



LANGUAGE POLICY

Policy No.1.5

Rationale

Language is an integral part of our world. It is fundamental to learning and permeates our program. It underpins our functioning; it empowers our communication and enables us to make meaning of a diverse world. To function effectively in society children need to speak, listen, read, view and write with confidence, purpose and enjoyment in a wide range of contexts. Language is a tool that enables people to find information and to express their ideas and opinions.

Students' need to:

- learn language
- learn about language
- learn through language.

Language involves:

- speaking and listening
- written communication
- reading
- visual communication- viewing and presenting, digital learning, multimodal texts

Our school values and supports development in

- the language of instruction – English
- the students' mother tongue languages
- students' exposure to further languages

Aims

The purpose of the Language Program is to:

- ensure all children are supported and extended, enabling them to develop and improve their literacy skills
- provide a challenging and comprehensive literacy program that encompasses all modes of language learning
- develop students' self-esteem, confidence, proficiency and independence in language learning.

Guidelines for Implementation

Classroom practices in language learning will reflect the Learning and Teaching Policy which states that:

- all students want to learn and are capable of learning
- as a community we are committed to a constructivist, inquiry based approach to teaching and learning

- that promotes inquiry and the development of critical thinking skills
- learning is best supported in classrooms that promote a co-operative approach to learning
- classrooms will promote self-esteem and confidence in learning
- the curriculum is broad and comprehensive and will cater for all students' needs

We will develop teaching and learning practices that:

- reflect the PYP Language Scope and Sequence, AusVELS English
- recognise that literacy involves thinking, speaking, listening, viewing, reading and writing within a relevant context
- build upon previous learning which will lead to future learning
- support a differentiated approach to address the competencies, experiences, learning needs and styles of students
- build confidence in the use of the inquiry process, experimenting and employing creative activities
- recognise that the development of literacy is central to all key learning areas
- teachers will be given the opportunity to share their professional knowledge, expertise and talents through co-operative planning both within year levels and across departments
- through professional development teachers will be given the opportunity to enhance their repertoire of teaching strategies

At Wales Street we currently provide:

- English as the language of instruction
- ESL instruction and support for students with little or no knowledge of English
- Italian instruction from Prep onwards
- Exposure to Greek and Mandarin languages in Grade 3-4
- Choice of Language in Grade 5-6- Mandarin, Greek or Italian
- Many opportunities to gain exposure to various languages and cultures through music, art, festivals, assemblies, community events and diverse units of inquiry across the curriculum

Rationale of Language Learning

Through enthusiastic, meaningful experiences students will develop an understanding and appreciation of language. A rich, literate environment in which all aspects of language are developed is necessary. This will nurture an appreciation of the richness of language and a love of literature. Literacy develops through the active engagement of learners and through meaningful interactions rather than isolated activities.

Beliefs about Mother Tongue Language

Members of the Wales Street community come together with a range of languages and language experiences. We recognise the need to provide an environment that is respectful of all mother tongue languages, where all cultures are valued and to provide an inclusive environment for students and community

members. Language connection between home and school is vital as are connections between classrooms, the library and the wider community.

To encourage and support mother tongue development we:

- provide bilingual dictionaries, books and DVDs, in a range of languages
- display posters and labels in different languages
- have bilingual versions of well-known stories
- celebrate international mindedness and diversity
- encourage children to bring in a wide range of artefacts
- encourage parents and community members to visit classrooms, read stories in different languages and share experiences
- support families to access language classes- offer information, support applications

Guidelines for Implementation

Languages Other Than English (LOTE)

Wales Street Primary School offers students from Prep to year 6 the opportunity to learn Italian and a choice of three languages in year 5 and 6. We believe exposure to more than one language offers multiple perspectives, enriches personal growth and helps facilitate international understanding. Our LOTE teachers nurture, inspire and challenge students to explore, expand and realise their capacity to acquire another language. This provides students with the opportunity to access the world through the eyes of another culture and heritage. LOTE learning broadens the students' knowledge, extends their cognitive skills and enhances understanding and appreciation of others. This allows them to reflect on their own language, develop more understanding of how other people think and feel, communicate and relate. The children learn to put themselves in another person's shoes through learning another language.

The language strands – listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting are taught simultaneously. The children learn the language, learn about language and learn through language.

The LOTE program provides students with stimulating and inspiring experiences. All children are valued for their efforts and individuality and are encouraged to "have a go".

The mission statement, learner profile and attitudes are all displayed and explored during the LOTE program.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

At Wales Street Primary School we believe that our EAL program:

- supports children as they integrate into the school's academic and social programs. In a positive learning atmosphere students develop the confidence necessary to take risks and accept their own linguistic experimentations

- provides small group instruction sessions which allow children to develop English according to their individual needs and abilities
- be an enjoyable experience for children as this will foster the students' motivation, interest, desire to learn and their level of achievement
- build on the cultural and language experience the child already has
- help maintain communication between home and school
- build on what is already known

English is the language of instruction at Wales Street Primary School. The students are immersed in an English speaking environment and are nurtured and supported – linguistically, emotionally, socially by the classroom teacher, support staff and the school community. The goal of this support is the development of confidence and independence so the students can interact and join in with English speaking students as quickly and as often as possible.

Through an intervention support program that complements the classroom, EAL students will learn to use English. We think of ALL teachers as English teachers because we know that all our students are developing their knowledge and understanding of English in every subject and class that they take.

New arrivals will often access the Northern Language school for intense language instruction in a small group setting. This is organised through our transitions coordinator- the Primary Welfare Officer.

Often the students will work in small, flexible groups. They will develop concepts, vocabulary and structures which will allow them to receive (listen and read) and express (speak and write) the English language. The students will learn both social and school English. Social English will help students function successfully in the classroom, in the playground, at birthday parties etc.

The language that is used in classrooms is more difficult and complex than social English. It is the language and skills that students need to be successful in learning. Sometimes teachers will concentrate on the vocabulary and concepts that the student will need for classroom work.

Within the classroom students learn about the conventions and structures of English so that they can use language correctly. Vocabulary and spelling are practiced and implemented in authentic writing tasks.

Though language permeates all learning and inquiries there are many units of inquiry which focus on language. Often intense front loading and/or materials in the child's mother tongue will help the student access the information required to explore inquiry. By participating in a wide range of school activities such as singing, dancing, art activities, sport, camps, excursions, assemblies, etc students are continuously using and reinforcing their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

Resources

- a language program budget will be developed in line with the school global budget to manage resources

- in the early years home reading and guided reading materials will be levelled using the Reading Recovery Levels as a guide
- all materials that support the English program will be catalogued through the library and housed in classrooms as needed
- the library program will be used to support EAL students
- senior students will borrow reading materials through the library
- parent helpers will support the Literacy program with additional assistance for students and support in classrooms

Evaluation

The language program will be monitored through:

- outcome measures, the goals and benchmarks stated in the School Annual Implementation Plan and School Strategic Review
- Student's progress will be tracked using the SPA data, Assessment and Reporting schedule, ILIPs and red student files
- Individual Learning Improvement Plans will be prepared for students with particular needs

This policy will be reviewed as part of a three year cycle.