

Language Policy

Ambassador International Academy

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Language Policy Statement

At Ambassador International Academy, language sits at the centre of learning. It is the means through which our students inquire, think, question, collaborate, express identity and make sense of the world. Learning at AIA therefore involves learning language, learning about language and learning through language, in every subject and at every stage of the programme continuum.

We are a highly multilingual community. We believe that every language a student brings to school is an asset rather than an obstacle, and that the development of a student's home country language supports – rather than competes with – the acquisition of English and of additional languages. We are committed to additive multilingualism, in which learners add languages to their repertoire while continuing to develop conceptually and academically in the languages they already speak.

English is the language of instruction and the language of inclusion at AIA. Arabic, as the language of our host country, is studied by all students in line with Ministry of Education and KHDA requirements, and is promoted and celebrated throughout the school. All teachers at AIA are teachers of language and share responsibility for the language development of every student in their care.

Aims of this Policy

This policy aims:

- To provide a clear, shared framework for language teaching, learning and assessment across the PYP, MYP, DP and CP.
- To ensure that all students, whatever their language background, can access the curriculum and demonstrate what they know and can do.
- To set out the provision available for English Language Learners, for students of determination, and for high performance learners.
- To define how students are placed in, supported in, and released from, language programmes, and how these decisions are communicated to parents.
- To uphold the requirements of the UAE Ministry of Education and the KHDA in relation to Arabic and Islamic Studies.
- To promote the maintenance and development of home country languages and to celebrate the linguistic diversity of our community.
- To align language practice with the IB Learner Profile, the Approaches to Learning and the IB Programme Standards and Practices.

Definitions and Key Terms

- **Language of instruction:** the language in which the curriculum is taught and assessed. At AIA this is English,

with the exception of Arabic, Islamic Studies, French and Spanish.

- **Home country language:** the language, or languages, a student uses at home and with family; also referred to as mother tongue or first language.
- **Language acquisition:** a course for students studying a language in which they are developing proficiency – at AIA, Arabic B, French and Spanish, and English support programmes.
- **Language and literature:** a course for students who are already proficient in the language – at AIA, English Language and Literature and Arabic A.
- **English Language Learner (ELL):** a student whose English proficiency is not yet sufficient to access the mainstream curriculum without additional support.
- **BICS and CALP:** the everyday conversational fluency a learner typically acquires relatively quickly, as distinct from the academic language proficiency (CALP) required to succeed in subject learning, which takes considerably longer. Support decisions at AIA are based on academic language proficiency, not conversational fluency alone.
- **CEFR:** the shared reference scale (A1 to C2) used alongside the IB phases of language acquisition to describe and track proficiency in English, French and Spanish.

Languages used in Ambassador International Academy:

Instruction language: English

Communication language (*with parents*): English/Arabic

Printed and electronic communication language: English/Arabic

Communication with visitors: English/Arabic

Communication with support staff/housekeeping: English

Communication with administrative staff: English

School language profiles

At AIA amongst the student body there are over 88 nationalities, with 67 spoken languages. The complex and diverse language profiles among students mean that they are learning in a language additional to that of their home and family, or of their prior educational experience. English is the primary language of instruction and is recognized as the language of inclusion throughout the school, and within the school community. The school complies with United Arab Emirates Ministry of Education requirements of Arabic and, in addition, offers French and Spanish as language acquisition subjects and fosters the use of home country language through the home country language programme. During admission, data is collected which identifies the student's home country language, language used at home, language used for instruction at previous schools and any other languages known.

- All teachers need to be well-versed in English.
- There is a coherent and consistent approach towards the development of language throughout the school.
- Consistency is expected throughout the PYP, MYP, DP and CP in procedure; expectations; differentiation and

assessment.

- Language is taught through relevant and realistic contexts in all subjects.
- ELL students have total immersion where necessary as well as in-class support and maintenance.
- Diversity of the student/staff body is celebrated through recognition of the home country language.
- Parents are made aware of the expectations of the whole school language policy.
- The school community promotes the understanding that all languages are of value.
- Arabic, the language of our host country, is promoted.

At AIA we believe that learning to speak more than one language is empowering and helps link people locally and globally. Supporting an understanding of other languages will enrich personal development. Language development is crucial for promoting cultural identity, empathy and international mindedness. A learner's home country language is a key component of cognitive, social and emotional development and cultural identity.

Teaching and Learning Practices

All teachers in AIA are teachers of language and as such have a responsibility to address the language needs of their students in the language of instruction. When teachers plan learning experiences that enable students to develop language within meaningful and enjoyable contexts, students make connections, apply their learning, and transfer their conceptual understanding to new situations. Teachers carry out the following:

- Provide a variety of meaningful and authentic language learning opportunities.
- Ensure balanced and varied language input to cater for different learning needs.
- Foster supportive, positive and reflective language learning environments, allowing learners to take risks.
- Develop competency, creativity and independence when learning and using languages across a broad range of contexts.
- Enable critical reflection on how language works and how texts are structured.
- Deliver language programmes through a variety of methods and strategies, linking closely with an emphasis on inquiry.
- Utilise AIA policy documents and IB scope and sequence documents to guide planning, teaching and assessing.
- Recognise speaking, listening, reading, writing as critical aspects of language development.
- Provide a range of appropriate, multicultural language resources over a full range of genres and text types.
- Make links within our school and wider community to support each learner as they use and develop their home country language.

Learning/Teaching and Assessment Strategies

- Identify prior knowledge through various strategies such as KWL (what I know, what I want to know and what I have learned) charts, mind maps, concept cartoons etc. and modify their teaching strategies.
- Plan a variety of engaging lessons with clear objectives and outcomes (success criteria).

- Incorporate strategies to cater to the learning needs of all students including SOD (Students of determination), Able, gifted and talented) AGT and ELL (English Language Learners).
- Use individualised resources to enable all learners to access the planned learning experience and achieve the lesson outcome.
- Use a variety of Assessment for Learning strategies to assess learning, identify gaps and accordingly support/challenge students in every lesson.
- Give positive and constructive written and oral feedback identifying achievements and setting targets using appropriate language.
- Promote a growth mindset to encourage students to face challenges and encourage them to progress at their own pace to achieve the outcome.
- Incorporate self and peer evaluation to further embed learning.
- Create opportunities for students to work collaboratively, according to their needs, nature of the activity and the learning objective.
- Publish student work.
- Encourage parental engagement.

Students should be encouraged to:

- Use language as a mode of thinking, reflecting and self - expression.
- Learn to speak, read and write English progressing across a continuum of skills.
- Confidently express themselves in English in a variety of situations.
- Develop an appreciation of a variety of literature and texts.
- Evaluate evidence and think critically regarding their use of language.
- Connect different areas of language learning to integrate prior and new knowledge.

Provision for Languages at AIA

PYP and MYP Languages

English

English is the medium of instruction and is offered as Language A in the MYP.

Support for English as language of Instruction:

We aim to develop a level of language proficiency in English that enables all students to perform to the best of their ability on all tasks related to the extensive curriculum across the school. Initially, students may choose to think or talk through unfamiliar or complex concepts in their first language to assist their understanding. Students are encouraged to communicate with their peers in a way that will not result in some students being excluded because they cannot understand a language. We use different teaching techniques to ensure that students for whom English is not their home country language understand all concepts during lessons. We expect teachers to use regular questioning to check

student understanding during tasks throughout each lesson. Teachers will, where appropriate, group students of different home country languages and English language abilities to enable sharing of information. Teachers acknowledge students' diversity in language and support their progress with adapted and or translated resources on an individual basis.

The following guidelines have been identified:

- Literacy develops when language has meaning and purpose
- The five areas: Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing and Viewing, are interrelated
- Communication is a cooperative process in which skills such as critical listening, questioning, persuasion and expressing ideas clearly are necessary
- Literacy skills must be developed across all subject areas
- Students should develop skills in formal and informal communication and in real-world situations
- The curriculum should be sensitive to the needs of all students. World literature (short stories, poems, novels, etc.) should form part of the school syllabus
- The increasing need for computer literacy and the use of technological tools
- End of Year assessments assess students' progress

Arabic

Arabic is taught to students from grade 1 onwards in accordance with the MOE requirements for Arab passport holders to learn first language Arabic (A) and second language Arabic (B) is taught to non-Arab passport holder students. In addition, Arabic studies is offered to students in KG1 and KG2. It will be extended to PRE KG as and when the new guidelines are provided by KHDA.

In accordance with the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) stipulations and curriculum expectations, Arabic classes are taught by specialist Arabic teachers, who plan collaboratively with homeroom teachers and MFL teachers where possible. Arabic instruction supports our Programme of Inquiry to enhance students' language learning and conceptual understanding, integrating the IB approach, methodology and strategies into the classroom. The programme involves opportunities for developing meaningful speaking and listening, reading and writing, viewing and presenting skills. Work samples are included in the student's portfolio and discussed in student-led conferences. Ongoing formative and summative assessment occur throughout the year using a wide range of assessment tools. Formal report comments communicate progress to the student and parents three times a year in Primary and Middle school.

• Arabic A Native Speakers

Arabic A is offered to all Arabic National students at AIA in accordance with KHDA stipulations.

Exposure to, and practice with, the host country language increases cultural understanding. The primary goal is to develop practical information skills while enabling students to understand linguistic, cultural, social nature of the language. Classes are phased according to ability. Arabic B is offered to all non-native speaking Arabic students at AIA. students are streamed into ability groups from Grade 1 to G9

Enrolment in Arabic A and Arabic B

Placement in Arabic A or Arabic B follows Ministry of Education and KHDA regulations and is determined by the student's passport, not by prior study or proficiency:

- **Students holding a passport from an Arab country (Grades 1–12):** students are placed by default in Arabic A, even where they have not previously studied Arabic. Arabic support is provided in these cases.
- **Students holding dual passports, one of which is from an Arab country (Grade 1):** students are placed by default in Arabic B. Should parents wish their child to study Arabic A, a written request from the parents is required.
- **Students holding dual passports, one of which is from an Arab country (Grades 2–10):** students are placed by default in Arabic B. Should parents wish their child to study Arabic A, both a written request from the parents and an attestation from the previous school confirming that the student has studied Arabic A and is able to follow the Arabic A curriculum are required.
- **All other students:** students study Arabic B up to the end of Grade 9.

For the purposes of this policy, the Arab countries are: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

Arabic and Islamic Studies are always linked: Arabic A with Islamic Studies A, and Arabic B with Islamic Studies B. Any other combination requires a written request and the approval of the Head of Islamic Studies.

Exemption from Arabic

Applications may be made to the KHDA for temporary exemption from Arabic in exceptional circumstances, for example for a student joining the school as a complete beginner in English. Applications are made through the school's KHDA liaison on a case-by-case basis, involving all relevant stakeholders, and are supported by letters of evidence from the parents, the English Language and Literature teacher and the Head of School, together with the most recent CAT4 assessment report. Exemptions are granted by the regulatory authority and not by the school.

Arabic Support Classes

The Arabic Department offers support classes in both Arabic A and Arabic B from Grade 1 to Grade 9:

- to students who join the school with no prior knowledge of Arabic (Arabic A or Arabic B); and
- to students who need additional support to make progress in one or more of the Arabic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Arabic support classes run in parallel with regular Arabic lessons. Students receive full or partial support depending on individual need, as determined by diagnostic assessments administered regularly through the year. A student is released from Arabic support once they have acquired the skills needed to participate fully in the regular Arabic class. Parents are informed in writing of their child's enrolment in Arabic support, of their progress within the programme,

and of their release from it.

Language of Delivery

In line with KHDA regulation, Arabic lessons are delivered in Modern Standard Arabic, and Arabic educators adopt standard Arabic in conversation and curriculum delivery. Student progress is tracked against the standards provided by the Ministry of Education, and Arabic B levels are set according to years of study.

French and Spanish

From KG2 upwards, students learn either French or Spanish. French and Spanish Language Acquisition is offered in the MYP. These courses are not designed for native speakers.

- In addition to the compulsory Arabic B up to Grade 9, students will study a second language either French or Spanish.
- In Grades 6, 7 and 8, students will study French or Spanish.
- In Grades 9 and 10 students will continue with the same language that they started in Grades 6-8.
- All other students are required to take Arabic Language Acquisition (Arabic B) as well as one other Language Acquisition subject (French and Spanish) compulsorily up to the end of Grade 9. In Grade 10 the students continue to pursue the selected language under language (French and Spanish) acquisition subject group.
- If a student studies a language in Grade 9 and Grade 10, they will not be able to study that language as an Ab Initio language in Grade 11. If the language was only studied in Grades 6-8, they will be permitted to study Ab Initio in Grade 11.

DP/CP Languages

Group 1:

English Language and Literature: English is the medium of instruction and is offered as Language A in the DP.

Arabic A

Arabic language A is taught to all Arabic National students of DP at AIA in accordance with Ministry of Education and the KHDA stipulations. Arabic A is not offered as a Group 1 subject in DP and CP.

Group 2:

French (Ab initio and B) and Spanish (Ab initio and B)

French B and Spanish B: These are language acquisition courses intended for those who have had at least two years of formal education in that language.

French Ab Initio & Spanish Ab Initio: These courses are available to non-native speaking students at AIA and are designed for beginning students with little or no previous studies in the language.

-Students may choose to continue their Language Acquisition subjects from Grade 10 into Grades 11 and 12 as

Language B or choose an alternative Ab Initio subject.

-If a student studies a language in Grade 9 and Grade 10, they will not be able to study that language as an Ab Initio language in Grade 11. If the language was only studied in Grades 6-8, they will be permitted to study Ab Initio in Grade 11.

English Language Learners

AIA recognises a variety of levels of English language competency. The school provides additional language support for students whose English language skills require further development to ensure success in the mainstream classroom. Teachers use a variety of strategies and resources to scaffold and extend language skills.

PYP/MYP

Students are identified for referral for assessment at the admissions stage by a qualified ELL teacher. The time spent with the student is determined after assessment of their needs and abilities and is adjusted accordingly during the school year. The ELL programme provides students with both 'in class' and 'pull out' support to aid language development. Regular communication between the homeroom/subject teacher and ELL teacher is essential to meet the ongoing needs of the student. The ELL teachers maintain a register of students receiving support, including an entry date, exit date and information about progress made. Parents are informed when their child exits the programme. Formal report comments communicate progress to the student and parents at each main reporting stage. Homeroom/subject teachers record details of support received and students' progress. This is recorded and passed on to the teacher for the following year.

DP/CP

In the Diploma Programme the student needs to obtain a minimum of grade 5 in MYP English Language and literature in Internal or e-assessments to opt for English Language and literature HL and grade 4 to opt for English Language and Literature SL.

In the Career-related Programme, Students who are new to the English language are provided ELL support outside classroom and in classrooms. The ELL teacher maintains a register of students receiving support, including an entry date, exit date and information about progress made. Parents are informed when their child exits the programme. Formal report comments communicate progress to the student and parents at each main reporting stage. Homeroom/subject teachers record details of support received and students' progress.

Identification and Entry into the ELL Programme

Enrolment in the ELL programme is possible at any point in the school year. Students are identified through the following routes:

- **At admission:** all applicants are assessed at the admissions stage, including a language screening administered

or reviewed by a qualified ELL teacher, alongside CAT4 and other standardised data where available.

- **At the start of the school year:** returning ELL students, and students whose attainment in English at the end of the previous year indicates that they cannot yet access the curriculum independently, are reviewed for continued or new enrolment.
- **At the request of parents:** requests are addressed to the relevant IB Coordinator.
- **At the request of a homeroom or subject teacher:** requests are made to the relevant IB Coordinator using the ELL referral form.

At the beginning of the school year, ELL teachers and homeroom or subject teachers observe newly identified students for one to two weeks, including placement tasks in English lessons, in order to confirm or amend the initial support lists. Confirmed lists are sent to the IB Coordinators. For students joining during the year, the IB Coordinator, the class or subject teacher and the ELL teacher agree the date of entry into the programme.

Organisation of ELL Support

- The programme combines in-class (push-in) and withdrawal (pull-out) support. The intention over time is to increase in-class support and reduce withdrawal, once a secure foundation in language acquisition has been established.
- Groups are kept small, with a maximum of eight students per support group, to allow intensive interaction and feedback.
- Beginners and students at the earliest proficiency levels follow an intensive ELL curriculum based on CEFR descriptors, designed to build functional communicative competence quickly, before progressively integrating the mainstream English curriculum.
- In-class support usually takes place during English lessons, where the ELL teacher acts as a facilitator enabling the student to access the mainstream curriculum. Where need is greater, support may be extended to other subjects in agreement with the subject teacher and the IB Coordinator.
- Withdrawal lessons are timetabled in place of English lessons or during personal development time. Students are not withdrawn from Arabic or Islamic Studies lessons.
- The frequency and pattern of support are individual to the student and are reviewed at each reporting cycle.
- Reported achievement levels in English remain the responsibility of the English teacher and are based on tasks set and marked by that teacher. The ELL teacher may be responsible for formative work and, where appropriate, homework.

Benchmarks and Expected Progress

Progress is described using CEFR levels alongside the IB phases of language acquisition. The following indicative minimum levels are expected at the start of the school year for students following the mainstream curriculum, and are used to identify students who require additional support:

- Grade 1: A1.1 • Grade 2: A1.2 • Grade 3: A2.1 • Grade 4: A2.2 • Grade 5: B1.1

- Grade 6: B1.1 • Grade 7: B1.2 • Grade 8: B2.1 • Grade 9: B2.2 • Grade 10: B2.2 • Grades 11–12: C1

These benchmarks are indicative and are reviewed annually by the Heads of English and MFL together with the IB Coordinators. They are used as a professional reference point, not as a barrier to admission or progression.

Monitoring, Record Keeping and Reporting

- The ELL teacher maintains a register of all students receiving support, recording entry date, exit date, provision received and progress made.
- Each student in the programme has a language passport, completed jointly by the ELL teacher and the homeroom or subject teacher, recording home languages, prior schooling, entry data, targets, agreed strategies and any access arrangements.
- Progress is tracked through formative assessment in both in-class and withdrawal settings, and against CEFR descriptors and the targets set in the language passport.
- Progress is reviewed at each reporting cycle, and formal report comments communicate progress to students and parents at each main reporting stage.
- Records of support received and progress made are passed to the receiving teacher at the end of each academic year to ensure continuity.

Exit from the ELL Programme

A student exits the ELL programme when their English proficiency is sufficient to access the mainstream curriculum without additional support. The decision is taken collaboratively by the ELL teacher, the homeroom or subject teacher and the relevant IB Coordinator, on the basis of assessment evidence rather than time served in the programme.

- Before a full exit, provision may first be modified – for example by increasing in-class support, reducing frequency, or narrowing the focus to writing or oral work.
- In the Primary Years Programme, exits take place at defined points in the year, aligned to the review of support lists and reporting cycles.
- In the MYP, DP and CP, exits take place at the end of a term.
- Any exit or modification of support is subject to the approval of the relevant IB Coordinator, as is any subsequent re-entry into the programme.

Communication with Parents about Language Support

- Prospective parents are informed of the possibility or the need for ELL support by the admissions team at the point of admission.
- The homeroom or subject teacher informs parents in writing of their child's enrolment in the programme, using the entry letter provided by the ELL teacher, copying the ELL teacher and the relevant IB Coordinator.
- The ELL teacher informs parents in writing of any modification to the support programme and of exit from the programme, using the exit letter, copying the homeroom or subject teacher and the IB Coordinator.

- ELL teachers may communicate directly with parents and meet them during parent–teacher conferences.
- Parents are provided with practical guidance on how to support language development at home, including maintenance of the home country language.

Students Requiring Support in More Than One Language

Where a student requires support in more than one language, priority is given to English as the language of instruction and of inclusion, since access to the whole curriculum depends on it. Arabic support is coordinated with the Arabic Department so that timetabled provision does not conflict. Depending on the student's profile, a blended pattern of support may be offered for a limited period.

Where a student is registered both as a student of determination and as an English Language Learner, the ELL teacher and the inclusion or SEND coordinator work together to distinguish language need from learning need, to agree the most effective combination of strategies, and to avoid a support overload for the student. Both sets of provision are recorded in a single plan.

Additional Opportunities for Language Development

- Students in the MYP, DP and CP are encouraged to use the academic writing support sessions, where a teacher works through a draft alongside the student to identify next steps in the writing process.
- Students receiving language support are encouraged to attend language-related after-school activities – language clubs, reading and homework support – in order to increase their exposure to the language.
- The libraries provide levelled readers, dual-language texts and audio resources to support independent reading at home.

Library

Both the Primary and Secondary libraries at AIA incorporate a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. Currently they include reference and multimedia material, periodicals and dual language books in a variety of languages that are accessible to all students, staff and the school community. We are continually building a library resource collection that is culturally and globally diverse.

PYP

The Primary library is used as a teaching resource and reading classes throughout the day. The Primary library also houses a range of language teaching resources within the school. The library is a resource center first and foremost and a promoter of literacy and language throughout primary school. The library has books which cater for students with knowledge of various languages.

MYP and DP/CP

The Secondary library is a separate room from the Primary library. It is managed by a qualified librarian and is

available for independent study and research.

It is also used by the teaching staff when they are researching with their students. The library is available at lunchtime for interested students. It is equipped with computers and databases for independent research.

Support for the host country

As mandated by the Ministry of Education, all Arab country passport holders will study Arabic A (first language) until Grade 12 and all non-Arab passport holders will study Arabic B (second language) until Grade 9. The host country's language of Arabic shall be integrated within unit plans where applicable. Students will be encouraged to explore the Arabic language and UAE culture when discussing literary texts in lessons and when commenting on language features. Writing competitions, such as the Emirates Literature Festival, challenge students to draw upon the host country's language and culture to produce a variety of poetry and short stories. Recitation of verses from the Quran and poetry written in Arabic are recited frequently at assemblies and other school events.

Students are familiarized with Arabic language around the school. Events such as UAE National Day, Flag Day and International Day are celebrated and are also integrated within appropriate unit plans to celebrate the culture and diversity of the host country.

Support for Students of Determination/Students with special educational needs

At AIA, we acknowledge a wide spectrum of abilities across our curriculum and tailor content to cater to each learner's needs. The school is dedicated to providing extra support for students whose skills require further enhancement to thrive in the classroom environment. In the PYP, MYP and DP/CP, our language policy underscores our commitment to inclusivity by acknowledging the diverse linguistic and learning needs of our students with additional needs.

Primary Years Programme (PYP):

- Language instruction within the PYP is tailored to cater to the unique learning styles and needs of students with additional needs. Teachers employ a range of strategies to ensure equitable access to language learning, fostering a supportive and nurturing environment.
- Collaboration among teachers, inclusion team, and families is pivotal in addressing the specific language needs of students of determination. This partnership ensures that language instruction is not only accessible but also effective in promoting their language development.
- Students of determination benefit from ongoing monitoring of their language progress. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are crafted, incorporating specific language-related goals and strategies, to ensure that their language learning journey is responsive to their abilities and requirements. Certain IB access arrangements may be considered to further support language acquisition, including extra time for assessments and alternative formats for materials.

Middle Years Programme (MYP):

- Language instruction in the MYP is personalized to accommodate the diverse needs of students of determination. This includes adapting materials, assessments, and instructional strategies to ensure meaningful and accessible language learning. Access arrangements, such as additional time for examinations and oral assessments, may be provided as needed.
- We create inclusive classrooms that value the contributions of all students, including those with special education needs. Collaborative approaches among teachers and specialists ensure that the language learning environment supports the linguistic and academic growth of every student. Supportive measures, such as assistive technology or individualized assessment conditions, may be introduced to aid language acquisition.
- Language assessment methods are designed to be flexible, allowing students with additional needs to showcase their language proficiency through varied means. Constructive feedback is tailored to individual abilities, fostering a growth mindset and promoting ongoing improvement. Appropriate IB access arrangements, including scribing or the use of assistive devices, may be employed to facilitate equitable assessment experiences.

Diploma Programme (DP) / Career-related Programme (CP):

- Accommodations tailored to individual needs are provided for language learning and assessment. This ensures that students of determination can fully engage with language content, tasks, and examinations while receiving appropriate support. IB access arrangements, such as a reader or the use of specialized software, may be considered to facilitate language-related tasks and assessments.
- Teachers, learning support specialists, and families collaborate to design and implement language learning plans that align with students' Individual Education Plans (IEPs). This collaborative effort ensures that language instruction is purposeful and effective. Specific IB access arrangements, including braille materials or sign language interpretation, are determined through consultation to address unique language needs.
- Student progress in language learning is continuously monitored, and feedback is shared with students, parents, and specialists. As students move through the DP/CP, their language skills are nurtured, supporting successful transitions to higher education and beyond. Appropriate IB access arrangements are implemented to ensure language proficiency does not impede academic growth and future pursuits.
- On identifying a need for learning support, subject teachers (in collaboration with the DP/CP Coordinator), refer students to the SEND coordinator. The SEND Coordinator initiates the process of consultation with all concerned parties to ensure school support. The DP/CP Coordinator will register the students officially to the IB inclusion list and await approval for accommodations in their coursework and assessments.

By embedding inclusion within the language policy across the PYP, MYP, and DP/CP, AIA ensures that students with additional needs receive comprehensive and equitable language instruction. This includes considering and implementing IB access arrangements that further support their language acquisition, ensuring that all students can excel academically and linguistically.

Differentiation and Personalization/Individualization

Teachers are expected to cater to the needs of high, middle and lower ability students in the language of instruction through outcome, task, resources or support. They are expected to use further personalized strategies based on individual needs of students, which are determined through the triangulation of teacher observations, internal formative and summative assessments and benchmark assessments such as: (CAT4, NGRT, PT, Arabic Benchmark Test Etqaan).

Based on the individual needs of students, IEPs (Individual Education Plans) are created with individualized goals and strategies to ensure all students make optimum progress from their individual starting points. A range of assessments are used to identify HPL *High Performance Learners* (Able Gifted & Talented) students as well as those requiring extra personalized support through intervention or inclusion support.

In the Secondary School, students are placed in Language Acquisition classes according to the IB's continuum of language learning phases. The school has a placement policy that allows student movement (typically at the end of the academic year) in relation to student progression along this continuum. In English, students will be set in mixed ability groups to allow for widely differentiated lessons and activities.

Teachers personalize teaching and learning strategies by:

- Using texts that children can read and understand.
- Using visual and written materials in different formats.
- Using ICT, other technological aids and recorded materials.
- Using teaching assistants to facilitate personalized learning where appropriate.
- Using specialists in the learning support department where appropriate.

Support for HPL *High Performance Learners* (Able, Gifted and Talented Students)

Students who have been identified as HPL attempt differentiated, more challenging activities in class. Teachers use strategies that further encourage vocabulary development, reading and writing across the curriculum, and expose HPL to more advanced forms of literature and informational texts. Teachers will choose texts to suit the ability levels in the classroom. Teachers work with other specialists in order to ensure continuity of the delivery.

Support for Home country language

During classroom instructions, students are encouraged to communicate in the language of instruction. However, outside classroom home country language is encouraged through activities such as (International Day, assemblies, field trips and student presentations).

If a student wishes to study a language and literature or an additional language acquisition subject which is not offered by the school, they can study their home country language outside of school time.

Where a language is not offered by the school, the following routes are available:

- In the Diploma Programme, students may study their home country language as a school-supported self-taught (SSST) Language A: Literature course at Standard Level, subject to IB requirements and the agreement of the DP Coordinator.
- In the MYP, home country language tuition may be arranged with an external provider, at additional cost to families, where sufficient demand exists.
- Language clubs and classes are offered within the after-school activities programme, subject to demand and staffing.

Home country languages are also supported and celebrated in the daily life of the school:

- Data on home languages is gathered at admission and shared with teachers so that language profiles inform planning.
- Students are encouraged to use their home country language for thinking, planning, note-making and peer explanation, particularly when engaging with new or complex concepts.
- The libraries maintain a dual-language and world literature collection, and families are invited to contribute titles.
- International Day, assemblies, displays and class-level activities give visibility and status to the languages represented in our community.
- Parents are encouraged to continue developing the home country language at home through reading, conversation and community links, and are informed that doing so supports rather than hinders English acquisition.

Language Development in the Context of the IB Learner Profile

In line with IB Programmes, the language programme not only helps students to gain an instrumental means of communication, but it also helps them develop the cognitive, emotional and attitudinal skills which promote a well-balanced and holistic education. We strive for students to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to be:

1. **Inquirers:** They use language as their prime medium of inquiry to make sense of the world around them.
2. **Thinkers:** They use language precisely and skillfully in the context of higher-level thinking to express their thoughts and ideas clearly and succinctly.

3. **Communicators:** They are confident users of oral and written language in a variety of situations.
4. **Risk-takers:** They attempt to read, write and speak in situations where they may not feel totally competent.
5. **Knowledgeable:** They understand the internal structures of language and the various influences on its development. They have experience with a wide range of literature and acquire the vocabulary and understanding to discuss different literary styles.
6. **Principled:** They are aware that language is powerful, that it can have a profound effect and that it must be used responsibly.
7. **Caring:** They show responsible and respectful behaviour towards the use of diverse languages, and they value literature for the insight it gives into the feelings of others.
8. **Open-minded:** They respect differences and similarities between languages and dialects. They are aware of the use of language as an expression of bias and strive to maintain an objective stance.
9. **Well-balanced:** They are aware of the need for an educated person to be an effective communicator. They use literature for both learning and leisure.
10. **Reflective:** They reflect upon their own levels of language development in their home country language and other languages. They consciously work at improving their language proficiency.

Links to the IB Approaches to Learning

Through approaches to learning (ATL) in the IB programmes, students develop skills that have relevance across the curriculum that help them “learn how to learn”. ATL skills provide a solid foundation for learning independently and with others. The ATL skills are interconnected across subjects and students are expected to develop all strands. The following ATLs have been identified as vital components of language learning in both helping a student develop language skills and using them successfully in lessons and assessments.

1. **Communication Skills** Exchanging thoughts, messages, and information effectively through interaction reading, writing and using language to gather and communicate information.
2. **Social Skills: Collaboration Skills** Working effectively with others requires language.
3. **Research: Information literacy skills** Finding, interpreting, judging, and creating information.
4. **Research: Media literacy skills** Interacting with media to use and create ideas and information.
5. **Thinking Skills: Critical-thinking skills** Analysing and evaluating issues and ideas.
6. **Thinking Skills: Creative-thinking skills** Generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives.

Practices for Implementing Reading, Writing, Oral and Visual Skills

IB Primary Years Programme (PYP)

In line with the IB PYP, we develop students’ use of language, appreciation of language, awareness of the nature of language, of the many influences on language, and of the variety in and between languages and dialects. Through regular teaching and learning we ensure that students understand the transdisciplinary nature of language, use language within and across the subject areas, both inside and outside the classroom. They are encouraged to recognise

that competency in language, and in more than one language, is a valuable life skill, a powerful tool both in societal communication and as a means of personal reflection. Furthermore, learning that language and literature are creative processes encourages the development of imagination and creativity through self-expression. Students learn oral language, visual language, written language across and throughout the curriculum.

Oral language—listening and speaking

At AIA we provide meaningful and well-planned opportunities for learners to participate as listeners as well as speakers through debates, show and tell opportunities, elocution competitions, project presentation etc. Oral language involves recognizing and using certain types of language according to the audience and purposes (for example, the language used at home, the language of the classroom, the language of play, the language of inquiry, conversations with peers, giving instructions, interpreting creative texts, the language of fantasy, etc.).

Visual Language—Viewing and Presenting

These processes involve interpreting, using and constructing visuals and multimedia in a variety of situations and for a range of purposes and audiences. They allow students to understand the ways in which images and language interact to convey ideas, values and beliefs. We create opportunities for students to view and present their work or ideas through advertisements, posters, illustrations, graphic organizers, comics etc. Students get opportunities to explore the function and construction of images to facilitate the process of critically analysing a range of visual texts.

Written Language—Reading

In line with IB PYP and the National Agenda Parameters expectations, reading is an integral part of the curriculum. At AIA reading is embedded in regular lessons, and through a wide range of learning opportunities. We endeavour to develop lifelong reading habits, creating opportunities for learners to have extended periods of time to read for pleasure, interest, and information, experiencing an extensive range of quality fiction and non-fiction texts. As learners engage with interesting and appealing texts, appropriate to their experiences and developmental phase, they acquire the skills, strategies, and conceptual understanding necessary to become competent, motivated, independent readers. We have two well-stocked libraries (Primary and Secondary) with a variety of books of all genres and diverse languages and reading corners in all classrooms. Guided reading is an integral part of the curriculum.

Written Language—Writing

Writing is a way of expressing ourselves. It is a personal act that grows and develops with the individual. Students organize and communicate thoughts, ideas, and information in a visible and tangible way. Writing is primarily concerned with communicating meaning and intention. Children are encouraged to express themselves and reveal their own “voice”, through writing. Writing is an integral part of the curriculum across PYP. In lessons and outside opportunities are created for students to actively share their thoughts and ideas through writing. Students follow the process of planning, drafting, editing, proof reading, revising, and publishing their work. The focus is on meaning rather than

accuracy. They are exposed to different genres to add depth. In PYP teachers develop the understanding of the rules of punctuation, grammar, spellings, and handwriting. They incorporate a variety of spelling strategies such as spelling conventions, high frequency words and unit related vocabulary.

MYP and DP/CP

To promote inquiry-based language learning within the context of the MYP, our school recognises the importance of incorporating the teaching and learning of language through each subject discipline as well as the IB Approaches to Learning. The mastery of the essential language skills - reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing - is a vital part of a student's overall development.

Reading practices

- Reading will take place in all subject areas, and students will read across the curriculum whenever appropriate.
- A variety of practices will be used when planning for instruction, including but not limited to, guided reading groups, differentiated reading instruction, word lists, graphic organisers and the use of leveled reading material.
- Students will be encouraged to read for information, read for pleasure, read aloud expressively, discuss, analyse, compare and contrast the texts they read.
- Students will be exposed to a variety of genres, including multicultural literature, poetry, plays, short stories, newspapers, magazines and informational texts.
- Students will learn how to understand, interpret and respond to the ideas, attitudes and feelings expressed in various texts, to think critically about what they read and to be able to make predictions and inferences based on information that is both explicit and implicit in a text.
- Teachers will promote and incorporate supplementary reading incentives and support programmes.
- Vocabulary building techniques will be used across the curriculum whenever appropriate, e.g. word walls, word of the day, spelling programmes, use of idioms, metaphors, and similes.
- Students will participate in Drop Everything and Read on a weekly basis in school in the MYP.

Oral Language Practices

- Teachers will model correct language use in conversation, while being sensitive to students' cultural backgrounds and home country languages.
- Students will be provided with opportunities to develop and utilise oral language beyond everyday classroom conversations. This will be done through oral presentations, assemblies, debates, speeches, role-play, poetry recitations, songs, books on tape, listening stations and performing arts.
- Teachers will plan activities that expose students to the conventions of oral language and aid them in responding appropriately to a range of contexts and audiences.

Writing practices

- Students' natural desire to communicate through writing will be fostered by giving real purpose to their writing, and by exposing them to varied, challenging and meaningful writing opportunities.
- There will be consistency in promoting the writing process (planning, drafting, editing, proofreading, revising, and publishing) throughout the grade levels.
- Students will be encouraged to focus on meaning first rather than accuracy and to enjoy the writing process in MYP.
- Students will be provided with opportunities to express themselves in writing through different genres.
- Students will be provided with opportunities to acquire, develop and use language specific to relevant subject areas.
- Constructive feedback from teachers, peers, and other adults will support the development of writing.
- Teachers will model and provide instruction with the correct use of language conventions, including spelling, grammar, rules of punctuation and handwriting.
- Teachers will incorporate a variety of spelling strategies including spelling conventions and patterns, high frequency words and unit/subject-related vocabulary.
- Academic writing sessions will be conducted during open classes to help students develop professional writing skills.

Viewing and presenting practices

- Students will have the opportunity to create visual presentations, and to use multimedia in a variety of situations and for a range of purposes and audiences.
- Opportunities will be provided for students to view high quality performances in a variety of media.

Language and Admissions

All applicants are assessed at the admissions stage in line with programme expectations and the Admissions Policy. During admission the school collects data identifying the student's home country language, the language used at home, the language of instruction at previous schools and any other languages known.

- English proficiency is assessed through admissions assessments and standardised data such as CAT4 and NGRT, and students who may require ELL support are identified at this stage.
- Placement in Arabic A or Arabic B is determined by passport in accordance with Ministry of Education and KHDA regulations, as set out above.
- Students entering from Grade 6 onwards are placed in French or Spanish language acquisition according to the IB phases of language learning and their prior study.
- Entry to English Language and Literature in the Diploma Programme is subject to the MYP attainment criteria set out in this policy.
- Where the school judges that a student's language needs cannot be met with the provision available, this is

discussed openly with the family before an admissions decision is confirmed, in line with the Admissions and Inclusion Policies.

Language Assessment

Language is assessed according to programme and framework – PYP, MYP, DP and CP – as defined in the Assessment Policy. Assessment of language is both formative and summative and takes place in all subjects, not only in language classes.

- Teachers assess the five interrelated areas of speaking, listening, reading, writing and viewing.
- Standardised and benchmark assessments – CAT4, NGRT, Progress Tests and the Arabic benchmark assessment (Etqaan) – are used alongside internal formative and summative assessment to triangulate judgements and identify need.
- Progress of English Language Learners is additionally tracked against CEFR descriptors and the IB phases of language acquisition.
- Progress in language is reported formally to students and parents at each main reporting stage.
- IB access arrangements are applied where approved, so that assessment measures subject understanding rather than language proficiency alone.

Recognition of Linguistic and Dialectical Differences

As an international school, AIA recognises the differences between dialects and varieties of English, French and Spanish. These differences are welcomed in students' spoken and written work, and no variety is preferred over another. We do, however, require consistency of usage within a single piece of work. In line with KHDA regulation, Arabic educators adopt Modern Standard Arabic in conversation and in curriculum delivery.

Language of Communication

English is the language of instruction and of school administration, and school communication is conducted in English and, for communication with parents and visitors, in English and Arabic. The school promotes respect and open-mindedness in communication and provides individual linguistic support – including translation or interpretation at meetings and for key documents – where possible and within reason, so that language is not a barrier to a family's participation in their child's education.

Roles and Responsibilities in Language Learning

Responsibility for language learning at AIA is shared across the community.

Learners

- Become active language learners through inquiry and authentic, real-life application.
- Work towards operational proficiency in more than one language.

- Are respectful of the languages and cultures of others.
- See language as a tool for lifelong learning, and reflect on their own progress.

Parents

- Value and share responsibility for the development of their child's language skills.
- Recognise the time and pace at which language skills develop.
- Maintain and develop the home country language at home.
- Participate in meetings regarding the IB programmes and the language of instruction.
- Support the Language Policy, including by seeking opportunities for language exposure beyond school.

All Teachers and Teaching Assistants

- Accept that every teacher is a teacher of language and is responsible for language development in their subject.
- Use a range of strategies to help learners comprehend, interpret, evaluate and respond to sources in a variety of languages and cultures.
- Plan for the language demands of their subject, including subject-specific vocabulary and text types.
- Encourage learners to maintain and value their home country language and to respect that of others.
- Give specific and constructive linguistic feedback.
- Include language teaching and learning within their continuous professional development.

Language, ELL and Arabic Specialists

- Assess, place, monitor and report on the progress of students receiving language support.
- Maintain registers, language passports and entry and exit records.
- Advise and coach colleagues on strategies for language learners in mainstream lessons.
- Coordinate with the inclusion team where a student has both language and learning needs.

Librarians

- Build and maintain a collection that is culturally and linguistically diverse, including dual-language and world literature titles.
- Support reading for pleasure and independent research across the programmes.

IB Coordinators and School Leadership

- Approve entry to, modification of and exit from language support programmes.
- Provide the resources, staffing and timetabling necessary to deliver a high-quality language programme.
- Review the language profiles of prospective teachers at recruitment so that curricular and pedagogical needs are met.
- Provide professional development in language teaching strategies and assessment.
- Ensure the school meets Ministry of Education and KHDA requirements in relation to Arabic and Islamic Studies.

Monitoring, Review and Publication

This policy is the product of collaboration between the Heads of School, the PYP, MYP and DP/CP Coordinators, the

Heads of English, MFL and Arabic, the Head of Inclusion and the school librarians, with input from teachers. It is reviewed annually, and additions and adjustments are made as needed; input from students and parents is also welcome. The policy is shared with all staff at induction and is available in the staff handbook, and is communicated to parents through the school website and parent information sessions.

The policy is shared with the school community on Ambassador International Academy's website – www.aiadubai.com.

References and resources:

- IBO, Guidelines for developing a school language policy, IBO, 2008, English
- IBO, Learning in a language other than mother tongues in IB programmes, IBO, 2008, English, https://resources.ibo.org/data/g_0_iboxx_amo_0804_1_e.pdf
- IBO, Language Scope and Sequence (PYP), IBO, 2009, English
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