



Özel Bilkent Primary, Middle and High School

ADMISSIONS POLICY

FOREWORD

The Özel Bilkent Primary, Middle and High Schools wish to thank the students, parents, academic and administrative staff, who have contributed to the renewal and development of our school policies by participating in the process of formulating and recording our beliefs and procedures in the following policy documents: Admissions Policy; Language Policy; Academic Honesty Policy; Assessment Policy; Inclusion and Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy.

Our schools were founded 25 years ago and, thanks to the support and feedback of our school community, over that time we have witnessed strong growth in the numbers of parents wishing to offer their children an internationally-minded education with us. The latest stage in our development was the authorisation for the Middle Years Programme in 2018, which, by connecting the Diploma and Primary Years Programme, has ensured the consistent application of our curriculum philosophy across the three schools.

We welcome comments and constructive feedback on all our policies in order to contribute to further development and improvement in the delivery of our curriculum.

As a school community we are committed to working together to ensure that these policies are applied effectively, kept up to date, and adhered to within a positive mindset to the benefit of the whole school community.



IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

KNOWLEDGEABLE

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

THINKERS

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

COMMUNICATORS

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

PRINCIPLED

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

OPEN-MINDED

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

CARING

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

RISK-TAKERS

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

BALANCED

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

REFLECTIVE

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

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1. Revised Admissions Policy: 2018 Onwards

This policy covers the revisions required for the three Özel Bilkent Schools in light of authorisation as an International Baccalaureate Continuum World School during the 2017 - 18 academic year.

2. Background

The Özel Bilkent Schools; Primary, Middle and High, are an International Baccalaureate (IB) Continuum World School and provide education based on the principles of an IB education from ages 3.5 to 18.

The Primary School offers the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP), authorised in 2012, which is a transdisciplinary programme from Reception and Kindergarten (ages 3.5 to 6), and includes Grades 1 to 4 (ages 6 to 10); a total of 6 years. The first cohort to complete the PYP exhibition was in 2016.

The Middle School offers the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP), authorised in 2018, which offers a framework of subject-specific and interdisciplinary understanding from grades 5 to 10 (ages 11 to 15), crossing from the Middle School, Grades 5 to 8, to the High School's first two years, Grades 9 and 10; a total of 6 years. The first MYP cohort is due to graduate from Grade 8 at the end of the 2018 – 19 academic year. This means the first cohort to possibly receive an MYP certificate, having completed the E-Assessment requirements, will be in June 2021.

All students who receive an education from the Özel Bilkent Primary and Middle Schools will be provided with an IB education while adhering to the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) requirements.

The final two years of High School, Grades 11 and 12 (ages 16 to 18), give students the opportunity to choose between the IB Diploma Programme (DP), authorised in 2008, or the Turkish MoNE programme. Both tracks allow students to study for the university entrance exam, however those studying the IB DP have the chance to attain both a high school diploma and IB diploma. Please note it is not a requirement to take the university entrance exam in order to graduate from Özel Bilkent High School.

3. Admissions Statement

The schools provide parents with the possibility of having their children follow a high quality IB Continuum education from an early age without the need for the students to change schools over the course of the primary and secondary educational lives. This coherence ensures that students graduate with well-formed global perspectives, with an inquiring mind-set, with the necessary academic and critical skills to be successful in their chosen university programmes, and with an awareness of the needs of their society and with the ability to organise for the fulfilment of those needs.

The schools support the provision of a rigorous educational experience for students and actively seek parents and students who wish to experience an education which will develop their talents, academic skills, and social awareness, and ready them for global citizenship.

The schools pursue an open admissions policy and welcome students from all nationalities, but recognises that the current school catchment population is mainly comprised of Turkish nationals, with a small number of families from bi-lingual backgrounds and other nationalities. This recognition shapes the delivery of the curriculum in meeting the future needs of students. The schools make it clear to prospective families and pupils of how the curriculum is implemented so that families can make the right choices according to their educational preferences.

The schools provide support for those for whom Turkish is an additional language, but seeks to convey clearly to parents the challenges that accompany acceptance of those with reduced competence in Turkish relative to the class level in which they integrate into the school. English is the second language of the schools and students start learning English in a bilingual environment in the Reception and Kindergarten. This means that as students progress through the school, they have the chance to develop their English language skills quickly. The schools are therefore also committed to ensuring that new admissions are able to integrate at the required level into the relevant English phases offered to the year group suited to their age.

4. Admissions Process

Each of the three schools welcomes admissions from all parents who wish to enrol their children. Each school specifies its admissions process clearly in the academic calendar which is available online (see APPENDIX 2). The ages for assignment to levels follows those set out by the Turkish Ministry of Education (İlköğretim Kurumları Yönetmeliği: <http://meb.gov.tr>).

The schools communicate clear admission requirements to prospective families through the website of each school, with clear dates specified for the process of admissions. Each school accepts students through a set of criteria relevant to the school in question, which recognises the need to account for factors mentioned above, as well as the ability of students to integrate successfully into the requirements of the IB programmes.

Currently demand outstrips capacity of the schools to accept all students, therefore a selection process is operated by each of the three schools as follows:

Primary School

Advertising of Availability of Places

- Availability of places in the primary school is advertised online in the web page prior to the date on which applications are accepted. Opening and closing dates for initial application are clearly provided on the website.

Visit to the School

- Information meetings are prepared by the school to which all interested parents are invited. The meetings are level specific and are led by the Principals, Vice-Principals, Counsellors, PYP Coordinator and teachers. These meetings provide background information, allow parents to meet teachers and get familiar with the school's approach to education, and provide parents with a tour of the school, with the appropriate level teachers, and the opportunity to ask questions and receive further detailed information.

Initial Registration

- Parents who are interested in registering their students are asked to fill out an online document giving details of their child, including age, desired entry level, previous education if relevant, family details, and other background information related to the child (special educational needs, etc.). A small fee is requested for the processing of applications.

Processing of Applications for Pre-School (Reception and Kindergarten) and Grade 1

- Once registration closes, those families who have applied are called to the school with their child at times specified by the administration for an entry process. This usually takes place on a weekend after registration is closed.
- The entry process requires applicants to bring their children to the school for a personal interview with the school counsellors. Children are also placed into a group of similarly aged children and observed by classroom teachers.
- The counsellors and classroom teachers then draw up a list of eligible students based on selection criteria, and the families of those admitted are informed of their right to enrol their children in the school. The list also includes families whose children are on standby, should one from the former list withdraw.
- Parents are given a specified time to register after which their right to enrolment is no longer valid.
- Registration requires the payment of the educational fee by the date provided, upon which registration is secured.
- In the case of none payment by the date required, the school progresses to the stand-by list and offers the opportunity to register based on the order designed at the interviews.

Processing of Applications for Grades 2 to 4

- The registration process mirrors that for the pre-school and Grade 1, but the selection process incorporates a test of knowledge, skills and attitudes based on curriculum expectations, as well as an interview with the counsellors, and selection is made accordingly. Those who meet the set criteria are invited to register. Again, a stand-by list is developed depending on availability of places and operated if the registration requirements are not completed as required by those eligible.

Entrance to Grade 5

- For students wishing to progress from the Primary School into the Middle School, teacher perceptions of a student's performance are important. The primary school supports students in Grade 4 who may need help, with a view to strengthening their knowledge and skills in specific areas.
- Entrance to the Middle School is based on performance in an entrance exam given in semester two of Grade 4. See below for further details.

Middle School

The middle school is authorised for the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and all students accepted follow the IB MYP framework.

Entrance Exam for Middle School: Grade 5

- Grade 5 entrance is based on performance in a written exam which is taken in semester two of Grade 4. Information on the registration for the entrance exam, necessary formalities and timescales is available on the school's website.
- As written in the School Regulations, accepted by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE), the entrance exam requires students to exhibit required levels of ability in their first and second languages, Turkish and English respectively, and mathematics.
- The requirements, dates, and examples of the entrance assessment system for the Middle School are provided online at least three months prior to the exam date, in a separate publication: <http://www.obu.bilkent.edu.tr/formlar/4-5.pdf>.

Internal and External Students for Grade 5 Entrance

- Both internal from the Primary School and external students have the same registration and eligibility requirements in order to sit the entrance exam.
- Once the exam has been taken, students are ranked according to their performance in this exam.
- A list of eligible candidates is drawn up and families are invited to register their child(ren) within the required timescales advertised, and according to the availability of places.
- External students who are accepted to the Middle School are assigned to English phases (levels) according to their performance in the entrance exam from the English language assessment section.

Entrance to Middle School: Grades 6 to 8

- Registration to Grades 6, 7 or 8 follows the same advertising, information provision, and initial registration as for the Primary School (see above and visit the school's website).
- Once registered, students are invited to sit a test covering their knowledge in Turkish, English and mathematics.
- Students who are successful in the entrance exam are invited to register to the school, depending on the availability of places, within the timescales as advertised on the school's website.

High School

The High School follows the IB MYP programme (years 4 and 5) in Grades 9 and 10. The school provides a choice of programmes for Grades 11 and 12 – parents and students may opt to either follow the IB DP (which incorporates the MoNE programme) or focus solely on the MoNE curriculum. Entry to the IB DP is based on criteria, outlined below. The registration process, with important deadlines, is posted on the school's website and the necessary application is made online.

Entry into Grades 9 to 12

- Entry to the High School is competitive for all students, those from the Özel Bilkent Middle School and those applying from other schools.
- Acceptance to the high school is based on acceptable performance on an entrance exam, viz. a test of English, Math, and Turkish. The tests are administered on a single day in March and families are notified of the outcome within two weeks.
- Those eligible are invited to register within a required period, along with payment of the necessary fee instalment, as advertised online. Registration is secured once this has been done.
- If places exist, then a second entrance exam will be run in the period prior to the new academic year. Acceptance will mirror the rules for the first exam and registration will depend on satisfactory performance in the entrance exam and payment of fees by the date specified.
- The school may decide to accept students through the national high school entrance exam which may be administered by the Turkish Ministry of Education (MEB), if places are available and the students meet the minimum criteria specified by the High School.

Entry to the IB Diploma Programme

The MYP programme will be fully operational in the High School Grade 10 by the end of the 2020-21 academic year. The IB Foundation programme in Grade 10 will be superseded at the end of 2021 by the fact that all students will have gone through the full MYP programme by then. Thus, in 2021-22 entrance to the IBDP will be decided on performance and results in the MYP programme in Grade 10. The criteria for entrance based on the full MYP will be specified in the 2019-20 academic year.

Entry to the IB DP Foundation Class: Grade 10 (2019 – 21)

Currently, entrance to the IB foundation programme is decided on:

- A level of English deemed enough based on performance in an English test administered by the Foreign Languages Department in the second semester of Grade 9; students may also present results from external exams as outlined below;
- A recommendation from the majority of teachers as to the preparedness for IB study based on the teachers' assessment of a student:
 - Contributing positively to the learning atmosphere in the High School,
 - Completing required work and assessment by given deadlines,
 - Exhibiting the IB Learner Profile;
- No failing grades in Grade 9;
- An acceptable attendance record;
- An acceptable disciplinary record;
- Completion of all summer homework given in mandatory IB subjects;
- Attendance at an IB DP induction process, prior to the summer break, at the end of Grade 9.

Entry to Grade 11 IB Diploma Programme (2019 – 21)

- Pass an internationally recognised English exam accepted by the school board as follows:
 - 550+ points for English B: Language Acquisition, or 600+ points for English A: Language and Literature on the TOEFL ITP English examination at the end of Grade 10 (May/June – dates are announced well in advance);
 - Students who fail to achieve the required scores in the ITP exam may submit a score from an external exam, as follows, by 31st July prior to 11th Grade entry:
 - 75 in the TOEFL iBT exam, with a minimum of 17 in each paper;
 - An average of 6.5 in the IELTS examination, with a minimum of 6.0 on each section;
 - A 'B' Grade in the Cambridge English First Certificate Examination (FCE);
 - Pass in the Cambridge Proficiency in English (CPE).
 - Students who have already achieved a score which meets the above standards in one of the accepted external exams is not required to take the ITP, the external exam is accepted in its stead.
- A recommendation from the majority of teachers as to the preparedness for IB study based on the teachers' assessment of a student:
 - Contributing positively to the learning atmosphere in the High School,
 - Completing required work and assessment by given deadlines,
 - Exhibiting the IB Learner Profile;
- No failing grades in Grade 10;
- An acceptable attendance record;
- An acceptable disciplinary record;
- Recommendation from the school counsellors based on an interview;
- Acceptance from the IB DP Coordinator based on a personal interview;
- A signed contractual agreement by student and parent that they have read and accepted the conditions related to registration to the Diploma Programme;
- Met registration requirements and payment of fees.

Special Educational Needs

During all registration processes to the three schools, families are asked to make known any disability or special educational need which may affect a student's ability to take full advantage of the education provided at the school. Should special educational needs or disability become apparent after admission, the school will consult with parents about reasonable adjustment that may allow the student to continue at the school.

Withdrawal from an Özel Bilkent School

Intention to withdraw from one of the three schools should be given in writing prior to the deadline announced on the school's website. Families who withdraw students after registration and payment of the initial instalment are charged a percentage fee, in line with MoNE rules, on the instalment prior to return of the remainder. Payment by the school for any books purchased by the school on behalf of an IB student will be subtracted wholly from the fee paid prior to the proportional settlement of fees.

Documents Required on Application and Registration

- The documentation required for application and eventual registration is outlined on the Primary, Middle and High School's website found in the school's online application process.
- All information given by parents related to their own situations and those of the child(ren) remains strictly confidential to the school and is not communicated to any other persons without express permission of the families concerned, other than to those who need the information for registration purposes.

Registration Forms

The prospective parents should download and complete the required forms before submitting them to the Admissions Office.

APPENDIX 1: Document outlining the Middle School Entrance Assessment Aims, Regulations, & Example Assessment Formats: <http://www.obl.bilkent.edu.tr/formlar/4-5.pdf>

APPENDIX 2: School website URLs for parents wishing to register to the schools.
High School: <http://www.obl.bilkent.edu.tr/index.php/en/>
Primary and Middle Schools: <http://www.obl.bilkent.edu.tr/>