



## St Leonards Language Policy

### **1.1 Philosophy**

Language is not only fundamental to learning; it is also a key factor in personal and social growth. It is a lifelong process that strengthens our cultural identity, maintains emotional stability and promotes cultural and international understanding. Language is not just about communication but about reciprocal skills too such as listening & reading.

### **1.2 Aim**

Our aim is to allow children to become good communicators in English, plus an additional language/s, by providing instruction and support in these languages while, at the same time, valuing and supporting their mother tongue and mother culture. Literacy skills must be promoted and enforced across the subject areas and not just within perhaps the more obvious subjects such as English Language & other Modern Languages.

### **1.3 Beliefs**

- All pupils will have access to a balanced language curriculum, which promotes communication, intercultural understanding and reinforces core literacy skills.
- All teachers are language teachers, who promote the development of communication to enhance thinking, understanding and construct meaning.
- All lessons will be differentiated in order to maximise the participation of every pupil, regardless of their current grasp of the language of instruction. This could/will encourage pupil-led learning opportunities.
- Mother tongue development is important for all pupils and will be supported and valued.
- A Balanced Literacy Curriculum is offered to allow pupils to 'Learn language', 'Learn about language' and 'Learn Through language' – in this way language learning is optimised. This is an integrated programme throughout all subject groups using the approaches to learning framework.

### **1.4 Language of Instruction**

The language of instruction is English for all pupils.

### **1.5 Language Acquisition**

All pupils are given the opportunity to study at least one language throughout their time at the school. Languages are introduced at different stages to allow for a strong foundation in language learning. The choice for languages is in liaison with those offered by the key feeder primary and prep schools in the area.

## **French**

French is taught from Year 1 to Year 7 (PYP 1 – MYP 1) as a compulsory subject. In the early years, this is through songs and games leading to a more structured programme in upper primary. It then becomes part of the subject choices for GCSE and the Diploma programmes. Pupils who are native or near native level in the primary level are offered non-PYP and non-MYP courses to either support the acquisition of English or to maintain mother tongue. These take place outside of regular lesson time as numbers are very small.

Pupils have the opportunity to participate in the DELF qualifications at an appropriate level throughout the school.

## **Latin**

Latin is taught from Year 6 (PYP 6) to Year 9 (MYP 3) as a compulsory subject. It then becomes part of the subject choices for GCSE and the Diploma programme.

## **Spanish and German**

Spanish and German are introduced to pupils in Year 7 (MYP 1) in a language carousel. Pupils complete a six-month taster course in each language. The exception to this would be pupils who are native speakers of one of the languages. These pupils are provided with an alternative course appropriate to their language level. This could be an EAL course to support the acquisition of English or it could be a non-MYP course to maintain mother tongue.

## **English**

This course is offered to pupils from Year 8 (MYP 2), for those who do not have English as a first language. It is offered at the appropriate Phase level instead of one of the other language acquisition classes.

## **Language Continuum**

At the end of Year 7 (MYP 1), pupils choose whether to continue with one or two languages into the remainder of the MYP programme. Latin is continued for all pupils, although setting takes place in MYP 2 & 3. This is to accommodate pupils who are new to the school with no prior learning and also those who are making strong progress. The setting is fluid and is reviewed on a half-termly basis.

The language choices are guided by teachers in consultation with parents and pupils. Factors such as, but not limited to, specific learning needs, mother tongue and class size are taken into account.

From Year 10, all pupils continue with at least one language acquisition course (French, German, Spanish, Latin or English) into GCSE and the Diploma programme. Pupils are able to continue with two languages at this time. Other languages are offered according to demand at this stage including Japanese and Italian *ab initio*. Additionally, other languages may be requested on an individual basis but they will incur an extra fee.

A variety of extra-curricular activities offer the opportunity for further language development. These include conversation lessons led by senior pupils, DELF club and Mandarin club.

## **1.6 Mother Tongue Languages**

### **1.6.1. Identification of Mother Tongue**

On admission to the school, families will be asked to complete a language profile for the pupil. This will include mother tongue of parents and child, and languages spoken frequently by the child and language acquisition classes already taken. This information will be used to put the most appropriate support in place for the pupil.

On completion of the application process, pupils sit a language assessment which is also used to inform pupil placement.

The support for the pupil is reviewed as an ongoing process between subject teachers and the heads of section. More formal reviews take place on transition from one school section to the other.

### **1.6.2 Supporting Mother Tongue.**

Mother tongue language resources are provided in the school libraries and through extra-curricular activities. There are magazine subscriptions, print and online to support mother tongue maintenance. The Senior School Librarian has an ongoing programme to stock new fiction books in the main mother tongue languages of the student body.

In the Junior School, a developing school library/Media Resources Centre provides a print and media-rich environment to support all areas of learning including the Learner Profile. It particularly promotes a passion for reading, research and inquiry. Links with the University of St Andrews, Community 'Experts' and local bookshops have been established, as has a programme of visiting authors. Two book fairs are held each year with non-fiction and fiction titles to suit pupils of varying reading ages and interests and we support World Book Week. French, German and Chinese sections are established in the library and we are looking to increase the provision of publications/global network links in other languages. Some mother-tongue resources for the Junior School library have been donated by parents.

Mother-tongue dictionaries are provided in different subject areas and glossaries of technical terminology to be produced by pupils as a learning activity.

Other languages are celebrated at events throughout the year such as Chinese New Year, the St Nicholas service and International Day.

In Trinity Guildhall Drama lessons pupils are able to prepare works in their own language to present at examination.

In curricular music lessons pupils learn a variety of songs in different languages which allow mother tongue speakers to reflect upon their own culture, whilst sharing it with others.

Senior mother-tongue pupils work with Junior School pupils to teach them their own language through games and conversations during after-school activities.

Where appropriate, classes can be offered in mother tongue languages, especially in the Diploma programme.

## **1.7 Equality of Access**

Pupils who have been identified by the Support for Learning Department are offered the chance to continue with a language without the pressure of a formal examination. This enables them to benefit from the skills and ATLs to support their learning across the curriculum.

The school will make every effort to have translators available for parents who attend the end of term parents' evenings, or the opportunity for a mother tongue speaker on the staff to attend.

## **2.1 PYP Specific**

Language is not an isolated area, and through our focus on Inquiry, pupils have planned opportunities to immerse themselves in all three strands of language: Oral (listening and Speaking), Visual (Viewing and Presenting) and Written (Reading and Writing). The PYP Developmental Continuum is used as a diagnostic tool to assist teachers with planning and assessment, and guide next steps in learning. The Junior School teachers are working on developing their Language Scope and Sequence to reflect PYP elements and our Programme of Inquiry. The Units of Inquiry give scope for students to share their experiences of different cultures, countries and language with their peers. Parents are regularly invited in to share their experiences of different cultures to students.

## **3.1 MYP Specific**

Students with limited English on arrival into the MYP are given extra EAL lessons where appropriate and provided with dictionaries/translators for class use. Subject teachers identify resources which will support the development of English. Assessments will be tailored to allow students the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding in different ways; for example orally.

Further examples form specific subject groups:

**Individuals & Societies:** subject-specific terminology or vocabulary is introduced and added to at the beginning of every new unit and retrospectively added to the bank.

**Language and Literature:** texts from other cultures are a requirement here – much discussion of cultural differences.

**Language Acquisition:** the use of the different phases to support the development of English and the extension of the mother tongue where appropriate.

**PHE:** the introduction of a range of international sports to the PE curriculum to allow students to connect with their own and other cultures. In the traditional team sports, pupils are provided with a glossary to help understand the rules and the playing positions.

The Arts and Design: units have been created which specifically look at art movements in different cultures and allow pupils to analyse differences and similarities with their own backgrounds.

#### **4.1 Pre-DP Specific**

Pupils who join the school for the one-year programme prior to the start of the Diploma have the opportunity to tailor their curriculum to allow for rapid English language development. This is a combination of EAL, English B and Language and Literature classes. The other subjects followed will be delivered in the school's language of instruction; English. These pupils will follow a smaller number of GCSE courses to allow for language development.

#### **5.1 DP Specific**

DP Language subject choices for each pupil are reviewed with advice given about the best language route available to them using evidence from earlier learning stages (or other schools), teacher feedback and, where required, assessment by the Support for Learning Department.

Subject guides are available in a variety of languages and teachers need to be willing and able to provide electronic & hard copies for their pupils.

#### **6.1 Support for teachers**

Acknowledging that all teachers are language teachers, support is given via peer group mentoring to help subject specialists to support all the pupils. This is done by working collaboratively on defining key terminology, developing glossaries and discussing individual cases. Teachers are encouraged to make use of IB communities and other IB schools to develop their own practice.

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