



# **International School Delft**

## **Whole School Language Policy**

**Version 26 November 2019**



## **Philosophy**

The community of ISD comprises of more than 40 different nationalities, most of our students have a first language other than English. We value all languages as equal and encourage the use of multiple languages in school by staff and students.

Language is used as a tool to communicate needs, feelings, ideas and experiences and to develop an understanding of the world. It is essential for the development of social, emotional and cognitive skills. Language is used according to different contexts and audience; it changes over time.

Language development is a lifelong process. Language skills can be further developed by challenging people's level of understanding and providing good models of effective communication. Developing confidence as a communicator is critical to becoming a productive and positive member of the world in which we live.

At International School Delft (ISD), we believe that language is fundamental to all teaching and learning as it is central to the entire curriculum. We consider all teachers as language teachers. Throughout our programme we nurture the development of English as the language of instruction, Dutch as the language of our host country, and students' home languages. Additional languages are taught during their time at ISD. Language learning is most effective when learned and used in context. A rich language environment is promoted throughout the school.

As a community we recognise the shared responsibility for language development and understand the importance of language and its role in all teaching and learning.

### **Purpose of Language Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to provide an overview of language learning at ISD. This learning is in line with the principles and practices of the International Baccalaureate (IB) PYP and MYP programmes.

The policy outlines our linguistic and academic approach to teaching languages at ISD.

### **Our approach to language learning at International School Delft**

We strive to enable our students to sustain and support all of their languages. We do this by using language to:

- To enrich teaching and learning
- To celebrate the linguistic diversity of our community
- To enable our students to learn the skills, attitudes, concepts and knowledge necessary to become independent life-long learners who are able to think critically and creatively
- To ensure members of our community have an understanding of the importance of how language is acquired and developed through student learning



## **Curriculum**

ISD is an IB school following the PYP and MYP programmes. Language learning in the curriculum is taught in context within the units of inquiry and in some discrete lessons.

### **● Home-school Links**

ISD values the relationship with parents in supporting their children's language skills. Parents are involved in their children's learning by:

- Attending regular parents' evenings provided by the school, which provides verbal feedback on their children's progress and their targets for the future.
- Attending meetings that are provided by the school, when appropriate, to learn about:
  - how students acquire language
  - how ISD teaches reading/writing/phonics
  - how parents can help at home.

### **● Dutch Language**

All students at International School Delft study the language of our host country, Dutch. This helps them maintain their own language and/or integrate into the local community and to develop their understanding of Dutch culture. Dutch is offered as a language of study from PYP 1 onwards. Lessons are designed to provide children with an enjoyable introduction to the language and culture. Students learn the basic language necessary for simple day-to-day communications. Developers (PYP) and Language and Literature (MYP) courses are offered to students who are more advanced Dutch speakers. Where appropriate, Dutch lessons are tied in with the school's curriculum.

### **● English Language Learners (ELL)**

At ISD, we recognise that our population predominantly consists of students who are learning English as an additional language. Teachers differentiate their instruction to support individual learners in their language development. All teachers have experience teaching ELL students and all teachers are considered to be teachers of language. In addition, students have access to specialised ELL support depending on their needs, and as identified by the school.

Specialist ELL teachers assess individual student needs on a regular basis. They use student prior knowledge and experience that pupils have of English, in order to enhance their learning. The ELL specialist teacher works in partnership with parents and staff to develop a programme for the student. ELL staff use a variety of games and resources when developing a language programme.



ELL students may be taught individually or in small groups. Learning sessions may take place in or out of the class, depending on student needs. The specialist ELL teacher and class / subject teacher on a regular basis review ELL student progress.

- **Home Languages**

At ISD we recognise that many of our students speak more than one language at home. ELL students can make rapid progress when learning English. Within two years, they may be competent English speakers when using English in social situations. However, it may take students from five to seven years to become fully competent in the use of academic language. Actively developing the use of the mother tongue language at home, positively affects the time it takes to acquire English.

We promote home languages through the PYP and MYP programmes. In addition, home languages are supported through extra-curricular opportunities and resources.

- **Additional Languages**

The host country language is introduced at International School Delft in the primary school from PYP 1 onwards. Language is integrated, where possible, into units of inquiry in PYP and continue in MYP. Additional languages are introduced from MYP 1. Alignment and breadth in choice of additional languages are made to allow for continuity of language development between PYP and MYP and to broaden the linguistic and cultural horizons of ISD students.

### **Alignment**

The Language policy is closely aligned to the policies of Admissions, Assessment, Academic Honesty and Teaching and Learning.

### **Responsibilities:**

The leadership team is responsible for development and review of the Language Policy.

**Last reviewed: November 2019**

**Next review date: November 2021**