

Whole-School Language Policy

Section A: Policy Statement

The school supports the IB philosophy and is “committed to supporting multilingualism as a fundamental part of increasing intercultural understanding and international-mindedness, and is equally committed to extending access ... for students from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.” (IB Language Policy, 2022)

Objectives

Among the many distinguishing characteristics of Chinese International School (CIS), none is more foundational or central to the School’s mission than that of bilingual education in Chinese and English. Chinese is taught in Putonghua. Among bilingual schools, which comprise a small percentage of schools worldwide, CIS is unusual in that neither of its two languages is the predominant language spoken in the local community.

Recognizing that each instance of language has an impact on school culture and therefore on learning, and believing that bilingual education in Chinese and English is a powerful means of producing young people who see themselves as global citizens, CIS seeks in this document to provide a framework for best practice.

Outcomes

The whole school community supports the "learning community that champions bilingualism, cross-cultural understanding and East-West partnership" (*from CIS' Definition of Learning*)

To promote multilingualism and interculturalism, CIS will:

1. Ensure that all teachers are aware of their role as teachers of language and literacy.
2. Ensure that all taught languages are valued and integrated into the everyday life of the School.
3. Provide the conditions necessary for students to develop their full potential in all taught languages.
4. Provide a rich bilingual environment in order to develop students' understanding and appreciation of the associated cultures.
5. Encourage excellence in learning and teaching all taught languages.
6. Ensure that teachers have access to quality external and internal language and literacy professional development and work collegially to improve practice.
7. Seek to be a leader in bilingual education.

Process of Implementation

The following are the processes implemented to support the achievement of the seven outcomes.

The school:

1. Champions the fact that all teachers are teachers of language and ensures that all teachers are aware of their role as teachers of language and literacy
2. Ensures that all taught languages are valued in the everyday life of the School
 - All major publications are produced in Chinese and English.
 - Chinese and English languages are used as mediums of instruction.
 - The use of Chinese and English in presentations, assemblies, committees, meetings and other occasions is actively promoted.
 - Chinese and English are used by students and others in informal situations.
 - Students have the opportunity to select and learn additional languages (French or Spanish) in the secondary school.
 - All taught languages are represented in the school library.
3. Provides the conditions necessary for students to develop their full potential in all taught languages
 - The curriculum actively promotes the bilingual mission.
 - Students seek to maximize their potential in language acquisition.
 - Students' language ability is assessed on a regular basis in Primary and Secondary School to ensure they are placed in a class of an appropriate level.
 - CIS provides a year-long residential programme for Year 10 students based in Hangzhou, focused on immersing them in Chinese language, culture and other aspects of contemporary China.
4. Provides a rich bilingual environment in order to develop students' understanding and appreciation of the associated cultures
 - This policy is embedded in the values, educational philosophy,, curriculum and daily life of the School.
 - Members of the CIS community are aware of and sensitive to the social and cultural dimensions of language.
 - All constituents demonstrate an understanding of the centrality of language in the formation of cultural identity.
 - Students participate in a range of activities designed to enhance cultural awareness and values.
 - Library resources reflect the cultures of the School.
 - Performances and displays of student work reflect the cultures of the School.
 - The acquisition and display of artwork reflect the cultures of the School.
5. Encourages excellence in learning and teaching in all taught languages
 - There is a clear language placement procedure for Year 4 onwards, which seeks to maximize student potential.

- Expected progression and outcomes are clearly stated in all curriculum documents.
 - Assessment data are collected and analysed to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of learning and teaching.
6. Ensures that teachers have access to quality external and internal language and literacy professional development and work collegially to improve practice
- The School provides sufficient resources to meet the goals of this policy.
 - Teachers throughout the school have access to language and literacy professional development. There is annual PD funding specifically for language development.
 - Recipients of professional development share quality feedback with colleagues.
 - Teachers share good practice and reflect it in their teaching.
7. Seeks to be a leader in bilingual education
- CIS maintains partnerships with academic research groups and actively participates in the research.
 - The School is used as a source of data for research.
 - Staff present papers at workshops and conferences relating to bilingual learning and teaching.
 - Staff are engaged in ongoing dialogue with colleagues in other bilingual schools.
 - Teaching appointments and positions of responsibility in the School reflect its bilingualism and culture.

Current Practices

The Chinese International School (CIS) Language Policy supports and complements the International Baccalaureate's fundamental concepts of communication and intercultural awareness.

CIS strives to develop students' international mindedness and intercultural awareness via a series of events and activities such as Chinese Week, China Experience Programmes in Years 7-9, Project Week, celebration of Mid-Autumn Festival, Remembrance Day, Christmas, Kings' Cake Celebration, and Chinese New Year.

Admissions

For admission into the Reception level Primary School, in order to ensure the success in the bilingual programme, CIS seeks applicants with a strong level of proficiency in English and/or Chinese. For applicants in Years 1-6, CIS seeks applicants with a strong level of proficiency in at least one of the two languages of instruction, combined with at least an established level of proficiency in the other language.

For admission into the Secondary School, students are expected to have achieved native, or near native level proficiency, in English. In order to meet the diversity of students' Chinese aptitudes and proficiencies, the school offers Chinese at a variety of levels, from beginners' level to an advanced level.

All CIS applicants and their parents are expected to have a strong commitment to the bilingual mission of the school.

Compulsory Languages

In the Primary School, both English and Chinese are the languages of instruction. A collaborative teaching approach is employed in classrooms from Reception to Year 6. Two teachers (one Chinese-speaking, one English-speaking) work together with the same group of students. Chinese Language Arts and English Language Arts instructional time is equal, with 50% of daily language arts instruction being in Chinese and 50% being in English. Instructional time in Integrated Studies is also split equally between the two languages. All specialist classes are taught in English and supported in Chinese by Chinese speaking teaching assistants. As we move forward in our Vision '33 goals of further personalised learning, our Years 4-6 Chinese programme takes a proficiency level approach in which students learn Chinese language arts in smaller groups, utilising our proficiency curriculum framework.

Year 6 and Year 7 English and Chinese teachers collaborate to determine curriculum and skills alignment as the students transition from primary to secondary. This incorporates provision for all students at all proficiency levels.

In the Secondary School, English is taught as a first language to all students. The majority of students will further their studies in English medium universities after graduating from CIS. It is a graduation requirement that every CIS student must learn Chinese either as a Language and Literature course or a Language Acquisition course. A student's placement is formally reviewed twice a year. It is possible for a student to move along the language continuum within a school year as a result of placement review. There is a combination of proficiency and immersive approaches in the instruction of languages in the Secondary School.

In Secondary, English is the language of instruction for all subjects, excluding Chinese, French and Spanish. Students also experience Chinese language in dual-language units in Individuals and Societies in Years 7-9, via the immersive approach in Year 9 PBL, and in TOK lessons in Years 12 and 13.

In order to create a bilingual environment, CIS encourages students to speak English and Chinese on campus. CIS has developed the Taipei Explore Trip, the China Experience Programme, and the Hangzhou CIS programme to provide authentic language learning opportunities in China.

The Years 7-9 China Experience Programme (CEP) has been an integral part of the CIS curriculum. Activities taking place both inside and outside of the formal classroom cover four major areas: Chinese instruction, cultural experience, service and interaction with local communities.

The Year 10 residential programme in Hangzhou aims to provide students with a transformational learning experience that is in line with the CIS mission. The design

of the programme focuses on four pillars: China, Challenge, Character, and Communities.

Additional Languages

In the Secondary School, French and Spanish are offered as third languages. Students who wish to learn another language in addition to English and Chinese may choose one of these languages as an additional subject. Students opt to join beginner French or Spanish classes in Year 7 and can continue studying their additional language through to Year 13. For students with a higher language proficiency level, the school supports individualized programs.

Language Support Programs

In the Primary School, English as an additional language and Chinese as an additional language support are provided through a variety of pathways. As a bilingual school, we expect that every student is a language learner and that every teacher is a language teacher. With one Chinese teacher and one English teacher in every classroom in Primary School, in addition to a team of Chinese and English teaching assistants, we have great scope to differentiate and attend to the language learning needs of each student. In addition, there is a Student Support Services Team (SSST) with specialist teachers, teaching fellows and TAs, who help to target support and interventions to students across the Primary school, which includes language support in both Chinese and English. The SSST works in collaboration with classroom teachers, teaching assistants and other education experts and clinicians. The SSST, Learning Leaders and Head of Programmes use regular universal screening data to identify and support students' language learning where needed.

In the Secondary School, students who need English language support are identified by teachers through a variety of diagnostic methods. We provide additional English language support to designated students, whether one-to-one or via in-class support.

Students who require Chinese language support are identified by teachers through a variety of diagnostic methods. In Years 7-11, Chinese teaching fellows and teaching assistants provide additional language support to designated students. This support may occur as one-to-one or via in-class support. The Chinese department also runs an after school "Chinese Base Camp" for students who require additional support.

Support for First Language(s)

While the mission of the School mandates the development of English and Chinese, all First Languages are respected and valued as part of the identity of members of the CIS community.

CIS parents are encouraged to facilitate the development of their child's First Language(s) in order to maintain their individual cultural identity.

The predominant First Language(s) of the CIS student body are English, Cantonese

and Chinese. English and Chinese are strongly supported via the CIS curriculum and extracurricular activities.

A small number of students' First Language(s) are languages other than English, Cantonese or Chinese, such as Swedish, French, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Hindi, and Thai. The languages and number of students vary each year.

CIS makes provision for students who wish to continue language studies in their mother tongue at the Diploma Level by enrolling them in Self-Taught Language A Literature subjects and assisting them in finding First Language(s) tutors/teachers. The IB Diploma Coordinator provides support to these tutors throughout the IB Diploma of Secondary schooling. In the past, we have had students study Korean as a Self-Taught Language A Literature Standard Level subject.

Implementation Plan

In order for the Language Policy to be effectively implemented, the following steps should be followed:

1. Expectations of teachers, as articulated in various articles of the Language Policy, are reflected in the teacher job description.
2. The teacher appraisal process is linked to expectations stated in the Language Policy and teacher job description.
3. All policies, when due for revision, including the school-wide Learning and Teaching Policy, reflect relevant elements of the Language Policy.
4. The role of Chinese and English languages as media of instruction, as well as in school assemblies, co-curricular activities and informal situations is continuously promoted and supported.
5. The IB guidelines on language progression is taken into account when reviewing or adjusting placement admission procedures. There is a clear placement procedure, which seeks to maximize student potential in all taught languages in both MYP and DP.
6. Students' language ability is assessed on a regular basis in Primary and Secondary School to ensure they are placed in a class of an appropriate level.
7. Library staff continue to make the necessary adjustments to CIS' stock of resources in order to support language learning.
8. Curriculum leaders of Visual and Performing Arts periodically review their exhibitions/performances to ensure that they reflect the multicultural nature of the school.
9. Curriculum leaders of all taught languages periodically review the following:
 - curriculum documents so as to ensure that they clearly state expected progression and outcomes in language learning;
 - collection and use of assessment data to monitor and evaluate student progress in all taught languages.
10. The school leadership continues to review professional development resources and practices in all taught languages to ensure that training is available in language and literacy across the curriculum.
11. The school leadership undertakes further steps as necessary to ensure that the admissions process effectively identifies applicants and applicant families who are strongly committed to the school's bilingual mission.

Recent revisions/updates of Language Policy:

May 2008: Language Policy Group updated

June 2010: revised

June 2014: updated

September 2019: updated

December 2022: revised

Expected next review: 2024-2025

Works Cited

"Language Policy" (2022) International Baccalaureate, Accessed 30 October 2022,
<https://www.ibo.org/language-policy/>

"DP language courses: overview and placement guidance" (2021), International Baccalaureate, Accessed 30 October 2022
<https://resources.ibo.org/dp/resource/11162-413712/?lang=en>