



Important Information for  
Young Learners Students and Parents

學前、幼兒及中小學  
學生及家長重要資訊手冊

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## Better English Brighter Future

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Dear Parents,

We are delighted that you have chosen a British Council Young Learner course for your child and would like to extend a very warm welcome to you. We have prepared this guide to provide you with important information about our policies and procedures.

The British Council is a world leader in English language teaching and the provision of qualifications. Teaching English forms part of our purpose as an organisation to build engagement with the UK through the exchange of knowledge and ideas between people as well as supporting arts and education.

We believe that parents are central to our approach. Our global experience tells us that children have more chance of being successful with their learning when teachers and parents work together. Over the coming year we will hold a number of events and activities for parents and we look forward to seeing you at these.

We really want to hear your views and comments about any aspect of your experience with us. Please send any comments or feedback to [enquiries@britishcouncil.org.hk](mailto:enquiries@britishcouncil.org.hk) or speak to one of our Customer Services staff.

We hope you and your child enjoy your time with the British Council.



Mhairi-Anne Gonzalez  
Director English Language Services  
British Council Hong Kong

## Our Approach and Beliefs

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We want every child to:

- enjoy their experience of learning with us
- communicate confidently in English
- understand the world around them
- develop an awareness of diversity
- become independent learners.

# Statement of Approach

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We believe that children and young people...

**... learn best in a safe, structured environment.**

To encourage language learning:

- we set up clear classroom routines and manage student behaviour
- we make sure that the physical setting is safe and secure
- we have safeguarding, behaviour and diversity policies.

**... need to understand the learning process.**

To help students monitor their progress and develop learning strategies:

- we give regular assessments with feedback on progress and achievements
- we use correction techniques which encourage self and peer assessment
- we plan relevant lessons with clear learning outcomes
- we set homework that reinforces classroom learning.

**... need exposure to rich, meaningful language.**

To help our students listen, speak, read and write in real-life situations:

- we provide models of natural language through genuine communication
- our syllabuses are topic-based with appropriate activities and materials
- we only use English in class.

**... learn at different speeds through imitation, interaction and problem-solving.**

To engage and motivate our students:

- we ensure that there is a variety of individual, pair, group and whole class activities
- we discuss progress with individual students based on observation and monitoring
- we cater to diverse learning styles and students' own interests.

**... are more successful when their parents are involved in their learning.**

To support this:

- we promptly communicate any issues regarding behaviour and progress
- we issue reports at multiple points in the semester which reflect learning and progress
- we encourage students to keep lesson and homework records
- we give parents opportunities to come into classes, meet teachers and attend workshops.

**We encourage parents to contact teachers to discuss any questions you may have about our courses, your child's progress or our teaching.** Please feel free to speak to teachers after lessons about any aspects of learning and development.

# Important Information

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## Settling in procedures for kindergarten students

It is very natural for young children to be upset during their first few lessons. Our teachers and teaching assistants are highly skilled and experienced at settling children into their new environment and the following points will enable parents to make this transition as easy as possible:

- prepare your child before the class by talking about the British Council course. If you have time, bring them for a visit so they can see the teaching centre
- don't arrive too early before class
- be positive about leaving your child in the teacher's care
- once you have handed your child over to the teacher, leave the class as quickly as possible - particularly if your child is crying.

We do not allow parents to stay in the class as we know from experience that this does not help the child. Children who are upset and who have a parent present do not involve themselves in the lesson or mix with their peers. It may be difficult to leave your child when they are upset but it is in their best interests to integrate them into their new learning environment.

## Safety and supervision

We regard all students below the age of 18 as children, according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989. We take our responsibilities towards the children in our care very seriously and we endeavour to make the British Council as safe as possible. However, we are in a public building which anyone can enter.

## Door opening times

To avoid congestion in the teaching centre corridors, we have staggered class start times and classrooms are not opened for students before lessons begin. Students will have access to their classroom when the class teacher arrives.

## **Parents of kindergarten and primary students must not leave children without supervision anywhere in the building, including the public toilets on the first floor.**

Parents or guardians should stay with their child until either the class teacher or designated teaching assistant arrives in the classroom.

Students must also be supervised by a parent or guardian at all times while using the public computers.

## **Student pick up policy**

**As we are unable to supervise any children outside class time**, we ask parents to ensure that students are dropped off and collected on time before and after classes.

### **Late pick up policy**

If a student is not collected on time they will be taken to a designated point (3<sup>rd</sup> floor) for collection. Children cannot remain in the classroom because the cleaners have to clean before the next lesson begins. Our teachers and teaching assistants also have other classes to teach and prepare for.

**We reserve the right to take action if parents or guardians leave children unattended or without adequate supervision when not in class.**

### Pre-school, kindergarten and primary students

As part of our safeguarding children policy, we have pick up procedures that we follow to protect the youngest children in our care. Parents will be given a 'pick up pass' that is used to collect children after each lesson. You must fill in the details on the pass and add a photograph of your child. The person who collects your child **must** have the pick up pass with them, and be aged over 14. If the person collecting your child is between 14 and 18 years of age then you need to fill in the back of the pass as well. Students in Upper Primary classes may arrive and depart unaccompanied providing you give your written authorisation on our 'permission form' which is kept by the class teacher.

**If you forget to bring your pick up pass** (or if you have left it in your child's bag) then we will ask you to complete the pick-up form held by the class teacher. This form asks for your name, contact number and Hong Kong identification number.

### Secondary students

Children attending our secondary classes can arrive and depart unaccompanied. However, parents need to ensure that students do not arrive earlier than 10 minutes before class time as they will not be allowed access to the teaching floors.

## **Fire safety**

All students will be informed about fire procedures in the first lesson. The assembly point is indicated in each classroom and we conduct regular fire drills which may cause disruption to classes. This is necessary to ensure the highest standards of fire safety are achieved.

## Behaviour

In order to ensure a secure and happy environment that is conducive to learning for all students, we expect students to behave appropriately. Inappropriate behaviour includes:

- using abusive language directed towards a teacher or another student
- possession of dangerous objects in the centre
- stealing or damaging others' property
- bullying or harassment of peers
- fighting or violence in class
- smoking in the centre
- disrupting a class
- vandalism.

If a student behaves inappropriately, the following steps will be taken:

1. The teacher speaks to the student. If there is no improvement,
2. Parents are contacted, informing them of the inappropriate behaviour and steps to improvement. If there is still no improvement,
3. We arrange a meeting between the parents, the student, a customer services staff member and a senior teacher to discuss and sign a *Behaviour Agreement*.

If sufficient improvement is not consistently demonstrated, the student will be suspended. After the period of suspension, a 'Return to Learning' meeting will be arranged with parents, customer services staff member and the relevant senior teacher to discuss expectations and consequences for any further inappropriate behaviour.

**Depending on the extremity of the behaviour and the urgency of the case, some of the above steps may be skipped. In extreme cases, e.g. bullying or physical violence, the student may be immediately and permanently excluded.**

The British Council believes staff, parents, carers and children are entitled to a safe and protective environment. Behaviour that will cause harassment, alarm or distress to users of the premises is contrary to British Council values. Therefore, the use of threatening and abusive behaviour may result in exclusion.



## **Specific educational needs**

We are committed to providing an inclusive learning environment in which children are supported to achieve their potential in a spirit of inclusion and acceptance. We value the abilities and achievements of all our students and recognise that parents hold key information and knowledge of their child. If your child needs any additional support in class, please notify us by filling in the form available at our Customer Services Centre . Having this information enables us to help your child more effectively. Your information is held in the strictest confidence.

## **Bullying**

To guarantee a safe and positive learning experience for all our students, the British Council has a zero tolerance policy to all forms of bullying.

Bullying can be very difficult to detect and victims may not even be aware they are being bullied as it can manifest in many forms. Some of these include:

- offensive gestures or comments
- starting rumours / passing notes
- emotional or physical attacks
- stealing / hiding objects
- physical violence
- exclusion.

If your child is not happy we want you to tell us. If your child cannot speak to the teachers there are other members of staff who are available to listen to you. Please also let us know if you think someone you know might be being bullied.

**If you suspect your child is being bullied, it is important that you get in touch with us as soon as possible** so that we can take appropriate steps to deal with the situation delicately and with discretion

## Internet safety

While we blend Information Communication Technology and computer based learning into our young learner courses, students must not access social networking sites or personal email accounts during lessons or on our public computers. Please also remind your children not to give out any personal information online.

**The collection of personal data by British Council, including the use of video or audio recording equipment or taking photographs in the classroom, is not allowed without the permission of the parents, the teacher and students.** Under the UK Data Protection Act, it is an offence to collect personal data without consent. British Council may use your child's photograph(s) or recording for the purpose of promoting British Council activities. This may include placing your child's photograph(s) or recordings in our publications, on our website and in our promotional materials. In addition we may also pass your child's photograph(s) or recording to any of our overseas offices, where necessary, for the above purpose.

As British Council is an international organization, promoting British Council activities may involve the global distribution of our publications and promotional materials as well as placing your child's photograph(s) or any such materials on our websites that are accessible worldwide.

If teachers would like to record or take photographs of all or part of a class, you will be asked to provide written permission beforehand. You are under no obligation to agree.

Teachers may, on occasion, film, record or photograph a lesson for the purposes of language practice and assessment, teacher training, quality assurance, or to show typical classroom activities to parents. Any video, audio or photographic created for such purposes will not be used outside the British Council, and will be destroyed after their use. Please inform us if you do not agree to your child's image or voice being used for these purposes.

## **Homework policy**

At British Council Hong Kong, we give homework regularly. As children may already receive a large amount of homework from their schools we do not want to over-burden them so we give short homework tasks which foster independent study habits and consolidate language learned in class. The amount and type of homework given may vary according to individual teachers and the specific needs of particular groups of students but the information below gives an outline of how much and what kind of homework your child can expect to receive.

### **Pre-school, K1 – K2 Courses**

No formal homework is given but each week teachers will recommend activities that can be done at home with the parent to support classroom learning.

### **K3**

Homework consists of recommendations through the parents' letter such as songs, reading and activities that you can do together.

### **Primary**

Each module has a non-compulsory, but recommended, online component consisting of vocabulary and grammar activities. Classroom based homework tasks could be exercises from the student magazine, collecting information for the next lesson, finishing work started in class and writing tasks.

### **Secondary**

Homework is given at least every other lesson and should take students 30 - 45 minutes to complete. Typical homework tasks could be exercises from the student's book or workbook, writing or reading tasks, collecting information for the next lesson or finishing work started in class.

### **DSE Foundation Courses – S5 and S6 (S5P, S6P)**

Homework is given at least every other lesson and should take students 45 minutes or less to complete. Typical homework tasks could be writing or reading tasks, finishing work started in class or preparing for the next lesson.

### **DSE Exam Preparation Courses – S5 and S6 (S5I, S5U, S6I, S6U)**

Homework is given at least every other lesson and should take students 45 minutes or less to complete. Typical homework tasks could be writing, reading or viewing tasks, finishing work started in class or preparing for the next lesson.

## **Attendance and absence**

**If your child misses over half of a lesson, they will be recorded as absent in class registers.**

**The teacher or customer services staff must be informed in advance if your child needs to leave early.** For safety reasons, the teacher will not allow a child to leave a class early without permission from a parent or guardian.

**In cases of planned absence, please tell us as soon as you can.** We will not make up or refund lessons missed due to personal commitments, truancy or illness.

**If your child is absent without us being told in advance, we will inform you by SMS or letter to confirm and check the reason for the absence.**

**If your child has a cold, flu or any other contagious illness, they should not attend lessons.** If a child's health poses a threat to other students, they will not be allowed to join the class.

## **Reports and certificates**

Phonics, Kindergarten 1 to 3, and Secondary students will receive a report in the last lesson containing comments on performance, provided that students have attended at least 75 per cent of their course. If students are absent from the final lesson, the report will be posted to the specified address within one month.

Children in Stay and Play course will receive a certificate of attendance at the end of the course.

Primary classes will receive a report at the end of each module, provided they have attended at least 75 per cent of their course.

If a report is lost or damaged, you can request a replacement report within one month from the date of your last lesson at a charge of HK\$100. After the first month, you can request a certificate of attendance, which is available up to one year from the date of your last lesson at a charge of HK\$50.

## Student transfer procedures information

### Changing class times

Transferral of your child to a different class time is possible while the registration period is still open. In order to change class, places in other classes must be available and supporting reasons must be provided. Please be aware that there are extra charges for transferring from weekday (Monday to Thursday) to weekend (Friday to Sunday) classes.

**Great care is taken by our English Services Consultant to place students in the appropriate level depending on their age and proficiency.** However, on rare occasions, we find it beneficial to transfer students to another level. Teachers, parents or students can make this request by the 3<sup>rd</sup> lesson of a semester or after a student has attended a minimum of two modules in the case of primary classes.

In these cases, teachers will gather evidence of a student's work in class and meet the Senior Teacher responsible for that course. **However, students may only transfer if:**

- the senior teacher agrees, and
- if there is a place available in another class.

Sometimes this means that a teacher might have 21 students in a class and we then have to ask the teacher to agree to this additional student.

Customer Services then informs the parents about the transfer and the procedure is complete.

Occasionally a student may approach their teacher with a request to transfer to another level but **the final decision rests with the teacher's professional judgement in conjunction with the senior teacher.**

### Change of teachers

While we make every effort to timetable the same teacher for the duration of a course, we reserve the right to change class teacher without notice according to operational need.

### Liability

The British Council shall not be liable to any party in respect of the following:

- for any loss or damage to your property or any property in your possession in the course of engaging with the British Council or participating in courses as arranged by the British Council;
- for death, or any injury or incapacity (except as may be required by law).



## Progression Chart

Cambridge English exams available at the British Council <sup>1</sup>	Local School Level						
	Pre-school K1	K2-K3	P1-P6	S1-S2	S3-S4	S5	S6
<b>IELTS<sup>2</sup></b>						Upper Intermediate	Upper Intermediate
<b>FCE for Schools</b>					Level 4 (2 <sup>nd</sup> year) Level 4 (1 <sup>st</sup> year)	Upper Intermediate Intermediate	Upper Intermediate Intermediate
<b>PET for Schools</b>			Level 6 Plus Level 5 Plus	Level 4 (2 <sup>nd</sup> year) Level 4 (1 <sup>st</sup> year) Level 3	Level 4 (1 <sup>st</sup> year) Level 3 Level 2	Intermediate Pre-intermediate	Intermediate Pre-intermediate
<b>KET for Schools</b>			Level 6 Level 5 Plus Level 5	Level 2 Level 1	Level 2 Level 1	Pre-intermediate	Pre-intermediate
<b>Flyers</b>			Level 6 Level 5 Plus Level 5 Level 4 Plus Level 3 Plus				
<b>Movers</b>			Level 4 Level 3 Level 2 Plus Level 2 Level 1 Plus				
<b>Starters<sup>3</sup></b>		K3 K2	Level 2 Level 1 Plus Level 1				
<b>English courses available at the British Council</b>	Stay and Play Kindergarten 1	Kindergarten 3 Kindergarten 2	Primary Plus	Secondary 1-2	Secondary 3-4	DSE Exam Preparation Courses DSE Foundation Courses	



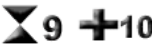



1. Suggested examinations according to your level.

2. The minimum age accepted for IELTS is 16 years old.

3. The minimum age accepted for Cambridge English: Young Learners (YLE) is 4 years old.

## Typhoon & Rainstorm Procedures

The following information is a general guideline, please check our website [www.britishcouncil.hk](http://www.britishcouncil.hk) for the latest lesson arrangement in all centres when the typhoon & rainstorm signal is in force.

Weather Condition	Pre-School / Kindergarten / KPhonics and Success in Starters courses	Primary & Secondary courses / Phonics / Cambridge Exam Preparation Courses (P1 to S6)	All Adult courses including IELTS preparation
<b>T1</b>	Proceed as normal	Proceed as normal	Proceed as normal
<b>L3</b>	Class Cancelled *Classes will resume in 3 hours after typhoon signal is lowered	Proceed as normal	Proceed as normal
 NE 東北 NW 西北  SE 東南 SW 西南 	Class Cancelled *Classes will resume in 3 hours once typhoon signal is lowered to No. 1	Class Cancelled *Classes will resume in 3 hours once typhoon signal is lowered	Class Cancelled *Classes will resume in 3 hours once typhoon signal is lowered
 Amber 黃	Proceed as normal	Proceed as normal	Proceed as normal
 Red 紅	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class cancelled unless it is already in progress</li> <li>• Students remain where they are until the warning is lowered</li> <li>• Classes will resume in 3 hours after rainstorm signal is lowered / cancelled</li> </ul>		Proceed as normal
 Black 黑	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class cancelled unless it is already in progress</li> <li>• Students remain where they are until the warning is lowered</li> <li>• If the rainstorm warning is lowered to Amber before 1pm; classes from 4pm will resume</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class cancelled unless already in progress</li> <li>• Classes will resume in 3 hours after rainstorm signal is lowered / cancelled</li> </ul>
<b>If the No.8 typhoon signal or above / Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is still in effect at 5pm, all evening classes will be cancelled.</b>			