



International School of Lusaka

Since 1963

Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow



International School of Lusaka

ISL Language Policy

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The International School of Lusaka

Language Policy

1. Background Information

The International School of Lusaka offers the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IBPYP) for students from 2-11 years, the International Middle Years Curriculum (IMYC) for 11-14 years, International General Certificate of Education Programme (IGCSE) for students from 15-16 years and the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) for students from 17-19 years.

Our students generally fall into the following categories: native English speaking students, students who speak English and additional languages, and beginners.

The diversity of the school is reflected in the different languages spoken at ISL. English is the main language of instruction. French and Spanish are offered as Modern Foreign Languages. Students may study their mother tongue as a self-taught language.

2. School Mission Statement

ISL is committed to the development of internationally-minded citizens who aspire to make the world a better place.

3. School Philosophy

The International School of Lusaka seeks to forge a unified and caring community which exhibits mutual respect and understanding, wherein each individual feels welcome, safe and valued as part of a greater whole. Through internationally accredited educational programmes, ISL aims to develop in all students a genuine desire to learn and the conviction that education is lifelong and open-ended. ISL does not align itself to any political or religious creed.

Our learning environment is characterized by inquiry, creativity, action and reflection. We experience interculturalism through the nurturing of attitudes and values, which permits us to appreciate our diversity. Internationalism at ISL recognizes differences and embraces what we have in common, for the benefit of all.



4. School Aims

- 4.1 To provide a holistic educational programme which supports the development of each student in a safe and inclusive environment.
- 4.2 To ensure purposeful and engaging learning experiences, which foster a genuine desire to continually learn about ourselves, others, and the world around us.
- 4.3 To develop the habits of mind necessary for independent, creative and critical thinking, and effective communication.
- 4.4 To nurture an appreciation for self and others within the diverse ISL community and beyond.
- 4.5 To provide opportunities, which develop an awareness of individual, community and global rights and responsibilities.

4. Rationale

Language is fundamental to learning and permeates the entire school programme. By learning language as well as learning about and through language, we nurture an appreciation of the richness of language and a love of literature across disciplines.

Language is a cross-curricular subject and therefore, the students need to develop good language skills in order to grasp and understand the different subjects offered within the school environment.

5. Language Philosophy

At International School of Lusaka, we believe language is the key to learning and all students can learn and experience success in languages. All learners are language learners and all teachers are language teachers. To that end, we provide a foundation for the lifelong process of language acquisition.

Through our language programme, we aim to foster respect for all cultures and prepare students to become productive members of a global society. We also promote awareness of one's own language and culture and allow opportunities for interdisciplinary connections. Linguistic and cultural diversity at our school is a rich resource that contributes to learning.



6. Language Aims

The language programme aims:

- 6.1. To acknowledge both the receptive and the expressive aspects of language
- 6.2. To surround the students with language in visual, oral and written ways
- 6.3. To enable students to communicate and express themselves to solve problems, explore the environment, influence change in others and identify their own self-concept
- 6.4. To create awareness and open-mindedness of the many forms of communication and the many languages we can use to interact with others
- 6.5. To recognize, respect and promote the use of appropriate language in different disciplines to convey ideas and concepts.

7. Strands of Language - Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing

ISL has identified four strands-listening, reading, speaking and writing-that are learned across and throughout the curriculum, with each strand being an integral component of language learning.

The learner's ability to understand language and use it effectively varies in different situations and from one individual to another. For example, a learner may listen attentively and reveal understanding through written or visual representations, but may require support to communicate ideas orally in the classroom.

Listening and Speaking

At ISL we value an awareness of the power of oral language and how both expressive and receptive language skills help students to connect with others. We want students to talk about their thoughts, feelings and opinions and to use speech responsibly to inform, entertain and influence others. Our aim is for students to speak confidently to a variety of audiences and to be active listeners. Opportunities to listen to, and receive, ideas and information in oral form are balanced with opportunities to express ideas orally. We want our students to ask and answer questions and contribute to discussions in a range of formal and informal situations.

Listening and speaking are natural, developmental processes that infants and young children are immersed in from their earliest experiences. However, the expectations and approach to language development in school is often very different from the learning environment the child has previously experienced.



Oral language encompasses all aspects of listening and speaking—skills that are essential for ongoing language development, for learning and for relating to others. Listening (the receptive mode) and speaking (the expressive mode) work together in a transactional process between listeners and speakers.

Reading

We believe reading is a developmental process that involves constructing meaning from text. The process is interactive and involves the reader's purpose for reading, the reader's prior knowledge and experience, and the text itself. Students of all ages are provided opportunities to experience and enjoy a wide variety of interesting, informative, intriguing and creative reading materials.

Reading helps to clarify ideas, feelings, thoughts and opinions and offers students a means of understanding themselves and others, and has the power to influence and structure thinking. The ability to read and comprehend non-fiction, fiction and other literary texts is essential for the process of inquiry. As inquirers, learners need to be able to identify, synthesize and apply useful and relevant information from text.

Writing

At ISL students will be able to present information in a written format to reflect their knowledge, research, ideas and feelings. Students will be exposed to writing in a variety of styles, in relation to the purpose and audience.

We also believe that writing is a way through which students express themselves and reveal their own voice. It allows them to organize and communicate thoughts, ideas and information in a visible and tangible way. This involves developing a variety of structures, strategies and literary techniques and applying them with increasing skill and effectiveness. However, the writer's ability to communicate his or her intention and share meaning takes precedence over accuracy and the application of skills.

It is only in the process of sharing their ideas in written form that skills are developed, applied and refined to produce increasingly effective written communication.



8. English Language

8.1 Primary School

In the Primary years Programme (PYP), language learning takes place in authentic contexts, both within and outside the Programme of Inquiry. Language is a powerful tool to engage learners and is used by students when negotiating new meanings and understanding new concepts. In the Primary school we are committed to a guided inquiry approach to language learning. Languages are integrated into all subjects; however stand-alone lessons also occur. The classrooms are language rich environments, with a lot of print and a wide variety of language and literature available. The curriculum provided builds on students' prior knowledge and understanding as we use developmental continuums to plan for teaching and learning in language. We aim to provide differentiated learning engagements in the three strands of language. Teachers plan collaboratively for language learning with other teachers, including single subject teachers and with the Primary Librarian.

8.2 Secondary School

IMYC (11 - 14 years old)

In Middle school, students are given opportunities to develop an appreciation for the nature and use of language through speaking, listening, reading and writing. Students will explore these opportunities by taking English as a compulsory subject and choose either French or Spanish as their Modern Language of study. They will develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of language by learning about the skills which help them to use language effectively, the meaning, form and use of language and how to enjoy and appreciate different text types. Students in Middle School will respond to the various texts by writing or speaking as a preparation for IGCSE and IBDP.



IGCSE (14 - 16 year old)

ISL students taking English as a First Language in IGCSE also take IGCSE English Literature.

IBDP (16 - 18 year old)

Students in the Diploma Programme study IB English A (Language and Literature) at Higher or Standard level. All teachers are part of the language learning process. Writing is emphasized in all subject areas through the IBDP Internal Assessments and the Extended Essay. Formal writing is formatted in MLA or another equally recognized style.

9. Learning Support and ESOL

The Learning Support (LS) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) accommodate pupils with learning difficulties or ESOL needs. The programme aims to help students develop the language skills needed to participate in the mainstream classroom. Students can be referred to LS or ESOL using the referral process during the school year. Student needs can also be identified during the admissions process. Reference is then made to the LS/ESOL Department to further assess the language skills.

Support is given to pupils

- To whom English is not their first language
- Who have specific learning difficulties
- Who have learning difficulties
- Who have missed some stage in their schooling
- Who have changed school systems

Students from Reception to Year 11 receive in-class support (except in extreme cases) from both Learning Support teachers and assistants.

10. Modern Foreign Languages

The Modern Foreign Languages Department firmly believes in the benefits of teaching a foreign language to children of primary school age. Modern languages in the Primary



school provide opportunities for children to experiment, play, discover and use a foreign language. This department raises the awareness of mother tongues and other languages that exist around the world. This in turn promotes international-mindedness on the part of adults and students within the school community. Students from Reception through Year 2 are taught French and Spanish, while students from Year 3 to IBDP are encouraged to choose a language that they would like to develop and focus on.

Diversity in language is seen as a positive element as it fosters respect for other cultures. As part of language acquisition, our belief is that speaking a second language is but part of the process. As such, students receive instruction and experiences regarding the second languages cultures, perceptions and other background dynamics.

11. Mother Tongue

11.1 Primary School

All students are given opportunities to express themselves in their mother tongue in the Primary school. They are invited to share language and culture related to their mother tongue through Units of Inquiry, productions, performances and celebrations across the school. Mother Tongue day is celebrated during the month of February in Primary School through various engagements planned during the day. Students in Primary school whose native language is not English are encouraged to speak in their mother tongue during Student Led Conferences.

11.2 Secondary School

The non native speakers have the possibility to take their native language as an IGCSE First Language and English as a Second Language. They also have the possibility to take their native language as a Self taught Language A Literature subject and therefore are able to qualify for the IBDP bilingual Diploma.

13. Role of the Library and the Media Centre

Our media center serves the whole school, including the parent community. We have a wide range of print and non print resources for a variety of languages. The Librarians plan collaboratively with teachers to provide the students across the school with



learning experiences that foster a love of literature, develop information literacy skills and learn about the ethical use of information.

14. Language Policy Review Cycle

This Language Policy reflects current practice in the school year 2016-17. Whilst our overarching beliefs and philosophy about language teaching and language learning will likely remain unchanged, we acknowledge the fact that language practices do change over time. Therefore this Language Policy is a document that will be subject to review at least once a year. The next review of the policy will take place in 2021.

