



## **ACS (International) Whole School Languages Policy**

### **Philosophy**

Our mission is to provide our students with a holistic education which encompasses a strong academic focus and an emphasis on the development of personal and social skills necessary to equip them for a future as responsible, caring and respectful citizens in a global community.

ACS (International) is a Singaporean International School catering for Singaporeans (50%) and students from around the world (50%). The medium of instruction and means of communication is English and students for whom English is not a first language are required to develop English proficiency to access the education on offer.

### **At ACS (International) we:**

- Recognise that language plays an important role in shaping thinking, developing understanding and communicating. As such, all teachers share responsibility for language development and competence.
- Recognise that administrators, teachers, librarians and other school staff will require professional development in the fields of language learning and teaching, and on how to make sure that the language policy is central to whole-school practice.
- Aim to promote international-mindedness amongst all stakeholders who bring cultural and linguistic diversity to our community whilst recognising that the articulation of these values in English will therefore take internal shape and be outwardly expressed in a language other than the student's own language for 50% of the school community.
- Understand that our school's values and its international-mindedness are articulated primarily in English.
- Are aware of and recognize the fact that, for the non-English speakers, there are different language learning experiences and that there is another 'language' process taking place.
- Recognise and respect students' linguistic and cultural heritage and foster the understanding that these are integral to individual identity.
- Ensure that there are practices in place to provide inclusion and equity of access to the full curriculum for all learners including those learning in a language other

than their mother tongue e.g. the Bridging Programme, language support and monitoring once the student is admitted onto the full mainstream programme.

### **English as the Medium of Instruction and Means of Communication**

- All lessons are conducted in English (except other language lessons e.g. Chinese).
- Other languages may not be used in class and staff and students must express their ideas in English.
- Students are expected to learn, process and express their learning in English.
- All teachers support ESL (English as a Second Language) and consider the language needs of all their students when planning.
- ESL and mainstream teachers collaborate regularly to ensure effective language support to their students.

### **First Language other than English at ACS (International)**

Students are encouraged to maintain and to develop proficiency in the use of their first language:

- The School will assist the student in seeking instruction to develop their first language by liaising with outside agencies (e.g. SINDA) to ensure provision of the mother tongue language for students whose mother tongue language is not offered as a taught language at ACS (International).
- At IBDP level provision is made through language A delivery. This may take the form of formal Language A delivery (special request languages) or school-supported languages.
- All staff and students at ACS (International) cultivate an awareness of their linguistic environment and aim, in formal and informal settings, to use the language that is the most inclusive so as not to exclude others.
- Students may draw upon their mother tongue to reinforce academic concepts.
- Speakers of languages other than English may use dictionaries and other resources to aid the learning process.
- In case of emergency the School will endeavour to use a student's first language or seek help from someone who speaks the student's mother tongue.

## **Second Languages at ACS (International)**

All students, with the exception of students in Bridging, at ACS (International) study a second language from Years 1 – 6 for the following reasons:

- We are an international school and foster international and inter-cultural understanding.
- The study of a foreign language equips students with a range of skills in language acquisition.
- It is a required component of the IBD.

All students will study at a level that is appropriate to their needs and which will challenge and develop their linguistic competence. Students expecting to follow courses of study in Chinese will be given a short assessment upon their arrival at the school.

## **Singaporean Students**

Singaporean students must study their Mother Tongue language up to the required MOE level. Should a Singaporean student not wish to take their MT language but prefer to study a new language from Year 1 to Year 6, they should understand that future application to a Singaporean university would not be possible.

## **Singaporean Students with MOE Mother Tongue Language (MTL) Exemption**

Such students need not study their MTL to the level required by MOE (Ministry of Education) for MTL. However, they will all study a second or foreign language.

Their options are as follows:

1. They study MTL in a Beginner's Class e.g. Mandarin Chinese
2. They take up a new foreign language which they can study at Core or Extended level depending on their ability.

## **Non-Singaporean Students**

Those students who are not Singaporean citizens or Permanent Residents (other than those following the Bridging programme) will:

Either:

Continue with the study of a second language already started in a previous school.

Or:

Begin a new, foreign language upon entry at ACS (International)

## **The study of language for the International Baccalaureate Diploma**

Students will study language at the appropriate level in order to continue the educational process of linguistic development.

At the point of entry onto the IB Diploma Programme, the School will assess the student's language competence in first and second languages. It is the School's responsibility to place the student on the most suitable and appropriate language course.

Students entering the IBDP from a First Language English curriculum and examination are not eligible for English B courses.

Students having studied English as a Second Language at IGCSE may consider English Language courses in Group 1 or English B (HL) in Group 2.

Native speakers of languages offered in Group 2 are not eligible for the study of their language in Group 2. In cases where the School is unable to provide their language in Group 1, such students may study their First Language as School Supported A1 Language in cases where their language is available.

Students may opt to study a new language at Ab Initio level. Singaporean students intending to apply to local universities must check that they have fulfilled all MTL entry requirements before opting for Ab Initio languages.

In all cases, the choice of an appropriate course of language study may only be made after appropriate consideration of the student's past language learning experience as well as their future educational and career plans.

### **Parents of students at ACS (International)**

All parents are briefed on the process of making appropriate choices for the study of language through school curriculum briefings and parent consultations.

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