



International School Delft Language Policy

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Philosophy

At International School Delft (ISD) we believe that language is fundamental to all teaching and learning as it is central to the entire curriculum. Throughout our programme we nurture the development of English as the language of instruction, Dutch and students' mother tongues. All teachers recognise and understand the importance of language and that it plays a key role in all teaching and learning.

Objectives

- To guide teaching and learning
- To celebrate the languages of our community
- To enable our students to learn through language the skills, attitudes, concepts and knowledge necessary to become independent life-long learners who are able to think critically and creatively
- To ensure members of our community have an understanding of the importance of language development in student learning

Language Learning at International School Delft

Language occurs in all subject areas and in every aspect of our school community. Language is used as a tool to communicate needs, feelings, ideas and experiences and to develop an understanding of the world. It is essential for the development of social, emotional and cognitive skills. Language is used differently in different contexts and for different audiences; it changes over time.

Language development is the acquiring and applying of a set of skills and attitudes as well as an understanding of the use of language. Language consists of five skills or strands (listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting), which operate interactively. Language skills can be further developed by challenging people's level of understanding and providing good models of effective communication. Developing confidence as a communicator is critical to becoming a productive and positive member of the world in which we live.

Oral Language: Speaking and Listening

Aim

To develop as fully as possible each student's competence, confidence and enjoyment in speaking and listening

Approaches

Speaking and listening activities are embedded throughout the curriculum to help students develop their ideas and explore their understanding.

The classroom environment encourages the use of communication and provides opportunities for students to interact verbally. The school provides a meaningful context and real purpose for language usage. Wherever appropriate we integrate talk into the

learning process as a whole. Students explore and experience language through a wide variety of situations, for example questioning, discussions and debate, drama/role play and hot seating. Stories, poems and songs include examples from different cultures and authors and from pupils' own work. Students are grouped in different ways in order to facilitate discussion and collaborative work, enabling them to share ideas and opinions. Students are allowed to experiment, make mistakes and gradually build confidence in themselves and their ideas. Students' home languages are valued and respected.

In addition there are weekly 'circle time' discussions. The students also take part in assemblies and Christmas and end-of-year productions, which provide opportunities for public speaking.

Throughout the school year there are opportunities for the students to present their learning in various forms.

Visual Language: Viewing and Presenting

Aims

To give students opportunities to view and present in a variety of ways including interpreting and using and constructing visual and multimedia representations

To experience and understand how images and language interact to show ideas, beliefs and values

Approaches

Viewing and presenting are fundamental processes that are powerful and significant in developing language. Visual images immediately engage viewers, allowing them instant access to data. Therefore, opportunities are provided to explore the function and construction of images in order to critically analyse a wide variety of media. Learning to understand and use different media expands the sources of information and expressive abilities of students. Presenting information is an important skill that requires experience and practice. Language is a major connection between home and school. In the Primary Years Programme (PYP) classroom cooperative activities optimise development of all languages.

Written Language: Reading and Writing

Reading Aims

To develop each student's ability to read, understand and respond to all types of writing

For the student to be able to read for pleasure or information and understand what is read

Reading Approaches

Guided reading forms an important part of reading development. Reading A-Z is used to provide levelled reading support. Reading comprehension activities are planned during guided reading sessions. Teachers and helpers listen to children read on a regular basis in all year groups. Guided reading takes place from Group 2 up to Group 8. This reading experience provides an opportunity for a focused look at a particular text to develop comprehension skills, increase knowledge of vocabulary and promote an enjoyment of a wide range of more challenging texts. Independent reading takes place as 'quiet reading' or ERIC (Everyone Reading In Class).

The Jolly Phonics programme is introduced in Early Years and continued through to Groups 2 and 3 and further if necessary. It focuses on phoneme/grapheme recognition and the strategies of blending to read and segmenting to spell. Children in Group 2 and onwards are grouped according to phonic ability and receive daily sessions of focused teaching, learning and assessment. Regular assessment ensures children who are working below expected levels access intervention groups for regular pre- and post-teaching of the required phase.

When students are ready in Early Years the teacher gives them a levelled reading book. There is a wide range of schemes available allowing students to read across a broad band of books or move up through them. They progress through the bands from Level 0 to Level 16 of the Oxford Reading Tree. After the final level, students are classed as 'Free Readers' and choose their own books. These books are taken home with a reading record or communication book in which the parent/carer is asked to sign and may also make comments. Parents/carers, teachers and students use these reading logs to communicate about students' reading. Students are given regular opportunities to engage in independent and shared reading. Some children need daily reading sessions and are given extra support. Shared reading takes place within the class using the interactive whiteboard, Big Books or photocopied extracts. Students are encouraged to read aloud in order to gain confidence and to learn expression within a supportive environment. This may be in small or large groups depending on the activity and desired learning outcomes.

Children have their reading and understanding assessed using PM Benchmarks at least once a term. Students take out a school library book at least once a week. Class teachers read to their own classes regularly. Book fairs are often organised. Parents and students are encouraged to support the school through the purchasing of books. The school receives a commission, which is spent on purchasing more books for the students to enjoy.

Reading Assessment

At ISD students are formally assessed each term using the PM Benchmark for reading. The reading log is used to pass information between home and school. We follow the International Baccalaureate's Language Scope and Sequence. Progress is tracked through formative and summative assessments, which includes the use of the Bonnie Campbell Hill Reading Continuum.

Writing Aims

To develop students' growing ability to construct and convey meaning in written language

To teach students the skills of handwriting, including producing clear, consistent, well-formed handwriting

Writing Approaches

Jolly Phonics and emergent writing form the basis of early literacy lessons where children start to understand the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics). Children are gradually introduced to more sophisticated spelling patterns and word structures using the SWST (Single Word Spelling Test) spelling scheme as the first assessment starting point.

Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, which are taught implicitly and explicitly from Group 2 through Group 8.

Writing: Early Years to Group 3

Writing is sometimes factual, sometimes imaginative and sometimes based on personal experiences. Writing is transdisciplinary and used to write recounts and reports of investigations, trips and school visitors. The student's work is discussed and used to draw attention to purpose, style, presentation, grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Writing: Group 4 to Group 8

Students extend their experiences in writing for different purposes and audiences. Their skills are extended through producing formal, informal, personal and reflective writing. It can be informative, persuasive, poetic or in the form of role play, a story or a dialogue. Below are some examples:

Fiction

- Stories
- Diaries
- Playscripts
- Letters
- Poetry

Non-fiction

- Reports
- Recounts
- Explanations
- Instructions/lists
- Reflections
- Arguments/persuasive writing
- Letters

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Language

Aim

To use ICT to support our language teaching and motivate student learning

Approaches

The interactive whiteboards are used for writing information and for sharing texts, pictures, student work and video clips. Some other tools we use for learning from Group 5 to Group 8 are video, Glogster and Edublogs. Students use ICT wherever appropriate as an integral part of the writing process, including researching using the Internet. All students have access to ICT for drafting and for making finished products.

Home/School Links

Aims

To help parents encourage their children when developing literacy skills

To develop parents' understanding of language learning

ISD values the relationship with parents in supporting their children's literacy skills.

Approaches

Parents are involved in their children's learning by

- Attending regular parents' evenings provided by the school, which give them verbal information on their children's progress and their targets for the future.
- Viewing reading books sent home and marking in the reading log so that progress can be tracked.
- Attending meetings that are provided by the school when appropriate to learn about how ISD teaches reading/writing/phonics and how they can help.

Dutch

Aim

To provide a clear differentiated Dutch programme to accommodate both native and non-native speakers

Approaches

All students at International School Delft study Dutch to help them integrate into the local community and to develop their understanding of Dutch culture.

Dutch is offered as an additional language of study in Groups 1 through 8. Our goal in teaching Dutch is to promote an appreciation for our host country, to reinforce the understanding that people use languages other than English to communicate and to empower students to continue their study of Dutch and Dutch culture. Lessons are structured to provide children with an enjoyable introduction to the language and culture. Students learn the basic language necessary for simple day-to-day communications. Many games, songs and creative activities are incorporated into learning experiences. For native speakers, advanced, differentiated classes are offered to help develop reading and writing skills.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Aim

To support the learning of English as an additional language

At International School Delft we recognise that our student population predominantly consists of children who are learning English as an additional language. We celebrate the fact that our students speak different languages whilst supporting the learning of English as an additional language.

Approaches

Teachers differentiate their instruction to support individual learners in their language development. All teachers have experience teaching EAL students. Students have access to specialized EAL support depending on their needs and as identified by the school.

EAL teachers assess individual student needs on a regular basis. They use the prior knowledge and experience pupils have of English to enhance their learning. The EAL teacher works in partnership with parents and staff to develop a programme for the student. EAL staff use a variety of games and resources when developing a language programme.

EAL students may be taught in small groups. Learning sessions may take place in or out of the class depending on student needs and occur as often as necessary. EAL student progress is reviewed by the EAL teacher and class teacher on a regular basis.

EAL students can make rapid progress when learning English. Within two years, they may be competent English speakers when using English in social situations. However, it may take students from five to seven years to become fully competent in the use of academic language. Encouraging the use of the mother tongue language at home positively affects the time it takes to acquire English.

Mother Tongue

Aim

To recognise the importance of all students' maintaining and developing their home language(s)

At International School Delft we recognise that many of our students speak more than one language at home.

'It is now generally accepted that the better a child's roots are in his home language, the better the performance in the second language being learnt.'

Maurice Carder, 1993.

Approaches

We cater for children's mother tongues in different ways. This includes mother tongue sessions linked to our PYP units as well as offering lessons after school at an extra cost to parents. This involves using specialists from our community as is dependent on demand.