



Distribution of Lessons in Middle School
International School Braunschweig–Wolfsburg

Issued July 2020

Preliminary note

The Academic Team has decided to revise the distribution of lessons in Middle School effecting school year 2020/21 and beyond, keeping these goals in mind:

- ✓ Re-distribute the weekly amount of lessons.
- ✓ Raise the level of language proficiency in English, German and Spanish
- ✓ Introduce a schedule with a prescribed amount of lessons per day to allow students and parents to plan after school activities
- ✓ Link the different programmes at the International School (Cambridge Primary, Secondary 1, IGCSE and IB) to develop consistent knowledge and coherent skills and competences
- ✓ allow students success in exams.

Description of the current state (June 2020)

Due to the condensation of the International Cambridge Primary and Secondary Programmes, teachers have developed a tight curriculum for all subjects.

Like many other International schools all over the world, the International School Braunschweig–Wolfsburg has a high fluctuation of students and families. New students often show different levels of language proficiency, knowledge, abilities and skills. Teachers conduct their lessons on different levels to meet the requirements of students in the classroom.

New students with a low level of English participate in EAL (English as an additional language) besides regular lessons in English as a First Language. Usually, students with limited knowledge of English are not able to cope with the requirements in English as First Language lessons. EAL lessons take place in the afternoon after regular lessons when the motivation and concentration of all students are already at a low level.

German First and Second Language classes are taught parallel in all years.

Spanish as a Foreign Language is divided in three levels Spanish Lower–Intermediate, Intermediate and Upper–Intermediate in Years 8 to 10. Students are assessed according to their level of language acquisition.

In Secondary 1, Geography and History are taught as a combined subject; the first two terms focus on Geography, the third term on History. As the third term is the shortest term of the school year and is always interrupted by class trips, project week and long weekends, students have only a rudimentary understanding and knowledge of the subject.

Students in Middle School have afternoon lessons on several days of the week. This discontinuity results in low numbers of students in afternoon projects and difficulties in planning personal activities after school, such as music lessons or sports.

Staying back in school for EAL and participating in after school projects increase the number of lessons up to 40 lessons per week.

This workload and the increased expectations in Middle School lead to frustration and dissatisfaction amongst students and parents.

Measures to be implemented in 2020/21

The International School Braunschweig–Wolfsburg is a Cambridge International School and IB School and follows Cambridge International Programmes in Primary and Middle School. Students take progression tests, Checkpoint tests and IGCSE exams which are benchmarks of their learning. All teachers have to comply with the syllabus for their subjects.

Every student in Middle School needs to attend Homeroom Time on Monday. This is time with the Class Team/Class Teacher to get to know their students, and they can offer guidance and information to help them navigate the day. The homeroom programme will become a crucial part of our school's concerted efforts to celebrate our students and make our school more welcoming and supportive.

The total number of lessons per week will be reduced, which allows students more flexibility in and responsibility for their learning in the afternoons. The changes in the schedules in Middle School aim at a better work–life–balance for the student and allow developing personal strengths and more in–depth knowledge of specific fields of interest.

A significant upgrading of the Natural and Social Sciences allows a broad development of the students' skills and abilities, keeping their future careers in the focus.

English as First and Second Language

EAL and ESL lessons will not be continued in 2020/21.

Instead, we introduce English as Second Language lessons in Middle School which will take place at the same time as lessons in English First language. The English teachers will assign the students to the two levels. An English teacher will assess the command of English when new students join the year.

The English teachers have developed the curricula for both First and Second Language based on the Cambridge syllabi for years 6 to 10. Students with limited knowledge of the English language can find more support in English as a Second Language class. Promotion to the English as a First Language group is possible and needs to be communicated with the Class Teacher, Coordinator and parents. Depending on the number of students in a group, classes can be combined (e.g. new students in Secondary 1 have English Second Language classes together).

Natural Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, ICT)

The subject "Science" in Year 6 will not be continued in 2020/21. Instead, students have weekly lessons in Biology, Chemistry, Physics and ICT to cover the Cambridge Secondary 1 curricula.

In 2020/21, ICT will be introduced in the IGCSE programme with first exams in 2022.

Social Sciences (Geography, History, Global Perspectives)

Combined Geography/History will not be continued in 2020/21.

Instead, students have independent and adequate lessons in both History and Geography.

Global Perspectives is introduced as a compulsory subject in Year 6. In the following years, students can choose Global Perspectives as an elective subject.

In 2020/21, Global Perspectives will be introduced in the IGCSE programme to Y9 with first IGCSE exams in 2022.

Spanish as a Foreign Language

Students start learning Spanish as a Foreign Language in Year 6. One block is scheduled in the morning, another one in the afternoon.

Spanish for Y6 and Year 7 are taught at the same time which allows Beginner I and Beginner II classes to be paired in the schedule. New students in Year 7 may join the Spanish Beginner I group.

For new students in Year 8, 9 and 10, the time is usually not sufficient to start with Spanish lessons and to reach a level at Year 10 to succeed in IGCSE exams for Spanish as a Foreign Language.

The Coordinator discusses the language policy at the International School Braunschweig–Wolfsburg with new students and their parents before they join the International School (please refer to Language Policy). The Coordinator, the student and their parents may agree that under certain circumstances, the student does not attend Spanish lessons. Instead, the student uses the free block in the morning for tutoring talks with a Professional Educator of the Secondary Section, teambuilding activities, group projects or independent studies in a classroom or the school library.

In the afternoon, students participate in Sports activities in school instead of Spanish class.

Elective Courses

Elective Courses in Secondary 1 (Year 6, 7, 8)

Students of Year 6 do not have elective courses.

Students of Year 7 and 8 can choose between the elective subjects Art and Global Perspectives. Both subjects are open for interested students of Year 7 and 8. The focus in both disciplines is on developing the necessary skills and knowledge needed for the IGCSE and IB Programme.

Elective Courses in IGCSE (Year 9, 10)

Besides the basic academic programme in the morning, students can choose from several extended courses for their IGCSE programme in Year 9 and 10 to develop more specific knowledge in many fields. Students can choose between IGCSE Art & Design or IGCSE Music and IGCSE History or IGCSE Geography in Year 9 and 10. Students who aim to achieve the equivalent to the German certificate Erweiterter Sekundarabschluss 1 at the end of Year 10, need to take two more lessons in Geography in Y9 and 10.

IGCSE Students can select:

- IGCSE Geography or IGCSE Chemistry,
- IGCSE Geography or IGCSE History,
- IGCSE Biology or IGCSE Physics,
- IGCSE Spanish or Sports.

Overview Lessons in Middle School

Obligatory Classes	Y6	NEW	Y7	NEW	Y8	NEW	Y9	Y10	NEW
English 1st	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
EAL/English 2nd	6	5	6	5	6	5	6	6	5
Maths	5	4	5	4	5	4	5	5	5
German	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
German Foreign Language	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Spanish	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Science	4								
Chemistry		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Physics		2	2	2	2	2	4	4	2
Biology		2	2	2	2	2	4	4	2
Geography	2	1	2	2	2	2	4	4	2
History		1		1		1	2	2	2
ICT	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Global Perspectives	2	2	2		2		2	2	2
Art	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Music	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Sports	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Homeroom	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total Number of lessons	35	36	37	35	37	35	43	43	35
Elective Courses									
Art				2		2			
Global Perspectives				2		2			
Chemistry									2
Biology									2
Physics									2
Geography									2
Total lessons		36		37		37			39

Schedule for afternoon lessons

Year 6

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1.45–2.30	Homeroom	lesson	lesson	lesson	
2.30–3.15		lesson	lesson		

Year 7

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1.45–2.30	Homeroom	lesson	lesson	lesson	
2.30–3.15		lesson	lesson	lesson	

Year 8

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1.45–2.30	Homeroom	lesson	lesson	SPA	
2.30–3.15		lesson	lesson	SPA	

Year 9

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1.45–2.30	Homeroom	lesson	lesson	SPA	
2.30–3.15	lesson	lesson	lesson	SPA	
3.15–4.00	lesson				

Year 10

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1.45–2.30	Homeroom	lesson	lesson	SPA	
2.30–3.15	lesson	lesson	lesson	SPA	
3.15–4.00	lesson				