



## VIENNA BILINGUAL SCHOOLING

Starting in the school year 2012/13, BRG 14 Linzer Straße will offer VBS (Vienna Bilingual Schooling) replacing the DLP (Dual Language Programme).

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), in which pupils learn a subject through the medium of a foreign language, has a major contribution to make to the European Union's language learning goals. It can provide effective opportunities for pupils to use their new language skills now, in addition to learning them now for use later. It opens doors on languages for a broader range of learners, nurturing self-confidence. It provides exposure to the language without requiring extra time in the curriculum.

This policy has been realized by the **Vienna Bilingual Schooling (VBS)** programme.

### **The target groups are**

- German speaking children who have some previous knowledge of English and a particular interest in learning foreign languages and enhancing their English within a bilingual immersion programme, using English as a working language in Humanities and Sciences, especially children having attended a bilingual primary school;
- Children of English speaking parents who speak English as their mother tongue or as a language of communication and who have some previous knowledge of German.

Both groups are taught by German and English speaking teachers. German and English are equally used in the classroom. Foreign language proficiency is increased by constant use in teaching and everyday school life. In the bilingual classes special emphasis is put on intercultural learning as well as education towards tolerance and open-mindedness.

The first step towards enrolment in the bilingual class is a so called **orientation talk**. This serves to find out whether a child fulfils the requirements for the bilingual class. The definite enrolment takes place from Monday through Wednesday in the first week of the second semester.

## Information by the Stadtschulrat für Wien for orientation talks for Lower Secondary VBS schools



The [European Office](#) of the "Stadtschulrat für Wien" is responsible for the coordination and maintenance of the Vienna Bilingual Schooling programme. It also coordinates the orientation talks for Lower Secondary VBS schools, which students have to pass in order to be able to enrol in the VBS programme.

These orientation talks are held for various reasons:

1. The number of parents and students interested in joining the VBS programme is usually much higher than the places available.
2. Students have to possess special skills to be able to participate successfully in the VBS programme. Data based research has shown that they have to have
  - special communicative skills to participate successfully in social interactions (asking questions, asking for further explanation, etc.)
  - non- verbal communicative skills to compensate lack of language knowledge such as gestures, miming, or other creative means
  - flexibility to overcome communication barriers

The procedure of the orientation talks was developed with the help of pedagogues of the University of Graz together with experts from the Stadtschulrat für Wien and is based on research results.

In order to guarantee equal conditions for all participants, special teams have been trained for the standardised procedure. The talks as well as the results the teams arrive at are documented. For a successful orientation talk students have to show competence above average in all three skills.

For a successful enrolment the following criteria are necessary

- a positive orientation talk,
- an adequate Primary School report of the fourth form

Due to limited capacity of various VBS schools, the positive result of an orientation talk, however, does not necessarily guarantee enrolment at the specific bilingual school the parents prefer.

For further information please contact the [European Office](#).

## Orientation Talks - General information



- To enroll in the VBS class, it is necessary to send in a completed application for the orientation talk by January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Application forms in German and English are available online ([http://www.brg14.at/content/infos/VBS\\_Anmeldung\\_GER.pdf](http://www.brg14.at/content/infos/VBS_Anmeldung_GER.pdf) or [http://www.brg14.at/content/infos/VBS\\_Anmeldung\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.brg14.at/content/infos/VBS_Anmeldung_ENG.pdf))
- You will then receive an email or letter informing precisely about the date and place of your interview.
- After the interview, in the first week of February, you will be informed about its result.
- A positive result of the orientation talk entitles the candidate to enroll in a VBS class. However, due to limited capacity, it does not necessarily guarantee enrolment at the specific bilingual school the parents prefer.
- In case of a negative result, our Focus English class or a normal class at our school should be considered.
- The definite enrolment takes place from Monday through Wednesday in the general enrolment week (first week of second semester).

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## lower secondary – general concept



**Mission.** The mission of the Vienna Bilingual Schooling (VBS) programme is to provide a profound education with English and German as working languages and to enhance students' intercultural and communicative competences in order to become successful members in our global knowledge society.

**School ethos.** The Vienna Bilingual Schooling programme unites students of diverse cultural and social backgrounds in one learning community. It aims at creating an atmosphere of open-mindedness and curiosity to learn more from each other and about each other's cultures, thus promoting mutual understanding. The multi-cultural context encourages the students to develop critical thinking, flexibility and conflict solving strategies, which are highly important skills for their personal development as well as for their future careers.

**Pedagogic concept.** BRG 14 Linzer Straße is part of the Vienna Bilingual Schooling programme, which offers a bilingual learning and teaching environment from Kindergarten on to Primary, Secondary 1 and Secondary 2 education, ending with the students taking their school leaving exams in both English and German.

BRG 14 Linzer Straße Lower Secondary is the third stage within this programme. After having attended the Lower Secondary forms, students can move on to the Upper Secondary at BRG 14 Linzer Straße or continue at any other subsequent educational programme.

VBS schools are distributed equally over Vienna to make it possible for every child to follow the VBS system from Kindergarten to school leaving exam without any obstacle.

Students are taught according to the current Austrian curriculum for Lower Secondary forms, distinguishing between "Realgymnasium"- focusing on Mathematics, natural sciences and Geometry- and "Gymnasium"- focusing on languages, offering French as a second foreign language in the 3rd form.

**Team Teaching.** Team teaching is a fundamental principle in the VBS programme. Humanities and sciences as well as English are taught by teams consisting of an Austrian teacher and a qualified English speaking teacher equally, if possible. E.g. in History one lesson per week is taught by the Austrian teacher in German, the other lesson in English by the English speaking teacher, the second teacher mostly being present and assisting.

**Exam papers.** Tests and exam papers are held in accordance with the Austrian curriculum. Questions and tasks are generally given in the input language, the answers, however, may always be given in the language preferred by the student. Language mistakes are of no significance, only the content is assessed.

**Student centred learning.** To enhance student's learning skills the focus is set on student centred learning such as Open Learning, process orientated portfolio work and group work. Formative assessment with the teacher as facilitator, self assessment and peer tutoring are basic principles in the differentiated classroom.

**Extra curricular activities and electives.** Additionally a number of extra curricular activities and electives are offered to meet diverse interests of the students.

**Guidelines for parents for application.** Students who attend VBS classes mainly belong to three groups, those who

- speak German as their first language, but have already achieved a certain level of knowledge in English,
- speak English as their first language or as their lingua franca and have already achieved a certain amount of knowledge in German,
- have attended a bilingual primary school.

Students are invited to participate in an orientation talk in January to show their communicative skills before enrolment. You will find further information [here](#).