



EVERY STUDENT IS A SUCCESS STORY

Language Policy

IBO 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 organization works with schools, governments, and international organizations 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.

AIS Mission Statement

Al Ruwad International School prepares its students to be **responsible global citizens** with international mindedness and the strength of character to make **positive contributions** in our ever-changing world.

We are a **safe, caring, and diverse community of learners** that works to inspire a passion for **knowledge and lifelong learning** instills **respect** for self and others, develops the whole child, and strives for academic, artistic, and athletic excellence.

AIS Core Values



Care



Respect



Excellence



Identity and Citizenship



Responsibility



Lifelong Learning

Language Philosophy:

At AIS, we create a challenging and motivating bilingual environment where the language of instruction is English. We believe that every teacher is a language teacher as language transcends curriculum areas. The continuous language development of students is the responsibility of all teachers, parents, and students. At AIS, we recognize that language is the foundation of all learning; students learn the language, learn through language, and learn about language.

AIS is adopting a literature-based approach when it comes to teaching and learning the language; students learn language through inquiry in meaningful contexts, allowing them to make connections, explore and investigate.

As an international school based in Oman, we are powerfully committed to providing students with access to Arabic and English languages, both native and acquisition, and utilizing the host country and community for language and cultural experiences throughout the curriculum.

Language Profile:

The school has a diverse student and teaching body. Most of the students have languages other than English as their mother tongue, mostly Arabic.

- Homeroom teachers use English in all their interactions with the students; homeroom teachers are responsible for teaching the core subjects (English, Math, Social Studies and Science).
- Arabic, Islamic Studies and Omani Social Studies subjects are taught in Arabic as mandated by the Omani Ministry of Education. Therefore, in these instances, the teachers interact with the students using the Modern Classical Arabic language.
- Art, Music and PE teachers use both English and Arabic languages in their interaction with the students.

Other Languages: The school collects information about the language profile of each student including mother tongue language, the language(s) spoken at home, the languages studied at school and any other that have previously been studied or learned. This information is kept in the student information database which is maintained by office administration.

The language of Instruction:

English is the language of instruction and the language used by the homeroom teachers when teaching at least the core subjects (English, Math, Science, and Social Studies). Outside of the classroom, students will be and are encouraged to communicate in the language that is comfortable to them. This will help us to create an environment, which will foster the development of Mother Tongue.

All students in AIS experience a rigorous English-medium language program through the IB requirements and expectations in the three programmes (PYP, MYP, DP). With high expectations for student success in English and Modern Classical Arabic, all students become fully bi-literate in Arabic and English Language Arts, the school system also delivers the Ministry of Education Language Standards to every student.

Host Country Language – Arabic:

The school is committed to enabling students to achieve proficiency in Modern Classical Arabic. Arabic, Islamic Studies and Omani Social Studies are taught in Arabic, using the curriculum and books provided by the Omani Ministry of Education. Arabic and Islamic Studies are taught starting KG1 and Omani Social Studies starting grade 4. The MOE subjects are integrated with the IB programmes as follows

PYP / MYP: All students in the Primary and Middle Years Programme are enrolled in either Arabic or Arabic as a Second Language. Arabic as a Second Language is provided for students whose mother tongue is not Arabic and provides the same amount of time and best practice strategies. Islamic Studies and Omani Studies are also delivered through Arabic speaking staff, teachers attempt to integrate the MOE curriculum with the programme of inquiry.

DP: Arabic is imbedded in Studies in Language and Literature or Language acquisition depending on the students' choice.

English as a Second Language:

AIS acknowledges that most students need some English support; therefore, teachers should adjust their methods and organize tasks and resources in mainstream classes accordingly. All teachers are seen as language teachers and are expected to provide differentiated instruction. The school offers only a limited amount of in-class ELA support.

Connecting Language Learning to Other Policies:**Admission Policy:**

AIS accepts students of all levels of English proficiency up to grade 1; after that, students should exhibit grade level knowledge of the language, orally and in writing.

All applicants will inform the school about the student's language background (Languages are spoken at home and taught before).

Assessment Policy:

At AIS, we believe that assessment is integral to all teaching and learning. Teachers will assess reading, writing and oral language on an ongoing basis (using different strategies and tools) and differentiating when required. Assessment will provide information on language growth and areas of development.

Inclusion Policy:

A Student must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language spoken at home is different from the language of the school.

A Special Needs teacher undertakes responsibilities such as identifying the needs of a student, planning a programme that suits the child, communicating the student's requirements with the regular classroom teacher and having a follow-up programme for students with their individual needs.

Language Practices in the PYP:

Language for Learning:

At AIS we believe that language plays a vital role in the construction of meaning and that learning engagements should encourage students to explore language in a meaningful context by involving:

- **Learning Language** by reading extensively; listening to and using language in context and in daily life situations
- **Learning about Language** by reflecting on the reading strategies and literary knowledge; discover how language works, analyze the use of language in focused instruction
- **Learning Through Language** by using literature to inquire about the world and their own lives

(The search for "balance" in a literature-rich curriculum, Kathy Short 1999)



Figure 1. Literacy circles (Adapted from Short, 1997, p. 32).

Language Based Environment:

At AIS we aim to create a language rich environment and create meaningful, deliberate and engaging experiences that involve the students as active participants.

- 1- Daily read aloud sessions
- 2- Active use of word walls
- 3- Diverse classroom libraries
- 4- Language is everywhere around school
- 5- Engaging students in daily language
- 6- Involving parents
- 7- School-wide literacy events

*** Oral Language Across the Curriculum**

Students will be provided with different opportunities to promote their listening and speaking skills by:

- Exposure to read alouds, nursery rhymes and conversations during play times in the Early Years.
- Participate in small group discussions
- Prompt the use of correct grammar and new vocabulary.
- Share their learning through presentations, songs, and skits.
- **Phonological Awareness:** Phonological awareness is a broad skill that includes identifying and manipulating units of oral language – parts such as words, syllables, and onsets and rimes. Children who have phonological awareness are able to identify and make oral rhymes, can clap out the number of syllables in a word, and can recognize words with the same initial sounds like 'money' and 'mother'. At AIS, we place a great importance on the development of phonological awareness in the Early Years, we use the “Letters and Sounds” programme for teaching phonological awareness skills.

*** Reading Across the Curriculum**

Students will be provided with different opportunities to promote their reading and comprehension skills by:

- **Guided Reading:** Guided reading is an instructional approach that involves a teacher working with a small group of students who demonstrate similar reading behaviors and can read similar levels of texts. The text is easy enough for students to read with the teacher’s skillful support; it offers challenges and opportunities for problem solving, but is easy enough for students to read with some fluency.

Guided reading gives students the chance to apply the strategies they already know to new text. The teacher provides support, but the ultimate goal is independent reading.

- **Shared Reading:** Shared reading is an interactive reading experience that occurs when students join in or share the reading of a book or other text while guided and supported by a teacher. The teacher explicitly models the skills of proficient readers, including reading with fluency and expression.

Shared Reading situations provide the students with an opportunity to engage in class discussion about text, teaching of comprehension skills and reading strategies and build fluency with repeated readings.

- **Reading at Home:** Students check out books of their choice from the library on a weekly basis. They also have RAZ account and the teachers assign new books on a weekly basis as well.

* **Writing Across the Curriculum**

Students will be provided with different opportunities to promote their writing skills by:

- Involved in engaging and meaningful writing experiences.
- Work within success criteria provided by checklists and rubrics
- **Integration with the Transdisciplinary Unit of Inquiry:** Where possible, writing is integrated with the unit of inquiry. Obviously, how the text type is worked into the unit will dictate when the writing happens and how much time is spent upon it, however, one suggested guideline within a 6 week unit is as follows:
 - 2 weeks deconstructing the text, exploring how experts write, identifying the key features and developing success criteria.
 - 2 weeks exploring writing, shared.
 - 2 weeks extended writing resulting in at least one published piece.
- **Word Study:** Word study is an approach to spelling instruction that moves away from a focus on memorization. The approach reflects what researchers have discovered about the alphabetic, pattern, and meaning layers of English orthography. At AIS, we are mainly using “Words their Way” to promote inquiry in spelling and focus on finding patterns in words.
- **Mentor Sentences:** Mentor sentences are examples of good writing. Some break conventional rules. Those are opportunities for teachers to guide students in a discussion of how grammar can change over time. Sometimes, rules are contested and language changes. Mentor sentences provide an avenue for that discussion.

The best mentor sentences are those that clearly illustrate a grammar rule or figurative language element. This way, students can make observations, identify the components, analyze their impact, and write their own version. It helps when the example sentences are high-interest.

In addition to allowing for conversation about the changes to grammatical conventions, mentor sentences also provide a bridge between grammar, reading, and writing. Grammar is not effective in isolation.

Supporting Additional Language Learners

AIS acknowledges that some students need English support; therefore, teachers should adjust their methods and organize tasks and resources in mainstream classes accordingly. All teachers are seen as language teachers and are expected to provide differentiated instruction. In that regard, the school will ensure that the objectives of the English as an Additional Language and Arabic as an Additional Language support are delivered through timely interventions, accommodations, modifications, and/or differentiation.

- Reinforce basic skills for effective listening, speaking, reading and writing in English
- Provide necessary accommodations, particularly in terms of differentiated assessment, to allow an ESL student to succeed at his/her level
- Provide necessary modifications of the skills, content and/or assessment to make them more accessible to ESL students

Increased emphasis on ...	Decreased emphasis on ...
promoting integrated language development	teaching language as isolated strands
language as a transdisciplinary element throughout the curriculum	language as a separate discipline
additional-language teachers viewed (and viewing themselves) as PYP teachers	additional language teachers are seen as solely subject teachers
a literature-based approach to learning language	using skill-drill texts and workbooks to learn language
a teaching approach that sees making mistakes in language as inevitable and necessary for learning	a teaching approach that focuses on encouraging students not to make mistakes in language
reading for meaning	decoding only for accuracy
reading selected according to interest level	reading selected according to decoding level
student-selected reading materials	teacher-directed reading materials
making world classics available for reading	having only school classics available for reading
making culturally diverse reading material available	having only monocultural reading materials available
focusing on meaning when reading and writing	focusing primarily on accuracy when reading and writing
encouraging appropriate cooperative discussion in the classroom	enforcing silent, individual work in the classroom
students engaged in spontaneous writing	students carrying out teacher-imposed writing
a variety of scaffolded learning experiences— with the teacher providing strategies for the student to build on his or her learning	activities where teachers directly model language for students
writing as a process	writing only as a product
developing a range of independent spelling strategies	a dependence on the teacher as the only source of correct spelling
nurturing appreciation of the richness of language	language study as grammar and syntax
literature as a means of understanding and exploring	literature study as vocabulary, grammar and syntax

teaching students to read and research using multimedia resources	providing print-only resources for reading and research
using language for creative problem solving and information processing	using language for rote learning
a range of appropriate assessment methods such as portfolios, conferencing, miscue analysis, writing sample analysis, response journals.	standardized reading and writing assessments

Making the PYP Happen 2007-2009, International Baccalaureate Organization pages 68 & 71

Language Practices in the MYP:

The school counsels' students about their choices for language acquisition or language and literature courses before the start of the MYP and DP by

- giving students a placement test to determine in which phase they will continue with language acquisition from a previous educational programme
- organizing an Introduction to the MYP orientation as part of the enrolment process that includes information about language acquisition course
- students who are performing at higher English levels will be offered a chance to take the language and literature course.

Language Practices in the DP:

All students are required to take a second foreign language in Diploma at our school. Everyone studies Arabic and English as subjects in group 1 and 2 (school year 2020-2021). The idea is to promote an understanding of other cultures through the study of languages and to develop communicative competence. (p. 7, A basis for practice, IBO 2009).

The Omani Ministry of Education requires that omani students should undergo the Arabic language in group 1.

DP LANGUAGE COURSE

The following is inspired by the document Language learning in IB programmes, IBO 2011: IBDP students are required to choose two Group 1 or two or one Group 1 and one Group 2 course. A further language—from either group 1 or 2—could be studied instead of a group 6 subject.

Group 1 contains the course which is designed for students who have previous experience of using the language of the course in academic contexts. At AIS we will offer the following:

- English A Language and Literature (Pamoja for 2020-2021) HL and SL
- Arabic A Language and Literature HL and SL

- well- resourced special- request and school- supported self- taught options in Studies in language and literature to maintain the mother-tongue development

Group 2 offers two modern language courses:

- Language English B HL and SL.

Language Arabic B HL / SL.

- Language ab initio or SL (Pamoja depending on students' choice)—for students with little or no experience of the target language.

The courses share an emphasis on the importance of understanding language acquisition as a process that also involves the recognition and understanding of another culture. To know more than one culture will mature the process of global and international mindedness.

Principal and Coordinator should ensure that students can manage the challenge to achieve a Bilingual Diploma by taking, for example, two Language A courses, if they would choose that path; to arrange support and involve the school's counselors to make an individual plan for individual students if it is discovered that the student's English is not proficient enough to manage the expectations of the Diploma Programme.

Every subject teacher is a language teacher and expected to guide their students both orally and textually. We always express ourselves precisely and encourage precise use of language, because we are aware of the impact of language on conceptual understanding. Teachers actively engage to continue developing their language skills to improve their teaching and are always prepared to participate in language courses.

Students should be aware of the critical aspects of languages; communication, cultural identity, and learning process, and therefore always strive to express themselves precisely in all communication, in all DP subjects studied, both written and orally.

The following are taken from Language and learning in IB programmes, IBO 2011: Group 1 is also the site where the IB recognizes the right of all students to study their mother tongue/best language at the same level as other DP subjects. Apart from the 50 automatically available languages, students can also make a special request for an examination in their best language. Upon receipt of such a request, the IB undertakes to appoint an examiner and set a paper for assessment. This applies even if only one student requires the service, and it is offered at the same cost to schools as any other DP subjects. In order to further support best language entitlement, the IB also offers a school-supported self-taught course. This ensures that, even if the school is unable to provide a teacher for a Language A subject, a carefully planned self-taught course can be followed, with the student's work being accurately assessed to the same standard as students who have followed the course with a teacher.

ONGOING REVISION

The language policy will be under constant development. As languages and intercultural skills are about communication between people, the consequences of that evolution, whether intended or otherwise, have an impact not only in the education sector but across the whole of society.

The revision will take place after evaluation of how the Language Policy has functioned throughout the 5-year period after authorization and changes and requirements in the school's community. The Head of school will be responsible for ensuring that the revision happens and the DP coordinator will plan and work out the revision according to suggestions and contributions handed in from the school's staff, students and their parents. Parents are encouraged to and asked to give their opinion and suggestions regarding the school's language policy (Towards a continuum of international education, IBO 2008).

References:

- Language and Learning in the IB Programme, IBO.
- Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes, IBO.
- Guidelines for following developing School Language Policy, IBO.
- Programme Standards & Practices, IBO 2014.
- Learning stories - School Supporting Multilingualism, IBO 2014.
- Making the PYP Happen 2007-2009, IBO

- The search for "balance" in a literature-rich curriculum, Kathy Short 1999
- Scholastic website,<http://emea.scholastic.com/en>
- School B Language Policy, PYP Programme Resource Centre,
http://xmltwo.ibo.org/publications/PYP/p_0_langu_mon_1301_1/School%20B_language%20policy%20document_e.pdf

Note:

This Policy will be reviewed each 2 school years by the Pedagogical Leadership Team.