



# Chester International School

## *Language Policy*

<b>Policy name:</b>	Language Policy
<b>Version:</b>	Final
<b>Author/s:</b>	Alexandre Lawrenson
<b>Date:</b>	17/10/2019
<b>Date approved by Governing body:</b>	01/11/2019
<b>Review period:</b>	Annually

<b>Name</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
Katrina Brown <i>Principal</i>		01/11/2019
Neil Jones <i>Chair of Governors</i>		01/11/2019

## **Introduction**

This language policy is a working document developed by staff and administration from each section of Chester International School (GCSE, IBMYP, IBCP and IBDP). The policy is consistent with the stipulated principles and practices of the IB (<https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/ib-language-policy-en.pdf>). This document outlines our school's linguistic and academic goals and defines the programme designed to help our students attain these goals.

This policy is intended to provide an overview and guiding principles for language learning at Chester International School which permeates the entire school curriculum through authentic contexts in a culturally rich and diverse environment.

The language policy validates the equal status of all languages. The mother tongue programme in each section of the school reinforces literacy and cultural identity and reflects the multilingual society we live in. The modern foreign languages programme develops understanding and respect for other cultures. The language policy supports the shared responsibility of all teachers, students and parents for all students' language development.

## **Philosophy**

At Chester International School, we believe that language is the medium of inquiry. We believe that language is a vehicle for transdisciplinary learning, and as such, provide a learning environment that promotes, generates and supports effective communication and language development. As communication in the world changes, we are committed to adapting language instruction to reflect the evolution of language in a modern world.

At Chester International School, we recognize that all teachers are also language teachers who have the responsibility to facilitate language acquisition and promote communication skills through their grade level and content area classes. We aim to nurture an appreciation of the richness and diversity of language. Language does much more than promote cognitive growth; it is crucial for maintaining cultural identity and emotional stability. The acquisition of more than one language and maintenance of the mother tongue enrich personal growth and help facilitate international understanding. As language, by its very nature, is integrated into all areas of the curriculum every teacher within the school is considered a language teacher. We aim to foster in students the ability to think and express themselves with precision, clarity, confidence and imagination in at least two languages. Language development in more than one language is essential to the development of international mindedness. We endeavor to integrate students' cultural and linguistic heritage throughout the curriculum.

English is the language of instruction at Chester International School. Language development is concerned with acquiring and applying a set of skills and attitudes as well as an understanding of the use of language. Each of these strands involves different cognitive processes. Language skills can be further developed by challenging student's level of understanding and providing good models of effective communication.

## **Pedagogical approach**

We believe that students become good communicators when:

- Students are engaged in a wide variety of activities in which they are actively involved in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students are actively involved in selecting their own reading materials for pleasure and research purposes, in addition to the books they read to support their research, academic and personal development.
- The language curriculum is embedded in the whole school curriculum and language activities are meaningful and relevant. The teaching of elements of language such as text structure, grammar, spelling and vocabulary are taught as much as possible in the context of the subject and have relevance within that context.
- Students are involved in assessing themselves and receive continuous feedback.
- Different linguistic backgrounds are recognized and appreciated.
- The different language strands are taught in an integrated fashion.
- The teacher models effective communication strategies.

## **Assessment**

While language acquisition follows distinct stages, students' rate of acquisition varies greatly from individual to individual. Therefore, language teachers assess all language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking), regularly differentiating through scaffolding or extension as required. Formative and summative assessments in the classroom provide information on language growth. Language teachers regularly standardize students' work to ensure a fair application of assessment criteria. Standardized tests and external examinations in Years 10 – 13 also provide evidence of language acquisition levels. Students who are identified as requiring additional support in English to access the curriculum will be supported appropriately and assessed regularly to monitor progress.

## **Language A**

All students are required to study a language A in the GCSE, IBMYP, IBDP and IDCP programmes and English A is offered at Chester International School in a taught course. In each level of the school, students may study Language A English language and literature.

Mother tongue development opportunities are offered for students on a regular basis and the school will review the language needs of the students on an annual basis including inclusion of other Language A courses as required.

## **Language B**

All students will study at least one foreign language at GCSE. The languages available are French, Spanish, Mandarin and German.

At IBDP and IBCP, French and Spanish will be available at Higher or Standard levels. In the IBDP, students may study Spanish the beginning Ab-Initio level if they have had minimal exposure to the language previously.

### **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of all teachers at Chester International School to implement the school's language policy. All staff will share this responsibility to ensure that this Language Policy is a working document.

- The Principal invites all members of the team to participate in workshops / meetings to review and update the school's Language Policy – ideally every year or whenever the need arises.
- The IBDP Coordinator will select the most appropriate professional development courses for teachers regarding language teaching and learning and all will receive IB training.
- It is the responsibility of every teacher across all subject groups to keep up to date with developments in language teaching and learning and embed it within their subjects.
- It is the responsibility of the school to continuously provide adequate teaching resources and materials to assist teachers in the delivery of the different program.

### **Professional Development**

As it is an expectation for all teachers to be language teachers, on-going training focused on integrated language instruction will be offered throughout the year. The school is committed to providing embedded professional development for language learning across the curriculum.

In all sections of the school (GCSE, IBMYP, IBCP and IBDP), there is an emphasis of co-teaching and push-in (rather than removing students), supporting the classroom or subject area teacher in the use of differentiation and language acquisition strategies. A variety of resources will be provided for staff in the school library. These resources will provide teachers with current research and best practice in language learning, and funds will be spent each year to maintain these resources.

### **Language learning and the library**

Information literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning. It is common to all disciplines, to all learning environments, and to all levels of education. The role of the Chester International

School research centre is to promote and facilitate information literacy across all curricula and to all members of the school community. The research centres have databases that contain professional material, scholarly articles, newspapers and magazines in many languages. We strive to support our diverse population by developing our resources for mother tongue support. As students with new languages and culture enter our school, appropriate resources will be purchased. A variety of resources, in mother tongue languages will continue to be purchased through our annual research and IBDP, IBCP budgets.

### **Learning support**

When a student has been identified with additional learning needs including language difficulties or gifted and talented abilities, intervention and support are provided through the Learning Support programme. The Learning Support department works with teachers to help them meet the needs of students identified with special language learning needs. This support may be formalized through an Individual Education Plan and may involve short and long term interventions. If the identified student speaks English as an additional language, the EAL teacher works closely with other teachers to provide the best service for this individual child. There will be separate EAL provision in the school.

### **Community involvement**

Parents and community members are an integral part of our community of learners and provide tremendous support for language learning at Chester International School. The IBDP Coordinator also organizes mother tongue language support groups with a contact person for many of the mother tongues represented at Chester International School. Parents and community members often volunteer in the enrichment electives, provide support for EAL students or take part in other volunteer.

in other areas in the school. In the Upper School, they help invigilate external exams, lead speaking exams in mother tongues and serve as readers for students who require this support. Other volunteers translate documents and interpret during meetings. Chester International School offers workshops for volunteers each year.

### **Admissions for EAL students**

Any application for a student who indicates that English is not their mother tongue will be reviewed by the IB DP Coordinator as part of the admissions policy. This process will include a language assessment.

### **Published materials**

Students, parents and staff members at Chester International School originate from different countries and educational systems. To maintain consistency in published materials, English spelling will be used for our formal written documentation. However, teachers and students may use their native country's spelling and punctuation for all other work provided it is employed consistently throughout the document.

### **Language Policy Review**

The language policy will be reviewed annually as part of the curriculum review cycle and as part of the whole school improvement plan. The Leadership team will review the implementation of the policy in classrooms and throughout the school on a regular basis as part of the appraisal process.