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# Good Shepherd Lutheran School

## Language Policy

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### Introduction

The development of language is essential to our need to communicate. It is the essence of constructing meaning. It supports our thinking and understanding and permeates the whole Primary Years Program (PYP). It is not a discreet process but integrated throughout the curriculum and therefore all teachers are considered teachers of language.

The role of language in the PYP is to provide an authentic context for students to develop and use language. Wherever possible we teach language through the relevant, realistic context of the units of inquiry. However, there are occasions where it is appropriate for students to be given a series of strategies for learning language, learning about language and learning through language in order to progress in their conceptual understanding rather than struggling to proceed.

We aim for all students to communicate responsibly, proficiently and confidently. To this students need to be empowered to comprehend language through listening, speaking and viewing, and to express themselves with increasing confidence through speaking, writing and presenting.

The language program includes the following areas of language learning:

### Language of instruction

The language of instruction at Good Shepherd Lutheran School is English and is the language in which most of the curriculum is taught.

### Additional language

German is the language offered in addition to the language of instruction.

### Mother-tongue support

Mother-tongue is the language most frequently spoken at home eg: indigenous language, Greek, Auslan. Students who attend Mother-tongue classes are also, where possible, to be supported by the school language program and general program.

### Philosophy Statement

At Good Shepherd Lutheran we believe:

- That every teacher is a teacher of language and parents play a significant role in their child's continual language development.
- Students learn language best by being immersed in language through daily interactions with others.
- Students learn language to be empowered as individuals through communication.
- Students learn language to be able to interact with and understand their world.

- The acquisition of additional languages is important as it fosters understanding and tolerance of other cultures and people, facilitates international mindedness and enriches students' personal growth.
- Language is taught in all disciplines: it is integrated through all areas of the curriculum.
- Children differ in their acquisition of language and therefore the teaching of language, teaching about language and teaching through language needs to take account of this and provide students with a differentiated curriculum.
- Learning language underpins all other curriculum areas and is one of the means that delivers trans-disciplinary content. It provides meaningful and authentic contexts for learning about and through language.
- The support and maintenance of mother-tongue language is integral to personal development and cultural identity.
- The language learning environment extends beyond the classroom, as students increasingly communicate via global technology. Critical literacy is an essential skill in the world of mass media and information to gain an understanding of our world and its people.

### **Practices of the Language Policy**

In a PYP school every teacher is a language teacher.

Language learning includes:

- The language of instruction – English
- The school's additional language – German
- Mother-Tongue support

### **Language Support**

Language support is organised both in and out of the classroom. In addition to language support provided by the language support teacher, classroom teachers ensure that learning engagements cater for the range of abilities, interests and needs in their classes. Within any classroom there is a range of abilities and language instruction is differentiated accordingly.

Decision-making processes used by the school to identify language needs are outlined in the Learning Support Policy.

Arrangements made for differentiation to support language learning are outlined in the Learning Support Policy and require collaboration with teaching staff. Those students who require intensive language support are supported with a Negotiated Learning Plan outlining specific differentiated needs.

Parents are encouraged to help students develop language skills at home through various school based information sessions and programs. These include:

- New Parent Orientation Night
- Learning Support information sessions and interviews
- Parent Information Night
- Class and school newsletter information
- Homework
- Premier's Reading Challenge
- Use of the Resource Centre
- PYP information evenings

- Parent/Teacher interviews (at the beginning of the year)
- Incidental Parent/Teacher meetings

Parents are encouraged to support the German program through conversations. Teachers facilitate parent involvement through parent conferences, newsletters and notes home in addition to regular face to face communication. Parents are encouraged to become active in the classroom and school community.

### **Additional Language - German**

At Good Shepherd Lutheran School, German is the language offered in addition to the language of instruction.

Students from Foundation to Year 7 receive language instruction in German once per week for 1 hour.

Where possible resources used in German lessons are available to be copied and used in classrooms. This includes posters, signs, images and artefacts.

The Learner Profile, Attitudes and Transdisciplinary skills are available to teaching staff in English and German.

Teaching staff are to be taught various phrases throughout the year to use with their classes. e.g.: greetings, words and phrases including the Learner Profile.

### **Class Opportunities for Sharing and Promoting German**

Teaching staff are to create and capture opportunities for students to share and explore German language in a classroom context. The following are merely suggestions and should not be considered exhaustive.

- Maths – count in German
- Learn key words and phrases related to Units of Inquiry
- Days of the week
- Charts with words in German
- Morning and evening greetings

Promoting German by:

- Providing reflection time and discussion with students about what they are learning in German
- Displaying work completed in German lessons in classrooms and specialist areas
- Including information in class newsletters

### **Resources in German**

Resources used in German lessons can be accessed by the teaching staff for class use.

### **Integration into the Program of Inquiry**

Effective oral, written and visual communication are best achieved when they are purposeful. Skills in these areas are therefore explicitly taught, practised and used as part of the inquiry process where they are most relevant. eg; report writing where a unit is focusing on in unit on endangerment.

Language skills, which are not part of the units of inquiry, are taught separately.

For further information see Language of Instruction Supporting Documents, German Language Documents and Guidelines for Mother Tongue Support.

### **Professional Development**

The PYP Coordinator, Management Team and Principal determine the whole school Professional Development needs in the area of language considering cluster, year level, specialist and individual perspectives.

Professional Development is accessed through Association of Independent Schools of South Australia (AISSA), the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO), external agencies and staff expertise.

The PYP Coordinator is responsible for disseminating the information to staff and the school community regarding current research and best practices in language learning.

The PYP Coordinator will organise staff meeting and professional development time for teaching staff to share how they are facilitating the learning and support of English, German and Mother-Tongue as part of the Programme of Inquiry (POI) and stand alone subjects.

The Principal and PYP Coordinator are responsible for sharing and making available professional journals and other resources for teaching staff.

Staff are expected to attend professional learning sessions endorsed by the IB as well as those that support language learning. The PYP Coordinator will provide in house support as well as arrange for in school workshops.

The Additional Language teacher attends relevant staff professional development, teaching staff planning meetings and reflection days and has access to language professional development.

### **Resources**

The PYP Coordinator in conjunction with the library technician will continually update the resources in the library and teacher resource collection to meet the needs of all students and cultures represented in the school. Classroom teachers, students and parents assist with providing recommendations.

Classroom libraries are kept up to date with resources catering for all language spoken in the classroom through:

- English and Mother Tongue resources from the Resource Centre
- Collaboration and cooperation with the Additional Language teacher

Processes used to identify suitable and adequate resources for general language learning and literature are negotiated with the PYP Coordinator.

Resources are initially considered based on:

- requests by teaching staff and students
- whole school focus and professional development needs
- recommendations of book suppliers
- information from educational authorities

The criteria for identifying suitable and adequate resources are the following:

- Balance of fiction and non-fiction, visual, print, ICT and audio

- Resources that directly support the conceptual focus of units of inquiry
- Whole School focus, e.g.: internationalism
- PYP Profiles
- PYP Attitudes
- Stand Alone units
- Mother Tongue resources based on information from data collected about mother-tongue languages represented at Good Shepherd Lutheran School
- Range of quality literature

The PYP Coordinator, in consultation with teaching staff, identify suitable teacher library resources for school language programs.

The Additional Language teacher determines suitable and adequate resources for German.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The development, implementation and revision of the language policy should, where possible, be a whole staff process and involve collaboration between the PYP Coordinator, Learning Support Coordinator, Additional Language teacher, Classroom teachers, Specialist and other teaching staff.

The PYP Coordinator will be responsible for initiating the process of implementation and reviews by way of recommendations and a draft document with proposals to submit to the staff and School Council.

Teachers will work collaboratively with the PYP Coordinator and Learning Support staff to develop and access resources needed for Units of Inquiry in the PYP, students research and language support.

The Language document will be approved by the School Council and will be communicated to the school community as are other such documents.

### **Communication to Staff and School Community**

The PYP Coordinator is responsible for communicating the Language Policy to teaching staff, students and parents/carers, ensuring that all documents, which contain policies or overviews of school programs, include information about the Language Policy.

The Additional Language teacher is responsible for highlighting the integral component of the German program in the Language Policy.

The PYP Coordinator explains the Language Policy to new teachers as part of their induction process.

It is the responsibility of the PYP Coordinator to ensure that staff are kept informed of the IBO programme standards and practices in relation to language teaching and learning and that the Language Policy reflects a commitment to these standards and practices.

### **Language Policy Resources**

It is the school's responsibility to ensure that sufficient funding is available to provide resources for all aspects of Language teaching including English, German and Mother-Tongue.

The PYP Coordinator and Additional Language Teacher, in collaboration with teaching staff, are responsible for the selection and purchase of resources used in implementing the Language Policy.

### **Scope and Sequence**

A variety of guiding curriculum documents are used in order to plan for language within the classes and year levels. Documents consulted include:

- International Baccalaureate PYP scope and sequence
- The Australian Curriculum
- Lexile Framework – Scholastic
- Spalding Framework
- Jolly Grammar

### **Language Policy Review**

The Principal, in collaboration with the PYP Coordinator, School Management team and Additional Language teacher will identify necessary minor changes annually.

The Language Policy will be reviewed biannually involving the PYP Coordinator, School Management team, Additional Language teacher, Classroom teachers, Specialist teachers, and other teaching staff.

As a result the school action plan will be updated based on what has been achieved and areas for further development.

### **Admissions and Enrolment**

Information on enrolling students' language needs is gathered in a variety of ways in order to develop a language profile of the student, and so that an entrance point for the student is identified for future milestones to be mapped against. It provides data about the proficiency and needs in language for teaching staff to plan for their needs.

At Good Shepherd Lutheran School, parents are interviewed in order to convey teaching and learning programs available at the school as well as the school's ethos. During these meetings, particular needs of a student may be outlined in regards to language development. Enrolment forms are issued where questions include preschools attended, physical needs such as hearing or visual impairment, medical needs, and language background. If the child is joining in Foundation then reports from preschools are gathered as well as other agency reports.

### **Mother Tongue Support**

A survey is used to collect important information, place of birth, languages spoken at home and can be found in the enrolment pack issued to parents at time of enrolment. This data is to be given to the PYP Coordinator.

Parents/carers are to indicate if a translator is required for the initial enrolment interview. This information is recorded as part of the enrolment procedure.

Class teachers are expected to use this information to create and capture opportunities for students to share and explore languages spoken by their peers. See [Class Opportunities for Sharing Mother Tongue](#) section.

### Active Use of Mother Tongue

Inclusive language behaviours of staff and students are expected. Students should not be excluded by means of language usage.

Information regarding the Language Policy and active use of Mother-tongue by students is outlined on the school website.

The Learner Profile and Attitudes are available for teaching staff in English, and German. It is the responsibility of the class teachers, supported by the PYP Coordinator and the Additional Language teacher to also include mother tongue language, where deemed necessary, for the Learner Profile and Attitudes.

All staff should consider the inclusive use of language for special events and celebrations such as Grandparents and Special Friends Day and end of year Graduation.

### Class Opportunities for Sharing Mother Tongue

Class teachers are expected to share information regarding the Language Policy at Parent Information Night.

When reading for pleasure in the classroom, students will have the opportunity to read in their first language.

Teaching staff are to create and capture opportunities as appropriate for students to share and explore languages spoken by their peers. The following are merely suggestions:

- Maths – counting in other languages (buddy activity)
- Learn key words and phrases of units of inquiry
- Learner profile in mother tongue
- Message book – include other languages
- Days of the week
- Worship
- Show and tell/sharing
- Writing
- Study of names and pronunciation
- Range of alphabets
- Morning greeting
- Reading of books by bi-lingual parents and students
- Provide opportunities for students to write in their mother tongue and teach others
- Student Led conferences
- Class teacher great students in their mother-tongue

### Resources in Mother Tongue

The PYP Coordinator and Specialists, liaising with other staff, will use the mother-tongue information collected to purchase appropriate:

- Fiction bi-lingual books.
- Non-fiction bi-lingual books
- Bi-lingual dictionaries

- Recorded music in mother-tongues
- Audio books in mother tongues

The PYP Coordinator will develop a data-base of parents who can assist with increasing awareness of mother tongue. This data-base will be made available to teaching staff.

### **Assessment**

Good Shepherd Lutheran School implements a range of diagnostic, formative and summative assessment to determine the development of students' English and German language.

This information is available to parents/carers via the Parent handbook and Assessment Policy. Teachers can access this information via the Teacher handbook and Assessment Policy. Students can access information via classroom programs. Feedback to the students is provided in a range of informal and formal ways.

IBO and Australian Curriculum documents and guidelines inform school language assessment.

### **References/Related Policies**

International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program scope and sequence

The Australian Curriculum

Immanuel Primary School Language Policy

Waikerie Lutheran School

St John's Lutheran School Highgate

Lutheran Education Australia: A Framework for Lutheran Schools

Association of Independent School's South Australia