



**POLICY TITLE:** **Language Policy**

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## **1. Definitions**

- 1.1 Language is fundamental to learning, thinking and communicating, and permeates the whole curriculum. It is necessary not only to learn language, but also learn about language and through language. Learning best takes place in authentic contexts, and literature plays a special role in enabling this to happen. The strands of oral, written and visual communication are learned across and throughout the subject areas. Each aspect is only relevant in relation to the whole.

## **2. Purpose**

- 2.1 This policy reflects the beliefs and values of the Red Hill School community about the importance of language acquisition in English (the language of instruction) and in French (the second language). This policy also specifies how each of these areas of language are currently taught.

## **3. Beliefs and values in language learning**

- 3.1 We believe that language learning is fundamental to all learning, and in particular, to developing effective communication skills. English is the language of instruction and is taught through a balanced approach that covers all components of English. The language program is differentiated to allow all students' access to the Primary Years Program (PYP). We provide an inclusive environment that values students' cultural backgrounds, mother tongue languages and offers opportunities to learn French as an additional language.

## **4. Policy**

### **4.1 English language learning**

- 4.1.1 The Australian curriculum is used in conjunction with the PYP Language Scope and Sequence to guide the development of English language programs.
- 4.1.2 The teaching of language is embedded mostly into the transdisciplinary programme of inquiry. This provides students with an authentic context for learning language. Teachers develop language programs collaboratively in year level teams and plan activities that are aligned with the units of inquiry.
- 4.1.3 Two Executive Professional Practice Teachers (ETPP) have been appointed to lead the development of consistent whole school literacy and numeracy practices. These

executive teachers work in classrooms supporting, coaching and mentoring colleagues with the aim of improving the learning outcomes for all students. Coaching and mentoring staff and providing professional training and development in literacy practices are key aspects of the ETPP's role.

- 4.1.4 Language is taught through a balanced literacy approach. A balanced literacy program incorporates a variety of literacy strategies, carefully selected materials for each activity and a responsive teacher.

## 4.2 Components of the Balanced Literacy Program

Language Experiences	Reading	Writing	Speaking and Listening	Visual Literacy
	Reading aloud to students (Modelled reading)	Modelled Writing		
	Shared Reading	Shared / Interactive Writing		
	Guided Reading	Guided Writing		
	Independent Reading	Independent Writing		

### 4.2.1 Language Experiences

- *Language experience* is used as a vehicle for jointly creating or sharing text that is then used for further literacy experiences in the classroom. As a result of the shared experience, oral language is generated and a written text is created. This jointly created text, scribed by the teacher, becomes the text for further reading and writing sessions.

### 4.2.2 Reading

- *Modelled reading* is conducted as a whole group, small-group, or one-on-one activity. Modelled reading involves the teacher reading in a fluent and phrased manner to model effective reading behaviours.
- *Shared reading* is conducted as a whole-group, small group, or one-on-one activity.
- *Guided reading* is generally a more formal, instructional reading activity conducted one-on-one or with small needs based groups. Students may be reading either

fictional texts or texts related to their unit of inquiry. Where ever possible guided reading activities are linked to the unit of inquiry.

- *Independent reading* involves students not only reading fiction books, but using non fiction texts for research linked to their unit of inquiry.

#### **4.2.3 Writing**

- *Modelled Writing* may be conducted as a whole-group, small group, or one-on-one activity. It involves the teacher composing text and demonstrating the way an effective writer works. Teachers teach the structure and language features of the particular text type associated with the unit of inquiry.
- *Shared writing* involves the class or small groups. The teacher initiates and models writing, while students contribute ideas. Teacher and students work together to compose various written pieces.
- *Interactive Writing* involves the teacher and students working together to compose joint texts. However, in interactive writing the students also help record the words and interact with the process of recording the words.
- *Guided Writing* involves very specific and focused instruction. It can be one-to-one or with small groups of students with similar needs. Each student in a group composes an individual piece of writing with the intense support of the teacher.
- *Independent Writing* involves students taking responsibility for their own writing. In developing written communication students are expected to read and write for enjoyment, instruction and information, develop an extensive vocabulary, recognise and appreciate the variety of literacy styles, genres and structures and develop competency in grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- *Spelling* is taught explicitly across the school using a balanced spelling approach equipping students with the ability to use a variety of spelling strategies to spell unknown words. Strategies taught develop the four areas of spelling knowledge, visual, auditory, morphemic and etymological, needed to be an efficient speller. Where ever possible spelling is taught in the context of writing and reading experiences.

#### **4.2.4 Speaking and Listening**

- *Speaking and listening* experiences focus on the explicit teaching of different forms of spoken language, speaking and listening processes, strategies and conventions, and the contextual aspects associated with understanding oral texts.

#### **4.2.5 Visual literacy**

- *Visual literacy* involves developing students' visual language skills so they can read visual texts and understand how images and language are constructed to convey ideas, values and beliefs. Visual texts may include maps, diagrams, timelines, tables,

graphs and various other forms of media and are used throughout the Programme of Inquiry.

## **4.3 Support Programs**

- 4.3.1 *The Learning Assistance Program* provides support to English speaking students who are experiencing difficulties in their language development. A team of support teachers provides this, either on an in-class or withdrawal basis. A Response to Intervention (RTI) program has been implemented that delivers intensive phonics and comprehension sessions for students in the early childhood years for periods of 6 – 8 weeks.
- 4.3.1 *Additional reading support programs* are provided by a range of community volunteers and cross age reading buddies.

## **4.4 French – the school’s additional language (LOTE)**

- 4.4.1 The teaching of languages at Red Hill School is based on the ACARA – Australian Curriculum: Languages French/F-10 Scope and Sequence and aims to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to ensure that students communicate in the target language, understand language, culture and the relationship between language and culture and thereby, develop an intercultural capability in communication, as well as, understand themselves as communicators.
- 4.4.2 The Languages Other Than English (LOTE) program is staffed by a full-time specialist French teacher who is a fluent French speaker. In addition, class teachers are encouraged to reinforce the French language by displaying completed work, reinforcing key vocabulary and by using French language signs around the classroom.
- 4.4.3 The French specialist teaches all classes from Kindergarten to Year 6. Each class having one 45 minute lesson per week.
- 4.4.4 The French specialist follows the Bonjour and Sava French program developed by the Scottish Education Department which contains a series of comprehensive French language units, aimed at developing proficiency in the French language when taught in a logical and sequential order and also the BBC Muzzy 1 and 2 programmes. The Muzzy program emphasizes the listening and speaking skills as well as the acquisitions of reading and writing in French. Where ever possible links are also made to units of inquiry being undertaken in the regular classroom as well.
- 4.4.5 The library has established a collection of French language and mother tongue resources to support a culturally inclusive curriculum. French books, curriculum resources and DVDs support the development of the French language in the school. Valuable advice and assistance have also been provided through the contacts and network that library staff have established with the French Embassy.

- 4.4.6 French assemblies are held to promote the importance of the French language in the school and to provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate their learning and development in oral French. All assemblies also have a French language component with introductions, directions and some key information translated into French.
- 4.4.7 Bilingual classroom and school signs are used to reinforce the importance of French as an additional language.
- 4.4.8 French events and experiences such as breakfasts and story reading days are conducted to provide authentic opportunities for students to practise their French.
- 4.4.9 The specialist French teacher reports on student achievement and progress in learning French to parents twice a year in student reports and portfolios. Special French events and assemblies also provide parents with information and feedback.
- 4.4.10 Professional development opportunities are available to the specialist French teacher through the school's PYP Induction Program, through the ACT Department of Education and Training's LOTE Teacher Professional Development Programme and through Professional Associations such as Alliance Francais.

## **4.5 Language Provision for English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EALD)**

- 4.5.1 The school's provision for EALD students is underpinned by ELA 15 of the ACT Curriculum Framework 'Every Chance to Learn', as well as the ACARA "English as an Additional Language or Dialect: Teacher Resource" document. This Document provides benchmarks for learning progressions for English language learning typical of students learning EALD.
- 4.5.2 EALD learning involves learning and understanding a new language and socialising in a new culture.
- 4.5.3 Staffing allocation for EALD assistance is determined by the ACT Dept of Education based upon the English language achievement levels of EALD students.
- 4.5.4 Newly enrolling students with minimal English are eligible to enrol in an Intensive English Program for up to three school terms at the Introductory English Centre located at Hughes Primary School.
- 4.5.5 EALD teachers work with individuals and groups of students in a variety of settings using targeted and highly supported teaching in collaboration with the class teacher. This is designed to best assist students to access the oral, written and visual language of the transdisciplinary program of inquiry at their year level. Specific instruction is provided in vocabulary, grammar and spelling to support EALD students as they develop competence as English language learners.
- 4.5.6 EALD teachers plan collaboratively with year level teaching teams and consult with individual teachers regarding the needs of individual EALD students.
- 4.5.7 EALD teachers formally communicate student's progress to parents twice a year as an attachment to the general student report.

## **4.6 Mother Tongue Language Support**

- 4.6.1 The librarian and library assistant continue to build a collection of mother tongue language books. These multilingual books can be read by students to support their mother tongue, by teachers to enrich language provision in the classroom, or by parents when they come to participate in language rotations
- 4.6.1 A list of the mother tongues commonly spoken in the school is maintained and used to plan mother tongue provision and support. The specialist French teacher is provided with a time allocation to coordinate Mother Tongue activities across the school.
- 4.6.2 A range of other activities are also held to increase the awareness and capacity of mother tongue support in the school, including for example, celebrating national days and a mother tongue languages day. Future plans also include establishing a mother tongue buddies system where older students assist younger students on an ‘as needs’ basis.

## **5. Related documents/resources**

*Making it Happen – A curriculum framework for international primary education*

*IB Guidelines for developing a school language policy*

*PYP Language scope and sequence*

*The Primary Years Programme – A basis for practice*

*English and a Second Language or Dialect Teacher Resource document*

*Australian English Curriculum English and Languages: French*

*First Steps second edition: Writing, Reading, Speaking and Listening (Resource books, Maps of Development and Linking Assessment Teaching and Learning books).*