



THE CODRINGTON SCHOOL
THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF BARBADOS

Language Policy

Reviewed March 2024

Philosophy

The Codrington School believes that language is the key, and the foundation, to all learning. As such, all teachers at The Codrington School are language teachers and all students are language learners.

Through language, our students acquire the ability to think and to learn, to develop social skills and values, and to acquire knowledge. It allows us to connect to one another, seek solutions to problems, resolve differences, and cooperate towards building a better community. Language makes it possible for us to inquire, laugh, share and truly maximize our learning experiences through life.

Guiding principles

At The Codrington School our approach to language is guided by the following:

- ✚ a belief that language development forms the foundation for all learning and education;
- ✚ that all teachers are language teachers;
- ✚ that well-developed language skills are essential to open, honest, and clear communication;
- ✚ that a person's mother tongue is a direct link to that person's culture, heritage, and identity;
- ✚ that multilingualism is a critical component of success in the world that we live in;
- ✚ that language helps forge social relationships and cope with the practical expectations of life.

School Language profile

The language of instruction at The Codrington School is English (Language A). Students are offered Spanish and/or French as an additional language (Language B). The options of languages offered is a combination of the following reasons:

- ✚ students new to Codrington who join at various points during the school year have generally been exposed to either of these languages;
- ✚ Spanish is part of the Barbados national curriculum;
- ✚ Barbados is in closer proximity to Spanish and French speaking countries than any other

- ✚ exchanges would be possible between local Spanish and French speaking islands;
- ✚ Barbados hosts a French cultural center, The French Alliance, that offers language and conversation courses, and organises French cultural events.

Currently, Spanish tuition begins in the PYP and continues through the MYP and into DP. French begins in the MYP and continues through to the DP

	English	Spanish	French
PYP	Language A	Language B	
MYP	Language A	Language B	Language B
DP	English A HL English A SL	Spanish Ab Initio SL Spanish B HL Spanish B SL Spanish A (self-taught)	French B HL French B SL

English is the language of communication used in the school and generally outside the classroom, but we also encourage students who are learning in a language other than the mother tongue to use their mother-tongue language freely. It is not uncommon to hear teachers and students reverting to mother-tongue in subjects, or chatting informally together in a language other than English.

English is the school’s language of instruction. It is also the school’s working language, and is used for governance, administration and management, collaborative planning, instruction, and enrichment.

Language A and B in Codrington

In the Primary Years Programme (PYP), all students have the opportunity to learn more than one language from age of 6. Middle Years Programme (MYP) language B (additional language) builds on experiences in language learning that the students have gained during their early years, or may be taught from a beginner level. Students wishing to continue on to the Diploma programme (DP) will have a grounding in at least one language B, and will have developed an inquiring, reflective approach to language learning.

PYP requirements

Students are introduced to a second language (Spanish) through songs as soon as the early years of PYP2 and 3. Students will begin to study a second language (Spanish) at age 6 (PYP4), where they will receive one 40-minute session per week. They will then receive two 50-minute sessions per week in PYP5 and 6 and three 40-minute sessions in PYP7-8. The length and frequency for these lessons may vary due to timetable and staff constraints.

MYP Requirements

Students will study two languages: Language A (English) and Language B (Spanish or French). Students receive four 55-minute lessons per week in language A and four 55-minute lessons per week in each additional language B studied (Spanish or French). Skills necessary to reach the final objectives are developed over the course of the programme.

All students will receive instruction in Language A (English), which is the school's language of instruction. The course will be taught as a combination of language and literature, where the aspects of language use are taught through the use of literature in English, both originally written in English and literature in translation. The school recognizes that even within the community of students for whom English is the mother tongue, there are different varieties of English represented. The Language A will be standardized to reflect the British academic standard, but varieties of English will be recognized and encouraged, where appropriate.

The language B subject group is organised into 6 phases and these phases represent a developmental continuum of additional language learning. The language B teachers are in the best position to decide which phase a student will complete for his or her final assessment to satisfactorily complete the MYP course. Given the size of the school, and nature of language acquisition, phases are not organized into age groups with the MYP. MYP 1 language classes will focus on phases 1 and 2. MYP 2 language classes on phases 2 and 3 and MYP 3 language classes on phases 3 and 4.

From MYP 4, language acquisition looks slightly different to allow for progression, but also to afford students entering the school who may not have a language back a chance to gain foundational skills to transition into Ab Initio in DP. As such MYP 4 and 5 are combined for French and Spanish classes which focus on phases 4 and 5, with these students looking to take language B in DP. An additional beginner's Spanish class will be added in MYP 4/5 that focuses on phases 1 and 2, with these students looking to take Spanish Ab Initio SL in DP.

Diploma Requirements

Students will study at least two languages. Every student must take at least one subject from group 1 and one subject from group 2, unless they take 2 subjects in group 1

In Group 1 we offer Language A English: study of language and literature at higher and standard level. Additionally, we offer Language A: literature school supported self-taught language in Spanish for students who are proficient in both English and Spanish or for students whose first language is not English. The self-taught language A: literature is offered at standard level only.

In Group 2 (language acquisition) students can choose a second (and third) language. It consists of three language courses accommodating the different levels of proficiency the students have when they begin.

Language *ab initio* courses are for beginners, (students with no previous experience of learning the language), and is available in Spanish and at standard level only.

Language B standard level is for students who have had some previous experience of learning the language-

Language B higher level is for students who have a high level of competence in the language they have chosen. The course includes the study of both language and literature.

Both language B standard level and language B higher level are offered in French and Spanish.

Bilingual diploma:

A student can obtain a bilingual diploma by taking 2 group 1 courses.

Mother Tongue

The school recognises that mother-tongue development is important in students' cognitive development, and general performance.

The school aims to enable students to retain a positive attitude towards their mother tongue by showing acceptance of cultural identity, and encourages students to continue developing their own knowledge and fluency in their mother tongue.

The school will recognise various mother-tongue languages by displaying the languages spoken by the student population, and in turn ensuring languages and cultural backgrounds are known and used as beneficial resources throughout school life and curriculum teaching.

The school will nominate mother-tongue teachers (or students where possible) to buddy-up with new students in the initial settling in process. These teachers will act as a resource for students, parents and teachers to allow the student to be as knowledgeable and confident as possible about their new surroundings and routine.

The school will work closely with families to support and advise assistance for language needs faced by students learning in a different language to the mother tongue.

Students will be encouraged to demonstrate their mother tongue in school events such as concerts and assemblies, and to establish enrichment groups where they can teach their peers mother-tongue languages. Older students could be involved in parent/teacher conferences, school meetings or admissions activities translating for new families.

The library committee recognizes the need to provide literature, both fiction and non-fiction, for non-English speakers, and this area will continue to be developed with the help and support of our international parent body.

EAL

Intercultural awareness and cultural identity

The school will use language to promote the fundamental concepts of the MYP: holistic learning, intercultural awareness and communication.

The school recognises that language is key to exploring and sustaining cultural identity, and that mother tongue and any other languages used in constructing meaning are intimately connected to a person's relationship with the world, and how they come to feel about that world.

The school aims to promote self-esteem through additive bilingualism (where another language and culture does not replace that of the mother tongue) and will do this by incorporating and celebrating cultural diversity in the school.

The school will use its language programmes to encourage the qualities, attitudes and characteristics identified in the IB learner profile, which promotes responsible citizenship.

The school aims to enable students to understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication.

Admissions

The Codrington School accepts students from diverse socio-economic, ethnic, linguistic and national backgrounds who will benefit from the rigorous nature of the IB programme, and who will positively contribute to the life of the school community. Qualified students are admitted at all grade levels (PYP 1 – DP 1), class size permitting. Students of all linguistic backgrounds are considered for admission. There is no need for a student to know French or Spanish, but a solid foundation in the child's mother tongue is necessary to be successful in our program. Students with no English language skills are accepted throughout the PYP and, where appropriate, in the MYP. Given the nature of the DP programme, students should be proficient in English to begin the IB program in DP 1.