



# EIS Meadows LANGUAGE POLICY

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## LANGUAGE PHILOSOPHY

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. The need to communicate is instinctive. The development of language is fundamental to that need to communicate; it supports and enhances our thinking and understanding. Language is central to learning; all teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication

Language plays a vital role in the construction of meaning. It empowers the learner and provides an intellectual framework to support conceptual development and critical thinking. It is recognized that the teaching of language should be in response to the previous experience, needs and interests of the student, rather than the consequence of a predetermined, prescriptive model for delivering language.

All EIS Meadows students are expected to become effective **communicators**, who are able to understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language. The language of instruction for Emirates International School-Meadows (EISM) is English and it is the aim of the school that all students are able to work successfully in this language. English is the language of communication used in the school and outside the classroom, on documentation with external examination boards and in letters to parents.

## English as an additional language (EAL)

Emirates International School Meadows has always welcomed and accepted students with little or no English language skills. Upon joining the school, these learners are assessed by the EAL (English as an Additional Language) Department and receive the appropriate extra English language support to access the curriculum. They are placed in small groups which promotes a secure and happy atmosphere to encourage learning. Our EAL department follows what is known as “the sheltered immersion system”, whereby the EAL students are placed into an age appropriate class upon entering the school but receive intensive EAL instruction.

The EAL Department follows an EAL curriculum which teaches the language skills of listening and speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting. Emphasis is first placed on listening and speaking skills to allow the students to communicate with their peers and teacher. Once the students have developed these elementary skills, they then develop their reading, writing as well as viewing and presenting skills.

The department uses a variety of language programmes which have been researched and written specifically for EAL learners and incorporates the latest research based methods of teaching EAL.

These language programmes are linked with the year Programme of Inquiry. Advanced learners in addition, will receive support and reinforcement to reflect the content of the mainstream classroom.

EAL learners may continue to receive EAL support for up to three years. Before exiting the program the student's file is reviewed by the class teacher along with the EAL teacher where they agree that the student no longer requires the EAL programme.

An informed consideration of this includes:

- admissions policies
- assessment policies – formative and summative
- short and long-term curriculum planning
- models of language support and programmes
- teacher professional development
- teacher recruitment
- liaison with parents.

### **Language Profile of the School Community**

As Arabic is the official language of the UAE, all students study Arabic language from KG 1 through to Grade 9 as per the Ministry of Education regulations. Students registered at the school with an Arabic passport are required to follow the Ministry of Education Arabic curriculum and are required to pass the Ministry of Education assessments up until the end of Grade 12. Legal requirements of the UAE government require some, but not all, documentation to the Ministry of Education to be completed in Arabic. This job is done by a Ministry Liaison Officer. Documentation for immigration and Grade residency purposes must often be done in Arabic and is completed by the HR Department. The range and types of mother tongue in the community varies according to the home country of parents and students. Currently there are over 82 nationalities present in the school.

As an international school, the knowledge of different languages other than English or one's mother-tongue is considered imperative and students are required to study at least one language other than English during each year they study at EISM. In addition to English and Arabic, French and Spanish are also offered in the High School and French is offered from Year 4 onwards. This implies aiming not only at linguistic competence but also at an understanding of the target culture. Learning about other cultures helps the students to understand the world better but also to develop a strong sense of their own identity and culture. They learn self-confidence and to have an open, critical and creative view which develops the ability to communicate, understand, live and work with people from other countries and cultures.

All teachers are considered to be language teachers as they need to make the language of their subject accessible to students.

### **LANGUAGE TEACHING**

1. In Primary English language is taught by the class teachers within the transdisciplinary context.

2. All language teachers must have an academic qualification in that language.
3. Language is felt to be very important in an international community such as Dubai and all students from Grades EY1-13 study more than one language each year.
4. The acquisition of any language involves four skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. All four areas are stressed in language programmes at all levels at EISM.

## **LANGUAGE PATHWAYS**

### **PYP EY-YR6**

Students in Primary are all required to study English and Arabic from EY-YR 6. French language is required for Years 4-6.

We encourage primary students to celebrate their mother tongue language as a part of developing own sense of identity.

EAL department gives support to a good range of students to develop their English language.

Most of our students English is their second language therefore we have developed a phonics/grammar program taught as a stand-alone to support students.

As per the PYP framework, all teachers in primary are considered as Language teachers. They play a main role in developing students' English language within the subjects they teach.

### **IB MYP Year 7-11:**

Students are all required to study English, Arabic and French/Spanish in Year 7-9 unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as diagnosed and documented Learning Need. In Year 10 and 11, Arabic passport holders continue to study Arabic Language & Literature as per Ministry directives and non-Arabic passport holders may choose between Spanish, Arabic and French. Students in Year 10 can only move to Spanish if Phase 4 fluency (Intermediate level) is achieved in French.

## **MYP CERTIFICATION**

In order to gain MYP Certification, all students must study a minimum of:

- One language and literature course and Language Acquisition course (Lang. Acquisition is French, Arabic and Spanish), or
- Two language and literature courses, or
- Two language and literature courses and one language acquisition course.
- **English:**
  - All students are required to take 5 periods of English language instruction each week.
  - A Language Acquisition English programme exists for students who are weak in English language skills. They follow the same course of study as other MYP students with modified use of language. Please note that all students are expected to be phased out of Language Acquisition English into a Language and Literature course after a year of support. Language Acquisition English is a support program, not the long term pathway to English proficiency as students are withdrawn from MFL.
  - English competency is a requirement for entry in EIS – Meadows. For students

entering the school with little English language background, the following courses of action are taken:

1. Students are entered in the Language acquisition programme in addition to the Language and Literature course.

- **Arabic Language and Literature**

- All students with Arabic passport are required to study Arabic LL as per the Ministry of Education guidelines up until the end of Year 12
- The Arabic Language and Literature programme is for all students who are registered at the school with an Arabic passport. The Arabic Language and Literature classes are streamed by ability. Students are taught classical Arabic according to the Ministry of Education curriculum and requirements.
- Students receive 3 periods of instruction per week
- Students wishing to complete their Personal Project in Arabic may do so
- At the end of the MYP course student will complete an IB MYP On-Screen Assessment for Arabic LL

### **3. Language Acquisition (Arabic, French & Spanish)**

- All students are required to study Arabic Language Acquisition as per the Ministry of Education guidelines up until the end of Year 9. Students receive 3 periods of instruction per week.
- All students are required to study French/Spanish Language Acquisition in Year 7-9. Students receive 2 periods of instruction per week.
- Arabic Language Acquisition students follow a course in Arabic as a foreign language which aims to enable them to communicate effectively. The programme meets the needs of both students who have had little or no previous experience of learning the Arabic language as well as those who have studied the subject in primary school.
- Students in Year 7-9 are placed in groups according to numbers of year studying Arabic.
- IB MYP Assessment Criteria for Language Acquisition are used.

### **Diploma Programme: Years 12-13:**

All students in Years 12-13 follow the IBDP and are thus required to take two languages, (Studies in Language and Literature or Literature and Language Acquisition). IB DP language courses are taught over 4 periods per week at all levels.

1. Group 1: Studies in English Language and Literature or Literature (HL or SL).
2. Group 2 subjects: French B, Spanish B, Arabic A and B, French *Ab initio*, Arabic *Ab initio*, Spanish *Ab initio*.
3. *Ab Initio* courses at the DP level will be for students with "little or no experience of the target language".
4. Self-taught languages: these can be studied by students wishing to pursue a bilingual diploma. The student does not take a Group 2 language but instead has private tuition in his/her mother-tongue, usually after school. A Self-taught Language Supervisor is responsible for overseeing any students who opt for a self-taught language. (See Appendix 3 for job

description of Self-taught Language Supervisor.)

### **Further support for Mother Tongue**

EISM is a broadly multilingual school where dozens of languages may be in use at any one time. While English is the language of instruction and communication throughout the school, students use their mother tongue to communicate to friends and family. Students regularly use their mother tongue to better understand some of the cognitive academic language they are working to understand in class and while studying.

### **Arabic at EISM**

The provisions for the promotion of the host country's language are embedded into the Ministry of Education's Arabic language learning requirements. As per Ministry of Education (MoE) directives, all students who are enrolled at the school with an Arabic passport are required by law to study Arabic Language and Literature until the end of Grade 12. Arabic Language Acquisition is not an option. Fluency in the language is developed in the key areas of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening over the multi-year, progressive course of study. Arabic Language and Literature courses will also lead to the MoE examinations and qualifications. All Arabic Language and Literature/Ministry of Education courses will be streamed by ability. All students registered at the school with an Arabic passport are required to follow the MoE Arabic course of study. Exemptions from Ministry of Education Arabic can only be gained by parental requests to the KHDA.

1. The MOE sets the Arabic programme of study required for all grades. This includes the topics to be covered, syllabus details and textbooks to use. All students required to study Arabic Language and Literature are expected to meet the MoE standards.
2. Results of End-of-Year "Ministry" exams are sent to the MoE. They are expressed as a % rather than on a 7-1 scale.
3. Ministry exams are no longer prepared by the MoE. Schools have been instructed to prepare the exams according to the MoE guidelines. Exams are kept in the event of a Ministry inspection.
4. For Years 12-13, they also do examinations for the IBDP syllabus.
  - Year 13 does the Ministry exam after the IB DP exams are finished.
  - Year 12 does the Ministry exam in class time before the start of the end-of-year examination period.
5. Responsibility for preparation of both exams is overseen by the Head of Arabic.

The host country's language is also promoted during school assemblies, different school events, signage throughout the school and as part of our UAE National Day celebrations.

## **Parental Involvement in the Language Profile**

As part of the admissions process families new to EISM complete a language profile questionnaire which provides information on:

- The child's first language
- Additional languages of study or fluency
- The language of the mother, father and/or guardian
- The language spoken at home
- The language of schooling
- Parent goals and preferences for their child's language learning

The various language options are provided to parents, particularly in the Secondary School upon enrolment. The language learning requirements and options are noted above.