

BSB

THE BRITISH
SCHOOL OF
BRUSSELS



Years 7-9
Course Guide
2026-2027

Learning together
inspiring success

Welcome to Years 7-9

Our aim is to be an educational force for good by:

- Developing confident, caring and courageous people who engage actively, ethically, and purposefully with the world around us.
- Fostering curious, resilient learners who enjoy life and achieve the best that they can.
- Encouraging respect for self, others, and the wider world.

Our curriculum has an emphasis on:

- Learning together by valuing collaboration, connectivity and diversity
- Student agency to make a positive difference in the world
- Becoming the best person we can be
- Providing opportunities for inquiry, critical thinking, creativity and learning beyond the classroom
- Scholarly endeavour and challenge
- Provision of a variety of pathways to set students up for success

What does Secondary School look like?

Year groups	Age	Programme of study	Other information
Years 7-9	11-14	A broad curriculum ensures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for Real World learning • Knowledge and skills development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid foundation in a wide range of subjects
Years 10-11	14-16	Exam years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (I)GCSEs: (International) General Certificate of Secondary Education • BTEC Level 2 in Business also available as an option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two-year programme • Exams at the end of Year 11 • 6 core subjects and 4 option choices • BTEC is vocational and is continually assessed rather than having final exams
Years 12-13	16-18	Pre-university exam years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BTEC Extended Diploma Level 3 • A Level • International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two-year programmes • BTEC Extended Diploma Level 3 is assessment based and has no final exam • A Level and IB have final exams • 3 subjects for A Level and/or BTEC • 6 subjects for IB • Entry criteria apply

The Curriculum: Lessons per week

Subject	Lessons per week		
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
 Art and Design *♦	1	1	1
 Computing	1	1	1
 Design and Technology *	1	1	1
 Drama	1	1	1
 French, Dutch, German, Spanish fluent and second language, EAL or AEN •	2, 2, 2	3, 3	2.5, 2.5
 English •	4	3.5	4
 Food Science and Nutrition *♦	1	1	1
 Geography	1.5	1.5	1.5
 History	1.5	1.5	1.5
 Mathematics (in sets according to ability) •	4	3.5	4
 Music	1	1	1
 Physical Education	2	2	2
 PHSE/Tutor •	0.5	1	1
 Science •	3.5	4	4
 Textiles *	1	1	1

* Will be taught as double lessons every two weeks

♦ Where the timetable allows, our most proficient French learners will join the bilingual French speakers for practical subjects such as Art and Design and Food Science. This will be an ideal way for students to improve their French listening and speaking skills.

• The balance of lessons from year to year may change.

French and Spanish is compulsory for all students in Year 7. Students may also have a choice between Dutch or beginners German as the 3rd language. Students will choose two languages to specialise in Year 8+9 (for 2026-2027, all Year 9 will study French).

EAL: English as an Additional Language

AEN: Additional Educational Needs

Bilingual Programme

“Childhood bilingualism is a significant experience that has the power to influence the course and efficiency of children’s development. The most surprising outcome is that these influences are not confined to the linguistic domain, where such influence would be expected, but extend as well to non-verbal activities.”

Ellen Bialystock, PhD York University, Canada

The Bilingual Programme at BSB aims:

- to foster enjoyment in students’ bilingual skills and ability to use French and English in a natural way;
- to offer academic content in both languages within an international environment;
- to encourage students to be curious and confident learners allowing them to develop transferable skills.

Admission: Students entering a bilingual class will need to demonstrate age-appropriate language development in English and/or French, together with a strong aptitude and motivation for, and some background in, learning and using the second language. All students have their levels of French and English assessed around the same time as the admissions interview to ensure the course is appropriate for them.

- We aim for at least one third of the curriculum to be delivered in French.
- Support at home is needed in ensuring that students get balanced exposure in French and English outside school e.g. joining clubs in a language that is not their mother tongue.

English as an Additional Language

Students at the early stages of English may be withdrawn from the mainstream English, History or Geography; for personalised EAL lessons (PEAL). Progress is reviewed regularly throughout the year and timetables changed as appropriate. While their English is developing, students might not study some of the additional language options. Instead, they have small group EAL lessons with a specialist teacher who is responsible for monitoring and reporting on their English.

Additional Educational Needs (AEN)

Learning Support may be offered in place of an additional language for neuro-diverse learners and for students who require additional support (academically, socially, emotionally). Learning Support is taught in small groups to provide individual attention, support and feedback to students. The focus is on the development of organisation, time management, motivation and study skills with the goal of creating independent, confident and curious learners who achieve individual success.

Equipment provided (included in fees)

- Laptop
- Personal locker
- Calculator
- Textbooks
- Basic sports kit provided for new students

Homework

A timetable is given for each Year group	
Year 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each subject gives one piece of homework a week• Spend on average 20 minutes per piece
Year 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each subject gives one piece of homework a week• Spend on average 30 minutes per piece
Year 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each subject gives one piece of homework a week• Spend on average 40 minutes per piece

Please note that the above is a guideline. The actual length of time needed to complete a set homework will often depend on the academic aptitude and diligence of a student. If parents feel their child is choosing to spend too much or too little time on homework, then they are encouraged to raise this at the progress meetings with teachers.

Assessments and reporting

- Settling in report during September
- Interim Report during Autumn and Spring Term
- Annual Report in the Summer Term

Progress meetings with parents will take place during Term 1 and 2. These are an integral part of our academic calendar and dates are published at the start of the school year. If a parent is unable to attend, alternative feedback may be provided where there is a specific concern.

Trips

There are many trips and visits that take place throughout the year. Here are some examples:

- Fieldwork trips
- International Schools Theatre Association (ISTA) festivals
- Year Group residential trips

Enrichment

Our Enrichment activities are extensive and our facilities are superb. We have over 100 sports/arts/technology activities available out of school hours.

FAQs

How many students are in a class?

The working maximum is 21. There may be occasions where we go over this size but this is rare. The practical subjects of Art and Design, DT, Textiles and Food Science are taught with a working maximum of 16 students.

If my child fails the year, do they need to repeat it?

The curriculum is differentiated to meet the needs of students of all abilities. Therefore we do not operate a pass/fail system as in other educational systems. Students progress each year to the next year group with their peers.

How many students are British and how many other nationalities are represented?

Around 30% of the students at the school are British. Approximately 70 nationalities are represented within our school community, making it one of the most diverse and inclusive student environments in any education facility in the world.

Why is there no school uniform?

School uniforms are not common in Europe. However, BSB students are expected to dress respectfully and ensure their clothing is appropriate for the learning environment. There is a school PE (sports) kit which all students must wear for PE from Year 1 onwards.

Is there a school bus?

Yes, we operate a supervised school bus service that covers many routes. Our Admissions Team will be happy to provide details.

Digital Literacy, Ethical use of AI and Online Safety in Secondary School

At BSB, we aim to strike a balance regarding the use of technology, taking into consideration:

- The general concern for overuse.
- The possible impact on mental health.
- The need to prepare students for the digital world we live in.
- The digital skills required in the future workplace.

Digital Literacy, Ethical use of AI and Online Safety are interwoven into school life at BSB.

MOBILE PHONES & LAPTOPS

- Students in Years 7-9 are expected to leave their mobile phones in their lockers during the school day. However, they can check messages at breaktimes and lunchtimes, if they wish.
- Students in Years 10-13 are allowed to keep their mobile phones on them but may only take them out in lessons with the teacher's permission. Sometimes mobile phones may be used for learning activities within the lesson.
- The cafeteria is a mobile free zone for all students. In good weather BSB students are encouraged to be outside socialising with friends and playing sports during break and lunch. Our outside spaces and pitches tend to be a hive of physical activity when it's not raining.
- Students should not be using laptops on school buses (sometimes an exception is made on the long distance buses for SHAPE and Antwerp for completion of homework)
- Students should not be installing VPNs onto school issued laptops, and gaming on school laptops during the school day is prohibited.

CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

- A general curriculum is followed e.g. screen time management, digital wellbeing, creating a positive online reputation, misinformation, risks of online gaming, building digital resilience, ethical use of AI, cyber bullying, online scams, online grooming, etc:
 - In Years 7-9, as an integral part of their Computer Science and PSHE lessons.
 - In Years 10-11, within the PSHE curriculum.
 - Year 12 have an induction, where digital literacy, Academic Honesty and AI use are covered in line with the IB and UK Exam Board expectations.
 - Occasional Year Group Assemblies may have a digital safety theme.
 - Technology free breaks and lunchtimes led by our pastoral teams.
- All Exam subjects (Years 10-13) incorporate:
 - Digital literacy (including ethical use of AI & Academic Honesty), relevant to the subject area.
 - The IB and UK Exam Boards' very strict guidelines regarding digital literacy, ethical use of AI and referencing.
 - Students are shown the assessment criteria for Exam coursework. Note, often, very few marks are awarded for the end product, and most marks are awarded for the process. Often, this means that the overuse of AI will lead to lower marks, counting against the student.
 - Awareness and appropriate use of online AI self-marking tools for internal exam assessed work.
 - For students in Post-16, this is also reinforced in the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) and the IB Diploma Core (Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge assignments)

- Interwoven into the subject curriculum, in all year groups, is the appropriate use of AI. Here are some examples:
 - How to reference sources, including AI, in humanities lessons.
 - In the English and Media Faculty: How AI could be used to produce creative writing, such as poetry, then to discuss the limitations of AI and how the product could be improved upon. Also, the use of AI to produce practical media work using terminology to manipulate the image.
 - Awareness and appropriate use of AI in theoretical research, but how this cannot replace practical creativity as Art, Design and Technology promotes students own creative thoughts and not rehashing other pieces.
 - Awareness and appropriate use of AI conversation tools and language translation software in Languages.
 - Appropriate use of calculators, graph plotting software, algebraic manipulation software and AI (e.g. ChatGPT) in Mathematics when solving Maths problems.
 - Awareness of AI Music composition software and Film editing software in the Arts.

POLICIES AND SUPPORT

- The school has an internet filter that aims to strictly limit access to inappropriate websites.
- Teachers have access to plagiarism detection software (Turn-It-In) as a tool to assess whether work has been plagiarised. This includes the possible use of AI by students.
- The school has several relevant policies:
 - Our Academic Honesty Policy includes guidelines and expectations for students regarding internet referencing and ethical use of AI. This is available to all parents on My School Portal.
 - The school has a Privacy Policy, including GDPR. This is available on the school website.
 - All students read and sign an acceptable use policy for school laptops in Years 7-9 (If parents would like greater control over their child's laptop than the school laptop allows e.g. installing monitoring software and time restriction software, it may be possible for parents to provide their own child's Windows laptop with the same software and touch screen as the school devices. However, in these cases, the full maintenance and damages to the laptop would lie with the parents, as we would be unable to do this within school.)
- The school works with a specialist external provider, who also acts as our data protection officer. This company offers user support and guidance on online safety and legal requirements.
- Digital Safety events are sometimes organised by FoBSB for parents (Families of BSB).





“ BSB is an exceptional school, and it brings the best out of the children.

Van Waeyenberge family

“ Part of BSB’s success comes from the quality of the relationships it develops between staff and students and partnerships it creates with parents.

Copner family



“ Both our children flourished academically and personally at BSB. They were given all the attention they needed to achieve their best.

Featherstone family



“ Excellent teaching quality and first-class school facilities.

Yang family



An international learning community

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