

# LANGUAGE POLICY (PRIMARY SCHOOL)

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**Policy area:** 2 – Teaching and Learning    **Date established:** March 2013  
**Date last revised:** August 2018            **Date of next revision:** August 2019

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Head of School every two years, or more frequently if there are changes in policy. This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Head of School on 6/09/2018. It is due for review in August 2019.

## **Signed**

Rose Threlfall  
Head of School  
Date: 06/9/18

## **Overview**

### **Policy statement**

Learning a language, be it the first or second language, is central to expressing who we are as individuals and serves as both the medium and the means of learning in educational contexts.

Language is acquired in socio-cultural contexts allowing us to construct meaning, express our thoughts and develop our own value and belief system.

### **Purpose**

This policy outlines the language provision at ICS Primary School. The school recognises that embracing the learning of languages other than one's home language provides students with the key to understanding their adopted countries and respective cultures.

## Applicability

This policy applies to Primary School teaching staff and students.

## Access

This policy is available on request from the school offices. We also inform parents and guardians about this policy when their children join ICS, through our newsletters and our website.

The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction alongside our ICS Professional Code of Conduct.

## Language Policy

### 1 Language Philosophy

- 1.1 Language learning is fundamental to all learning. Language is *evidence of and a tool for* thinking. Therefore, all teachers are language teachers (IB, 2007)
- 1.2 Effective language learning takes place when language is personalised, contextualised and brought to life through authentic and/or real-world connections.
- 1.3 There is a beneficial link between language proficiency and a child's social, emotional and academic development.
- 1.4 Successful language development takes place in meaningful, relevant contexts so that the learner develops holistically.
- 1.5 Language learning and development helps learners to become more independent thinkers, develops an understanding of different perspectives and heightens their intercultural awareness.
- 1.6 Our aim is that the teaching and learning of language is a part of all school activities in order to develop learner independence and put international mindedness at the heart of learning.

## **2 Language and Identity**

- 2.1 We recognise the important role that home languages play in fostering a spirit of learners' individuality and identity, as well as the language of instruction.
- 2.2 We recognise the benefits and opportunities offered by multilingualism.
- 2.3 Our aim is that students develop their home language as well as the language of instruction.
- 2.4 We recognise the importance of educating children and parents about the importance of maintaining and being literate in their home language (Goldenberg 2008) and give parents information about this in their home language as much as possible.
- 2.5 Parents are encouraged to help translate important concepts into their home language with their children through homework assignments.
- 2.6 Students are able to use their home language to access the curriculum where appropriate. Students are given opportunities in class to use their home language to express themselves in spoken and written language, often as a scaffold to English language learning.
- 2.7 The school is committed to increasing the number of documents translated into the languages of our community.
- 2.8 As an inclusive school, the diversity of our student body is reflected in the number of languages spoken at a range of levels. The result is a diverse range of language-related programmes.

## **3 The study of Language A- English**

- 3.1 Students are integrated into mainstream classes immediately, as we believe that they can best gain academic literacy through learning with their peers.
- 3.2 Students in all year levels are offered intensive language support through our teaching teams. Many Emergent Bilingual students in mainstream classes receive some support from English Language teachers, depending on their level of English.
- 3.3 All classroom teachers plan with the language specialists to deliver lessons differentiated to the different language needs of the students.

## **4 The study of Language B- Mandarin, Spanish or French**

- 4.1 Students are taught Mandarin, Spanish or French during the school day by specialist teachers who are fluent in the language.
- 4.2 Students are required to choose which language they will study on entry to the school.
- 4.3 If a student's home language is Mandarin, Spanish, or French they will be required to study the other language.
- 4.4 The languages are taught through authentic contexts with links to the mainstream curriculum where appropriate.

## **5 Speech and Language Therapy**

- 5.1 The school has a speech and language therapist providing support for students and staff
- 5.2 A fully collaborative and integrated approach is adopted for learners with speech, language and communication needs and those without language, to successfully access the curriculum.

## **6 Literacy**

- 6.1 Literacy is at the heart of all language learning.
- 6.2 Through a balanced literacy workshop approach of reading (aloud, shared, guided and independent) and writing (shared, guided and independent), students explore the many facets of literacy daily.
- 6.3 Literacy learning is integrated through the Programme of Inquiry and all staff collaborate to reinforce cross-curricular literacy goals. Learners are also encouraged to extend their literacy learning at home, both in English and their home language.
- 6.4 All classrooms have their own library with a range of fiction and non-fiction books available to students as well as books in the languages of the class.
- 6.5
- 6.6 All students have access to a school library including fiction, non-fiction, and home language books across many levels.
- 6.7 We use a researched-based synthetic phonics programme called Sounds Write. Students are directly taught using the programme starting in our

Nursery classroom and progressing into the older years as deemed necessary for each child.

## **7 Assessment**

- 7.1 Students' progress in language is assessed both formally and informally throughout the year.
- 7.2 Reading assessments (Rigby) take place three times a year and phonics assessments take place at least twice a year as appropriate to each student's reading level.
- 7.3 Students' language is assessed through formative and summative assessments in their Units of Inquiry, often with the aid of a rubric or checklist. Students are assessed in all areas of language when they start school and throughout the year, where appropriate, according to age and language level.
- 7.4 Student portfolios offer students the opportunity to reflect on their progress and to develop their own goals.
- 7.5 Emergent Bilingual students' progress is tracked three times a year in addition to the other language and literacy assessments.

## **8 Professional Development**

- 8.1 Our professional development opportunities reflect the importance of language teaching and learning in the school.
- 8.2 We encourage colleagues to seek out PD related to language awareness and understanding of language teaching strategies.

## **9 Recruitment**

- 9.1 We actively seek out teaching and support staff with an awareness and understanding of language learning.

## Reference(s)

Cummins, J. (1979), Cognitive/academic language proficiency, linguistic interdependence, the optimum age question and some other matters. *Working Papers on Bilingualism, No. 19*. 121-129.

Goldenberg, C. (2008). Teaching English language learners. What the research does and does not say. *American Educator*. Summer.

International Baccalaureate. (2007) Making the PYP happen in the classroom. Cardiff: Wales.