

# **PHILOSOPHY and OBJECTIVES of** **BORDEAUX INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

**The overall philosophy of Bordeaux International school is to provide access to freedom, responsibility and autonomy for each student whatever his or her personality, social and cultural background.**

## **Section 1 : The Context**

The school was created in 1987 with the support of the British and American Consulates in order to provide primary and secondary education to the growing English-speaking community in the Bordeaux region. Over the years, the school has attracted a greater international intake.

BIS receives students from a variety of social, international and cultural backgrounds. In order to implement our programmes and take into account the cultural diversity of our students, we have made it our policy to ensure that no class exceeds 12 students: this allows us to focus attention more pertinently on the needs of individual students thanks to differentiated teaching.

From the start it was felt essential that the school should encourage mutual interaction between the Anglophone and French communities. A bilingual program was devised incorporating both the French and English National Curricula in 1990. The success of this programme led to the opening of an Early Learning section in 1995. The unique role that BIS plays in the local community has gained the Primary section recognition from the French National Education Authority in 1999 (now under “contract”).

While the Secondary programmes are strongly influenced by the requirements of the English National Curriculum, BIS has also built in activities which focus on the linguistic and cultural features of the school’s location - Bordeaux, France. Since 2007, the bilingual nature of our Middle School reinforces the international dimension of BIS. This has positive repercussions on the interaction between the French and the expatriate working community.

## **Section II The aims of the School**

- A)** To help students reach **their full potential** by encouraging them to think creatively, reason critically, express themselves confidently and become independent learners.
- B)** To equip students with a level of fluency in **at least two languages**, to encourage interaction with pupils of different nationalities and thus promote an appreciation of diverse cultures
- C)** To enable pupils to reach a level of **academic achievement, knowledge and understanding** which prepares them for international further education and ultimately a global career
- D)** To develop pupils' self respect and encourage them to become inspired, balanced and responsible **global citizens**

## **Section III Strategies employed to achieve these aims and their rationale**

- A) To help students reach their full potential by encouraging them to think creatively, reason critically, express themselves confidently and become independent learners**
  - Recognising its shared responsibility with parents, BIS offers a balanced programme of activities, which includes projects, school councils, the Performing Arts, Social Education, and the International Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.
  - These activities encourage students to formulate and express their opinions and values, and to reflect on their actions and possible consequences.
  - Students participate in preparing debates, research projects, presentations, using a variety of techniques including ICT (Information and Communication Technology), and the school magazine.

**B) To equip students with a level of fluency in at least two languages, to encourage interaction with pupils of different nationalities and thus promote an appreciation of diverse cultures**

- Students are encouraged and supported to become fluent and confident speakers in both English and French together with an initiation in Spanish.
- Planned activities provide opportunities for students to become actively and positively involved in the local community (host family boarding, membership of local clubs).
- Students are encouraged to enjoy French culture by participating in sports, visits to theatres, museums, field trips, and work experience (when relevant).
- Through all these experiences, students will be aware of, respect and appreciate multicultural diversities both within and beyond the school.

**C) To enable pupils to reach a level of academic achievement, knowledge and understanding which prepares them for international further education and ultimately a global career**

- We value the previous learning and varied personal experiences of all our students
- We provide a flexible programme, within the overall direction of the French and English national primary years' framework and the Secondary English National Curriculum.
- We recognise a range of learning styles and use a range of teaching styles to meet these needs.
- While recognising the importance of formal examinations (IGCSE and A level), we use a wide range of assessment methods to identify and report strengths and needs of our students
- We advise prospective parents of children with severe learning difficulties that BIS cannot cater for their needs. In the case of minor difficulties, the school will work with both parents and students to arrange contact with an outside counsellor (working in French, English or Spanish).
- We understand the importance of transition into and out of an international school and we provide our students with a positive and adaptable approach to learning. In addition we ensure honest, detailed reports on progress and standards.

**D) To develop pupils' self respect and encourage them to become inspired, balanced and responsible global citizens**

- Students are encouraged to develop respect for themselves and others, and to reject all kinds of injustice, prejudice and disrespect of human rights.
- The school derives maximum benefit from its international dimension, sharing the positive aspects of different cultural traditions.
- We promote a sense of responsibility to the local community by organising voluntary services, fund raising. These activities also give students an insight into less privileged communities and thereby provide a sense of global awareness.

**Bordeaux International school provides:**

**Bilingual Early Learning** (2½ – 5 years) adapts French and English school programmes for an international community while developing basic social skills and autonomy. Activities are led by a team of two teachers, one English speaker and one French speaker

**Bilingual Primary School** (6 – 9 years) fuses the essential elements of the French and English national syllabuses while introducing an understanding of discipline, promoting pleasure through learning and development of confident self-expression. Lessons are taught by a team of two teachers, one English speaker and one French speaker.

**International Middle School** (10-13 years) is a very successful bridge between Primary and Secondary school. It enables pupils to transfer to Secondary school already having experience of learning in a more independent way. In Lower Middle School (10-11years), lessons are taught in both languages like in Primary. In Upper Middle School (12-13 years) lessons are taught more largely in English in order to equip pupils for the international world of higher and further education.

**Secondary School** (14-19 years) is based on the English National Curriculum and takes pupils through their IGCSE (International General Certificate of Secondary Education) and A-level; IGCSE is the international equivalent of the English GCSE, and A-level is an internationally recognised university entrance qualification. Throughout the courses, where relevant, topics covered focus on global issues rather than purely UK centred themes.

**International Students**

For students for whom English/French is not the mother tongue / First language, the school will provide language support. For those in examination years, there may be the need of supplementary language support outside the scope of the specialist subject class (at a cost). Students can prepare the IGCSE examination in English as a Second language.