

The King Fahad Academy



THE KFA-IB Language Policy



2017 – 2018

Contents Page

Language Policy	2
Introduction.....	2
Language Philosophy	2
Language of Instruction (English)	2
Language Acquisition.....	2
Mother Tongue.....	3
How Language is implemented in the PYP.....	3
Implementation of Language and Literature in the MYP	4
Implementation of Language in the DP.....	4
Special Educational Needs (SEN).....	5
Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking Development and Intervention in the School.....	5
Learning Resource Centre	6
Information Communication Technology (ICT).....	6
Assessment.....	6
Language requirements for entry into the KFA-IBDP	7
Academic Honesty.....	7
Professional development	7

This policy should be read in conjunction with other key policies, procedures and handbooks.

Language Policy

Introduction

The intention of this document is to explain the philosophy and practice of language teaching and learning at the King Fahad Academy (The KFA). At The KFA, we believe that language is the medium of inquiry. We strive to help everyone appreciate the aesthetic and functional uses of language. We believe that language is a vehicle for transdisciplinary learning, and as such, we provide a learning environment that promotes, generates and supports effective communication and language development. We understand that since language is central to learning, all teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating effective communication. As communication in the world changes, we are committed to adapting language instruction to reflect the evolution of language in a modern world.

Language Philosophy

The KFA believes that language is the key to all learning and that all teachers are language teachers. Our whole school philosophy states that we provide a holistic education where language is interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary through all subjects and learning opportunities. We aspire to provide an inclusive environment that respects each child's unique cultural and linguistic identity.

Language of Instruction (English)

The *language of instruction* used to deliver the curriculum at the KFA is English. Students admitted to the school are taught the skills needed to become proficient readers, writers and communicators in the English language both for social interaction and academic success.

Language Acquisition

The primary aim of language Acquisition course (at different phases and stages) is to encourage students to gain competence in English language with the long-term goal of balanced bilingualism. It aims to encourage in the students a respect for and understanding of the English language and host culture. The course provides a skills

base of reading, writing, listening and speaking to facilitate further language learning, which helps them to assimilate in the host culture. Proficiency in a second language gives students access to a broader range of input, experiences and perspectives. The students will be able to effectively communicate in a language other than their mother tongue. Also, language proficiency in a second language (English as a language of instruction) will greatly contribute to the holistic development of students and aim to raise achievement in other subject areas.

Mother Tongue

The *mother tongue* is recognized as being the language most strongly linked to the culture that an individual identifies with as their culture of origin, and often is the language used at home. The first language is the one that the individual is most proficient in. The KFA encourages the development of the mother tongue and first languages of students through an ethos of acceptance and celebration of linguistic diversity within the community. There is also recognition that a strong level of competency in the mother tongue or first language of students can be an important ingredient in their success as learners of additional languages. To this end, the KFA organizes events and activities that celebrate the language diversity of our students.

How Language is implemented in the Primary Years Program

Language in the Primary Years Program (PYP) provides the school with a framework that will promote consistency in approach between grade levels and between subjects. In the PYP, we believe that language is the medium of inquiry and is transdisciplinary throughout all subject areas. Language is developed through all Units of Inquiry and sometimes through a stand-alone unit. The Language curriculum is taught through the various strands: Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing. The development of language is fundamental to the need to communicate effectively; it supports and enhances our thinking and holistic understanding. Language permeates the world in which we live; it is socially constructed and dependent on the number and nature of our social interactions and relationships. (Making the PYP happen)

Implementation of Language and literature in the MYP

Language and literature in the Middle Years Program (MYP) provides opportunities for the development of all four language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening). It focuses on developing critical reading and analytical skills (receptive and productive) through the study of language and literature (including world literature). The program encourages the use of proper spoken and written English to savour and engage in active criticism of literary works produced by canonical writers and contemporary authors. Students explore all literary genres and study full-length texts including those written by the most prominent figures in English literary history. It is a high-standard and rigorous literature-based programme that increases in scope and sophistication as pupils grow older to cope with the rigours of MYP English language and literature course and ultimately, IB English A. The programme also aims to enhance students' ability to make appropriate stylistic choices in terms of linguistic, literary and visual devices to produce thoughtful and imaginative creative texts that demonstrate awareness of different audiences and purposes. Within the course there is an opportunity to develop higher thinking skills through exposure to literatures of different cultures and works in translation.

Implementation of language in the DP

Language is central to teaching and learning; the language of instruction being English is not the first or mother tongue for a significant majority of our students. These considerations have vastly impacted on the choice and structure of language courses in the DP. Language A literature is for students most competent in the language. It involves the study of literary texts and analytical skills in reading, writing and speaking. It enables students to acquire independent and critical understanding and interpretation of literary works.

Language B is for students with some experience in the language. It enables students to learn to communicate and comment effectively on everyday activities with ease. It also enables students to develop mastery of language skills. Language *ab initio* is for students with little or no prior experience in the language.

To enhance students' access to the diploma programme, EAL support for students is being planned in English and Arabic.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

As a school we promote inclusive education for all students whatever their needs. Students, who require additional support, in terms of language, are usually referred to the SENCO by teachers. Students can also be referred through parents, outside professionals and other staff members who may recognize a need for a student to receive additional support. The role of the SEN department is to review the student information available, request additional paperwork from the family, and recommend a way forward plan (WFP) to meet the student's needs. The plan is implemented for a period of time and evaluated for its effectiveness.

The KFA also recognizes that all children are individuals with their own unique talents. Within this range of individuality there are students who are more able intellectually than other students, and students who are particularly talented in certain specific areas of ability. To this aim, we have a range of ways to support our students through implementation of inclusivity through enrichment of lessons and extension of opportunities.

Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking Development and Intervention in the School

The KFA understands the importance of getting children off to a good start in the literacy skills necessary for learning. We realise that success in learning is synonymous with success in reading. We use two programmes within Renaissance Learning (Accelerated Reader and Star Early Literacy) for reading assessment, reading development and to assess students' independent reading. For the students that are failing to make appropriate progress in reading, the KFA provides 'intervention' that may include:

- 1: 1 reading with Reading Intervention (RI) teacher and support teachers.
- Small group intervention for reading and comprehension.
- Reading interventions that combine phonic and comprehension development through the use of Accelerated Reader, Oxford Reading Tree and Project X.

The reading intervention provided involves a specific set of steps which are implemented to help children improve their skills in reading and are designed so that parents and the school can track individual children's progress that may include:

- Reading record books – shared between class teacher, RI teacher and parents.

- Individual reading record –this is administered by the RI teacher and support staff.
- Renaissance Home Connect – where parents can view and track their child’s reading progress online.

Learning Resource Centre

The Learning Resource Centre is the heart and soul of our school; it plays an integral part of our student’s experience of school life. The purpose of the Library is to provide a vibrant and stimulating learning environment in which all staff and students can access a huge range of resources which reflect the aims and objectives of the IB Continuum. The school policy emphasizes on the needs of our diverse learning community and the materials/resources are selected to enhance the concepts of international mindedness. The KFA has many languages and cultures; the Library does its best to acquire materials in a range that supports mother tongue and aspires to develop it in the future. The Librarians work in close collaboration with teachers, coordinators and Heads in order to develop literacy levels and a passion for reading.

Information Communication Technology (ICT)

ICT enables students to ‘investigate, create, communicate, collaborate, organise and be responsible for their own learning’ (IB, 2011). The KFA, to enrich learning experiences, makes ICT an integral part of language teaching. The interactive nature of new technologies can transcend linguistic, cultural and geographic boundaries involving the local and global environment. The audio and visual components of these tools can help further reinforce an understanding of language and text. Technology motivates and empowers language learners. It provides them with rich, authentic and relevant contexts for language development at all levels of instruction. Across all schools, the KFA promotes opportunities for students to use computer systems operating in English and Arabic. This provides opportunities for EAL and AAL students to learn in both languages. E-safety is a priority and embedded in all ICT activities.

Assessment

Assessment of progression and achievement in Language A and Language Acquisition across the KFA-IB continuum are outlined in the KFA-IB Assessment Policy and detailed in practice at departmental and classroom levels from PYP through MYP to DP.

Through formative and summative assessments, students are assessed regularly using Mark Book together with teacher and peer assessment. Please refer to our Assessment Policy for further clarification.

Language requirements for entry into the KFA-IBDP

In the light of the position of English language as the language of instruction in all DP subjects, a minimum of 'C' grade at IGCSE/GCSE or equivalent is essential to ensure that students are not unfairly positioned to underperform in their diploma studies. All diploma students are expected to study a second language other than their mother tongue. [For details, please refer to KFA-IBDP Admission Policy]

Academic Honesty

In recognition of the central place of language in teaching and learning, the KFA-IB language policy reflects the academy's standpoint on academic honesty (as outlined in the KFA-IB Academic Honesty) to ensure that parents, teachers, and students fully understand and are committed to uphold the principles of academic honesty. To this end, teachers model and teach students when to cite, how to cite and what to cite. MLA referencing is taught across the KFA-IB continuum from PYP, through MYP to DP. Across the IB continuum, academic honesty is encouraged and avoidance of academic misconduct and malpractice is actively promoted by discussions on examples of academic misconduct and plagiarism.

Professional development

Attendance to professional development is incumbent on all IB teachers. Moreover, as all IB teachers are recognized as language teachers, it is even more crucial that opportunities are provided for school-based professional development in the language of instruction and language acquisition. This is demonstrated and supported by the school in terms of time allocation and active participation of language coordinators and heads of language departments in support of colleagues to enrich teaching and learning at the academy.

The KFA IB Language Policy was developed in 2008 and has been reviewed periodically over the years. The current review in January 2017 was carried out by members of The KFA Language Committee; representing key departments from the IB Continuum across the whole school. Members of the KFA Language Committee (2017) include:

*Mohammed Baba; Fatima Bakali; Hania Farwati; Khizra Ahmad; Natalie Brouwer
Karima Ramsay; Abdelgayed Behairy; Neelum Nadeem; James Nevin; Nelly Ramassamy
Nadera-Latif-Shaikh; Sahar Hussein*

References:

IB (2009) Primary Years Programme, *Making the PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education*. International Baccalaureate: Cardiff

IB (2011) *The role of ICT in the PYP*. International Baccalaureate: Cardiff. Available from: <https://ibpublishing.ibo.org>