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Responsible SLT: Rory  
McKeague, School Director

# Language Policy

<b>Guiding Statements</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Show kindness, empathy &amp; respect for each other</li><li>• Actively work together being healthy – physically, socially &amp; emotionally</li><li>• Make a positive impact in local, regional &amp; international relationships</li><li>• Reach their full potential through active participation in the learning community</li><li>• Communicate effectively, recognising English as their school community language</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use technology responsibly to support learning &amp; to understand global issues</li><li>• Recognise &amp; respect others' beliefs, culture and values</li><li>• Take pride in Egyptian culture, in personal identity and in the Arabic &amp; English languages</li><li>• Understand how our personal behaviour affects our values, attitudes and beliefs</li></ul>

## **1. Context and Philosophy**

At Cairo English School, we recognize the rich linguistic and cultural diversity of our student body. Many students are constructing knowledge in a language other than their home/personal language(s). This ability to communicate in multiple languages facilitates an individual's movement beyond their first language and mother-tongue culture, increasing their awareness of the world and ultimately enabling them to participate more fully as international citizens.

**Sociocultural Circumstances:** Situated in Egypt, a predominantly Arabic-speaking nation, CES embraces its unique sociocultural context. We acknowledge and respect the Arabic language as the language of the wider community, and we strive to integrate local culture and language into our educational experience, fostering an environment where all linguistic backgrounds are valued.

At CES, it is profoundly recognized that the study of language is the foundation for all learning. Language study—encompassing English, Arabic, Modern Foreign Languages (French and Spanish), and Mother-tongue Languages—promotes effective communication, reinforces cultural identity, enhances personal growth, and develops international understanding. We firmly believe that all teachers are, in practice, language teachers, with inherent responsibilities in facilitating communication and language development across all subjects and interactions. The most conducive environment for language learning is a positive and encouraging one, where students have the opportunity to engage in authentic and meaningful experiences. Great value is placed upon differentiated and varied instruction that integrates the core skills of listening, speaking, viewing, reading, and writing.

## **2. Aims of the Language Programme**

Our primary aim is to create a successful, structured, and inclusive bilingual programme that supports multilingualism and multiliteracies. The programme aims to develop cognitive, language, and literacy skills in both Arabic and English, as the core languages of instruction. In addition, French and Spanish are offered as modern foreign languages.

Specifically, this policy aims to:

- Ensure that all students learn at least one language in addition to their home/personal language(s).
- Describe how the development and maintenance of the home/personal language(s) for all learners is to be supported.
- Ensure that there are practices in place to provide inclusion and equity of access to the IB programme(s) offered by the school for all learners, including those who are learning in a language other than their home/personal language(s).
- Support multilingualism, which is required to support multiliteracies across all areas of learning.
- Describe how the language(s) of the wider community are respected and promoted within the school environment.

### **3. Overview of Languages at CES**

#### **3.1 English**

English is the primary language of instruction at CES. Admission assessments and placement decisions are made to ensure that students can access the curriculum delivered in English. All students are expected to speak English during English-based lessons unless otherwise instructed by the teacher. Students may sometimes refer to their home/personal language when making connections in class as part of the language acquisition process. However, students are encouraged to speak English on the school campus, especially when communicating with non-Arabic speaking staff, to foster an immersive English-speaking environment.

#### **3.2 Arabic**

Arabic as a First Language is offered throughout the school, starting in the Foundation Stage (FS). Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL) classes are offered to students with no previous or little previous Arabic language background. Egyptian Ministry of Education requirements, citizenship, and student screening are factors used to determine if a student takes Arabic as a First Language or AFL classes. The Arabic programme at CES from Year 1 to Year 10 conforms to the Ministry of Education requirements, but in the FS, it is a school-based curriculum which transitions into the Ministry of Education programme. From 2012-2013, Year 9 students have been offered the opportunity to study an Edexcel IGCSE in Arabic as a First Language to complement their Ministry of Education studies.

In Years 11 and 12, students may take Arabic in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) at Ab initio, Language B, and Language A levels. The level at which a student studies the language is determined by IB's criteria of previous experience in the language. The IB Arabic A programme demands the use of Classical and Modern Standard Arabic in oral and written communication, including extensive literary analysis.

- Arabic as a First Language: Egyptian Arabic is the native language of the majority of students and is widely used on the playground. The Egyptian National Curriculum (Language, Religion, and Egyptian Social Studies) is taught, assessed, and examined in classical Arabic under the requirements laid by the Ministry of Education.
- Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL): This programme caters to two groups of students who are Arabic second language speakers:
  - Arabic speakers exempt from Arabic as a First Language study by the Ministry of Education (e.g., from different Arabic-speaking nations or Egyptian background with different nationality).
  - Students with little or no previous knowledge of the Arabic language, with the aim of enabling them to manage everyday situations in Egypt.
- Arabic as a Support Language (ASL): The weakest students are withdrawn from mainstream Arabic classes for intensive, small group (maximum five) support. This only occurs in Arabic as a First Language classes. Each student exits the ASL programme based upon a variety of assessments and criteria. This holistic approach culminates in an exit decision being made that

includes the ASL teacher, Arabic as First Language classroom teacher, and Head of Department.

### **3.3 Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)**

CES is committed to ensuring students learn at least one language in addition to their home/personal language(s) and English.

- French: Taught as a compulsory subject to all Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6) students in the primary school within their class group. French is also taught as a compulsory subject in the secondary school at Key Stage 3 (Years 7 and 8), except for a small number of students who are withdrawn for further English Language Support. Each tutor group is divided into two groups to take into account different speeds of language development and the needs of new students with little or no prior French knowledge. French is offered as an option subject in secondary school Key Stage 4 (Years 9 and 10), leading to a Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) IGCSE qualification. Students with strong French skills may be entered for an IGCSE before Year 10.
- IBDP Languages: French, Spanish, and other languages (by arrangement) are taught as Language B Standard (French) and Ab initio (French and Spanish) in the 2-year IBDP.

### **3.4 Mother-Tongue Languages and Support for Home/Personal Languages**

Typically, the mother-tongue language is the first language a child speaks and understands, and the one spoken at home. This language also forms his or her socio-cultural identity. Supporting the development and maintenance of the home/personal language(s) is crucial as it enhances the development of second and other languages, strengthening cognitive and literacy skills. For example, there is a high correlation between learning to read and write in the mother tongue and subsequent achievement in the second language.

To support this development, students whose native language is not English may use already-gained language skills and mother-tongue resources to help facilitate their learning within the classroom. Outside of the school context, CES encourages parents and families to play a vital role in the continued development of their children's mother tongue in order to maximize language acquisition and achievement.

- First language support can be provided by specialist teachers in Spanish for mother-tongue speakers wishing to take an IGCSE qualification in this language. In the same programme, guidance can be provided in other languages offered by the CIE group (see [www.cie.org.uk/qualifications/academic/middlesec/igcse/subjects](http://www.cie.org.uk/qualifications/academic/middlesec/igcse/subjects) for subjects on offer).
- Language A1 support can be provided by specialist teachers in English, Arabic, French, and Spanish in the IBDP. In some programmes, Language

A1 guidance can be provided by arrangement for students whose mother-tongue languages are those other than English, Arabic, French, and Spanish.

#### **4. Inclusion and Equity of Access to IB Programmes**

CES is committed to providing inclusion and equity of access to the IB programmes offered by the school for all learners, including those who are learning in a language other than their home/personal language(s). This is achieved through:

- Differentiated Instruction: All teachers, recognizing their role as language teachers, employ differentiated and varied instructional strategies that integrate core language skills across all subjects, ensuring that content is accessible to learners at various stages of English language proficiency.
- Language Support Programmes: Provision of dedicated language support classes (e.g., Arabic as a Foreign Language, Arabic as a Support Language, and specific English Language Support where students are withdrawn from MFL classes).
- Mother-Tongue Facilitation: Encouraging the use of mother-tongue skills and resources within the classroom to aid understanding and concept acquisition.
- Curriculum Adaptation: Where necessary, adapting curriculum delivery to support language acquisition, ensuring that language demands do not hinder conceptual understanding.
- Assessment Accommodations: Providing appropriate assessment accommodations for students with language learning needs, in line with IB guidelines, to ensure their true abilities are measured.

#### **5. Support for Multilingualism and Multiliteracies**

CES actively supports multilingualism, recognizing it as a critical asset for students' cognitive development and for fostering multiliteracies (the ability to understand and create meaning across various modes of communication). This support is integrated through:

- Explicit Language Teaching: Direct instruction in English, Arabic, and Modern Foreign Languages.
- Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL): Teachers across all disciplines incorporate strategies that simultaneously develop subject-specific content knowledge and language skills.
- Promoting Diverse Resources: Encouraging the use of resources in multiple languages and formats to foster diverse literacies.

- Celebrating Linguistic Diversity: Creating a school environment that celebrates and values the linguistic backgrounds of all students and staff, promoting a sense of belonging and global-mindedness.

## **6. Respect and Promotion of Wider Community Languages**

The language(s) of the wider community, particularly Egyptian Arabic, are respected and promoted throughout CES. This is achieved through:

- Integration of Arabic Language and Culture: Arabic language is a core subject for the majority of students, aligning with the Egyptian National Curriculum. Egyptian Social Studies is taught in Arabic.
- Cultural Events: School events and activities often celebrate Egyptian culture and language, providing authentic contexts for language use.
- Bilingual Communication: Where appropriate, school communications and signage may incorporate both English and Arabic to ensure inclusivity and reinforce the presence of the host country's language.
- Cultural Opportunities Through Language: Mathematics, Art, Music, and Drama are recognized as other valuable languages to which all students are exposed in the curriculum at CES, and are encouraged to use to understand the world and connect with diverse forms of expression.

## **7. Role of Parents in Language Profile and Development**

Parents are viewed as essential contributors to the language learning process. CES actively seeks to involve parents in planning their children's language profile and development through:

- Open Communication: Regular parent-teacher conferences and discussions specifically about language development.
- Workshops and Information Sessions: Providing workshops for parents on how to support language acquisition and maintenance at home, including strategies for mother-tongue development.
- Providing Resources: Recommending and, where possible, providing access to multilingual materials and resources for home use.
- Collaborative Planning: Engaging parents in discussions about their child's language learning goals and preferences, particularly for IBDP subject choices.
- Encouragement of Home Language: Actively encouraging parents to maintain mother-tongue literacy skills in the home and to have a positive attitude towards both English and their home language.
- Support for School Expectations: Encouraging parents to support the expectation that students use English as the language of learning and social interaction at school, while also respecting the home language.

## **8. Role of Students**

Students are responsible for:

- Developing fluency in English for all forms of communication.
- Demonstrating respect for others by using English in social situations as well as in class.
- Having a positive attitude and respect towards English, their mother tongue, and any MFL used at CES.