



# LANGUAGE POLICY

## **ICS Milan LANGUAGE POLICY**

### **MISSION, PURPOSE AND AIMS**

ICS Milan serves a diverse community of students from a range of nationalities, cultures and backgrounds. We offer a broad-based education which uses English as the main language of learning and caters for a range of student abilities. As part of the Globeducate family of schools (<https://www.globeducate.com>), “we prepare each student to be a global citizen who can shape the world”.

### **LANGUAGE POLICY**

The school recognises that language is central in the teaching and learning process. All teachers are teachers of language and therefore are responsible for the development of the social and academic communication of the students. The languages of instruction are English, the main language of instruction, and Italian in order to ensure that all our students have the necessary linguistic tools to successfully access the programs offered by the International Baccalaureate in the school (MYP and possibly the Diploma). In addition, the school will give opportunities to the students to learn other languages throughout the school.

The school recognises that the language needs and the communication skills of the students vary through the three sections of the school.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGES**

The school values the social constructivist approach of teaching and learning. It establishes that students should construct their learning on previously acquired knowledge and through social interaction to promote progress. Learning a language occurs when three interconnected processes occur: learning a language, learning through the language and learning about the language. Taking this into account, four principles guide the implementation of this language policy:

1. Teachers are language teachers. ICS recognises that language is the most relevant connective element through the curriculum, and it plays a crucial role in the cognitive development of the students.
2. Teachers develop responsible social and academic communication: teachers model and teach in an explicit and correct manner, demonstrating the responsible and appropriate use of language in social and academic contexts. Students are empowered to use the language as an action and transformation vehicle.
3. The school develops citizens of the world that are capable of being successful in any field or place that they choose: the school promotes bilingualism and multilingualism as a way of development of linguistic skills and of cultural understanding towards the development of internationally minded individuals. Trans-linguaging, the use of one language in order to learn another, is recognised as a learning strategy.
4. The School supports the development of the home and family language(s). The development of literacy of the home and family language is highly promoted as a vehicle for the construction of sense and understanding and to increase the sense or cultural pride. Sections should establish the way in which this policy and principles are applied in their learning

environment, taking into account the ages of the students and the fact that language is central in all the learning processes.

## **LANGUAGE PROFILE OF CURRENT STUDENTS**

Approximately 95% of our student body speaks English as an additional language. The majority of our families are native Italian speakers. The vast majority have however, been studying in English and Italian for numerous years.

The majority of our administrative and teaching staff speaks English and Italian. The languages of instruction and the primary languages of communication in the school are English and Italian. For formal documents, English and Italian are both used.

The standard bibliography and referencing format is MLA (Modern Language Association).

While English and Italian are the most common languages within the school, the use of other languages in appropriate circumstances is welcomed and celebrated.

## **EAL/IAL AND ASSESSMENT**

While language acquisition follows distinct stages, students' rate of acquisition varies greatly from individual to individual. Therefore, language teachers assess all language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking), regularly differentiating through scaffolding or extension as required. Formative and summative assessments in the classroom provide information on language growth. Language teachers across the schools regularly standardise students' work to ensure a fair application of assessment criteria.

Students who are identified as requiring additional support in English or Italian to access the curriculum will be placed in the appropriate English or Italian language acquisition class and assessed regularly to monitor progress. A student may be graduated from the pull-out or scheduled EAL/IAL classes when the student can participate fully in the regular educational programme. When evaluating a student's graduation, a team consisting of the EAL/IAL teacher, a classroom teacher and a Leadership team member will use information from several sources to make the determination to graduate the student from the programme. Parents will be informed about the decision before the transfer takes place. After the student graduates from the EAL/IAL programme, the new teacher will closely monitor the student's academic progress.

## **LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

It is a requirement that all IBMYP and IBDP students take at least one A language. Currently both English and Italian are offered as A languages and Spanish is offered as a Language Acquisition language. All language teachers in the MYP are part of a Language Committee which regularly meets to discuss the consistency of teaching, learning and assessment across all languages. Currently due to the small student numbers, only one teacher per subject area exists so collaboration is required to ensure that good practice is shared and extended.

## **EAL/IAL PROVISION**

In the IBMYP and IBDP, EAL/IAL students study English/Italian as their language B course. This course follows the IBMYP and IBDP curricula and develops students' language and literacy competence in English/Italian as well as intercultural competence. The English/Italian B language classes are scheduled against the A language classes in the timetable. Depending on students' ability, age and rate of language acquisition, the EAL/IAL department strives to transition students to A language whenever appropriate. Students may transition from English/Italian Language B, to English/Italian A language classes as determined by a review of their assessment work and the teacher's professional judgement.

MYP students also have the possibility of taking Spanish as a Language B at MYP years 10 and 11 and also at DP level. This decision is taken on an individual level and is linked to whether the student is joining the school in the later years and has studied Spanish previously. In these circumstances, individual students may be able to take Spanish rather than Italian Language B.

## **LANGUAGE AND THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE *PARITARIA***

The school is currently accredited as a *paritaria* school offering the Italian curriculum and the MYP alongside each other. If a student opts for the *paritaria* then they must take Italian as their A language in all years of the MYP and DP. Students are also required to take a second acquisition language as well. At the end of Year 9, all students have the possibility to take the *Terza Media* exam, according to the Italian Ministry of Education's (MIUR) guidelines. The school is accredited to hold the examination on site.

## **LANGUAGE POLICY AND ITS LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES**

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY**

Our language policy links to the Academic Honesty policy as we encourage students to trans-language when needed in order to fully understand the concept of referencing, summarising, in-text referencing, etc. We enforce the Academic Honesty Policy for all languages that we teach at the school to reinforce academic integrity and to acknowledge the difference in cultural understanding of what constitutes academic honesty.

### **ADMISSION POLICY**

All potential students, Year 4 and up, are required to complete CAT 4 assessments and to have an interview with a senior member of staff. After completion of the interview, a recommendations sheet is shared with the parents and the admissions team. If accepted to the school, the school leadership along with English and Italian teachers, determine whether the student is placed in an ELL or ILL class or placed into ELA or ILA. This placement may take place after the student has started with the school and the information will be formally shared as soon as possible with the parents.

The decision of accepting a student or not is always taken in regards as to whether the student has the language ability to reach their potential in all academic classes. This changes according to individual circumstances and the year of potential entry to school.

### **INCLUSION POLICY**

As stated in the Inclusion Policy, the school believes that all community members have equal opportunities and rights, and this is reflected in our approach, respect and commitment to valuing all languages and the greater culture that they convey.

#### **ASSESSMENT POLICY**

The Language Policy and Assessment Policy focus on differentiation as an approach allowing teachers to adapt and use a range of strategies which are applicable to individual students in individual classes to maximise teaching and learning. This includes trans-languaging and integrating a variety of cultures and languages into everyday learning.

#### **POLICY REVIEW PROCESS**

The policy is a working document and as such, reflects the dynamic and changing environment of our currently growing school. The policy will be reviewed by the school community and leadership in May of each year to ensure it links to all other policies and the school's overall mission statement. The review process aims to ensure that language provision is given to all students, particularly supporting those students who have English or Italian as a second language.

First Drafted Dec 2020

Reviewed by panel March 2021

#### **NOTES:**

ELA – English Language Acquisition

ILA – Italian Language Acquisition

ELL – English Language and Literature

ILL – Italian Language and Literature

DP – Diploma course

MYP – Middle Years Programme