

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY 2026

Approved by:	Mel Hitchcocks	Last reviewed on:	August 2026
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Introduction

British International School of Ljubljana (BISL) is a community of resilient lifelong learners. It offers a safe, supportive and stimulating learning environment where every member of the community is encouraged to strive for excellence.

At BISL we are committed to providing all students with high-quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of student achievement and attitude. This policy summarises our expectations and common working practices, which reflect the aims and objectives of the school and support its vision.

Definition of High-Quality Learning

High quality learning at BISL showcases a student-cantered approach to teaching. Students are nurtured to develop a love of learning, to have their curiosity ignited and are provided with a variety of engaging lessons. Students learn to take risks, are encouraged to find confidence in making mistakes. Within the school community, students develop independent strategies to learn how to move forward and understand what the next steps are to progress. At BISL creating a climate of self-motivated, independent thinkers is our measure of success.

Rationale:

This policy offers clarity about what the expectations of teachers are.

The individual points within 'Mark - Plan - Teach' have been included here in more detail to provide context and examples. This policy defines the consistencies and key teaching strategies which will make everyone's job easier, so that teachers can build up a repertoire of expertise, knowing that what they are doing in these key aspects is the same as what is going on in other classrooms across the school.

Aspects such as the marking code should become common practice. Mark-plan-teach will be monitored, but the main purpose is to ensure students make progress over time rather than ease of monitoring.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- EAL Policy

- Send Policy
- Primary Literacy Feedback Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

FEEDBACK:

- All formative and summative assessment (see **assessment policy**) should receive timely feedback according to the [feedback policy](#). This should inform future planning.
- All teachers are familiar with their student's data (CAT4 targets, SEN, G and T etc.) including ongoing formative and summative assessment.

PLANNING:

At BISL students are enabled to gain knowledge and develop their skills, interests and abilities through a variety of relevant learning experiences. We plan lessons with the aim to:

- provide a supportive and safe environment, which values all members of the school community;
- promote best practice and establish consistency in expectations and standards across the whole school;
- promote a learning culture so that students engender a love of learning and desire to become lifelong learners;
- provide equal opportunities for all students to advance to the best of their abilities;
- focus on academic as well as moral, social, cultural, physical, and emotional development of the students;
- provide rich and varied contexts and experiences for students to acquire and apply a broad range of knowledge and skills;
- enable our students to be resourceful and responsible learners;
- promote students' self-esteem, self-worth and emotional well-being while encouraging them to show positive attitudes and respect towards the ideas, opinions and feelings of others;
- enable our students to learn to value their achievements and feel proud of them;
- encourage students to become responsible and adaptable individuals who respond positively to the opportunities and challenges of a rapidly changing world;
- celebrate diversity and develop values of respect, honesty and tolerance;
- enable students to grow into proactive, trustworthy and independent-thinking citizens who contribute positively to the community and society.

TEACHING:

We provide a range of opportunities for students to gain, apply and demonstrate their knowledge including:

- speaking, listening, reading and writing activities
- creative and practical activities
- participation in a variety of physical activities
- investigation and problem solving
- making choices, forming opinions and decision-making
- asking and answering questions
- whole-class work, group work, paired work and independent work
- experimentation
- roleplays, presentations and class projects
- use of music, drama, art and ICT
- homework assignments – see policy: [BISL Homework Policy \(3\)](#)

Curriculum and Planning

BISL is committed to developing a balanced and structured curriculum to provide the highest possible standards of teaching and learning. In the core subjects – English, Mathematics and Science, students work towards curriculum expectations, while other subjects follow the programmes of study as required by the National Curriculum.

Teachers may use curriculum requirements as a starting point but are expected to add their own creative ideas. Where possible, lessons are delivered with a cross-curricular approach and links are made to real life experiences.

Regular staff/ departmental meetings are used to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and standards.

Schemes of Work based upon previous assessment data, student needs and subject expectations.

Gifted and Talented (Provision for higher ability students)

The school is committed to ensuring that all students are appropriately challenged and supported to reach their full potential and this policy provides a structured framework for identifying and supporting students who demonstrate high academic potential or exceptional subject-specific ability.

This policy ensures that gifted learners receive appropriate challenge through curriculum extension and enrichment opportunities. In exceptional circumstances, accelerated pathways may be considered at the discretion of the school.

Aims

Identify students with exceptional potential

- Provide appropriate challenge and extension
- Promote independence, creativity, and critical thinking
- Ensure high expectations across all subjects

Develop students who demonstrate leadership, innovation, and critical thinking

Definition of Gifted and Talented learners

The school defines higher ability learners as those who demonstrate significantly above-average ability or attainment in one or more of the following areas:

- Academic (English, Maths, Science, Humanities)
- Creative thinking or problem solving
- Leadership or innovation
- Subject-specific excellence

Typically, these students perform within the top 5–10% of the cohort.

Identification Process

Identification should be multi-layered, using quantitative data such as that listed in the box below and qualitative evidence such as observation.

Indicator	Threshold
CAT4	SAS $\geq$ 125
PTM	Standardised score $\geq$ 120
PTE	Standardised score $\geq$ 120
Teacher Assessment	Working significantly above expected level

Qualitative Evidence

may include:

- Exceptional classwork
- Independent research or projects
- Competition results
- Demonstrated leadership or initiative

Students usually meet two or more indicators before being added to the G&T register, which is kept with the Director of Teaching and Learning.

Senior T&L leads such as the Director of Teaching and Learning and Assistant Head of Primary, Teaching and Learning and teachers identify higher ability learners.

The senior leaders of T&L should be looking at the CAT4/PTE/PTM data and should maintain the register and chair termly meetings.

Once identified, the school will follow the steps below.

Classroom Provision

Teachers are expected to provide:

- Higher-order questioning
- Open-ended tasks
- Extended problem solving
- Independent learning opportunities
- Differentiation through depth and complexity

Adaptive Teaching strategies as per the School Development Plan must be applied as a baseline in all teaching.

Extension and Deep Learning

Rather than simply moving ahead, Higher ability learners should experience depth and complexity.

Examples:

- Problem-based learning projects
- Independent research tasks
- Debate and academic writing challenges

- Extended mathematics investigations

Cross-Year Learning Opportunities

Students may participate in:

- Higher year classes
- Cross-phase learning groups

Examples:

Primary → Secondary transition opportunities may include:

- Year 6 students attending Year 7 Maths lessons

Enrichment Opportunities: Students may access:

- Academic competitions such as Kangaroo Maths.
- Debate and public speaking, particularly through assembly presentations and Senior and Junior MUN
- Research projects Such as provided by departments for formative and summative assessments. See Assessment Framework document.
- Academic after school clubs

How departments stretch and challenge students

The school is committed to providing appropriate **stretch and challenge for all learners**, ensuring that students develop deep understanding, independence and high-level thinking skills across all subject areas and key stages.

Whole-School Principles

- Stretch and challenge is embedded within **quality-first teaching** rather than reliant on acceleration.
- Provision focuses on:
 - Depth of knowledge and understanding
 - Problem-solving and critical thinking
 - Independent learning and resilience
- Teachers use:
 - **Higher-order questioning**
 - **Bloom's Taxonomy** and **Rosenshine's Principles**
 - Adaptive Teaching through task, outcome, and support
- Students are provided with opportunities for:
 - **Leadership and collaboration**
 - **Independent research and wider reading**
 - Participation in **competitions and enrichment activities**

Key Stage Overview Key

Stage 3

- Focus on building:
 - Secure foundational knowledge
 - Effective study habits
 - Independence and resilience
- Students remain within their **chronological year group**; acceleration is not standard practice.
- Challenge is delivered through:
 - Problem-solving activities (e.g. NRICH)
 - Depth-focused tasks and enrichment
 - Exposure to more advanced concepts where appropriate

- Participation in subject-specific competitions (e.g. UKMT, Bebras).

Key Stage 4

- Increasing emphasis on:
 - Application of knowledge in unfamiliar contexts
 - Analytical and evaluative thinking
- Opportunities include:
 - Optional qualifications (e.g. Additional Mathematics)
 - Extended projects and investigative tasks
- Structured problem-solving and independent learning
- Exceptionally able students may access **accelerated pathways** where appropriate, supported by independent study.

Key Stage 5

- Focus on progression from knowledge acquisition to **analysis, evaluation, and synthesis**.
- Provision includes:
 - Advanced subject content (e.g. Further Mathematics)
 - Independent research and wider academic reading
 - Debate, justification, and critical evaluation
- Students are encouraged to engage with:
 - University-level resources
 - Competitions and academic enrichment
 - Leadership opportunities within and beyond the classroom

Subject-Specific Approaches

- **Mathematics:** Emphasis on problem-solving, reasoning, enrichment, competitions, and advanced study pathways.
- **English:** Challenge embedded through structured questioning and wider reading, with increasing individualisation at KS5.
- **Computer Science:** Open-ended problem-solving, project-based learning, coding challenges, and computational thinking enrichment.
- **Science:** Application to real-world contexts, independent investigation, reduced scaffolding, and STEM enrichment.
- **Humanities:** Higher-order thinking, evaluative tasks, and student-led learning.
- **PE:** Advanced tactical understanding, leadership, performance analysis, and competitive opportunities.
- **EAL:** Targeted extension activities to develop advanced academic language and independence.

Enrichment and Extension

- Access to **competitions**, clubs, and extracurricular programmes (e.g. UKMT, Bebras, coding clubs).
- Opportunities for:
 - Independent study
 - Cross-curricular learning
 - Leadership and peer mentoring

Rationale

- The school's approach is informed by **educational research**, which demonstrates that:
 - Depth of learning is more effective than acceleration for long-term outcomes
 - High challenge within the classroom leads to greater student engagement and achievement

Acceleration

- Acceleration decisions are made on a case-by-case basis and involve consultation with parents and senior leadership.

Monitoring

Learners on the register are reviewed termly for attainment, engagement and wellbeing. The reviews are carried out by departments (Secondary) or within Primary Department and/or Primary curriculum leads meetings and led by the Director of Teaching and Learning.

The review process considers:

- Academic attainment
- Student engagement
- Wellbeing
- Evidence of challenge

Students may move on or off the G&T register depending on progress and needs.

Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers, Heads of Department, Primary Coordinators, Pastoral leads and Senior Leadership all contribute to identification and provision.

Teachers

- Identify and nominate potential gifted and talented students.
- Provide challenging learning opportunities through adaptive teaching methods.
- Monitor student progress.

Heads of Department / Primary Coordinators / Director of Teaching and Learning and Assistant Head of Primary, Teaching and Learning.

- Ensure appropriate curriculum challenge through the monitoring of schemes of work and learning walks.
- Support enrichment provision (need more specifics here – how do they do this, by supplying resources, training etc?) How does the Director of T&L and the Assistant Head Primary provide support? See below:
 - Support the planning, development, and evaluation of enrichment opportunities designed to extend students beyond the formal curriculum.
 - Identify opportunities for subject-specific enrichment, including competitions, academic challenges, educational visits, guest speakers, clubs, workshops, and leadership opportunities.
 - Provide staff with appropriate resources, guidance, and professional development to support the delivery of enrichment activities.
 - Promote participation in local, national, and international competitions and events that align with students' strengths and interests.

- Facilitate collaboration between departments to develop cross-curricular enrichment opportunities.

Assistant Head of Curriculum and Data

- Analyse standardised data
- Analyse internal and external assessment data, standardised test scores, CAT4 data, baseline assessments, progress measures and examination outcomes to identify trends in student performance.
- Use data analysis to identify high-attaining students, potential G&T learners and students demonstrating exceptional aptitude in specific subject areas.
- Provide Heads of Department, Subject Coordinators, and Senior Leaders with data reports that inform planning, intervention, and curriculum development.
- Monitor the progress and attainment of students on the G&T register and identify any underachievement.
- Support departments in using assessment information to develop appropriate challenge and extension opportunities.
- Contribute to the annual review and evaluation of the effectiveness of G&T provision.

Senior Leadership Team

- Oversee implementation policy:
- Ensure that the principles and procedures outlined within this policy are implemented consistently across all phases of the school.
- Promote a whole-school culture that values high achievement, challenge, aspiration, and inclusion.
- Monitor the effectiveness and impact of G&T provision through:
 - Analysis of attainment and progress data.
 - Learning walks and lesson observations.
 - Work scrutiny and curriculum reviews.
 - Student voice surveys and focus groups.
 - Parent feedback.
 - Participation rates in enrichment activities and competitions.
 - Review of individual student outcomes and achievements.
- Evaluate:
 - Whether identified students are making expected or better-than-expected progress.
 - The quality and consistency of challenge within classroom practice.
 - The effectiveness of enrichment opportunities.
 - Equity of identification across different student groups.
 - Staff confidence and implementation of strategies for supporting high-attaining learners.
- Senior Teaching and Learning leads will maintain the G&T register and will chair termly meetings with Heads of Department (Secondary) and Primary Subject Coordinators.

Equality and Inclusion

The school ensures fair identification across all backgrounds: A non-selective admissions policy.

- Baseline assessments and standardised testing for all students.
- The use of multiple identification criteria, including assessment data, CAT4 results, teacher nominations, student work, observation records, and student self-nomination where appropriate.
- Consideration of students with English as an Additional Language (EAL), Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and those who may be twice-exceptional (high ability alongside additional learning needs).
- Regular review of identification procedures to minimise unconscious bias and ensure representation across different student groups.
- Monitoring of G&T register demographics to identify any patterns of underrepresentation.
- Professional development for staff on recognising high potential and giftedness in diverse learners.
- Consideration of both academic achievement and potential when identifying students.
- Opportunities for students to demonstrate strengths through a variety of assessment methods and learning experiences.
- Ongoing review and adjustment of the G&T register to ensure it remains accurate and reflective of students' developing strengths and talents.

Working with students with additional educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

All teachers are teachers of SEND and are expected to:

- Ensure that all students can access, participate and achieve within a broad and balanced curriculum, and that they are fully integrated into lessons and school life, with opportunities to participate meaningfully alongside their peers.
- Deliver high-quality adaptive teaching as the first response to meeting the needs of SEND students, underpinned by expectations, inclusive practice and the commitment to removing barriers to learning
- Plan lessons that are responsive to a range of needs, using information and targets contained within student Learning Support Plan or Individual Educational Plan. Planning should include clear success criteria, appropriate scaffolding, differentiated outcomes and the use of a variety teaching strategies to support diverse learners.
- Modify teaching styles and resources, and embed routinely any reasonable adjustments, as appropriate for any students with specific learning needs, in active collaboration with the SEN and EAL departments, such as the use of visual supports, structured routines, flexible grouping, and assistive technologies where appropriate.
- Effectively use of assessment for learning to monitor progress and adapt teaching in real time. Regular feedback should be accessible, constructive and tailored to support individual progress.
- Identify students who may require additional support and work collaboratively with the SEN specialist staff, assistant teachers (where relevant) and other professionals to implement targeted interventions.

- Maintain a strong partnership and clear communication with parents and carers to support student success.
- Contribute to a culture where every learner is valued and supported to achieve their full potential through consistent, inclusive practice.
- Refer to the **SEND Policy and the Students of Concern document** for further information and procedures.

Monitoring and Review

Policy updated: August 2026 by John Lowe,
Director of Teaching and Learning.

Approved by: Mel Hitchcocks, Principal, August
2026 Date when next review is due: August 2028.