

# Language Policy

La Garenne International School



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This policy is a working document which represents a statement of action. All teachers in our school are responsible for language learning and are provided with professional development opportunities to ensure that we are meeting the complex language needs of our learners as illustrated in the School Language Profile shown in Appendix 1.

## **La Garenne Language Philosophy**

La Garenne International School has a unique and ever changing linguistic profile which demands careful attention. The key tenants underlying the language policy in La Garenne are the beliefs that:

- Language is an important part of cultural identity. The diversity of language within the school should therefore be respected and nurtured, in line with the school's ethos.
- Language is the most important tool available for communication and thought. Oral and written proficiency in the language of instruction are therefore paramount to successful learning.
- Multilingualism is the linguistic norm, governed by the demands of globalisation and cultural openness. Proficiency in more than one language provides greater opportunities for learning and understanding.
- English is an international language which crosses cultural, ethnic and religious divides.
- Successful integration into the local community demands proficiency in the local language of the school (French).

## **Administration**

La Garenne has a rich linguistic history, firstly as a school whose primary language of administration and instruction was French. Subsequent years saw an increasing demand for English within the school which has now replaced French as the primary language of instruction. English rather than French is now the chosen working language of La Garenne for instruction, however in keeping with the identity and history of the school, French remains the key language for much of the administrative functions. English has become the common language of all students and staff whereas French is still widely used throughout the school. Consequently:

- All teachers and administrators are required to be fluent in English. Mother tongue or an equivalent level of proficiency is required for teaching, fluent written and oral proficiency for administration.
- The content of all lessons (apart from instruction in other languages) should be delivered in English.
- Teachers are expected to communicate in English or French with pupils in and outside the classroom.

- Formal assessment is carried out only in English (apart from assessment of other languages). Although pupils may formulate their original ideas in another language, formal recognition of their understanding is only given to ideas correctly expressed in English.
- Students are politely reminded to speak English with each other in the classroom as a means of including others.
- Formal feedback to parents regarding students is provided in English. English is the language chosen for reports, parent consultations and assessment.

Proficiency in English is paramount to accessing the curriculum. In order to ensure proficiency in English, the following procedures are in place:

- All applicants to the school are screened before entry to establish their proficiency level and specific needs through the results of their GL placement test which provides a reading age and more specific data regarding, amongst other things, English language skills.
- English is a core subject on all timetables, and is therefore prioritised in time allocations.
- English teaching in the Primary, Middle and Senior School is tiered to enhance differentiation. This allows teachers to focus more intensively on the specific needs of individual groups.
- The English Phase 1 Language Acquisition group exists to assist pupils who require support in attaining proficiency in English
- Pupils who lack adequate proficiency are provided with a level of support depending on their needs. This may range from weekly 'booster' sessions, or intensive small group tuition as an alternative to the normal curriculum. Struggling students may also opt for additional private lessons which the school can help to facilitate.
- The EIS curriculum is designed to complement and support the main-stream curriculum, ensuring ease of transition once pupils attain proficiency in the language.
- Pupils who require intensive support follow an adapted curriculum, with non-core elements removed. This includes delaying the introduction of a second or additional foreign language.
- Pupils receiving support are given special consideration in assessment procedures and may be eligible for special consideration in formal examinations.
- All teachers are considered responsible for the development of English and are expected to promote language development in lessons.
- All teachers are required to integrate language learning into their interdisciplinary planning.

## **Promotion of the Local Language**

Multilingualism is increasingly important in the modern world and provides greater breadth for intercultural understanding, underpinning the school's ethos. The local language – French – constitutes the second language of the school and is embraced as an important part of school life.

Proficiency in French is essential for pupils to be able to communicate in the local area so that they can integrate into and benefit from their local community.

In view of the importance of the local language:

- The school aims to develop proficiency so that all pupils leave the school multilingual
- The use of French in the classroom is accepted as a means of clarifying or reinforcing an idea, only if other means of communication have been exhausted.
- Pupils are able to use French in recreational settings, as long as they do not exclude others.
- Parents can communicate with the school in French and translations are provided where necessary.

In order to attain proficiency in French, the following procedures are in place:

- French is compulsory for students from 5-16 years of age
- French is considered a core subject, and thus allocated time on the timetable.
- A two tiered system is in place: students who speak French well receive appropriate tuition aimed at extending their use of the language. Students who are new to the language receive lessons in French appropriate to their abilities.
- French teaching in the Minis, Junior and Senior School is tiered to enhance differentiation. This allows teachers to focus more intensively on the specific needs of individual groups.

## **Promotion of mother tongue languages and other languages**

An increased range of languages leads to an increased understanding of the world. La Garenne encourages and supports both the learning of additional languages and the development of first-languages that are not a normal part of the curriculum.

In view of this:

- The use of other languages in the classroom is accepted as a means of clarifying or reinforcing an idea, if other means of communication have been exhausted.
- Students are able to use other languages in recreational settings as long as they do not exclude others.
- All staff accept and understand pupils need to express themselves and develop in their first language.
- La Garenne supports students wishing to undertake IBDP Self-Taught language A options.
- Speakers of other languages are encouraged to gain additional qualifications in their home language and are supported wherever possible in achieving this.
- There are a range of language clubs which take place each week and students are encouraged to participate in these clubs.
- La Garenne promotes the importance of developing a child's first language and guides parents on ways that they can support their child's development through contact with institutes or private tutors.

### **Languages in the Middle Years Programme**

The languages that we offer in the MYP are tailored to suit the language profile of our students. For this reason we offer English Language and Literature for students who can meet the level of English needed to access the content.

The English Language and Literature classes are in two sets which are taught in tandem to ensure that we can facilitate differentiation as much as possible through collaboration, movement between groups and team teaching of various topics.

Students who meet this level will then study French as their Language Acquisition subject which is also the second language of the school and the working language of the boarding house.

## **Languages in the Diploma Programme**

The languages offered as a part of the Diploma Programme are designed to support progression routes from the MYP. It is anticipated that a majority of students will progress from MYP English Language and Literature into DP Language and Literature as this will likely be their best working language.

Should students wish to pursue studies in their native language however this is supported through the inclusion of School Supported Self-Taught Languages. This is allocated time on the timetable once per week to ensure that student will have the opportunity to lease with the site based coordinator for self-taught languages. The surrounding community is well served by a variety of private language teachers who we anticipate will be able to support the majority of or SSST language needs.

Students who opt for SSST languages will be able to select both English B or French B for their group 2 language depending on their language portfolio. Challenge is important and we will guide students towards their second language choices with this in mind.

Students who opt for English Language and Literature in Group 1 will be guided towards French B as their language Acquisition subject. This is in line with the school's context as a school with French as a second working language, in addition to promoting the local language and allowing integration.

## Appendix 1: School Language Profile

### Percentage of Languages Spoken of Students

