



INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE SPAIN
MADRID

A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

The EAL Program in the Secondary School at ICS (2018-19)

What is EAL?

ICS offers an **English as an Additional Language (EAL)** program for English language learners. This program's aim is to provide equal access to the curriculum for students whose mother tongue is not English but who are learning academic content through English. In the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (MYP) for grades 6-10 and the Diploma Program (DP) in grades 11-12, EAL teachers support students to develop the Academic English needed to access the curriculum. The EAL Department also strives to promote and integrate mother tongue language development, as it is key to language acquisition.

EAL classes are provided to support students as they develop their academic language skills in English. The EAL program incorporates content and skills-based instruction and is designed to help new students participate in all subject classes from their very first day at ICS. This means they are taught English *through* grade-level academic lessons, which have been adapted to meet their needs. Some students may have had English lessons in their previous school, but the English that is required for academic learning is quite different, and our program is designed to help students participate fully in all subjects along with their grade-level classmates. At ICS, EAL classes support students to develop the language and skills they need for their mainstream classes.

Who has EAL?

Students are tested during the admissions process and may be identified as needing English support. Upon arrival at ICS, the EAL department may further test those students and/or observe them in subject classes before determining what English classes they will need. We use the WIDA English language proficiency assessment in addition to other tools to determine students' language learning needs.

EAL Program Model

At ICS, EAL and subject teachers work together to meet students' language and academic needs. Students in the EAL program take an MYP English Language Acquisition class four periods a week. These classes are based on a student's "phase" or language level. The different phases correspond to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The focus of these lessons is on developing students to become confident communicators in English.

In addition to English Language Acquisition classes, students receive three periods of EAL during the Foreign Language (French/German) block. EAL classes focus on academic English to reinforce mainstream subject content and skills. EAL students receive specialized support based on their individual needs. Differentiation in language learning for academic purposes includes strategies such as activating students'

prior knowledge, scaffolding meaning, and frontloading vocabulary. Collaborative planning is also an integral part of the IB programme. EAL specialists work with mainstream teachers to help differentiate content and tasks for EAL students. There is an additional fee for EAL classes.

In-Class Support: In addition to the above-mentioned lessons, EAL teachers often go to MYP subject classes such as science or humanities to provide support for EAL students, and work with subject teachers. This allows students to follow the regular curriculum, and allows EAL teachers to monitor students' progress.

Who are the EAL teachers?

There are four teachers in the EAL Department. Ms. Joan Costello (USA) is the EAL Coordinator. Ms. Patti Trimborn (USA), Mr. Franco Fernandez (UK), and Ms. Sophie Carozzi (UK) all have experience working with EAL students. EAL teachers are available to speak with parents about their children's progress. Please feel free to contact your child's EAL teacher by email.

How are EAL students assessed?

Both mainstream and EAL teachers monitor students' progress continuously. In their subject classes, EAL students may have differentiated assignments but are assessed using the official MYP criteria. In English Language Acquisition and EAL classes, student performance is assessed in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Students also practice important communication skills such as presenting information in the appropriate format according to the audience and purpose as well as interpreting images and different texts such as graphs and non-fiction writing. In English Language Acquisition classes students are graded using the official MYP criteria for Language Acquisition (see below). However, EAL is not an IB course so the EAL report will only include an effort grade and a comment with personalized feedback. Students receive semester reports in February and June. Interim (Progress) reports are issued in November and April.

How long does it take to learn English?

Many students become fluent in spoken English very quickly. Research has demonstrated that it takes only 1 to 2 years to develop competency at this level. However, when English is required for academic purposes, as it is at ICS, the process may take much longer, at least 4 to 7 years. In the secondary school, the academic demands of the coursework offer additional challenges for most English language learners.

How can parents help EAL students at home?

It is very important for students to know that their parents support their efforts to learn in a new language. Students come to school with a great deal of previous knowledge in their first language, and parents should continue to develop this at home. Research has shown us that **the most important factor in learning a second language is a well-developed first language**. Parents can read with their children and discuss books in their first language. Parents can provide stimulating, age-appropriate reading material at home as well. It is also helpful for students to read about the topics that they are learning at school in their first language.

With regard to homework, parents should discuss material in their first language, to ensure understanding. It is important for students to complete homework assignments in their own words, even though they may

contain grammar mistakes, than to hand in long, complicated pieces of work they do not understand or have copied directly from a translation or from a book. It is very helpful for students to have access to a bilingual dictionary (English-First Language/ First Language-English), to use at school and at home. There are also various internet resources available to help EAL students that will be used in class and at home. These resources will be on the ICS English as an Additional Language website and on ManageBac, which is the student-learning platform for ICS.

MYP English Language Acquisition Criteria

Criterion A— comprehending spoken and visual text

The student is expected to be able to:

- listen for specific purposes and respond to show understanding
- interpret visual text that is presented with spoken text
- engage with the text by supporting opinion and personal response with examples and evidence from the text

Criterion B— comprehending written and visual text

The student is expected to be able to:

- read for specific purposes and respond to show understanding
- interpret visual text that is presented with written text
- engage with the text by supporting opinion and personal response with examples and evidence from the text

Criterion C—communication in response to spoken, written and visual text

The student is expected to be able to:

- interact and communicate in various situations
- express thoughts, feelings, ideas, opinions and information in spoken and written form
- speak and write for specific purposes

Criterion D—using language in spoken and written form

The student is expected to be able to:

- organize and express thoughts, feelings, ideas, opinions and information in spoken and written form
- develop accuracy when speaking and writing in English.

Students can receive a maximum of 8 points in each criterion. A total grade of **7** will be determined along with an effort grade for each report.

NOTE: This section is from the MYP *Language Acquisition Guide* (May 2014: 9-10)

Further reading:

- *A Parents' and Teachers' Guide to Bilingualism*, by Colin Baker, available from www.multilingual-matters.com, also available in Spanish, *Guía Para Padres y Maestros de Niños Bilingües*.
- *The Power of Reading*, by Stephen Krashen, available from Greenwood Publishers www.greenwood.com.

For more information, please contact the EAL Coordinator in the Secondary School:

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