Policy Name	Language Policy (Primary)				
Effective Date	January 2022	**Date of last revision**	September 2026	**Version No.**	1.3
Author	Coordinators				

Version History				
Version	**Approved by**	**Revision Date**	**Details of Changes**	**Author**
1.1		**21/10/24**	**Throughout** **Update to ICS London**	**SJ**
			Page 5 **Updated Phonics Program - LW** **Updated phonics support in place across the school** **Update to frequency of reading and phonics assessment**	**SJ**
1.2		**16/09/25**	**Remove requirements for native French, Spanish or Mandarin speakers needing to study a second additional language.**	**SJ**
		21/10/25	**Page 4 - Study of Language A** **Page 4-5 - Study of Language B** **Page 6 - Assessment**	**SJ**
1.3		**21/8/26**	**Page 5 - Remove reference to Speech + Language therapy**	**SJ**

International Baccalaureate's Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organisation works with schools, governments and international organisations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

ICS London's Mission and Vision Statements

Our innovative approach to education inspires each and every student to discover their strengths within a community of future leaders.

We aim to be a community of compassionate and inspired world citizens.

Policy Statement

Learning a language, be it the first or additional 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.

This policy outlines the language provision at ICS London 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.

Scope

The following policies should be read in conjunction with this document:

- ICS London Early Years Policy
- ICS London Curriculum Policy
- ICS London Teaching Policy
- ICS London Assessment Policy

This policy applies to:

- Staff
- Volunteers
- Children

Language Philosophy

Language learning is fundamental to all learning. Language is evidence of, and a tool for thinking. Therefore, all teachers are language teachers (IB, 2018).

Effective language learning takes place when language is personalised, contextualised and brought to life through authentic and/or real-world connections.

There is a beneficial link between language proficiency and a child's social, emotional and academic development.

Successful language development takes place in meaningful, relevant contexts so that the learner develops holistically.

Language learning and development helps learners to become more independent thinkers, develops an understanding of different perspectives and heightens their intercultural awareness.

Our aim is that the teaching and learning of language is a part of all school activities in order to develop learner independence and place international mindedness at the heart of learning.

Language and Identity

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.

We recognise the benefits and opportunities offered by multilingualism.

Our aim is that students develop their home language as well as the language of instruction.

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 belief in their home language as much as possible.

Where possible, parents are encouraged to help discuss important concepts in their home language through homework assignments with their children.

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.

The school is committed to increasing the number of documents translated into the languages of our community.

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.

The Study of Language A - English

English is the language of instruction and learning at ICS London. As an international school, we value and celebrate linguistic diversity and recognise that language is central to identity, thinking, and learning.

All students are integrated into mainstream classes upon enrolment, as we believe that English language acquisition is best supported through participation in authentic learning experiences with peers. English as an Additional Language (EAL) support is provided according to individual needs through close collaboration between classroom teachers and/or the PYP Coordinator, and language specialists. Together, they plan and deliver differentiated instruction to ensure equitable access to the curriculum and the ongoing development of academic English.

Where a student's level of English is not yet sufficient to access the language of instruction meaningfully, the study of an additional language may be temporarily deferred. This enables the student to focus on developing a functional command of English, supporting their inclusion and full participation in all areas of school life.

The Study of Language B - French, Mandarin or Spanish

Students learn Mandarin, Spanish or French as an additional language during the school day from specialist teachers who are fluent in the language.

Students are required to choose which language they will study on entry to the school. If students are native speakers or already fluent in one of the offered

languages, they are encouraged to choose a different language to ensure continued linguistic development and challenge. This approach allows them to broaden their language skills, cultural understanding, and overall communication abilities rather than revisiting a language they already master.

On a case by case basis, we may offer native level instruction based on student needs and resources.

The languages are taught through authentic contexts with links to the mainstream curriculum where appropriate.

Literacy

Literacy is at the heart of all language learning. Through a balanced literacy approach of reading (aloud, shared, guided and independent) and writing (shared, guided and independent), students explore the many facets of literacy on a daily basis.

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.

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.

All students have access to the school library including fiction, non-fiction, and non-English language books across many levels.

The researched-based synthetic phonics programme Little Wandle Letters and Sounds is used. Students are directly taught using the programme starting in our Nursery Reception class through to Year 2, and for any children in our older years in need of phonics support, provision is put in place for this.

Assessment

Reading and phonics assessments take place three times a year as appropriate to each student's reading level.

Students' language is assessed through formative and summative assessments, 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.

Students are given the opportunity to reflect on their progress and to develop their own goals.

For students of English as an Additional Language, progress is tracked three times a year in addition to the other language and literacy assessments.

When assessing non-English language skills, such as application of concepts, student assessments may be in their native language or respond in their native language to show accurate depth of understanding.

Professional Development

Our professional development opportunities reflect the importance of language teaching and learning in the school.

We encourage colleagues to seek out professional development related to language awareness and understanding of language teaching strategies.

Recruitment

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

References

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.

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