

Language Policy

TAUNTON SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL: LANGUAGE POLICY

There are three guiding principles:

- That all languages are equal and deserve equal respect;
- In general, students should have the freedom to speak their native language without unreasonable restrictions unless this excludes other people;
- As all parts of Taunton School operate in the medium of English, it is necessary for international students to make determined efforts to attain a high level of English as swiftly as possible and it is the expectation both of their parents and the staff that they should do so.

The Language Policy described here attempts to keep a balance between the rights of the individual and the requirements of the School.

The purposes of the Policy are:

- To allow and encourage international students to develop their command of English, both academic and informal;
- To encourage integration and mutual respect between all members of the School community;
- To encourage all students to develop language sensitivity and good manners.

The following are our codes of conduct:

- i) All students should speak English at all times during all lessons as this is the medium of instruction. If there is a strong reason to use their own language (e.g. to explain something to a friend) they should first ask the teacher's permission;
- ii) When entering or leaving classes, in the corridors, buildings, boarding houses, queues for meals and the dining-room, students are strongly encouraged to use English;
- iii) Shouting, screaming and swearing should be avoided around School buildings, in any language. However, everyone should be aware that cultural norms and attitudes towards what is considered to be acceptable volume of speech in conversation will vary, so staff should always explain rather than reprimand if it is felt that this is overly loud;
- iv) All members of the school should be aware of the power of language to either exclude or include people, and they should aim to include others. For example, if a group of students is speaking Chinese or Russian and an English-speaking person approaches the group, they should switch to English. Similarly, if a group of students is speaking English and an international student approaches the group, they should be welcoming and try to make sure that their English is comprehensible to that person;
- v) English-speaking students should realise that they too are speaking a foreign language, when seen from the point of view of an international student. English-speaking students should be welcoming and inclusive towards others and may need to moderate their language and explain things to help others to join in with their activities.

EAL provision

All students are tested with an online English language test to ascertain their English level and be appropriately set in English lessons.

All English groups are streamed according to level both at TSIMS and TSI. These levels are reviewed on a regular basis through formal testing and informal teacher assessment.

At TSI any students who have a greater need to improve their English in order to access their subjects are given a reduced subject timetable and have 5 lessons of 1 hour a week of Additional English in place of a subject.

The Additional English course has three main areas of focus:

- Extra support in IGCSE English as a second language, helping with improving their skills needed for this exam
- Extra support in preparing for the IELTS exam, helping them with exam skills and techniques
- General English, helping them with improving their vocabulary and grammar, speaking and pronunciation to be able to access all parts of school life inside and outside lessons

All our students are international so there is particular attention taken in the week long induction programme to ensure they understand the rules and expectations of the school and staff. In the first few weeks staff grade the level and pace of their lessons to include those with a lower level of English or low confidence. Staff also integrate more with the students in break times to encourage English speaking and monitor exclusion.

At TSIMS staff are expected to integrate with students during every break time and meal times to encourage students to speak English.