



Language Policy

1 Introduction

Stiftsschule Engelberg places great importance on formal language learning. We recognize the importance of one's first language for the social, emotional and cognitive development of young people. It is crucial for the preservation of cultural identity and the basis for learning other languages. Knowledge of one or more foreign languages promotes intercultural understanding and facilitates getting ahead in an increasingly globalized world.

	Primary School			Middle School	High School
	1 st grade	3 rd grade	5 th grade	7 th /8 th grade	9 th to 12 th grade
German	█			█	█
English		█		█	█
French			█	█	█
Latin				█	█
Greek					█

2 German

German is the regional language and the mother tongue of most of our students. Accordingly, the majority of the subjects our school offers are taught in German. German is considered in our curriculum as one of the main subjects and therefore required for the Swiss Matura. German also counts as the first language (German A Literature) to be completed in the IB Diploma program.

Students whose mother tongue is not German attend «German as a Foreign Language» (DaF), if necessary. In this course, they receive individualized instruction in order to meet first language requirements as quickly as possible.

3 English

As English increasingly takes on the role of «world language», it serves as no other language does in contributing to international and intercultural understanding. This is particularly important in the field of research, where international organizations often work together. Accordingly, more and more courses are being taught in English at Swiss universities.

In Canton Obwalden, English lessons begin in the third grade of primary school. At Stiftsschule Engelberg English is taught as a main subject. During the last three years of Gymnasium (High School), biology, geography and mathematics are taught and tested in English, culminating in a bilingual Matura Certificate (German/English). Thus, students experience English in a reality-oriented, i.e. purely communicative manner. English is completed as a second language (English B) within the framework of the IB Diploma Program

Preparatory courses for the external language examinations administered by the University of Cambridge are also offered regularly. The university's internationally recognized language certificates serve as proof of our students' achievements and proficiency in English.

4 French

As a small country with four national languages, Switzerland is aware of the central role that language plays in cultural understanding. Thus, it is federally stipulated that another national language must be taught in addition to the mother tongue and English.

As of the 5th grade of Primary School, all pupils in Canton Obwalden begin taking French. At Stiftsschule Engelberg, French counts as a main subject, required for graduation. In the IB Diploma program, French is completed as an additional language (French B) in place of a subject in the Arts.

In order to experience the linguistic and cultural diversity of Switzerland, an exchange with a Gymnasium located in French-speaking Switzerland takes place in the upper grades. It is also possible to prepare for an external language certificate such as the Diplôme Etude en langue française (DELFF).

5 Classical languages

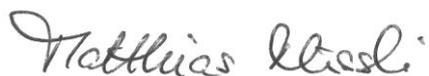
As an abbey school, Stiftsschule Engelberg has almost 900 years of experience in the use of the classical languages Greek and Latin. In the abbey library, numerous works testify to the importance of these languages in the development of Europe.

Although other languages have taken on greater importance in modern times, we still believe that studying classical languages is worthwhile, from both the aspect of language etymology and from a cultural viewpoint.

Therefore, all pupils of Stiftsschule Engelberg attend Latin classes during the Lower Gymnasium (grades 7 & 8). Students of the Upper Gymnasium (grades 10 to 12) have the possibility to choose classical languages as a major subject. They either continue with Latin and/or start with the study of Greek.

The above regulations go into effect as of 1 March 2018, replacing all former versions.

Engelberg, 1 February 2018



Matthias Nüssli

Head of School