

Language Policy

Reviewer: AD (with SH) February 2025
Education Committee: March 2025

Next review by: July 2026



1. School Linguistic Profile and Philosophy

1.1. **Profile:** Approximately 810 currently on school roll, of whom approximately 210 are in the Sixth Form. As stipulated within our admissions policy (see below) all students within the school are proficient English speakers. It is worth noting that a significant proportion are bilingual or multilingual and that all students develop proficiency in at least one other language during their time at the school (see below).

1.2. Admissions Policy Philosophy

1.2.1. Within the community of Godolphin and Latymer School we recognise that language lies at the heart of all learning and is the key to unlocking our students' ability for intellectual and personal growth throughout their lives.

1.2.2. We acknowledge the versatility of language in all its forms as interactional, personal, representational, heuristic, imaginative and regulatory. We believe language enables us to express, explore and extend who we are: individually and culturally languages are at the core of our identity and we recognise that a student's mother tongue can shape her learning style.

1.2.3. We believe a pupil's native language should only ever be grounds for celebration and never discrimination. We appreciate that the study of languages, ancient and modern, fosters a sense of awe at the vastness and diversity of our world and that communication extends beyond the verbal and enables appreciation of another's culture, values and traditions. As such it is a crucial component of truly holistic education, enabling us to build successful and mutually respectful relationships which are the foundation-stones of tolerance and peace.

1.2.4. It is recognised within the school that all teachers are teachers of language, and all parents and members of the school community are essential contributors to the learning process. We recognise that language is not a neutral, transparent medium of instruction or explanation but rather a constructive vehicle for values, meanings and beliefs which should therefore be constantly and critically questioned. Therefore we strive to ensure that effective and appropriate language is taught and reinforced through multi-sensory, stimulating teaching which actively addresses all pupils' language needs.

2. Language Programmes Overview

2.1. **Pedagogy:** We recognize that all teachers are language teachers who have the responsibility to facilitate language acquisition and promote communication skills.

2.2. **Professional Development:** As it is an expectation for all teachers to be language teachers, training will be offered where appropriate. The school is committed to providing embedded professional development for language learning across the curriculum.

3. Language and Literature

3.1. Our curriculum is ambitious to ensure that all students are confident when encountering complex challenging texts. We see this as underpinning their development into aspirational readers, writers and thinkers for the rest of their lives.

3.2. ***English curriculum:*** In English lessons, language and reading skills are fundamental to all schemes of work, which encourages students to value language skills as essential to all their studies. All students are required to study English Language and Literature until the end of Year 11. The GCSE programme includes a Spoken Language Endorsement for which students write and deliver a short presentation on a topic of their own personal interest. In the Sixth Form all pupils who opt to undertake the IB Diploma Programme will study English as their mother-tongue language, whilst those opting for the A Level pathway have the option to study English Literature and/or English Language. At Godolphin and Latymer we believe that developing a child's mother tongue can accelerate the rate of English language acquisition, support achievement in all subject areas, increase self-esteem, and enhance intercultural understanding and international-mindedness.

3.3. *Support for mother-tongue language*

3.3.1. Alongside the many English language development opportunities offered for students of all ages on a regular basis, we facilitate bilingual learners taking IGCSE French, Italian, Spanish, German or Mandarin early, in Year 9, 10 or 11 as an extra IGCSE.

3.3.2. Pupils throughout the school are able to undertake a wide variety of activities to develop their mother-tongue language use and apply their skills creatively and imaginatively. Examples of such activities include debating, public speaking, delivering assemblies, leadership roles such as form reps, society talks, creative writing groups, magazine editorial teams, voluntary service involvement etc.

3.3.3. In addition, there are activities and clubs to promote the learning and enjoyment of other languages: some of the Sixth Form bilingual students help Lower School students once a week; Year 7 German club; French cinema society; Spanish, French and Italian debating; and Latin reading competitions. The school also offers students the chance to participate in a wide variety of cultural visits and exchanges.

3.3.4. Many of the activities described in this section provide opportunities for students to use language persuasively, and for an authentic audience and purpose.

4. Modern Foreign and Classical Language Acquisition

4.1. Studying a range of modern and classical languages is a requirement for all students at Godolphin and Latymer. In Year 7 pupils currently choose one modern foreign language from French, German and Spanish which they study for two lessons per week. In addition, all Year 7 pupils currently study Mandarin for one lesson a week. From September 2025, all Year 7 pupils will study one lesson a week each of French, German and Mandarin. Year 7 students also study Latin for two lessons each week. In Years 8 and 9 all pupils currently

choose to continue with Mandarin or select a second language from French, German or Spanish. From September 2026, Year 8 pupils will choose two languages from French, German, Mandarin or Spanish; they will study their selected languages for two lessons a week until the end of Year 9. Pupils continue to study Latin for two lessons each week in Year 8 and have an introduction to Classical Greek. In Year 9, students have one lesson each week to study a classical subject; either Latin or Classical Civilisation (a non-linguistic course).

4.2. During Years 10 and 11 pupils at the school follow a GCSE and IGCSE curriculum and are required to study at least one modern foreign language (French, German, Italian, Mandarin or Spanish). They may also choose to study Latin and/or Classical Greek.

4.3. Each year a number of students study multiple languages at IGCSE/GCSE.

4.4. Languages are integral to the philosophy of the IB Diploma Programme. For Language B, students may choose to study one or two modern or classical languages from French, German, Italian, Latin, Classical Greek, Mandarin and Spanish at either SL or HL. Language B courses are language acquisition courses and may not be studied by bilingual students with extensive (beyond GCSE) proficiency and experience of the language. There is also the possibility to study Italian or Mandarin ab initio; these are effectively courses for beginners. We follow the guidance set by the International Baccalaureate Organisation to ensure a sufficient level of challenge for IB students.

4.5. ***French, German, Italian, Mandarin, Spanish***

4.5.1. In essence the aims of all the modern language courses offered throughout the school are the same, namely:

- To develop the ability to use the foreign language effectively for purposes of practical communication. This includes both the spoken and the written language.
- To form a sound base of skills, language and attitudes required for further study, work and leisure.
- To offer insights into the culture and civilisation of the countries where the foreign language is spoken. This includes everyday life and seasonal customs in the countries and may also include reference to the history; geography, music, painting, literature and thought of the country as appropriate.
- To develop an awareness of the nature of language and language learning by pointing out and discussing where relevant, the differences and similarities between different foreign languages and between the foreign language and English.
- To provide enjoyment and intellectual stimulation.
- To promote real linguistic and cultural interaction.
- To encourage positive attitudes to foreign language learning and to speakers of

foreign languages and a sympathetic approach to other cultures and civilizations. This is fostered particularly by actual contact with the foreign country through exchange visits, pen-friendships, visits and courses.

- To promote learning skills of a more general application. These include:
 - Analysing;
 - Memorizing;
 - application of ICT tools to facilitate and enhance learning and communication, including current models of social networking;
 - drawing of inferences and the intellectual discipline imposed by grammatical accuracy.

4.6. *Classical Languages*

4.6.1. Studying classical languages provides pupils with the opportunity to approach language, both their own and that of others, from a different perspective. The necessary focus on grammar and syntax in the teaching of Latin and Classical Greek gives students the capacity to understand and analyse their own language more effectively, while the requirement to produce good idiom in translation encourages them to explore nuance and meaning in both the classical and English lexica. We encourage students to develop their vocabulary by finding modern derivations of the new words which they encounter in Latin and Greek, through which we hope to demonstrate to students the place of classical languages within the development of language more broadly.

4.6.2. Effective translation and analysis of set literary texts requires a deep and overarching appreciation of a culture which in many respects is very different from our own, and pupils are encouraged to explore the links and similarities between classical culture and modern life. The aims of teaching Latin and Classical Greek throughout the school are, broadly speaking, as follows:

- To develop an analytical and sensitive approach to languages in general, and to Latin and Classical Greek in particular, including an awareness of the relationship between Classical Greek and Latin and the languages of today;
- To fire imagination and to deepen and develop experience by considering a wide range of issues, such as aesthetic, ethical, linguistic, political, religious and social questions;
- To increase accuracy and fluency in reading the Latin and Greek languages;
- To introduce pupils to a wide variety of classical literature in its original language, and to develop skills of literary appreciation at both the thematic and the technical levels;
- Where appropriate at higher levels of study, to communicate meaning in classical languages by translating effectively and accurately from English into Latin or Classical Greek.

5. Learning Support

- 5.1. The specialist teachers in the Individual Learning department recognize and help students to overcome the specific barriers that some learning differences present in language development. (Further details are contained within the Individual Learning Policy.)
- 5.2. The school has an Individual Learning Coordinator and two Individual Support teachers who all hold specialist qualifications in teaching pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties. Pupils who have a 'learning profile' that impacts adversely on aspects of language-related learning (e.g. Reading proficiency, spelling, writing fluency, vocabulary acquisition) are given support to develop their skills and compensatory strategies in order to overcome any disadvantages arising from their learning profile, whilst also appreciating the strengths inherent in their learning differences. All teachers are expected to be familiar with the needs of such pupils and suggestions for ways of supporting them are made available to colleagues.
- 5.3. Provision will be put in place for students requiring EAL support (see EAL policy).

6. Parents and the Community

- 6.1. Parents are encouraged to support their daughter's language learning at Godolphin and Latymer. There exists a range of opportunities for parents to support cultural and linguistic experiences, such as school productions organised by the drama department, foreign exchanges and language trips, and externally organised debating or public speaking competitions.
- 6.2. School publications, such as the School Magazine and Weekly Dolphin, enable parents to connect to the school's initiatives in language learning.
- 6.3. Where appropriate, parents and other community members are invited to participate in and contribute to language learning activities at the school.

7. Communication of the Language Policy to the Godolphin and Latymer community

- 7.1. The Language Policy is accessible to staff, pupils and parents on the school website. It is also available to staff and pupils as a file on the shared area.