

Language Policy and Philosophy

Our Language Philosophy – *Who We Are*

At ISZN we recognize and celebrate the richness of our language diversity.

We aim to create partnerships with our learning community that value and support a culture of language learning.

Through the development of language, learners are given the tools to understand different cultures and perspectives enabling them to interpret the world around them.

Language at ISZN – *How We Organize Ourselves*

We offer the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP) for students aged 3-11 years; Nursery through to Grade 5. The main language of instruction is English. German is taught as Language B from Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 5 and additionally, French is offered to students from Grades 5 onwards as Language C. The school is an IB World School, accredited to offer the IB programme. Within this context, we offer a comprehensive and challenging language programme, which is integrated across the full curriculum. It is designed to expand student's linguistic skills and awareness and provide them with the tools they will need to make connections with our ever-changing world.

In every class, students and teachers have a wide range of language capabilities. The classroom environment aims to provide inquiry-based authentic language, which is supported by a variety of materials and approaches to learning. Students are encouraged to ask questions, explore and solve problems.

The school is open for application from all students, irrespective of previous linguistic experiences. Additional support is available to help students develop the level of English proficiency needed to access the programme. Our aim is to empower each student to strive for excellence with regard to written and oral English, through transdisciplinary and skill specific focused activities. We adopt an integrated approach to reading, writing, listening, speaking and visual communication.

It is recognized that all teachers are language teachers. We therefore look to be aware of the current educational practices that we can implement. We also actively investigate the learning that is taking place to inform and guide our curriculum development and teaching.

Multilingualism – *How We Express Ourselves*

At ISZN, we respect and celebrate the rich language diversity that we have within our community. Opportunities to acknowledge and use our different languages enable us to broaden our local and global perspectives and build cultural connections. Presentations, exhibitions, research, posters, stories, books, audio-visual experiences, songs and community events are just some of the ways in which we engage with the languages that surround us.

We appreciate and constantly witness the benefits of translanguaging; a learner's ability to actively use more than one language in the process of communicating and comprehending, as it empowers our students to use all of their language skills in order to further enhance and deepen their learning and understanding.

Communication – *Sharing The Planet*

We recognize the importance of encouraging student's mother tongue/home language learning, in order to strengthen all language learning and to give the students the best tools to express themselves socially and emotionally. A strong foundation in the first language facilitates connections between previous and new learning, enabling students to build on the conceptual understandings they have already gained.

Our learning community is encouraged to support and help to develop student's interests and progress. The home school partnership is strengthened through regular communications and meaningful interactions to enhance the student's language abilities and understanding. We regularly look to add literature from our student's languages to our Library collection and seek opportunities to develop relationships with our local community to further enrich our language experiences.

Assessment – *Where We Are In Time And Place*

In alignment with the IB's Language Scope and Sequence, we assess and report on student's abilities to demonstrate their language skills within the framework of

- Oral Communication: Listening and Speaking
- Visual Communication: Viewing and Presenting
- Written Communication: Reading and Writing

We promote the use of a range of assessment tools and strategies that are designed to give a clear picture of a student's prior knowledge and progress; anecdotal records, portfolios, checklists, continuums, reflections and rubrics.

Language and the Learner Profile – *How The World Works*

(based on an extract Tuscaloosa Magnet School's Language Policy, OCC, March 2013)

Viewing language overall in the context of our programme, the following reflects ways in which we demonstrate and reinforce our beliefs and values in our daily actions to instill the attributes of the IB Learner Profile. (On display throughout the school)

We aim to:

Inquirer – use language to gain new information or knowledge in order to make sense of the world

Thinker – express thoughts and ideas clearly, succinctly

Communicator – competently use oral and written language in a variety of situations; listen attentively to details; speak confidently; read and write with fluency and comprehend what is conveyed

Risk-Taker – willingly attempt to read, write and speak in all situations

Knowledgeable – have the vocabulary and understanding to discuss and use languages

Caring – show caring in use of language and have an awareness of the affect language has on others

Principled – be aware that language is powerful and has a profound affect; use responsibly

Balanced – express ourselves orally, visually, and in written form, and balance listening and speaking when communicating with others

Reflective – reflect on language usage and development and consciously work towards proficiency

Open-minded – respect the differences and similarities in languages, dialects and personal communication skills