



**SHINAGAWA  
INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOL**

# Language Policy



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## **SIS Vision**

Our vision is to foster passionate, independent, highly-motivated learners who actively contribute to world peace.

## **SIS Mission**

Our mission is to provide a multicultural learning community which nurtures passion for academic, social, and personal success.

## **SIS Educational Philosophy**

SIS aims at educating each of its students to be:

- inspired and independent life-long learners.
- academically, artistically, socially, and physically balanced.
- inquirers and problem-solvers.
- multilingual communicators.
- responsible and principled internationally-minded citizens.
- appreciative of our local community.

## **Introduction**

This document describes our philosophy and practices surrounding the teaching and learning of language, including the principles that they are rooted in.

- It provides the school with a framework that will promote consistency in language instruction approaches and attitudes across grade levels and subjects.
- It provides parents with information about our principles and practices and assists them in understanding our curriculum.
- It will assist teachers in the planning, presenting and evaluation stages of teaching.
- It will serve as a guide for teachers to reflect on their language practice and to guide professional development and appraisal.

## **Philosophy**

Language plays an important role in all aspects of learning, including social, emotional and academic growth. All SIS teachers play an essential role in facilitating the acquisition of language. Language development is an ongoing process for all ages and stages of development. Language is taught through and reinforced in multiple ways, including learning language, learning about language, and learning through language. Language is the major connecting element across the curriculum, and it is the medium through which all learning occurs. Although English is the main language of instruction, systems are in place to encourage the support and development of all other languages used by students.

## Guiding Principles

- Language learning at SIS will reflect International Baccalaureate PYP and MYP Language Scope and Sequence learning outcomes.
- All teachers are teachers of language.
- All members of the school community are learners of language.
- Language development programs are developed using constructivist theories.
- Teachers assist students to scaffold their learning and to work within the students' "Zone of Proximal Development."
- Teachers take background knowledge and previous learning experiences into consideration when planning their lessons.
- Teachers provide comprehensible input and present language through meaningful tasks in authentic contexts.
- Teachers provide developmentally appropriate scaffolding strategies such as visual aids, graphic organizers, demonstrations, dramatizations, and small-structured groups.
- Teachers guide learners to extend their language by combining high expectations (complexity and abstraction of concepts, increased density of low frequency and technical vocabulary, sophisticated grammatical constructions) with differentiated practices in a contextualized learning environment.
- Teachers promote a school environment that welcomes diversity of cultures and perspectives by encouraging English language skill development during formal instruction, while also validating students' mother tongues and other language exploration.
- Teachers collaborate with parents to achieve shared language goals.

## Language Profile

As of January 2022, the SIS student body consists of 220 students. The nationalities represented in the student body are as follows: American, Australian, Azerbaijani, Brazilian, British, Bruneian, Burmese, Chinese, Filipino, German, Indian, Israeli, Japanese, Malaysian, Mauritian, South Korean, Peruvian, Qatari, Russian, Saudi Arabian, Taiwanese, Turkish, and Uzbek. Additionally, many students are of mixed heritage and hold multiple citizenships from the aforementioned list. The students' linguistic backgrounds are as follows: Arabic, Azerbaijani, English, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Turkish, and Uzbek. SIS currently has around 35 staff members. The nationalities represented among the staff are as follows: American, Australian Azerbaijani, British, Filipino, Japanese, Irish, New Zealander, and Turkish. The linguistic backgrounds of the staff include: Azerbaijani, English, Japanese, Korean, and Turkish.

## Meeting the needs of SIS Community

- English is the primary language of instruction.
- All students study the official host country language, Japanese, either as their native language or as an additional language.
- All school documents and communications are in English.
- A student's language ability in both English and in their mother tongue is evaluated during the admission process. **See Figure 2**
- EAL programmes are flexible and responsive to the needs of individual students.
- SIS promotes the learning of additional languages.
- Language development occurs in authentic settings according to the language outcomes written in the PYP language scope and sequence document and the MYP Language and Literature and Language Acquisition subject overviews.
- Language development builds on from the knowledge students already have and formative assessment practices are used to determine levels of instruction and differentiation

## Mother Tongue Language Development

Mother tongue support is crucial for affirming identity and emotional stability of students. Mother tongue language proficiency also supports students in learning a second language more readily. Parents and families are encouraged to use their mother tongue at home in order to develop students' language skills, as well as to support the social-emotional wellbeing of students. In our library, we try to offer fiction and non-fiction books in various languages represented in our school community. We also welcome our parents to support the provision of their mother tongue by providing facilities after school hours.

## Planning for Language Learning

- PYP Language outcomes and MYP aims and objectives guide instruction and assessment of student language development.
- Aspects of language development are incorporated into SIS weekly planning.
- Language learning is structured to assist students to experience success. This requires differentiated learning experiences.
- An interactive class structure is facilitated by teachers. Activities and tasks are designed to give a wide range of communication forms.
- A variety of books, references, resources, and materials are available for classroom use according to the language abilities of the students.
- The team teachers and EAL teacher collaborates with classroom teachers to help learners who need extra guidance and support in English.
- Self and peer assessment is encouraged through the use of rubrics and one-on-one conferences.
- Students are involved in designing assessment criteria for their work.
- The type and amount of support given is differentiated according to the students' language ability, ranging from EAL instruction outside of the classroom to modifications and accommodations within the classroom.
- Various grouping strategies are utilized to cater to different levels of language proficiency and learning styles.
- Students can move within a spectrum of services at any time based on the development of their English language skills.
- Dynamic language grouping (based on students' abilities) is used within the classroom in order to develop specific aspects of language and to meet the requirements and expectations of a given task.

## EAL Support

Since the primary language of instruction is English, the objective of the support programme is to enable the EAL (English as an Additional Language) students to access the complete mainstream class curriculum with minimal accommodations. Although students are required to display an English proficiency level commensurate with their grade level prior to enrollment, all SIS staff work together to build EAL students' skills to a level of proficiency that allows them to confidently navigate the grade-level curriculum. Support can come in the form of small group language instruction outside of the mainstream classroom for varying amounts of time per week, small group language support and instruction within the mainstream classroom, modifications, accommodations, and differentiation of the mainstream curriculum by the classroom teacher and other members of the SIS staff.

**See Figure 1**

- During admissions, new students complete the MAP screening test for language use, reading and Math.
- Once enrolled in SIS, new students will also complete the WIDA MODEL (Measure of Developing English Language).
  - Based on WIDA MODEL and MAP Screening scores as well as teacher and parent feedback, students in the PYP and MYP may be enrolled to receive EAL Support Services at an additional cost to the parents.
  - The Guidelines for Enrollment in SIS' EAL Support Services (see below) are used to determine which type of EAL Support Services PYP and MYP students require.
- All students enrolled at SIS complete the MAP growth tests at least twice per year to determine language needs.
- If enrolled in EAL Support Services, students will be re-tested using the WIDA MODEL at least once per semester to determine language growth. Depending on WIDA test results, enrollment will be adjusted as necessary.
- If students are receiving EAL Support Services, schedules will be adjusted as necessary based on student language needs.
- PYP EAL courses consist of two types of classes, Listening and Speaking, and Literacy (reading and writing).
- Students enrolled in English Support Services may not receive a score for grade level classes and will only receive narrative feedback until they are proficient enough in the language of instruction to access the curriculum at grade level.
- MYP students who are enrolled in the MYP EAL course will audit English Language and Literature until they can access the curriculum.
- Once students are able to access the English Language and Literature curriculum and MYP Objectives at an achievement level of 3 or higher, students will no longer be auditing the class and will begin receiving a grade for the class.

Below 2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● PYP students will enroll in the EAL Literacy and/or Speaking and Listening course as well as receive additional in-class language support.</li> <li>● MYP students will take English Language Acquisition and will also receive additional in-class language support.</li> </ul>
2.6-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● PYP students will receive additional in-class language support.</li> <li>● MYP students will take English Language Acquisition and will also receive additional in-class language support.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Once students are able to access English Language and Literature curriculum and MYP Objectives at an achievement level of 3 or higher, the school may recommend for students to graduate from the MYP EAL course.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
4+	No enrollment necessary

#### Resources

- PYP Language outcomes
- MYP aims and objectives
- Online Resources
  - Readworks
  - NewsELA
  - Common Lit
  - Epic!Books
  - Florida Center for Reading Research
- Resources on Server
  - Leveled Science Readers

- o Scott Foresman Leveled readers
- o Vocab A-Z
- o Grammar and Writing EAL
- o WIDA English Language and Development Standards (K-12)
- In-School Resources
  - o McGraw Hill texts in Library
  - o Fountas and Pinnell
  - o WIDA English Language and Development Standards (K-12) and the Can Do Descriptors

#### Planning

- The EAL teachers use the SIS ILP template for planning.

### **Practices in the Middle Years Programme (MYP) (Grades 6-10)**

In Grades 6-10 at SIS, we support the ideal that language is a vitally important part in a student's expression of their identity, culture, and experience. Skills in writing, reading, listening, speaking, viewing and presenting are developed through both Language and Literature and Language Acquisition courses. An inquiry-based learning environment is utilized to develop each student's language skills, through a process of collaboration and communication with peers and teachers.

Language Options for MYP Students:

#### Language Acquisition

Language Acquisition Courses in Japanese and English.

#### Language and Literature

Language and Literature Courses in English and Japanese.

All SIS Students in Grade 6-10 take the English Language and Literature Course, with students receiving EAL support having push-in and pull-out support based on a per-needs basis.

Language and Literature courses are offered to students who

(a) have been speaking, writing, and using the language for the majority of their lives [ie. what you may know as 'native level'], and/or

(b) have shown their abilities to be at a highly proficient level.

Language Acquisition courses are suited for students who want to take an additional language (English, Japanese) apart from their choice on the Language and literature course. Students in Language Acquisition can be new language learners or learners who are developing their written, spoken, listening, and reading skills towards proficiency.

In the Language Acquisition course, there are six phases of learners.

**Phases 1 + 2** are emergent communicators

**Phases 3 + 4** are capable communicators

**Phases 5 + 6** are proficient communicators

These phases are broken up into various continuums that show the teacher's student's performance in the four skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. These continuums serve as a

diagnostic tool to: assist teachers in planning the placement of students in different phases, provide formative assessment to monitor and assess students' language progress, and plan units of study.

As students move between each of these phases, they will develop increasingly advanced competencies in communicating appropriately and effectively in various ranges of social, cultural and academic contexts, for different audiences and purposes.

By the end of each year, students will have completed assessments on the four MYP Criteria (A,B, C, D) Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing within each of the four Language Acquisition criteria to determine a student's growth within the six phases of the course. If students effectively demonstrate their abilities to meet language acquisition objectives of a higher phase, through formative and summative assessments in addition to placement testing, students will move up to a higher phase in the course.

For the subjects of Japanese and English, students can transition from the Language Acquisition course to the Language and Literature course after they have successfully demonstrated competency in phase 5 or 6 objectives throughout the course of at least one semester.

## **Language for Successful Communication**

- Students reflect on their language proficiency according to the Alberta Indicators for Language Proficiency criteria through self-assessment and teacher feedback.
- Teachers encourage the development of critical thinking through the use of language skills such as debating, active listening and thoughtful writing.
- Teachers provide opportunities for students to develop an understanding of concepts through verbal and written communication.
- The social language of SIS is English, which is inclusive and understood by all members of the school community.
- Written communication amongst the school community is in English, which is inclusive and understood by all members of the school community.
- Teachers organize various events and special days to promote internationally minded perspectives of different cultures and languages.
- Students are actively involved in selecting their own books according to their level during library time.
- Students are encouraged to use online reading programs to develop reading skills at their own pace.
- Book fairs are organized for the school community to purchase books in English.
- Students are given opportunities to visit the library during dedicated library time and recess times each week to check out books of their choice in English and in other languages.
- A variety of resources are used to provide students with globally relevant information, including newspapers, magazines, and online news sites.
- Community members and families are invited to share their language skills with students.\

## **Teaching and Learning**

Teaching and learning at SIS is designed to meet the language needs and learning styles of all students in order to facilitate growth.

- All teachers are responsible for the language development of all students across subjects.
- All teachers foster language development through differentiation in planning and teaching.
- The inquiry approach to teaching and learning is used in collaborative planning, teaching, and reflection.
- Teachers are encouraged to use flexible grouping in order to maximize the opportunity to learn language at appropriately challenging levels
- When necessary, students are enrolled in our EAL Support Services, receiving extra English support (See EAL Support Services above).
  - Every new student enrolled is given the MAP test to gauge English language



- proficiency and determine educational support needs.
  - The EAL specialist teachers meet regularly as a team to plan for the teaching and learning of EAL Support Services.
  - The PYP EAL Specialist Teacher collaborates with the PYP Coordinator and homeroom teachers to plan and implement language teaching and learning that aligns with the programme of inquiry whenever possible.
  - The MYP EAL Specialist Teacher collaborates with the MYP Coordinator and subject group teachers to plan and implement language teaching and learning that aligns with the subject group overviews whenever possible.
- Teachers are encouraged to use any and all suitable technology that can facilitate language teaching and learning.
- All teachers are required to adhere to the agreed upon expectations for assessment outlined in the DID Assessment Policy when planning and teaching.
- Students are motivated by teachers to write for publications outside of the school that connect to the school's host country, Japan.

## **Professional Development**

SIS administration recognizes the significance of ongoing professional development in the area of language learning and EAL/JAL support.

- All teachers are language teachers and opportunities are available in the area of language learning and EAL/JAL support through workshops, seminars and forums within the school and in the wider community.
- Monitoring and providing feedback on effective language learning in the classroom is part of teacher appraisals.
- WIDA training will be prioritized for teachers providing EAL support to students

## **Library and Multimedia Center**

The SIS Library and Multimedia Center supports the learning environment and enriches the various languages represented in our school community.

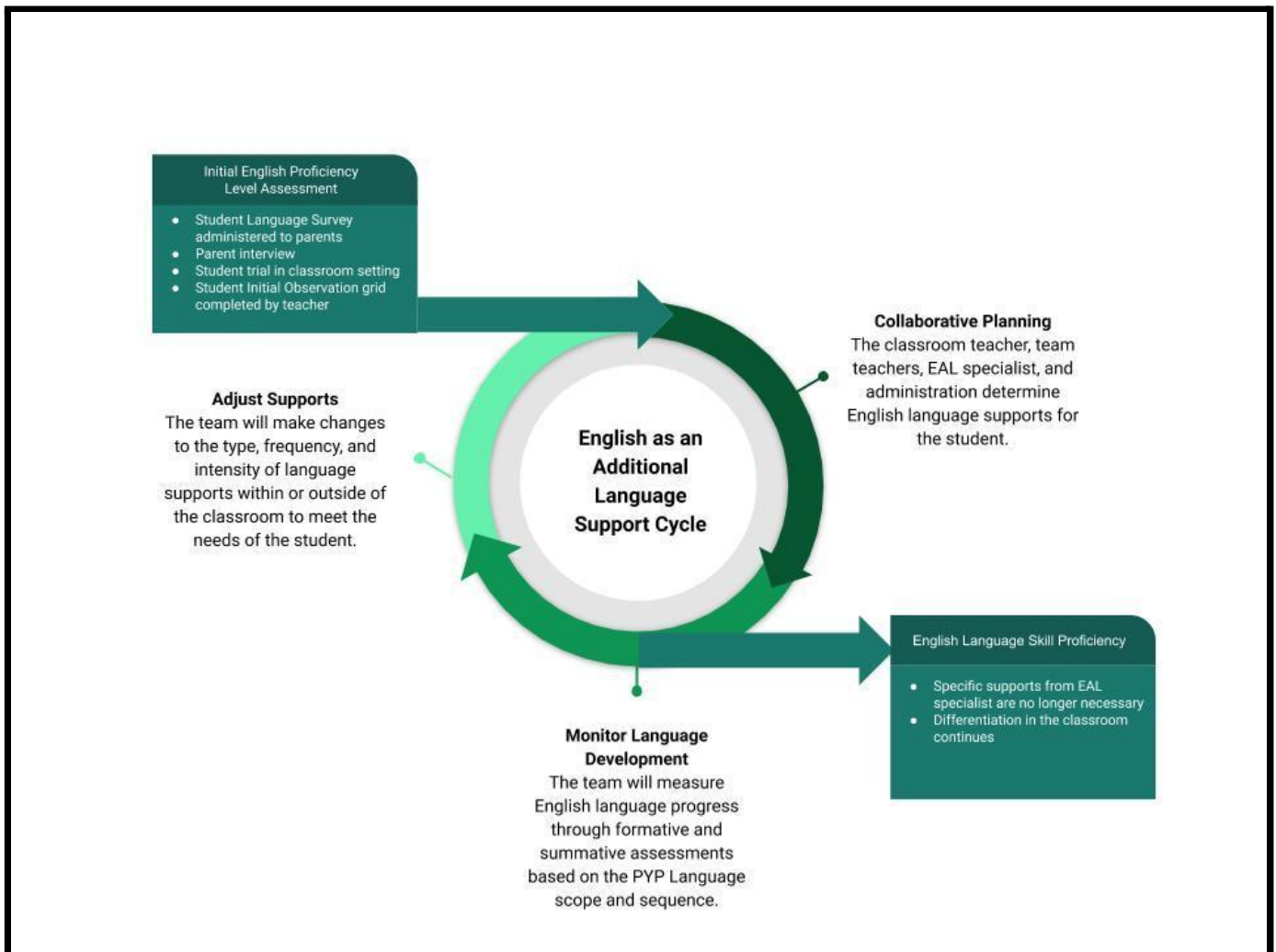
- The SIS Library and Multimedia Center is designed to meet the study and research needs of both individuals and groups.
- A wide range of materials (language games, references, online resources, etc.) are available mainly in English.
- The librarian will look for opportunities to increase the amount of resources in additional languages represented in our school community.
- The librarian will provide support for teachers to find books, online teaching resources, and other materials.
- The librarian and other teachers will strive to increase awareness and appreciation of a wide variety of languages around the world through creating mother tongue language displays.
- Reading materials including fiction and non-fiction books, Fountas and Pinnell, Raz Kids online, Big Cat Guided Reading Books, dictionaries, thesauruses, encyclopedias, and reference books are available.

## **Review**

This SIS language policy is reviewed every two years by coordinators, administrators, teachers, students, and parents.

## References

- Making The PYP Happen, 2009
- Learning In A Language Other Than Mother Tongue In IB Programmes, 2008
- Guidelines For Developing A Language Policy, 2008
- Towards A Continuum Of International Education
- Programme Standards And Practices, 2011
- IB PYP Language Scope and Sequence, 2009
- Alberta K-12 ESL Proficiency Benchmarks
- WIDA English Language and Development Standards (K-12), 2012



## Language Survey conducted in Admission Process

Student's Manner of Communication				
Skills	English	Japanese	Other: _____	Other: _____
	0: None ⇄ 4: Above Grade Level	0: None ⇄ 4: Above Grade Level	0: None ⇄ 4: Above Grade Level	0: None ⇄ 4: Above Grade Level
Listening	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
Speaking	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
Reading	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
Writing	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
Father's name: _____ Father's country of origin: _____ Mother's name: _____ Mother's country of origin: _____ What name do you use for your child? (E.g., Jenny or Chihiro) _____ Where was your child born? _____ Where else has your child lived? _____ How long has your child lived in Japan? _____ What languages do you speak? Father: _____ Mother: _____ In what language(s) do you communicate with your child? (E.g., Turkish and Japanese; or Only English) _____ _____ Does your child speak English or Japanese with other family members or friends? With whom and how often? E.g., She speaks Japanese with her grandmother once every two weeks. _____ _____ Approximately how many English words does your child know? (circle one): less than 10                  10-50                  51-100                  101-200                  more than 200 Is there anything else you would like to share regarding your child's communication abilities? _____ _____ _____ _____				

Figure 2