is possible for students to select language courses other than German.

- Other Languages B

Students have the option to enroll in an online language course for Group 2 or 6 with Pamoja Education. The options are subject to availability and FKG has no influence on which languages are available.

Bilingual Diploma

The majority of IBDP students at FKG enroll in two A-languages and are thus eligible for a Bilingual IB Diploma.

3. Communicating and Reviewing the Policy

The policy is regularly reviewed and amended as required. Possible changes are discussed in department meetings, staff meetings and communicated in staff meetings, parent-teacher meetings, in circulars and information sessions for applicants and candidates.