

St. Andrew's School Language Policy: 2026-2027

Statement of Purpose:

This document aims to clarify and outline the St. Andrew's Middle Years Programme (MYP) and the Diploma Programme (DP) Language Policy. Our school is committed to supporting multilingualism to promote intercultural understanding and international-mindedness, and to support students from diverse backgrounds. This policy applies to both programmes and is to be communicated to and understood by all continuing new teachers, students, parents, and administrators.

Our Philosophy:

At St. Andrew's, our longstanding Chapin Tradition of service, action, and inclusion governs and guides our daily interactions with the community. Being inclusive and understanding of different cultural backgrounds, experiences, and ways of learning is integral to our mission of providing our students with a robust and well-rounded experience. To this end, language is essential for learning, communication, and expression. Through language instruction, we emphasize the development of cultural competency, curiosity, and an appreciation of diversity by providing students with the necessary tools to interpret, evaluate, and understand the world around them. Language is taught through various modalities, including listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, presenting, and cultural experiences.

At St. Andrew's, language acquisition is essential to developing international-mindedness. To that end, we believe that every faculty member at St. Andrew's is a teacher and facilitator of language. Through language discovery, students become expert communicators in our global world. In each year of the MYP and DP programmes, language education is implemented with the understanding that each student brings their unique cultural experiences and backgrounds to our community.

To ensure each student's success, we *strive* to support the mother tongue of our students from diverse backgrounds, enabling them to respect and learn about various cultures. After an initial assessment, we offer those with emerging English proficiency the opportunity to continue learning our language through the English Language Learning program on campus. Additionally, we strive to tailor instruction to meet the unique needs of individual students.

School Language Profile:

For the 2026-2027 school year, St. Andrew's has an approximate population of 240 students. Nearly 40 students have a Mother Tongue other than English. Languages spoken by students at school also include Mandarin, Spanish, Russian, French, Polish, Vietnamese, Portuguese, German, Thai, and Hungarian.

Mother Tongue Support:

Within our student population, there are bilingual students, including those whose home language is a language other than English. These students are primarily members of our residential community for the school year (September-June). Our student population in grades 9-12 comprises students from numerous countries worldwide. Our faculty includes speakers of several languages, who are often called upon to assist as translators as needed for parent conferences. Additionally, we utilize a bilingual consultant to help with translations during campus events, including Opening Week, Parents' Weekend, and graduation.

Our goal is to foster advanced English literacy while recognizing the cognitive benefits of multilingualism. We support the strategic use of students' home languages to deepen academic understanding and promote a sense of belonging during non-instructional time.

School Language Identification:

To promote holistic learning within the context of the International Baccalaureate, St. Andrew's recognizes the importance of integrating language teaching and learning throughout the curriculum. Because English is the primary language of instruction, our Language and Literature courses are taught in English.

If a student is placed in an ELL course, the School acknowledges the student's primary language as something other than English. These students will also take content courses concurrently in English, but various supports will be built into the classroom setting. ELL includes intensive instruction in English through the use of second language acquisition methodologies designed to develop proficiency in the English language's comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing. These are support classes only. ELL courses are commensurate with the student's level of English proficiency.

Instruction in academic content areas is structured to ensure that students master the required essential knowledge and skills, as well as higher-order thinking skills. Using language learning strategies does not impede awarding credits/units toward meeting promotion requirements.

Language Instruction:

St. Andrew's MYP and DP programmes offer a proficiency-based approach to language learning taught in phases to acknowledge and foster the complexity and range of language profiles that students bring to their MYP and DP classrooms. Students come to MYP and DP language studies from diverse backgrounds. For example, MYP students may have exited from any MYP language phases, while others may have completed a different language acquisition program. Conversely, students may have no prior knowledge or experience of the language to be studied in the MYP or DP. (IB MYP Language Acquisition Guide, September 2014).

Upon entering the Middle Years Programme at St. Andrew's in years 1 and 2, students will study English and Spanish. In year 3, students have an additional option to study French. Students who enter the programme in years 4 or 5 will study either Spanish or French and continue their studies through the completion of grade 10.

Course	Phase(s)	Proficiency Level
Year 1: Spanish	1	Emergent
Year 2: Spanish	1	Emergent
Year 3: Spanish	2	Emergent
Year 3: French	1	Emergent
Year 4: Spanish I	1	Emergent
Year 4: French I	1	Emergent
Year 5: Spanish II	2	Emergent
Year 5 Spanish III	3	Capable
Year 5: French II	2	Emergent
Year 5: French III	3	Capable

The IB MYP Language Acquisition Guide explains that planning, teaching, and language acquisition skills are mapped on continuums to show clear expectations for each phase. Students develop the ability to communicate effectively in an increasing range of social, cultural, and academic contexts, for a growing variety of audiences and purposes.

As students develop their understanding, increasing expectations are set. There are many paths to further language study. MYP language acquisition courses are developed assuming students will continue to the St. Andrew's Diploma Programme classes or further formal language study. Our program is structured to provide students with a smooth transition from their MYP language acquisition courses into the expectations for grades 11 and 12 in our Diploma Programme.

Instructional Strategies and Practices:

The primary language of instruction is English. Faculty support the development and acquisition of oral and written language through the following strategies, among others:

- Language taught through the curriculum
- Differentiated instruction

- Multi-sensory methodologies
- Eliciting prior knowledge
- Making connections to other disciplines and experiences
- Modeling
- Collaborative learning
- Holistic skill development (reading, speaking, writing, and listening)
- Modifying the curriculum for learners when necessary.
- In Language and Literature courses at every level, students read literary texts written by authors from around the world that feature a diverse range of experiences.

Assessment:

Student language assessment is guided and governed by our assessment policy.

Parental Involvement:

Parents are included in the language development of their children through the following practices and resources, among others:

- Parent Conferences
- Exhibitions of student work
- Parents' Weekend
- Weekly parent newsletter
- Bilingual consultant

Professional Development:

- International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme and Diploma Programme Category Trainings
- Professional training designed to help teachers support students who are second language learners
- Regular department meetings and discussions
- Community, Equity, and Belonging:
 - There is monthly programming for the entire community, organized by a faculty member

Communication:

The policy is communicated via the following channels:

- Faculty and Staff Newsletter
- School website
- School communication with home
- Student and Parent Handbook

- Faculty Handbook
- Events that take place during the year

Review:

The Language Policy is reviewed annually at the end of each school year by the subject group leadership team, which includes various stakeholders in the MYP and DP programmes. The faculty will then review the policy at the beginning of the new school year and before being shared with the larger community. Amendments to the policy will be considered, particularly in response to changes in IB policy, shifts in the school community, or evolving community needs.

References and Guides Used to Develop this Policy:

- International Baccalaureate Organization (April, 2008). Guidelines for Developing a School Language Policy.
- International Baccalaureate Organization (May 2017). MYP: From Principles into Practice.
- International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme Subject Brief -- Language acquisition
- https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/digital-toolkit/brochures/myp-brief_language-acquisition_2015.pdf
- [Vernon School \(Portland, Oregon\)](#)
- [Jefferson and Longfellow Schools \(San Antonio Independent School District, Texas\)](#)