



GKV Cemil Alevli College Language Policy

Introduction

The GKV Cemil Alevli College administration and faculty recognize the importance of language proficiency and appropriate use, whether they are in the mother tongue or in second languages. The curriculum and the academic environment provide for high quality instruction and immersion in English, the language of instruction for IB courses, as well as Turkish, the mother tongue, and additional options for Group 1 Arabic and Russian (SSST).

Philosophy

The language policy at Cemil Alevli College starts with the following basic premises:

1. Language is essential not only for basic communication, but serves also intellectual, social, psychological, political, economic and aesthetic functions; proficiency in language will support those functions.
2. In line with IB philosophy, all teachers are language teachers who are responsible for promoting and facilitating communication in and out of the classroom.
3. Language is an important part of a person's cultural identity. Every student should be a proficient user of his/her native language.
4. An appreciation of the mother tongue and the literature in which is written helps to preserve cultural heritage for future generations.
5. Learning foreign languages promotes intercultural understanding, not just through communication, but by experiencing the nuances of idiom, metaphor and other subtleties of expression by which culture is built into a language.
6. Proficiency and linguistic awareness in one language carry over to other languages.
7. Learning second and third languages increases cognitive skills in pattern-forming, categorization, and other types of organizational thought.
8. Learning any language is an ongoing process that is furthered by reading. Moreover, a high degree of literacy is essential for assimilating knowledge and abstract ideas found in academic texts.
9. Equal access to all IB subjects is a basic right of qualified students; for this reason, the faculty at Cemil Alevli is committed to identifying the linguistic needs of its IB students and working to serve those needs.

Language profile of GKV Cemil Alevli College students

The vast majority of current Cemil Alevli students were born in Turkey and use Turkish as their mother tongue. Among those students, some may also have had exposure to another home language, but they have been educated using Turkish as the language of instruction from preschool or kindergarten on. Most have had varying levels of English instruction in their primary and/or secondary years. In addition, students may have studied a second foreign language such as German. We have had several Syrian immigrants (Arabic, English, French), and exchange students and children of relief workers (with various cultural and linguistic backgrounds). Currently we have one Indian student from Gujarat (Gujarati, Malayalam, Hindi, English, Turkish), one Ukrainian student (Ukrainian, Russian, English), one student from Bosnia (Albanian, English, Turkish), and one from Dubai (Arabic, English, Turkish).

Language and admission requirements of GKV Cemil Alevli College

The Turkish Ministry of Education mandates that Turkish be the linguistic medium of education for most academic subjects in high school; however, using English as a medium is acceptable in the natural sciences, mathematics and the arts. Therefore, the requirements of the national curriculum easily accommodate the need for the IB Diploma Programme to be facilitated in English.

A high level of proficiency in English is required in order to be successful in IB subjects. Admission to the ninth grade is based on internally-developed leveling exams. Candidates who qualify in all areas except English may be admitted to GKV Cemil Alevli College but placed into a year-long preparatory program with a primary focus on English.

English language learning

GKV Cemil Alevli College aims to provide an internationally-minded education in which English is the primary medium of instruction as well as the medium of the IB Diploma Programme. To this end the curriculum and must provide English instruction and support sufficient for successful comprehension, written and oral production, and an understanding of appropriate language use in a variety of contexts.

Aims of English instruction in terms of language skills:

1. Enable students to use spoken and written English accurately and confidently in a number of different linguistic genres and in a variety of social and academic contexts.
2. Teach students how to read for content and critically analyze texts.
3. Develop students' written skills in a wide range of genres.

4. Assist in helping students to find their creative and intellectual voice in order to communicate effectively in English, which will carry over to their mother tongue and other languages.
5. Encourage students to use language as a means to explore cultural views worldwide through literature written by a wide range of authors, including works which have been translated into English from other languages.
6. Foster an appreciation of literature for its own sake, for the pleasure and intellectual stimulation of reading.
7. Develop students' awareness of the role of language in other areas of knowledge across the curriculum and its relationship with other ways of knowing (reason, emotion, sensory perception, etc.).

Support for English and other foreign language learning outside the classroom

Students are immersed in a Turkish-speaking environment. GKV Cemil Alevli College is situated on the same campus as other Gaziantep College Foundation schools, which means that students are constantly in contact throughout the day with others who are not in an English-intensive program. For this reason, special efforts must be made to encourage IB-bound students to practice and promote English and other foreign language use outside the classroom. Some of those include:

1. Extra-curricular activities in English, such as Model United Nations, European Youth Parliament, Erasmus, English conversation. GKV TEDx, and culture club, etc.
2. Sister city and other inter-school cultural exchange programs which use English as the lingua franca.
3. Expansion of English novels, textbooks and periodicals in the library.
4. International projects such as "Your Ideas Your Initiatives," held by Groupe Renault 2019. In this activity CAS students prepared a study and awareness campaign, with the cooperation of the municipality, to improve traffic safety around the school zones.
5. Opportunities to participate in English theater productions with the other GKV schools.
6. Foreign exchange programs.
7. Pen-pal programs.
8. Hosting foreign students in family homes.
9. English, Arabic, and German language publications such as monthly periodicals and newspapers, available in the classrooms and relaxation areas.
10. "English only" zones in the school.
11. An "English only" table in the cafeteria, in which students and teachers eat together and have conversation practice.
12. School Web page with English translation.
13. Reward-based home reading program.

Recruiting and hiring of foreign teachers

GKV Cemil Alevli College considers English native speakers and other non-Turkish speaking foreign teachers to be a valuable addition to the faculty. Our school has employed foreign teachers in the past, with ongoing recruiting taking place at fairs and Web-based professional search services.

Departmental support for teaching language and teaching through language

To ensure the success of language learning, the school administration and department heads provide maximum support to the IB faculty by ensuring that they have adequate facilities, materials, training and communication. These include:

1. Providing support to Arabic and Russian language teachers by providing them with the same access to work space, materials, training and communication as the English teachers and, recognizing that 2nd language acquisition and teaching methodology is applicable to any language, encouraging all teachers to visit the others' classes and give feedback.
2. Regularly evaluating the school library and computer laboratory and making recommendations as to how to maximize access to English and foreign language materials and support.
3. Enabling students of IB English, Arabic, and Russian to be successful in their new program by ensuring that teachers have proper IB materials and training.
4. Providing ongoing teacher development through training workshops, seminars, conferences, regular resource sharing and in-service workshops, trade journal subscriptions and memberships in professional organizations.
5. Specifically, supporting teacher development through seminars provided by a member of the IB faculty who is an expert in the field second language teaching. These seminars focus on the problems associated with teaching courses in English, or using English as a medium, to students whose mother tongue is not English. This support is provided to all teachers, administrators and support staff, regardless of discipline.
6. Holding regular meetings for IB staff—in English—in which to communicate ideas, discuss problems and solutions, and disseminate information and updates.

Mother tongue

The mother tongue is fully supported both within the Turkish national curriculum and as the Group 1 subject in the Diploma Programme. Students are also given the option of taking the school-based syllabus for Group 3 in Turkish Social Studies. Arabic and Russian have been offered.

Students are welcome to consider writing their Extended Essay in one of the Turkish-based subjects. However, an Extended Essay in history, for example, which needs to be written in English but whose EE supervisor is not an English speaker will be assigned an English-speaking secondary supervisor to advise the student on the organization and writing mechanics.

Liaison with parents

We organize IB open house days for parents of 8th graders to promote the IB DP. We also hold a three-day open-days event in which we invite 8th grade students to attend IB classes for two days, then on the third day the current IB students host teambuilding activities and give presentations to the 8th graders on the Programme and learner profiles. While students attend classes, parents meet with the IB Coordinators and teachers meet with parents to give detailed information and answer their questions. At the beginning of Year One in the second term of the 10th grade (as they are November exam students), we hold an orientation with parents to give a detailed overview of the upcoming DP requirements and how they interface and support the concurrent national curriculum. In addition, the following measures are implemented:

1. Regular parent-teacher meetings with translation as needed.
2. Monthly newsletters with school events, calendar and important information.
3. Google Drive team group for parents on which documents are shared.
4. Urgent information is text-messaged to parents by phone, WhatsApp, and e-mail groups.
5. Bilingual parent-student handbook containing comprehensive information about the Diploma Programme, including CAS, TOK and Extended Essay requirements.
6. Open houses for parents.

Policy review and curriculum planning

Strategic planning is done by a committee made up of administrators, the IB Coordinator, CAS Coordinator and the EFL expert on staff. Weekly meetings are held to discuss all areas of planning, including the language policy, admissions policy, assessment and other policies, course offerings, short- and long-term curriculum plans, CAS projects, teacher training and development, communication methods, and interschool cultural programs.