

**TEACHING CENTRE KOLONAKI AND KIFISSIA  
ENGLISH COURSES FOR CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS**



# **PARENTS' GUIDE**

## **2018-2019**

# WELCOME TO THE BRITISH COUNCIL GREECE

Dear Parents,

We're delighted that you have chosen, or are thinking of choosing, a British Council Young Learner course for your child.

The British Council leads the world in English language teaching. **We have more than 70 years' experience and 91 teaching centres in 57 countries.** Within this network we share best practice in teaching and also have a policy of professional development for all of our teachers.



Athens is a long-standing teaching centre.

We are committed to making your child's learning a successful, enjoyable and positive experience. At the same time we strongly believe that children's learning is even more effective when parents and teachers work together.

This handbook outlines our goals and approaches and gives you the information you need to understand what happens in the classroom. While we hope that its contents will answer most of your questions about us, we are more than happy to answer further queries. Please don't hesitate to contact us. Our contact information is at the back of this brochure.

We look forward to welcoming you and your child to the British Council.

**Best Regards,**

**Merve Kosker**

**Teaching Centre Manager**

**British Council Greece**



- their lessons develop not only their language skills but also their life skills
- their lessons make use of a variety of media (visual, audio, computer) that stimulate and motivate
- their teachers are positive and supportive
- their teachers are experienced and supported by a wide range of aids and training
- you, the parents, understand the way we teach
- you, the parents, are involved in your child's learning process

## WHAT WILL THE BRITISH COUNCIL OFFER MY CHILD?

In short: a professional learning experience. At our Teaching Centre your child will benefit from the latest in English teaching methodology and technology, including multimedia and interactive web resources. They'll receive excellent information on summer schools in the UK. They'll have access to a whole range of challenges and competitions organised by the British Council in Greece. But the most important thing they'll get is their language learning experience and their teacher.



### A teacher who:

- is intuitive to their needs
- understands the progress they need to make
- is experienced enough to take their individual learning style into account
- supplements their learning with topical and interesting materials
- can make learning, even grammar, fun
- varies activities in the classroom to keep them on their toes
- knows everything there is to know about how to pass the exams you want them to take
- gives them lots of practical advice on how to study outside of the classroom
- evaluates their English and helps them measure their progress
- guides them and helps them reach their potential
- has the professional support they need to make your child's learning experience as good as it can be



Like you, we believe the teacher is the key to your child's learning and success. Our teachers are qualified, experienced and understand the developmental needs and interests of children. They are caring and friendly and develop positive relationships with your child and you, the parents. They encourage your child to be actively involved in learning and do their best to make sure your child succeeds.

## HOW WILL YOU TEACH MY CHILD?

Our classes are based on a variety of carefully planned tasks and fun activities that involve vocabulary, grammar, speaking, listening, reading and writing. These activities will challenge your child and keep their interest. We know from our years of experience that individual children have different learning styles and that's why our classes include a variety of activities and materials.



**Tasks** are used to encourage students to use English. To get a taste of our tasks, examples include making a model of your family and friends and then talking about them (for younger learners) and giving an interactive presentation on unsolved mysteries (for older learners). This mimics how we learn and use our first language and greatly improves listening and speaking skills, as well as life skills. **Creative activities and project work** such as making things like models, masks and posters are great fun. The learning points behind such activities are always linked to language learning. Our experience has shown us that the effort and time your child devotes to producing an attractive and long-lasting piece of work reinforces the language with which it is associated.

**Life skills** are incorporated into the course which helps prepare students for life outside the classroom. Our tasks involve problem-solving, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, leadership and digital literacy.

**Group and pair work** involves children working together and gives them opportunities to speak and participate actively. It offers less confident children the chance to participate without the fear of having to perform in front of the whole class. Pair and group work will develop your child's confidence, their fluency in English and provide practice in the essential life skills of co-operation, active listening and turn-taking. The role of the teacher is to monitor, encourage and provide help and advice where needed.

**Games** are fun and immediately engaging. Whether they are quizzes, board games or drama games, the real purpose of such games is to provide a meaningful and enjoyable context for your child to practise their English. Games also develop essential life skills such as teamwork and negotiation.



**Stories**, particularly for younger children, provide a memorable and enjoyable starting point for developing active listening, speaking and other skills. We select stories carefully for their linguistic merit, content and messages. In this way we can make links with other subjects in your child's curriculum and build their understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the world in which they live.

**Songs, rhymes and chants;** children love music and learn from it and the human voice is music in itself. The combination of words with the beat of a song or chant is a powerful way to help your child learn the rhythm and pronunciation of native-speaker English.

**Using the very best materials;** children who learn English with us benefit from our unique course materials which apart from helping your child to learn English, foster other aspects of their development. We will work on their social, personal and emotional skills, and encourage abilities like creativity, leadership and critical thought.

If your child is preparing for one of the internationally-recognised Cambridge assessments, our dedicated teaching team chooses the very best course materials according to a wide variety of criteria including age appropriacy, challenge, interest and social value. We will also design additional materials to match the needs of your children.

If you want to find out more about your child's programme, then come along and have a chat with one of our Academic Management Team – Sarah Smith or Cliff Parry.

## WHAT HAPPENS IN THE FIRST LESSON?

Your child can expect a warm welcome. In the first lesson we take time to get to know one another, help your child make new friends and make them feel comfortable and at ease. Your child's teacher will set up classroom routines and discuss basic classroom behaviour and rules. Some classes produce an agreed Class Code of Behaviour.

This first lesson also provides you with an opportunity to set up a weekly routine with your child. Please ensure that you arrive promptly and pick your child up on time at the end of the lesson.



There are generally 14 children in our young learner classes. Each class has a dedicated class teacher who may be assisted by a colleague from time to time depending on the activity.

Your child is welcome to bring along their favourite pens, markers and pencil case and their teacher will tell them what else they should bring to the lesson on a regular basis.

## WILL MY CHILD HAVE HOMEWORK?



Yes, we believe that homework has many benefits. It:

- improves your child's understanding of work done in class
- helps your child to acquire study skills
- fosters your child's independence and responsibility
- teaches your child to manage time
- teaches your child that learning takes place anywhere, not just in the classroom

We know that your child may have a lot of school homework and we don't want to overload anyone. However, we will set a variety of homework tasks including traditional exercises, reading and more creative activities like following instructions to make a mask. The frequency of homework will depend on the type of class your child is attending; exam preparation classes will have more homework.

We encourage you to help with homework by:

- making sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to study in
- making sure that your child has the materials he/she needs, such as a dictionary
- helping your child manage time by establishing a set time for homework
- being positive and taking an active interest in what your child is doing
- providing guidance and encouragement but not answers
- watching out for signs of frustration and telling your child's teacher if you notice any problems
- rewarding and praising success in homework

If your child is genuinely finding homework too demanding, please let us know and we will work out a solution together.

## HOW WILL YOU ASSESS MY CHILD'S PROGRESS?

Three words sum up our approach: positive, encouraging and constructive. Ongoing classroom assessment is an important part of our evaluation policy. Your child's teacher will gather and integrate information about their learning from a variety of sources including

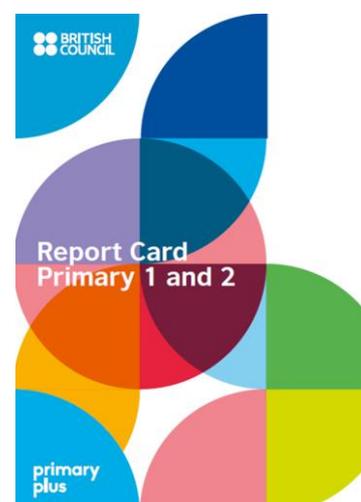
- classwork
- homework
- language quizzes
- formal tests

Your child's teacher will record and evaluate all of these until they have a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses. This process of continuous assessment maximises your child's language development because it will signpost future teaching and learning points.

## HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY CHILD'S LEARNING?

You'll have a positive influence on your child's English language learning if you:

- adopt a positive attitude to the English language
- read your child stories and encourage your child to read stories to you
- make sure your child has an opportunity to visit our on-line portal where he/she can practice language met in the classroom and unlock great video resources
- encourage your child to visit LearnEnglish Kids on the British Council website
- check the appearance and neatness of your child's notebook



- encourage your child to talk about their lessons
- attend parents' meetings and seminars and talk
- talks to us if you are worried about your child's progress



If your child is enrolled in a Primary Plus course, they have access to Primary Plus Online from mid-October 2018. The website supports the work that your child does in class by providing them extra grammar and vocabulary practice, and fun videos!

To access the website, click the link <https://primary-plus-gr.english.britishcouncil.org/Login/Login.aspx>

The user name will be your child's first and last name (no space and lower case). Then click the reset password option to generate a new password.

For support with this, please contact [PrimaryPlus@britishcouncil.gr](mailto:PrimaryPlus@britishcouncil.gr)

## CAN YOU HELP ME SUPPORT MY CHILD'S LEARNING?

Yes, we run workshops that:

- are for parents of young learners aged 6-12
- help parents support their child's learning
- provide practical tips to make children's learning enjoyable and memorable
- examine ways of helping children learn from the world around them

You can also find more top tips at:

[learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/parents](http://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/parents)



## CAN MY CHILD BRING A MOBILE PHONE/DEVICE TO CLASS?

At the British Council children must use their/the British Council's mobile devices responsibly.

Mobile devices such as smartphones or tablets can be very useful tools and can help children learn, but they can also be a distraction. We want children to stay safe online and to make the most of their time in the classroom.

Please read the rules below with your child and ask your teacher if you have any questions or doubts.

1. Mobile devices must be on silent/airplane mode and must be kept in your bag in the classroom.
2. If your teacher asks you to use your phone during an activity, always make sure it is on the table when you don't need to use it.
3. You are not allowed to make or answer voice calls, or send/read any personal messages during lessons.
4. Do not take photos or make video of anyone with your mobile device without the permission of all the people involved.
5. Do not upload photos or video to social media without the permission of everyone who appears in the photo or video.
6. When your teacher gives you permission to use your phone for an activity you must follow their instructions carefully.
7. Please take care of the mobile devices you bring to the teaching centre. The teaching centre takes no responsibility for loss or damage.
8. If you see anyone in the teaching centre breaking any of the rules, or if you are worried or upset about anything you have seen online, please tell a teacher immediately.
9. You must never use your mobile device to bully or hurt others.
10. Respect people's privacy at all times and do not use your mobile phone in the toilets.

## HOW CAN WE COMMUNICATE WITH YOU?

You can make an appointment to meet your child's teacher at any time during the course. Please speak to the Registrar Dimitra Christopoulou or one of our Customer Experience Assistants – Stella Tsiklou (Kolonaki) and Afroditi Nikolopoulou (Kifisia) to arrange a time.

At the mid-point and end of each course, you will have the opportunity to attend a formal meeting with your child's teacher and receive a written report on their progress to-date. We also communicate with parents through our termly newsletter, our annual customer survey and regular focus groups conducted by our Teaching Centre Marketing Officer (Katerina Dala). We always value your suggestions and are delighted when you take the time to talk to us. Your concerns are our concerns and we will do our best to respond to you.

## WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES?

At the British Council, we believe strongly in respect and encourage all our children to respect:

- themselves;
- other children;
- their teacher;
- their school.

If a child misbehaves they will receive an informal warning from their teacher. If the behaviour continues, the child will receive a second, but formal, warning from the Academic Manager who will keep a record and notify you the parents. If serious misbehaviour continues, we reserve the right to expel the child. No child will be expelled until we've consulted parents.



## WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD IS ILL?

We have staff trained in the delivery of first aid. In addition, selected members of our staff have successfully completed the online training course “First Aid for Babies and Children” developed by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

If your child feels ill while at the British Council, they must inform their teacher. The teacher will then inform the Registrar, who will contact you to arrange for your child to be collected. If you're not able to collect your child, they'll remain with the Registrar.



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

[www.futurelearn.com/courses/child-first-aid](http://www.futurelearn.com/courses/child-first-aid)

## IS MY CHILD SAFE AT THE BRITISH COUNCIL?

The British Council takes your child's safety and security very seriously. We are one of only two international organisations that have received **Keeping Children Safe Level 1 Certification**. There is a comprehensive child safeguarding framework in place that meets the standards for protecting children from harm and responding appropriately to concerns should they occur.

The British Council believes that all children have potential and that every child matters – everywhere in the world. The British Council affirms the position that all children have the right to be protected from all forms of abuse as set out in article 19, UNCRC 1989. We also have a set of specific and targeted procedures to protect children under the age of 5 covering guidelines to staff in safeguarding children, intimate care procedures and measures to protect children from abuse perpetrated through the use or manipulation of mobile phones.



At our Kolonaki site, we have a dedicated Child Collection Assistant (Eleni Senta) to ensure that children are only collected by authorized persons at the end of the lesson. Children under the age of 13 are not allowed to leave the premises unaccompanied. Two unique ID cards will be issued to parents after registration. Parents will be required to present these cards to Teaching Centre staff when picking up their children.

For children over the age of 13, a parental permission slip must be signed if they are to travel to and from our premises on their own.

Please do not encourage your child to meet you/wait for you at a place beyond the monitored area of the British Council and its entrance.

We sometimes photograph/video our classes as part of our own teacher development plans. These photographs /videos are for internal use only and are deleted once they have been used. We contact all parents to ask for their consent in all such cases. For further information, visit our web page at: [www.britishcouncil.gr/about/child-protection](http://www.britishcouncil.gr/about/child-protection)

If you would like our teaching materials in a bigger font, please contact the registry office.