



LANGUAGE POLICY AT SEKOLAH MENENGAH KEBANGSAAN DATO' SHEIKH AHMAD

RATIONALE :

Learning a language is a valuable part of every child's education as it is vital to exploring and sustaining personal development, cultural identity and intercultural understanding. It also has cognitive benefits, i.e. the way in which the skills learnt in language lessons transfer to other curriculum subjects and can therefore improve overall academic performance. Language then, is central to learning, as well as literacy, and is thus closely related to success in school.

DEFINITIONS :

- i. Language of instruction :
The language in which the school's lessons is delivered. The language of instruction is Malay. This can also be referred to as the school's Language and Literature (MYP). Throughout this document, however, it will be referred to as the language of instruction.
- ii. Second Language :
English language is the second language which is learned by all students. This can also be referred to as the school's language acquisition (MYP). Throughout this document, it will be referred to as the second language.
- iii. Mother Tongue :
It refers to the language that a student first learned to speak. The school offers Chinese language to the Chinese students while Tamil is offered to the Indian students.
- iv. Foreign Language :
German is offered as an elective subject for students who are interested to learn the language from Year 1 – Year 5.

PHILOSOPHY

Learning a language is central to intellectual, social and emotional development and the basis to develop traits of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Learner Profile. Students achieve their potential when they use the language effectively through inquiry, reflecting and communicating in a variety of contexts and purposes.

Thus, the development of attributes of the Learner Profile involves the acquisition of language concepts, understandings, skills and attitudes. This will enable students to:

- interpret the world around them
- communicate effectively
- feel confident and be open-minded
- inculcate a love for learning
- express their opinions and views and respond to the thinking of others
- understand, tolerate and appreciate other cultures and perspectives

The school places importance on language learning, including the language of instruction, second language, mother tongue and other language. Thus we believe that :

- i. every teacher is a teacher of language and supports the language development of each student.
- ii. teachers expose students to a range of cultural perspectives and foster intercultural understanding and appreciation through listening, speaking, reading and writing activities.
- iii. the approach to teaching and learning any language must differentiate to cater to students of different proficiency, abilities and capabilities.
- iv. language learning support should take place inside and outside of the classroom.
- v. the Language Policy be reviewed annually.

GUIDELINES :

LANGUAGE PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Malay and English are compulsory subjects in all National Secondary schools (Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan, SMK).

Language of Instruction (Malay)/Language and Literature:

- i. The language of instruction for all subjects in all forms (Form 1 to Form 5) is Malay except subjects for the second language, mother tongue and foreign language.
- ii. The language of instruction for Science and Mathematics in Form 1 classes which involve with Dual Language Programme is English. (2 classes)
- iii. Malay Language is the Language and Literature subject offered in our school.
- iv. The literature component in the Malay Language has a world literature component as per course requirements.
- v. Teachers will concentrate on each of the macroskills of language: listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting. These language modes are very much interactive and interrelated.

Second Language (English)/Language Acquisition:

- i. All students learn a second language i.e. the English language.
- ii. **Teaching and learning in the language acquisition subject group is organized into six phases. (Refer to MYP Language Acquisition Subject Guide)**
- iii. **The phases represent a developmental continuum of additional language learning. Depending on their prior additional language-learning experiences, students may commence their language acquisition course in any phase on the continuum and may exit from any phase on the continuum.**
- iv. In Language Acquisition, as students progress through the six phases, they are expected to develop the competencies to communicate appropriately and effectively in an increasing range of social, cultural and academic contexts, and for an increasing variety of audiences and purposes.
- v. In alignment with the MYP's regulations of placement into Language Acquisition, students are permitted to change to a new language course when they have successfully completed the phase 4 course.

Mother Tongue (Chinese and Tamil):

- i. Chinese and Indian students attend Chinese and Tamil classes respectively.
- ii. In order to facilitate time-tabling, Chinese classes are conducted concurrently with Islamic studies for Malay students.
- iii. The Chinese class is conducted by a teacher in the school and is allocated three (3) periods a week @ 40 minutes per lesson in the main time-table.
- iv. The Tamil class is conducted by a qualified teacher appointed by the State Education Department. The class is held once a week using the school premise. The class is held outside the main time-table i.e. from 3.00pm – 5.00 pm.
- v. Students doing mother tongue languages have public examinations at Form 3 and Form 5. These examinations are not compulsory. Students may opt not to sit for them although they are encouraged to do so.
- vi. Mother Tongue is not part of the Language Acquisition programme.

Foreign Language (German):

- i. Students who are interested to learn a foreign language are introduced to German. Three classes offer German in Form 1. The time allocated is three (3) periods a week @ 40 minutes per lesson.
- ii. Students taking German would sit for an examination in Form 4.
- iii. Foreign Language is not part of the Language Acquisition programme.

LANGUAGE PROFILE

- i. Language Profile information for each student is obtained through the admissions process of their competence in their :
 - language of instruction
 - second language
 - mother tongue
- ii. Records are kept for each student and travel with the student from year to year and teacher to teacher, to help guide instruction and the student's future development of language and literacy.

RESOURCES

- i. Resources in the languages represented in the school population are provided in the school library and subject-based classrooms.
- ii. The need for resources is discussed and identified by media teacher, teachers, students and parents.
- iii. Access to the internet is available to all teachers and students at the computer labs, language lab and teachers staff rooms.

LANGUAGE LEARNING SUPPORT

Language support takes place inside and outside of the classroom. All teachers are aware of their role as language teachers promoting language skills that are necessary for students to access content, and express their learning in a variety of way.

- Approaches to learning (ATL) is introduced by the school counsellors in Form 1 and 2 and reinforced by teachers in the classrooms.
- All teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication.
- Teachers expose students to a range of cultural perspectives and foster intercultural understanding and appreciation.
- Listening, speaking, reading and writing language knowledge and skills are developed through meaningful and engaging experiences.
- Students with a low competence in any language would attend classes outside the allotted classroom time for language learning support.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- i. Teachers identify students who are competent to participate in competitions such as debates, drama, singing, public speaking, choral-speaking , writing and other related activities organized by the school, at zone, district, state, national or international level.

- ii. Students are encouraged to take part in these competitions and teachers guide students in achieving their potential.
- iii. The school celebrates student's achievement by providing certificates of appreciation to students .

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