

POLICY TITLE: Language Policy

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1. School Context

Opened in 1960, Red Hill caters to a diverse student clientele in the inner south of Canberra, drawing families from diplomatic, government, defence force, university and other backgrounds. As an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, Red Hill provides an inclusive, international education for students in preschool to year 6.

The Australian Curriculum and the Early Years Learning Framework are delivered through the five essential elements of the IB's Primary Years Programme (PYP). This inquiry-based philosophy is underpinned by the belief that thinking and understandings are best built when children are curious, engaged and responsible for their own learning.

2. Beliefs that support and underpin our Language Policy

We believe that language permeates the world in which we live and is therefore fundamental to all learning. It is the major connecting element across the programme. Red Hill School's Language Policy supports the International Baccalaureate's view that the development of language is fundamental in the need to communicate; it supports and enhances our thinking and understanding and underpins successful social interactions and relationships.

- 2.1 As an International Baccalaureate (IB) world school we aim to create a positive inquiry-based learning culture that encompasses all aspects of teaching and learning, meets the needs of all learners and is driven by evidence-based practice.
- 2.2 To prepare students for the increasingly complex life and work environments they will experience in their future, we need to incorporate the fundamental skills of creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration. English is the language of instruction and is taught through a balanced approach that covers all components of the Australian Curriculum standards for English. We provide an inclusive environment that values students' cultural backgrounds and mother tongue languages and offers opportunities to learn French, Mandarin and other additional languages.

3. Overview

The teaching of additional languages is embedded in the transdisciplinary Programme of Inquiry. This provides students with authentic learning experiences for the acquisition of language. Specialist language teachers aim to develop language programmes collaboratively with year level teachers and align Australian Curriculum requirements with a focus on oral, visual and written language.

4. English

Following Halliday's model of 'learn language, learn about language and learn through language' allows us to build on concepts, skills and processes developed in earlier years. The individual literacy learning needs of students are catered for through individualised programs and differentiation.

A variety of strategies, resources and support mechanisms are used to scaffold student success and allow every student to achieve. A love of literature and language is fostered through the use of engaging and rich text and the six areas of reading needed to successfully program and teach literacy: oral language, phonological awareness, letter-sound knowledge, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. These six areas are focussed on building skills, knowledge and understandings.

5. Additional Language Provision

Language education enriches learners intellectually, linguistically and culturally, enabling them to communicate in multiple ways. It strengthens the understanding of one's own culture and identity and helps the learner to understand global commonality and difference. Learning another language builds neural pathways, increasing cognitive ability and lateral thinking. It prepares learners for greater immersion in life.

5.1 Additional Language Provision for English as an Additional Language/ Dialect (EAL/D)

The IB is committed to increasing intercultural understanding and is equally committed to providing an education that is accessible to children from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

EAL/D teachers work with individuals and groups of students using targeted and highly supported teaching in collaboration with classroom teachers. 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 EAL/D students as they develop competence as English language learners.

EAL/D teachers formally moderate student's progress twice throughout the academic year to assess eligibility of EAL/D funding; this process allows the EAL/D team to ascertain necessary levels of intervention, therefore ensuring equitable allocation of support.

5.2 Additional Languages

Specialist teachers of French and Mandarin deliver a specific language and culture study programme from kindergarten to year 6. Each class engages in weekly sessions. Class teachers are encouraged to reinforce these languages by modelling key vocabulary such as greetings and days of the week and incorporating signs around the classroom and school.

Students at Red Hill School have the opportunity to learn two of the six official languages of the United Nations. Younger students (P-3) study French language and culture, whilst older students (years 4 to 6) study Mandarin language and Chinese culture. Students therefore have the opportunity to learn both Asian and European languages and their different scripts (Chinese characters and Latin alphabet), before reaching Telopea Park, our feeder high school, where they will be able to select one of eight languages (Asian and European) for further study.

Additionally, the school supports adults and students to engage with additional languages by offering:

- a 'continuing French' class for senior students on Friday mornings (8.30am-9.00am)
- a French lunchtime club on Thursdays for all interested students and staff
- after school French and Mandarin classes, run by the ACT Community Language Schools Association, and
- adult Mandarin classes on Friday mornings before school.

Mother Tongue

The variety of languages that students bring to a PYP school may be complex and diverse; however, the influence of mother tongue development is significant for all learners. It is acknowledged that the continued use of mother tongue language is crucial for cognitive growth and in maintaining cultural identity. For a child to be successful in learning another language they must have a strong mother tongue. We are committed to the continued development of a child's first language by allowing, promoting and facilitating an ongoing exposure to a variety of languages through the ['ACT Community Language Schools Association'](#), recognition of cultural events and guest speakers.

Related documents/resources

Australian English Curriculum [English as a Second Language or Dialect Teacher Resource](#)

Australian Curriculum [English](#) and [Languages](#)

Australian Curriculum [Cross Curriculum Priorities](#)

Australian Curriculum [General Capabilities: Intercultural Understanding](#)

Halliday, M.A.K. (2004). *Three Aspects of Children's Language Development: Learning Language, Learning through Language, Learning about Language*.

IB, (2005-2017). *Guidelines for developing a school language policy*

IB, (2018). *From Principles to Practice: Language in the PYP*

IB, (2018). *PYP Language scope and sequence*

Red Hill School, (2020). *How to help your child if English is not their first language*.

United Nations: *Official Languages*. Retrieved at <https://www.un.org/en/our-work/official-languages#:~:text=There%20are%20six%20official%20languages,%2C%20French%2C%20Russian%20and%20Spanish> on 23/7/21.

Schools and Playgroups

Language	Playgroup
Chinese	Mandarin for Fun
French	Les Petite Etoiles French Language Playgroup
German	Spiel und Spass German playgroups
Language	School
Arabic	Canberra Islamic School (CIS)
Arabic	Canberra Islamic Centre Community School
Arabic	Arab Academic and Cultural Community Service
Arabic	Taqwa Language School
Bangla	Bangla Language and Cultural School
Cambodian	Canberra Cambodian School
Chinese	Australia School of Contemporary Chinese
Chinese	Canberra Chinese School
Chinese	Canberra Community Chinese School
Chinese	FCCCI Chinese School
Chinese (Traditional)	TACA Mandarin Language School
Croatian	Croatian Ethnic School ACT Inc.
Dari	Dari Language School
Dzongkha	Dzongkha Class Canberra
Dutch	Abeltje, Dutch School Canberra
Filipino	Filipino Language School of Canberra (FLSC)
Finnish	Canberra Finnish School / Canberran Suomi-Koulu
French	Alliance Française de Canberra
German	ACT German Language School Inc
German	German Australian Playschool
Greek	St. Nicholas Greek School
Hebrew	ACT Jewish Community Language School
Hindi	Canberra Hindi School
Hindi	Hindu Education Foundation
Italian	Italian Language School
Japanese	Canberra Japanese Supplementary High School

Language	School
Japanese	Canberra Japanese Supplementary School Incorporated
Japanese	CJC (Canberra Japan Club) Community Language School
Japanese	CJC Japanese Language Kindergarten
Karen	Kaw Lah
Khmer	Canberra Cambodian School
Korean	Canberra Korean School of Education
Macedonian	Macedonian School – St. Kliment of Ohrid Canberra
Malayalam	Malayalam Vidhya Vedhi
Maori	Australian-New Zealand Maori Culture School of Dreams
Persian	Persian Language School
Polish	Polish Language School, Phillip
Portuguese	Monaro Portuguese School
Punjabi	Canberra Khalsa Punjabi School
Russian	St John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Church School
Samoan	Samoa Language School
Serbian	Dositei Serbian Language School
Sinhalese	Sri Lanka Sinhala Language School in Canberra
Sinhalese	Buddhism and Sinhala Language School of Sri Lanka Dhamma
Spanish	Ositos Cool
Swedish	Scandinavian School in Canberra, Swedish Section
Tamil	Canberra Tamil School
Tamil	Chennai Tamil School
Telugu	Telugu Badi
Tibetan	ACT Tibetan Community Language School
Tongan	ACT Tongan Language and Cultural School
Tongan	The Association Tongan School
Vietnamese	Canberra Vietnamese School