



**Zhuhai International School**

Qiao Island, Zhuhai, Guangdong, China

[www.zischina.com](http://www.zischina.com)

# Primary Years Programme Language Policy



## **Philosophy**

At Zhuhai International School we believe that enrichment through language offers our students the necessary tools of communication and capacity building to enable them to truly be a global citizen of the world. We accept and openly encourage a diverse range of languages spoken in our school, and believe that the development of intercultural awareness is best heightened by learning additional languages to that of students' mother tongue. We believe that this approach also supports the practical needs of the globally mobile in our community.

## **Language of Instruction**

At ZIS English is the language of instruction at all year levels. Chinese Mandarin is offered as the second language in Early Learning and the Primary Years programme (PYP).

Chinese may be spoken by Chinese staff as means to support mother tongue Chinese Mandarin speakers in both primary and secondary classrooms. There are times when it may also be used to support The Program of Inquiry in the PYP.

In the Middle Years Programme (MYP), Chinese is offered to all students. Other languages are also offered in the Secondary school via distance/online learning. Examples of languages offered in this mode are, German, French, Korean and Japanese. Other languages may be offered by request. This online learning option is to suit the requirements of students whose families intend to stay for only one contract of work and wish for continuity of study in either their mother tongue or second language.

In the Diploma Programme (DP), English and Mandarin are the primary choices for Group 1 and 2 (Languages A and B), however individual student needs for alternative languages can be investigated.

## **Admissions**

All students are admitted regardless of the level of English spoken in all Year levels up to and including Year 9. All students who speak English as an additional language may be required to take The Zhuhai International English Proficiency Test at the time of enrollment. Primary students with a low level of English will receive additional English support.

## **Mother tongue**

When appropriate and where possible ZIS encourages the use and appreciation of the student's Mother Tongue to learn and communicate.

The library endeavours to support Mother Tongue languages by providing reading materials and resources in different languages.

### **Chinese Language Learning**

Early years – Chinese is integrated in centre activities or taught at Chinese group time. Chinese lessons are integrated into the unit of Inquiry as often as possible.

Primary school – Chinese is taught as a daily stand alone subject in line with the Transdisciplinary theme as appropriate. Classes are organized in consideration of student ability and age.

### **Planning and collaboration**

Class planning is a collaborative process between teachers, co-teacher and specialist teachers. Meetings are held on a regular basis.

### **EAL**

Non-English speaking students new to the school are assessed by the EAL department. Each student's needs are identified and if EAL support is necessary the EAL department develops a programme to support the student's English language learning.

The EAL department performs continuous assessment of the students. Students are gradually integrated back into the classroom when EAL and class teacher assessment indicates the student's readiness.

### **Intensive Language Course**

There will be a 6-8 week intensive language course twice yearly, (at the beginning of each semester). This is offered to students new to the school whose EAL indicates they do not have enough English to be able to access the curriculum. The duration of each course will be half a day each day for this period of time. Years 1 – 3 (9.00 - 11.30am) and Years 4 - 6 (1.20 – 3.20).

Children in Years 1 – 3 will not attend Chinese classes during this time, however Chinese lessons for students in Years 4 - 6 will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

During Chinese time students in the intensive language course will be involved in an individual computer assisted learning programme.

The approach to the Intensive Language classes will be transdisciplinary and include elements of maths, art, drama, PE and music by collaboratively planning with the EAL teaching team and with the support of the specialist teachers.

During this 6-8 week period all other students who need EAL support will continue to have regular EAL support.

### **Special Education Language support**

The children who have special needs in regard to learning and accessing language will have support from both their class teacher and a support teacher to help develop an Individual Educational



Programme (IEP) for that student. Where necessary there will be recommendations for the student to be assessed by an outside agency to diagnose potential specific learning difficulties.

### **Literature Replacement**

Literacy resources include, but are not limited to; puppets, flash cards, games, CD, DVDs, posters and computer and on-line resources.

The literacy resources are grouped into the categories below

- Library
- Class to include Chinese class, UOI and other subject areas
- Readers - English and Chinese
- EAL

These resources should be reviewed yearly to replace lost and damaged items as well and increasing the volume and variety of resources.

The library will develop and deliver a curriculum to support learning across the school and will include research skills.

### **Assessment**

A variety of assessment will be carried out on a regular basis, in line with the Assessment Policy.

### **Practices that reflect our beliefs**

In our school the focus is on language and also on its application across the subject areas and throughout the transdisciplinary programme of inquiry.

Language is a major connection between home and school. Teachers actively foster respect for and interest in other languages by encouraging and supporting mother tongue language development. Resources, such as bilingual dictionaries, are available in several languages and students may present their learning in other languages when necessary and appropriate, including their mother tongue.

The school and classroom libraries are kept up to date with books catering for all languages spoken in the school. Letters to parents are often translated before being sent home, students are encouraged to use books in their own language for project work, and mother tongue classes may be part of the programme. The school environment is rich in print with relevant labels, signs, explanations, teacher and student writing.

Students have opportunities to listen and speak, in order to communicate effectively, and to establish and maintain relationships. They experience a variety of media such as drama, oral presentations, exhibitions and multimedia presentations to encourage the development of their language skills.



Literature is an integral part of the curriculum. Students learn how to understand, interpret and respond to the ideas, attitudes and feelings expressed in various texts; to think critically about what they read; to be able to make predictions and inferences based on information that is both explicit and implicit in a text. Reading is modeled at school and encouraged at home to reinforce and develop reading behaviours.

The writing process involves creating an environment where students can acquire the skills necessary to produce written products for a variety of purposes and in a variety of formats. When learning to write, students are encouraged to focus at first on meaning rather than accuracy, and to enjoy the writing process.

Teachers strive to develop a caring language community, in which all students feel accepted and confident that they will be supported by others in language learning and taking risks.

Teachers structure teaching and learning situations so that students have opportunities for success. They use scaffolding techniques to support students and a variety of approaches and teaching styles are employed to cater to individual needs. The teachers plan in collaboration with other classroom teachers and single subject teachers to provide authentic and purposeful learning experiences.

The PYP classroom is also connected to the broader world through technology; students research and communicate not only through printed media, but also through global electronic networks, in order to access a vast range of multimedia resources.

The teacher's own interest in, and development of, language teaching and learning is maintained through regular professional development, reading of professional journals and, especially, through regular contact with colleagues who share their commitment to teaching language through inquiry. Commercially available resources for teaching language are carefully evaluated to ensure that they meet the requirements of the teacher, the students and the curriculum.

