

Bilingualism Policy

Based on the Avenor learner profile we believe that bilingualism is a central value amongst the 11 main student characteristics. This bilingualism policy is thus a strong connector between the Avenor curriculum policy (Teaching and Learning), Admissions criteria, Recruitment and CDP policy and lastly, Assessment policy.

1. Definition

The term 'bilingual' or 'bilingualism' refers to individuals or groups who routinely use two or more languages for communication in varying contexts. More specifically, we define 'bilingual education' to refer to the use of two languages as mediums of instruction for non-language subjects ('content' subjects such as science or history).

The specificity of the bilingual education policies in Avenor College is given by its orientation and curricular structuring. The educational offer in Avenor College is structured along two different study pathways, for which the students may decide starting with the 7th grade.

2. Educational stages outcomes/Learning pathways

In the Avenor Nursery the only accepted medium of communication is English. This was meant in order to compensate for the fact that almost all of the children enrolled in Avenor Nursery originate from Romanian families, and so an early acquisition of English is required. In order to familiarize the students with the functioning of a bilingual education system we introduce in the Kindergarten a practical course in conversation in Romanian.

In primary school most of the 'content' subjects are taught in Romanian, so as to comply with the requirements of the Romanian National Curriculum. In order to foster bilingualism, Avenor College offers 5 weekly English language lessons and courses in Drama (grades 0-IV) and Science (0-IV).

In lower middle school (5th and 6th grades) the subjects assessed against National Curriculum criteria (Mathematics, Physics, Biology) will be taught in Romanian so as to ensure academic success. Alongside these subjects there is a Cambridge Curriculum Science course aiming to support those students choosing the Cambridge pathway in Upper Middle School. Some Primary subject teachers will work through the medium of English (Art, Music, Drama and Science)

In the preparatory – grade 6, Avenor College teachers will comply with the requirements stipulated in the National Curriculum, with regards to the standards, describing core objectives and skills, as well as the learning contents and assessment forms. Equally, teachers are ready to use teaching principles and methods specific to British child education, through which resources, contents, teaching and assessment methods are adapted to meet the individual learning needs of the students.

In 7th grade students choose the learning pathway which best suits their future academic life.

Avenor College designed a customized school orientation program for grades VII and VIII (lower secondary). Students have the possibility to choose from two different **learning pathways**:

- **OPTION A: Cambridge Checkpoint:** students study Mathematics and English Language based on the Cambridge Checkpoint Syllabus **and additionally**
- **OPTION B: National Evaluations:** students study Mathematics and Romanian Language based on the Romanian curriculum. In this case the students take National Examinations

The skills aimed by **English Language** lessons are aligned with specific **Drama** contents. **Science** is a combined subject, meant to connect the updated national school subject, Mathematics and 'Environment Exploration' (Preparatory-II), Natural Sciences (III-IV) and the separated subjects of Biology, Chemistry and Physics contents V-VIII). Avenor College considers this to be an innovating exercise of co-curricular approach to learning, continued in High School through IGCSE Science and A Level Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

The school curriculum includes lessons in **ICT, Music (and Movement), Visual Arts, Physical Education and Sports** which are taught in a bilingual context, Romanian – English, according to the key-stage learning requirements.

3. Teaching and learning – Blended Curriculum

At Avenor College we believe that the languages of one child support each other, leading to better school achievement.

The school seeks to provide opportunities for students to use their language skills in the present rather than learn them now for later use.

This implies that:

- some Primary subject teachers will work through the medium of English: Art, Music, Drama and Science
- some Middle School subject teachers will work through the medium of English: Art, Music, Drama, Science, History, Geography.
- in High School Romanian language is a central art of the curriculum taught
- English teachers bring content into their lessons from various other fields (History, Geography, Science, Visual Arts, Drama)

In Middle School Romanian will be used alongside English to:

- clarify teachers instructions
- introduce key vocabulary
- develop ideas
- foster group negotiations

4. Methodology

The educational intention is that through practice the students learn subject knowledge whilst at the same time learning a foreign language.

As a result, **subject teachers also become language teachers** ensuring that the child has managed to grasp the concepts taught. Subject teachers should therefore meet and plan alongside with English teachers to ensure that the approach to teaching is suitable to second language students. When necessary, the subject teachers will liaise with the English teachers and find right strategies to support students whose language is below grade level.

The students will be able to confidently manipulate content taught through English if they have reached B1 level of the CEFR scale at or before the age of 12. However, CLIL is not confined to higher-achieving students as it fits perfectly with the school's mixed ability philosophy.

5. Staff learning standards (see Recruitment policy)

The teacher recruitment policy specific to every Key Stage across the school will take into account the bilingual school profile. Subject teachers working through the medium of English will be bilingual or at a minimum level of B2 on the CEFR scale in order to be able to deliver content confidently and effectively. Staff language standards will be met through the CPD program which follows key CLIL principles and aims to support language certification.

6. Admissions (see admissions policy)

The admission process will be tailored to the bilingual school profile.

In Primary and Middle School interested applicants' language abilities in both languages (Romanian and English) will be assessed against criteria specific to each Key Stage.

7. Assessment

a. Progress reports

The language used when writing progress reports should be the same as the medium of instruction specific to each subject taught across the school.

b. Examinations taken across the school will reflect the specificity of each Key Stage as follows:

1. National Evaluations: for 2nd, 4th and 6th grades
2. Checkpoint examinations: for those choosing the Cambridge Curriculum pathway in 7th grade
3. IGCSEs, AS and A-level exams for High School
4. In Primary and Middle School students can also choose to sit Cambridge ESOL international exams, issued by University of Cambridge

c. High School graduation certificate

In High School there is an Avenor Diploma comprising students' AS results and those obtained when completing the Romanian language and literature course.

8. Institutional communication (see Communication Policy)

Signage around the campus will be bilingual so as to enable in accordance with the ethos of the school

Official emails across the school will be written in both languages, English and Romanian

Internal emails (within each department) can be monolingual, depending on each department's particularities

Departmental meeting minutes will be written in English

9. Cultural awareness

Avenor College promotes a constant concern for Romanian patrimony through delivering Patrimony courses and co-curricular activities and events.

Improving Public Speaking skills in both languages is a skill that is one of the school's main priorities. We therefore developed a program in which the participants deliver speeches in both languages.

Native English speakers will take Romanian lessons to help them acquire basic communication skills within the school. The classes will occur on a weekly basis and will be delivered by Romanian language teachers.

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