

PYP LANGUAGE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

“Languages are not just technical tools for transmitting information...languages actively shape the thinking and relationships of the people who use them. In engaging with languages and cultures we have to deal with ways of understanding people, how people engage with one another, and how they conceptualise themselves and others.” (Howard Nicholas, 2003) DECS LANGUAGES POLICY 2005-2010

Education in a global community brings with it an increasing need to focus on developing intercultural skills and understandings. This requires students to develop the knowledge, understandings and intercultural capabilities to participate actively and responsibly in increasingly diverse local, regional and global communities. More than one language supports the development of international-mindedness, intercultural understanding, peace education and understanding of students’ own cultural identity. All students are offered a range of language learning opportunities that develop their capacity to:

- communicate and interact within and across cultures,
- understand their own and others’ languages to extend their range of literacy skills,
- become respectful and familiar with the experiences and perspectives of other cultures.

AIMS

The Languages curriculum of Belair Primary School encourages students to:

- maintain and support mother-tongue languages and acquire English and second languages to foster intercultural understanding,
- promote the teaching of additional languages,
- incorporate the teaching and learning of language into the Transdisciplinary nature of learning via the Programme of Inquiry,
- use language as a tool for personal growth, social interaction and developing relationships within and across cultures,
- use language as a vehicle for thought, creativity, reflection, learning and self-expression to foster curiosity, a lifelong interest and enjoyment in language learning,
- develop language skills to enable practical communication for future study, work and leisure in a variety of contexts within the global community,
- explore and develop language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing and media literacy) through inquiry-based interdisciplinary work,
- understand the nature and many facets of language and the process of total language learning, which comprises the integration of linguistic, cultural and social components,
- respond appropriately to a range of texts within a variety of local and global contexts,
- promote consistency of practice in the teaching and learning of English and a second language,
- reflect on the learning process.

LANGUAGES

English is the language of instruction at Belair Primary School and all students from Reception to Year 7 also participate in learning a language other than English. Instruction in Japanese language is provided by two specialist language teachers who enable continuity of language learning to be extended to neighbouring secondary schools.

The IBO acknowledges that learning additional languages greatly contributes to the holistic development of students by encouraging a respect for and understanding of other languages and cultures, and providing a skills base to facilitate further language learning. Proficiency in additional language/s gives students a broader range of input, experiences and perspectives. It is believed it raises achievement in other subject areas, as well as increasing the enjoyment and confidence of being able to communicate in more than one language.

The language currently offered at Belair Primary School is Japanese from Reception to Year 7. The language is taught as a specialist subject and connections are made with the PYP units of inquiry. The content is determined by the Australian Curriculum Framework.

The second language curriculum may involve students in:

- connecting with people locally, regionally and globally, including visitors from exchange programs, native speaking language assistants and study tours,
- visiting local places of cultural and linguistic significance in the community,
- using ICT to enable communication and research in the language,
- using regularly updated materials such as magazines, newspapers, music, film, textbooks, dictionaries and CDROMs.
- working alongside and being supported by exchange teachers from Japan

It is essential that regular assessment to monitor and report on student achievement is a planned and integral part of the program. Language development is assessed and reported upon in a manner defined by the school's PYP Assessment and Reporting Policy. This requires:

- Using a range of assessment strategies that focus on both process and product,
- Providing assessment tasks that are multifaceted and have explicit criteria based on the IBMYP assessment criteria and SACSA language learning outcomes,
- Pre-assessing prior knowledge, skills and understandings before students are placed in classes,
- Providing students with regular informal and formal feedback about their learning,
- Formative and summative assessment to determine their progress and achievement,
- Assisting students to evaluate and discuss their own progress through reflection,
- Monitoring long term progress of language development.

Reporting to families occurs formally during the year to students and families, through two written student reports, a three-way conference, a student-led conference and via PYP student portfolios. Parents/ carers are also able to request a parent/carers , interview with staff members at any negotiated time.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)

ESL students are supported in learning English from the English as a Second Language programme at Belair Primary School. The purpose of the program is to enable students to develop as individuals and to participate fully in the academic program and the social life of the school.

MOTHER-TONGUE SUPPORT

Mother-tongue describes the language most frequently spoken at home, but we acknowledge there may be more than one language a child uses at home. Whilst only a small proportion of the student body at Belair Primary School has a language other than English, we acknowledge these students and families and recognise they provide a vital opportunity to enhance our global perspective. Belair Primary School supports learners who speak a mother-tongue language at home by providing curriculum support and activities for these students to acknowledge, develop and celebrate their cultural diversity.

Belair Primary School aims to support students' first language through:

- providing information and links with Ethnic Schools available in the student's own language and information about the South Australian School of Languages¹,
- providing acknowledgement of the student's proficiency in their first language through displays, and inclusion of Ethnic Schools reports as a part of our own reporting process,
- providing access to books and other materials in their first language,
- inviting parents to talk about their cultural heritage and involve them as resources within class curriculum,
- translating reports and providing interpreter services as required,
- encouraging children to read, write and speak in their first language in classrooms and at home.

Belair Primary School identifies the first language of our students to determine if a First Language/Mother tongue programme can be provided locally. French language classes are also offered after hours at Belair Primary School.

RESPONSIBILITIES

We accept that every teacher is a Language teacher with a responsibility to ensure that language is seen as an important part of learning. Classroom teachers and support staff are responsible for including a language and cultural perspective to studies across the curriculum. They work with the specialist language teacher to provide links with the general curriculum and to support the Languages curriculum.

The Specialist Language Teacher is responsible for providing a program relevant to the age, experience and ability of the students in line with the SACSA Language B Standards and the IB Middle Years Program Scope and Sequence for the Mitcham Hills College.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that adequate staffing and resources are provided to enable a successful languages program. Leadership are responsible for monitoring the success of the program and promoting and building its worth to parents and the broader community.

ACTIVITY AND RESOURCE SUPPORT

A variety of school based activities and events are being conducted to promote language at Belair Primary School. These include:

- Japanese exchange programme is offered to students in Years 6 & 7 (MYP) All R- 7 classes socialise and have a lesson with the Japanese exchange students when they visit Belair.
- Language Assembly,
- Focus Events / Days (Eg: International Year of Languages),
- International pen-pal cultural exchanges with students in Japan and Indonesia (2013/2014),
- Some signage around the schools is in English, Japanese and Kaurna,
- New texts are sourced so students can access reading materials in a variety of languages in the Resource Centre,
- Teachers undertake local, national and international workshops in language learning and International Mindedness,
- The Resource Centre is a central resource facility in the school and we aim to also provide texts for students in languages other than English,

¹ The School of Languages is an external language school that offers after hours classes in more than 50 languages in South Australia. It aims to develop and promote mother-tongue proficiency.

- Invitations to authentic global booksellers to review new publications at staff meetings,
- The school has a dedicated Japanese room and storage facility for cultural costumes, artefacts and teaching resources,
- Some staff members are learning and are proficient in learning languages other than English,
- Improve curriculum outcomes for any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students,
- Increase awareness and understanding of Indigenous perspectives through the POI, school communication, links and events.

POLICY PROCEDURE

The IB Steering Committee, chaired by the Curriculum Coordinator at Belair Primary School has overseen the review of this Language Policy in collaboration with:

- Belair Primary School Leadership Team,
- Belair Primary School Governing Council,
- Belair Primary School Education Committee,
- All staff at Belair Primary School.

REFERENCES

National Goals for Schooling 1999.

National Statement and Plan for Languages Education 2005-2008.

Teaching Languages in the Primary School, J.Browett. Australian Curriculum Corporation.

SACSA Standards and the Companion Documents.

International Baccalaureate Standards and Practices.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other Belair Primary School curriculum support documentation including:

- The Belair Primary School Mission Statement and curriculum documents available on the schools website,
- Belair Primary School Enrolment Policy,
- Towards a Continuum of International Education,
- Programme Standards and Practices,
- Learning in a Language Other Than Mother Tongue in IB Programmes,
- Making the PYP Happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education,
- Languages Engagement Strategy Department of Education and Child Development. 2007 – 2010.

APPENDIX:

The IB Steering Committee comprises the leadership team, teachers, librarian, School Support Officer, specialist language teacher, curriculum coordinator. The leadership team wrote the initial language policy and following the appointment of the Curriculum Coordinator the school language policy was reviewed and developed in consultation with the SC, Governing Council, Parents and Friends Association and administrators. The policy was reviewed again and distributed to staff, governing council and parents on the Education Committee for their input in Terms 2 and 3, 2013.

A comprehensive language profile of the school is maintained on a school database system. It identifies:

- the diversity of language learners in the IB programme, including the languages of teaching and learning, the languages of communication used in the school and outside the classroom, and the range and types of mother-tongue in the community,
- The language needs of the school community,
- Current teaching and learning practices,
- Beliefs about language teaching and learning,
- Policies that relate to language teaching and learning including: admissions and assessment.

This data-gathering process is used when the school needs to:

- identify how the library resources can be linked to teaching programmes.
- consider alternative models for supporting and maintaining mother-tongue languages,
- addressing the needs of those learning languages,
- reviewing processes needed to identify the language needs of the students,
- monitor effectiveness of differentiation strategies for learners with specific language learning needs,
- develop language and language scope and sequence continuums.

Staff is given a school profile list of the range and the types of languages spoken by students and their families in the Belair Primary School community at the beginning of each school year.

APPROVED: MARCH 2009

REVIEWED & REVISED: JUNE 2010 and August 2013

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