

HWA LANGUAGE POLICY

IB Learner Profile

As IB learners, we strive to be:

- i. **Inquirers** – We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.
- ii. **Open-Minded** – We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.
- iii. **Knowledgeable** – We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.
- iv. **Caring** – We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.
- v. **Thinkers** – We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.
- vi. **Risk-takers** – We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.
- vii. **Communicators** – We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.
- viii. **Balanced** – We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives-intellectual, physical, and emotional-to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.
- ix. **Principled** – We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibilities for our actions and their consequences.
- x. **Reflective** – We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

(Cited by: IBO: "Programme standards and practices")

HWA Vision & Mission

Vision:

The Vision of HWA is We aim to develop principled global citizens with intercultural perspectives and a passion for lifelong learning.

Mission

Our Mission is We provide a nurturing environment to encourage:

- Independent and collaborative learning;
- The information of international-mindedness;
- Principled and responsible acts; and
- Holistic development.

Core Values (RI²CE)

Resilience | We adapt in the face of challenges with new skills.

Integrity | We know and act with sound ethical principles.

Internationalism | We practice open-mindedness and show empathy across cultures.

Collaboration | We will work with others for the common good of the community.

Excellence | We passionately strive for continual improvement in the things we do and believe in.

Purpose

HWA formulates the school's language policy based on the IB's philosophy, the school's vision and mission, and the IBO's language policy document. The relevant language policies include the following: "Programme standards and practices"; "Guidelines for developing a school language policy"; "Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programs" etc.

The school recognises the importance of language learning throughout the continuum of programmes contributing to:

- Communication skills
- Developing learning skills applicable across the curriculum and life outside of school
- Enhancing cultural awareness and appreciation

Language is integral to exploring and sustaining personal development, cultural identity and intercultural understanding. As well as being the major medium for building Approaches to Teaching and Learning (ATLs), communication is tightly linked to cognitive growth because it is the process by which meaning and knowledge are negotiated and constructed. It is the main tool for building our knowledge of the universe and our place in it. Language then is central to learning, as well as to literacy, and is thus closely related to success in school. (Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes, P1)

As an IB school, we are committed to the following standards and practices:

Culture 4.1: The school implements and reviews a language policy that is aligned with IB language policy guidelines. (0301-04-0100)

Culture 4.2: The school describes in its language policy the way that the school recognizes multilingualism as a fact, a right and a resource for learning. (0301-04-0200)

Culture 4.3: The school identifies in its language policy a variety of physical and virtual resources used to facilitate language development. (0301-04-0300)

Culture 4.4: The school clearly describes in its language policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and what constitutes good practice within the school context. (0301-04-0400)

Philosophy

Following the core principle that language is the key to all learning, all teachers of HWA are language teachers.

Language learning at HWA refers not only to the learning of a specific language, but it includes all activities around the language learning process, including all activities that promote the use of languages in the academic programme of HWA, including in co-curriculum activities (CCA). Through language, our school community acquires the ability to think and to learn, to develop social skills and values, and to acquire knowledge.

1. Language Learning

- 1.1. HWA promotes a whole-school approach to identifying, planning, implementing and monitoring support for students with a specific learning need(s), by providing appropriate learning strategies that enable these students to reach their potential in a supportive community and an inclusive learning environment.
- 1.2. HWA accommodates different learning styles with differentiated instruction according to the individual needs of students, aimed to shape students' complete learner profile.
- 1.3. All students at HWA are to be provided with an opportunity to learn at least two languages, including their mother tongue. This will look different in each school division. Students vary in their ability to learn a language; some will achieve functional proficiency in the target language while others will become truly bilingual or multilingual. The acquisition of language must be seen as a continuum along which each individual student progresses at his or her own speed.

2. Language Support

- 2.1. All Teachers of HWA shall possess respective language skills to teach academic courses.
- 2.2. All other staff of HWA shall possess English Language skills at a level suitable to support students at HWA in their learning process.
- 2.3. Official communication between HWA and students, their parents, and/or guardians should be conducted in English, or the family's mother tongue where possible. Taking into consideration the role of the Chinese language in HWA, HWA will often need to communicate with parents or guardians of students in the Chinese language as well.
- 2.4. English language teachers are to provide required support in communication with students, their parents, and/or guardians.
- 2.5. In the case of communication between HWA and students' parents and/or guardians in the Chinese language, a teacher of the Chinese language can be asked for assistance.

3. Language Admission Requirements

- 3.1. All student applicants who have applied for admission to HWA are required to take an English language placement test and interview, as required by the admissions regulations of HWA (Refer to Operation Manual: Managing and Monitoring of Student Selection).
- 3.2. Placement into the IB PYP, MYP and DP is regulated by the admissions policy of HWA.

4. Evaluation of Language Teaching

- 4.1. HWA conducts assessments of language courses. The performances of all students in all languages taught in HWA are subject to formative and summative assessments.
- 4.2. Language teaching and learning standards are required to be reviewed, and if necessary revised, at least yearly.

5. Languages Policies in the Kindergarten (Nursery to K2)

- 5.1. The foundation of the HWA Kindergarten Programme is the development of both English and Chinese Language Skills. All students, regardless of their Mother Tongue language or current standard of English and Chinese languages, are expected, with the support of their parents, to be committed to the learning of both languages. No language is given preferential treatment. Students are expected to learn both languages to the best of their ability.
- 5.2. HWA Kindergarten utilizes a student-centered, inquiry and activity-based learning environment across all classes. All classes within the Kindergarten Homeroom environment, with the exception of English and Chinese language, are bilingual. Our Language Teachers recognize the need for a balanced approach, reflecting our HWA's vision of Eastern and Western values.

6. Languages Policies in the Primary School (Grades 1 to 6)

- 6.1. As language is the key to all learning, all teachers at HWA are Language Teachers. Language learning at HWA refers to learning a specific language. This includes activities that enhance the learning of that language. As English is the medium of instruction for English learning, Chinese is the medium of instruction for Chinese learning.
- 6.2. The Primary School at HWA provides a strong, challenging curriculum in two languages, embracing the principles of the PYP. Our students become skilled and knowledgeable in the main subject areas: Mathematics, Social Studies, Language, Science and Technology, Personal and Social Education, Music, Drama and the Arts, while acquiring Chinese as a second language.
- 6.3. HWA strives to support every student to be proficient in two languages: English and Chinese. All students will aim towards having the knowledge of and the ability to use two languages. However, students vary in their ability to learn a language; some will achieve functional proficiency in the target language while others will become truly bilingual. The acquisition of language must be seen as a continuum along which each individual student progresses at his or her own speed. English and Chinese are equally valued

and used as the medium of instruction. Our teachers are highly proficient in the target language taught in the classrooms or are proficient in both languages. Between 60% to 80% of our staff speak more than one language, although English is the common language used for all collaboration, planning meetings and communication within HWA.

- **Chinese Language Support**
Successful language learning can only be accomplished through a thorough support system within HWA and a full partnership with the parents. Chinese and English teachers also work collaboratively around the central ideas to teach the PYP programme.
- **Chinese Culture**
The Chinese Culture programme is available to students from Grade 1 to Grade 6. Additionally, clubs (CCAs) and HWA events that use Chinese as the language of instruction provide an opportunity to students who need extra help to develop their language skills. The clubs (CCAs) are a part of HWA activities, but are held after HWA hours.
- **Mother-Tongue Development**
As a multilingual and multicultural HWA, HWA promotes the development of every student's mother-tongue language. This is especially true for those students whose mother-tongue is not English or Chinese. HWA supports teacher/parent-initiated mother-tongue lessons in the form of after HWA classes or clubs (e.g. French) ????. Parents are encouraged to communicate the importance of developing the mother-tongue language with their children (for travelling to one's home country, communicating with relatives and maintaining ties with a child's cultural heritage).

7. Languages Policies in the Middle School (Grades 7 to 10)

- 7.1. Within the IB Middle Years Programme, English is the primary language of instruction. Students are assessed and placed in English classes based on their abilities. The language learning is facilitated through regular classes including language rich activities. HWA accommodates different learning styles with differentiated instruction according to the individual needs of students, aimed to shape the students' complete IB Learner Profile.
- 7.2. In all MYP discipline areas, communication is both an objective and an assessment criterion as it facilitates understanding and student self-reflection. The performance of students through the MYP's Language courses is regularly monitored to ensure that courses have the appropriate rigour to develop students' language skills. Students are given formative and summative assessments in class and bi-annually, during Mid Semester and End Semester Assessments.

- 7.3. MYP teachers work collaboratively to promote learning through language and literature phases. Students are placed in classes according to six phases and HWA ensures that there are only two phases in any one English Language Acquisition class.
- 7.4. Students will be expected to meet certain language criteria to become a student at HWA (Refer to Operation Manual: Managing and Monitoring of Student Selection). The MYP is phased to ensure that learning takes place at the student's level of language abilities. Native English speakers are enrolled in the English Language and Literature programme. Non-native English speakers are supported through Language Acquisition classes, where no more than two phases are taught in the same class.
- 7.5. Students with limited English will be given support in the language of instruction and are placed in a course track running parallel to the MYP in preparation to join the mainstream classes. The course track concentrates on building language abilities. In addition, supplementary Intensive English Support is provided for students to ensure that their language abilities meet the requirements of the Curriculum.
- 7.6. Chinese Language Acquisition is taught in phases. Mother-tongue Chinese speakers are enrolled in the Chinese Language and Literature programme. Non mother-tongue Chinese speakers are put into phases of Language Acquisition depending on their ability and potential. HWA ensure that no more than two phases are taught in the same class. The Language Acquisition classes are monitored to ensure that courses have the appropriate rigour to develop students' language skills. Students are assessed through Class Assessments, Mid Semester Assessments and Semester End Reports twice in an academic year which informs HWA of student progress.
- 7.7. The majority of students in MYP are from Chinese speaking countries but as a multilingual and multicultural HWA, HWA promotes the development of every student's mother-tongue language. For students whose mother-tongue is not English and Chinese, HWA is developing mother-tongue support in the form of after HWA classes. Within classes and in the Personal Project, students are able to conduct research in their mother-tongue provided the final product is in the language of instruction. HWA works is working to ensure that mother-tongue resources are available in HWA or that students can gain access online.

8. Languages Policies in the Senior School (Grades 11 to 12)

- 8.1. In High School, and within the IB Diploma Programme, the language of instruction is English. The English language is used to teach subjects of IB DP Groups 3, 4, 5, and 6, as well as the English language itself (Groups 1 and 2). HWA makes all efforts to provide students of Grades 11 and 12 with an opportunity to learn their Mother Tongue (including English or Chinese), in fully supported classes and courses given the available resources. HWA also

encourages students to bring their Mother Tongue books to HWA to share with their class and to make available in HWA library.

- 8.2. If the academic resources are not available, HWA supports students to learn their Mother Tongue on a school-supported self-taught basis. Students registered as language learners on a self-taught basis are provided with an assigned supervisor, who can be any teacher of the IB DP Mother Tongue course regularly taught in HWA. Languages self-taught at HWA in the IB DP, in recent years, include Korean, Japanese, Thai, Spanish, Russian, and French. Supervision of self-taught languages shall also be conducted in English language and a Self-taught/World Languages supervisor will be based in HWA for students to access easily.
- 8.3. HWA provides its students with an opportunity to learn a third language as well, either as a language B or language ab initio.
- 8.4. Languages of IB DP Group 1 shall be taught by native or first-language speakers. Language ab initio can also be taught by teachers who have education specialization other than language or linguistics, however, by teachers who have completed at least 4 years of full-time study with the respective language as a medium of instruction (either at tertiary or secondary level).