



Admissions Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

The British Section is part of a highly original intercultural educational project based around the Lycée International, Saint Germain-en-Laye, enabling pupils from a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds to pursue a bilingual and bicultural education in both English and French. As a result, students develop the knowledge, skills and cultural mobility to enable them to pursue higher education in the UK, France and further afield.

The British Section educates children from age 3 to 18 in one of five French host schools of which the Lycée International is the hub.

The British Section offers a mother-tongue English curriculum within the context of the French state school system and hence a primarily francophone educational environment. Pupils of all ages spend about three-quarters of lesson time in a French class learning in French and between 6 - 8 hours per week (depending on the year group) learning in English with British Section teachers.

The bi-lingual / bi-cultural curriculum (*double-enseignement*) requires commitment to both the British Section and the French education system. It is a challenging educational pathway that demands considerable academic ability and intellectual flexibility as well as motivation, engagement and resilience. Given these demands, as well as the fact that the demand for places far exceeds our capacity to accommodate all candidates, the British Section assesses all pupils who apply.

Parents are expected to support the school's international objectives and to take steps to understand and appreciate the different but complementary approaches to learning. Parents are also reminded that the host schools are French state schools and function accordingly. For example, parents must respect the French schools' administrative procedures.

2. WHO CAN APPLY TO JOIN THE BRITISH SECTION?

Established in the 1950s to educate the children of NATO personnel, the mission of the British Section has broadened over its sixty years in existence. This said, its objectives are clear and they are defined in French law - the *Code de l'éducation* - and the British Section mission statement:

Translated extract from the *Code de l'éducation*:

The purpose of the international sections is: 'to facilitate the integration of non-francophone pupils into the French education system, whilst enabling them to continue to learn in their native language; to offer the opportunity for francophone pupils to learn a foreign language at native-speaker level.'

Extract from the British Section mission statement:

'The British Section sets out to offer its distinctive education to children from English-speaking and bilingual family backgrounds, and to those who have learned English as a second or foreign language and who are committed to developing it at mother-tongue level.'

There are three main routes into the British Section which have been designed to facilitate the integration of students from different linguistic backgrounds into the bi-lingual curriculum:

a. Fluent English and French speakers

Children who already speak both languages fluently will be considered for entry to both the mainstream British Section and French classes. **Should the assessment process reveal weakness in one of the languages, the applicant may be considered for either *Français spécial* (see below) or the Fast-track English class in Le Pecq (as appropriate, and depending on the availability of places).**

b. Anglophone students (non-francophone)

Children who speak little or no French can join the British Section via one of the *Français spécial* classes, available from 10ème to Seconde. This involves an intensive one-year course in French before pupils are integrated into mainstream French classes. During this year, pupils are also taught in English in the mainstream British Section classes.

c. Francophone students (pupils learning English as a foreign language)

Academically able francophone children with the ambition and motivation to become bilingual in English can enter the British Section through the *Fast-track English* classes in Le Pecq (starting in 6ème) or, later, through the specialised *Seconde Accueil* class at the Lycée International. Depending on satisfactory progress, and the availability of places, these students normally enter mainstream British Section classes in Seconde and Première, respectively.

3. ENTRY POINTS (please see Appendix 1 for a diagram showing the main entry points to the British Section)

Year groups in France are made up according to the child's year of birth running from **January to December**.

Table 1: Equivalent year groups

French Year	UK equivalent
Maternelle 1 / Petite Section	Nursery
Maternelle 2 / Moyenne Section	Reception
Maternelle 3 / Grande Section	Year 1
11ème / CP	Year 2
10ème / CE1	Year 3
9ème / CE2	Year 4
8ème / CM1	Year 5
7ème / CM2	Year 6
6ème	Year 7
5ème	Year 8
4ème	Year 9
3ème	Year 10
Seconde	Year 11
Première	Year 12
Terminale	Year 13

The main points of entry to the British Section are:

Primary

- Maternelle 1: creation of one class of circa 12 children
- Maternelle 3: creation of two additional classes of c.15 children, one in Le Pecq and one in St. Germain
- 10ème: class sizes increase to around 18 so there are generally up to 8 places created at this level.

At all other levels in Primary, any additional places are dependent upon pupil departures.

Secondary

- 6ème:
- some additional places for bilingual (English and French) children become available in mainstream British Section classes;
 - creation of *Fast-track English* class for c.16 francophone speakers who wish to become bilingual.
- Seconde: creation of *Seconde Accueil* for c.15 francophone speakers who wish to become bilingual.

It is rare that we admit students between 5ème and 3ème, and leavers are not necessarily replaced. We occasionally admit students at lycée level, in either Seconde or Première, but only exceptionally in Terminale.

Parents of potential applicants for 5ème and above are invited to contact the British Section Admissions Officer for advice.

Please visit the admissions pages of our website for the up-to-date admissions situation: <http://www.britishsection.fr/Procedure.html>.

4. THE APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The deadlines for applications are:

Mid-January for *Seconde Accueil*; (please check Admissions page on website)

The first Friday in February for all other local applications.

Applications for entry outside the period of assessment will be dealt with on an individual basis, subject to the availability of places.

How to apply for a place in the British Section:

If you wish to apply, please submit the following documents in a single envelope addressed to:

Mrs Sarah Grégoire
Admissions Officer
British Section, Lycée International
2 bis rue du Fer à Cheval - B.P. 70107
78101 Saint Germain-en-Laye Cedex
France

- a) A letter from the parents addressed to the Director of the British Section giving details of your child's previous schooling. It would be helpful if you could comment on the following:
 - Languages spoken at home;
 - Support you as parents are able to give;
 - The provision already made to support your child's development of English e.g. details of any tuition already being given etc;
 - The degree of your child's fluency in the French language, if any;
 - Any specific reasons for which the family is applying to the British Section;
 - Any further details concerning your child which you feel would be useful for us to know;
 - Please also include your current email address and telephone number.
- b) School reports covering the last two school years and any relevant information about the standard of the applicant's English
- c) A photocopy of the child's birth certificate or other official ID
- d) An identity photo of the applicant
- e) Any additional information that should be taken into account when assessing your child e.g. special educational needs etc (see Special Circumstances below).
- f) A cheque for 160 euros per child for Maternelle applications, 200 euros for Primary applications and 250 euros for College and Lycée level applications to cover non-refundable assessment fees. Please make cheques payable to 'British Section.'
- g) For candidates applying for places from Maternelle 3 and above: please include photocopied samples of recent schoolwork in English as well as the name and contact details of one of your child's teachers so we can contact them should we require additional information.

In the majority of cases, an entrance test will be arranged. If not, all the documents, including the cheque, will be returned to you.

Please note:

- All completed applications are reviewed as quickly as possible, but this process can take several weeks due to the increasing volume of applications we receive and the thoroughness with which we consider each one;
- Due to the large number of applications we receive, incomplete applications will not be processed;

- The British Section does not take responsibility for administrative errors or letters that go astray.

5. RESIDENCE

It is not necessary to have residential status in France before making an application but the British Section will expect families to live within a 15-kilometre radius of the school their child attends.

The British Section and host schools **do not** provide boarding facilities. Given the real challenges involved with the dual curriculum, it is highly recommended that pupils live at home with their parents or legal guardians who can give them the support they need.

6. THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The purpose of assessing candidates is to identify and admit children who demonstrate the potential and commitment to thrive in bilingual education, and who will contribute to, and benefit from, the ethos and opportunities available.

In addition to reviewing the application, we also typically assess candidates through a written task and an interview at the school. A French test and, where considered appropriate, a Mathematics test in French is also arranged in the following cases:

- a) Candidates applying for full-time places in Maternelle 3;
- b) Candidates applying for places in 11ème / CP;
- c) Candidates transferring from schools in France or abroad that are not recognised by the French national education system;
- d) Candidates applying for a place in *Français spécial* (available from 10ème up to Seconde, see Table 1 above).

Decisions are made based on our evaluation of all elements of the application.

It is important to note that the British Section's decision to offer a place must be approved by the French administration before the place can be confirmed. The British Section makes recommendations to the French authorities and decisions are then finalised taking into account the whole field of applications from all 13 international Sections. The British Section will endeavour to communicate decisions to families as promptly and efficiently as possible.

Applicants living abroad (candidates for 6ème upwards only)

It may, in exceptional cases, be possible to arrange written tests and interviews by distance for those candidates who are unable to come to France during the admissions period. Please contact the Admissions Officer for advice.

7. FURTHER DETAILS ABOUT ASSESSMENT

Maternelle / Primary

We are looking for age-appropriate ability in speaking, listening, reading and writing in English, and the potential and support to maintain development of these skills whilst being educated in a primarily francophone environment.

Maternelle 1 – 11ème (CP)

Candidates are assessed orally for their communication and language skills, and their potential for development, using a selection of resources chosen to stimulate discussion. We also consider depth and range of vocabulary, accuracy in the use of English, the extent and use of general knowledge in conversation, willingness and ability to sustain a conversation, perceptiveness, engagement whilst on a task, and the ability to deal with simple and multi-step instructions. Interviews are held individually and last for approximately 20 minutes.

10ème/9ème (CE1/CE2)

In addition to the above, there is a spelling and writing assessment. We are looking for fluency and understanding in speaking and reading, as well as understanding of sentence structure, syntax and grammar in writing appropriate to the child's age. The assessment is organised individually and lasts for approximately 45 minutes.

8ème/7ème (CM1/CM2)

Candidates are assessed using a standardised reading test, as well as comprehension, spelling and creative-writing tasks. We are looking for imagination / creative thinking and logical thought, as well as a good vocabulary, effective sentence construction, and accurate spelling and punctuation appropriate to the child's age. The candidates may also participate in a (group) discussion with a British Section teacher. The assessment lasts approximately two hours.

***Français spécial* (10ème/CE1 - 7ème/CM2)**

In addition to the tests mentioned above, individual interviews are arranged in English and French to assess the child's potential to learn in a bilingual and bicultural environment; in particular, their processing skills, perceptiveness, willingness to learn and resilience.

Candidates are not required to bring books, projects or other work with them to interview.

Secondary

Mainstream British Section classes:

- Candidates take a written examination in English. We set our own assessments which involve reading comprehension exercises, open-ended

writing tasks and language exercises. We are looking for creative thinking and logical thought, as well as a good vocabulary, effective sentence construction, and accurate spelling and punctuation appropriate to the child's age.

- Where possible, interviews take place on the same day as the written exam and last approximately 20 minutes. The aim of the interview is to explore the candidate's analytical skills, creative thinking and potential to thrive in bi-lingual education. The style of the interview is intended to be an informal discussion. Candidates are not required to bring books, projects or other work with them to interview.

Francophone students:

- *Fast-track English* (6ème): Candidates will be assessed for their potential to study in English in an interview lasting approximately 30 minutes in which they will be heard reading and participate in a discussion; they will also be asked to produce some written work. Evidence of the candidate's motivation and commitment to learning English at native speaker level is also considered a crucial criterion for admission, as is the family's support for the bi-lingual curriculum and British education and culture more generally. It is not necessary for candidates to have been educated in English nor to have lived in an anglophone country, although some candidates may have. Students in the *Fast-track English* class are assessed for their ability to study a native speaker English Literature and History/Geography curriculum during the final two years of collège and they are expected to demonstrate a genuine commitment to the British Section curriculum to be considered for admittance to the mainstream British Section classes at the Lycée International in Seconde.
- *Seconde Accueil*: selected candidates take a written test at the Lycée International in March (see the admissions timetable on our website). Candidates who demonstrate a sufficient level of English language proficiency (CEFR/CERCL level B2) and advanced analytical thinking skills will normally be invited to interview. Students admitted to the *Seconde Accueil* class are assessed for their ability to study a native speaker English Literature and History/Geography curriculum by the end of the year. They are also expected to demonstrate a genuine commitment to the British Section curriculum to be considered for admittance to the mainstream British Section classes at the Lycée International in Première.

8. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

We recognise that a candidate's performance may be affected by particular circumstances, for example:

- illness during tests or a lengthy absence from school;
- particular family circumstances such as a recent bereavement;
- a disability or specific learning needs.

Parents should inform the school as soon as possible if any of these, or any other circumstances considered relevant, apply. Depending on the circumstances, we may request further information such as a medical certificate before deciding whether or not to make any reasonable adjustments. A candidate with specific learning needs or disabilities

will be required to submit a copy of a valid report from an appropriately qualified teacher, Educational Psychologist, or other specialist, together with any other information the British Section may reasonably request. A copy of the report or the letter from the school should be received by the Admissions Officer no later than one week before the date of the child's assessment in the British Section.

9. NOTIFICATION OF DECISIONS

We aim to inform families whether we are recommending their child for a place either just prior to or just after the Spring holidays. Once the candidates have been assessed, they are placed on the British Section lists in order of merit and our recommendations are then forwarded to the French administration. Parents should be aware that there may be a delay at this stage as the French administration has to process not only our applications but also all applications from the other twelve national sections.

Candidates who have not had places confirmed by July will be placed on a waiting list and may be offered a place if any become available during the summer holidays due to unexpected departures. The enrolment situation may evolve considerably towards the end of the academic year, and sometimes places become available as late as September.

Links with local schools (Secondary)

The British Section receives a high volume of applications for a limited number of available places and we are frequently unable to accommodate all students who demonstrate sufficient aptitude to follow the bilingual curriculum. In such cases, and in order to help families to find suitable alternatives, we may share a child's application, including assessment data, with local schools offering bilingual opportunities. If you do not wish us to share your child's application with other schools, please specify this in your letter of application.

10. ALLOCATION OF PLACES

Primary

Successful candidates will generally be offered a place at the school that is nearest to the family's home. Pupils joining the British Section outside one of the main points of entry will be offered a place wherever there is a vacancy.

The *externé* system (Lycée International site only)

Pressure on places is such across the different national sections that the Lycée International can only accommodate a limited number of 'full-time' pupils. 'Full-time' in this sense means that the child obtains a place in a French class on the Lycée site. Most successful candidates will therefore be offered an *externé* place. The *externé* system allows pupils to attend their local French primary school and to be released to attend British Section lessons at the Lycée International on the two half-days relevant to their year group. British Section primary classes on the Lycée International site therefore consist, in varying proportions, of children who are 'full-time' in the Lycée International and those who attend just for the British Section classes as *externés*.

Allocation of full-time places at the Lycée International

The British Section is accorded a limited number of full-time places in the various year groups across Primary on the Lycée International site each year. Decisions about which children will be recommended for a full-time place and their order of precedence will be based on a variety of factors including academic performance and well-being issues, and will remain at the discretion of the British Section's senior leadership team. The final decision about which pupils are offered full-time places remains with the Proviseur who mediates between the requests of the 13 different sections.

We understand that some parents find the alternative to full-time education on the Lycée International site a challenging prospect. In such cases, it is worth remembering that the *externé* system has been developed in order to enable as many children as possible to benefit from the enriching opportunity of a bilingual education.

Secondary

Collège: successful candidates joining the British Section from outside are generally offered places at one of our partner collèges, either Collège Pierre et Marie Curie (Le Pecq) or Collège les Hauts Grillets (St Germain) depending on their residential address.

Français spécial

Due to the declining number of non-francophone applicants in recent years, *Français spécial* classes may be amalgamated so that two year-groups are taught together; for example, 6ème and 5ème-aged pupils may be taught in a combined class. The decision as to which year group's curriculum the class will follow will depend on the composition of the class and, once decided, the pupils will follow the timetable for this year-group. Consequently, *Français spécial* pupils will be placed in the British Section class that corresponds with the year-group chosen for the *Français spécial* class. At the end of the year in *Français spécial*, pupils who have made satisfactory progress normally join one of the mainstream French classes for their age-appropriate year-group. Should the *Français spécial* class be aligned with the younger year group, pupils in the elder age bracket may have the option of continuing in the year-group which follows the *Français spécial* class to enable them to consolidate their French, if required. This decision will be made in consultation between the pupil, their parents, the *Français spécial* teachers, the British Section and the French administration.

11. FEEDBACK

Individual feedback can be requested and will be given with the intention of helping candidates who have not been offered places to prepare for a future application to the British Section or to find a suitable alternative in the local area.

12. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Our aim is to encourage applications from candidates with a diverse range of backgrounds. The British Section will consider candidates for admission regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, disability or social background.

13. SIBLING POLICY

Each child is assessed on his/her own merits and there may be occasions where we judge that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment.

14. COMPLAINTS

We hope that you and your child will have no cause for complaints about our admissions process. However, a copy of the British Section's complaints procedure can be sent to you upon request to the Admissions Officer.

Policy created: September 2013
Next review: September 2015

Appendix 1: Entry Points to the British Section

Entry Points to the British Section

LEVEL		NURSERY			PRIMARY					COLLÈGE				LYCÉE		
Sites		Lycée International / Jehan Alain (Le Pecq)			Lycée International / Félix Eboué (Le Pecq)					Lycée International / Collège Pierre et Marie Curie (Le Pecq) / Collège les Hauts Grillets (St Germain)				Lycée International		
FRENCH YEAR GROUP		Mat 1	Mat 2	Mat 3	11ème	10ème	9ème	8ème	7ème	6ème	5ème	4ème	3ème	Seconde	Première	Terminale
UK EQUIVALENT (YEAR)				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
ENTRY POINTS	Bi-lingual students (mainstream classes)	c. 12 places		c. 30 additional places		c. 8 additional places				c. 8 additional places						
	Anglophone students (<i>Français spécial</i>)						The school aims to accommodate all candidates who demonstrate the potential to thrive in the bi-lingual curriculum.									
	Francophone students (Fast-track English)									c. 16 places				c. 15 places		

KEY

Main entry point

Enrolment is dependent upon end-of-year leavers who may or may not be replaced

No places available