New Language Ambassador Program

Internationalism is a deep-seated philosophy at BISB. One can hear this in the hallways, in assemblies, and in every classroom. Many students speak their mother tongues at home, engage with classes in English, and study Spanish and French. The importance of language at BISB creates ample opportunity to bring students together and Ms. Louise Miller has envisioned a program at BISB that will celebrate our multicultural background. She calls this initiative the Language Ambassador Program.

It is a program where Language Ambassadors will meet to brainstorm events, such as quizzes and games, that allow students to have fun while developing an even greater appreciation of languages and culture.

We sat down with Ms. Miller to learn more about her new program as well as languages at BISB.

*Describe your background as a teacher and with foreign languages?*

My earliest memories of being really interested in language learning go way back to my family's

annual vacations to Brittany. At this time, I was 7 and I truly believed that since my dad had taught me how to count to 10 in French, and I had learned how to order a few items on the local café's menu, that I was half-way to being bilingual! It wasn't until I started middle school that I began learning French formally and realised that there was far more to learning a language than

counting and ordering food. Although I opted to study Spanish in Year 10 alongside French, my

focus has always really been on French.

*What is the Language Ambassador Program?*

The whole language team at BISB is really excited to launch this brand new initiative which will

allow our passionate linguists to take on a leadership roles to promote, celebrate, and support

language learning at BISB. The aim is for students to be involved in the running of lunchtime

conversation practice clubs, language themed House quizzes and challenges, and our

BISB Languages Instagram account. These are just some of the ideas that we have in mind but we know that the successful candidates will have so many more suggestions and projects to add. We will look to be completely open to our Ambassadors' creativity.

*What qualities would you value in Language Ambassadors?*

A genuine passion for languages is essential! Further to this, we would love to see teamwork with the ambassador team working collaboratively on the initiatives that we set in motion. We want our ambassadors to be team players that are creative and self-disciplined.

*What do you view as the significance of modern foreign languages at BISB today?*

Foreign languages have always played an extremely important role in any successful curriculum. The skills that language learning facilitates and the increased literacy and understanding of one's mother tongue that is fostered through the acquisition of a new language, is invaluable. In addition to this though, it is the empathy and cultural understanding that results from the study of language along with the ability to communicate with people from other countries, that is so incredibly useful in society, and highly valued by employers in all sectors.

*What do you envision as the role of languages and international culture at BISB in the future?*

I would love for our students to maintain the great success that we have seen over many years at IGCSE and IB in both French and Spanish. I would also love to see more of our students opting to take both languages at IGCSE and even the IB.

There are so many additional language initiatives that I would like to see take place at BISB, like the introduction of more language clubs, an international themed week with different events, challenges and competitions, and of course, when COVID-19 is a distant memory, the return of residential trips.

We thank Ms. Miller for opening up to us about the new Language Ambassador Program and providing a little perspective into the ever-growing role of language and culture at BISB.