



## 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. English is the language of instruction for Science and Mathematics for Dual Language Programme (DLP) 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 macro skills 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, students sit for screening test to identify proficiency level and to determine their phases. The school uses the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) assessment results for the students to be allocated in phases and the subsequent movement of the student to the next phase. The language proficiency table Indicator as followed:

**Table 1: The Language Proficiency Table Indicator**

CEFR	MYP Phase
C2 / C1	6
B2	5
B1	4
A2	3
A1	2
Pre A1	1

- v. The results are kept by the English Panels for further references as a guidance to distinguish the students strengths and weaknesses (in LSRW), not compulsorily for grouping the students into different classes based on their level of proficiency.
- vi. Teachers need to be alert of students' language profiles. With this acknowledgement, teachers will be able to foster further development of the language.
- vii. Different type of learning materials will be given to students based on students' proficiency and capabilities.
- viii. More proficient students are also encouraged to do independent task
- ix. 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.

## 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 @ 30 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 3.00 pm – 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):**

Students who are interested to learn a foreign language are introduced to German. Only one class offer German in each year level. The time allocated is three (3) periods a week @ 30 minutes per lesson.

- i. Students taking German would sit for an examination in Form 5.
- ii. Foreign Language is not part of the Language Acquisition programme.

### **LANGUAGE PROFILE**

- i. Parents will be asked to complete a language profile form in order to establish each student's language background during registration day.
- ii. Teachers regularly monitor student's language proficiency

### **RESOURCES**

- i. Resources in the languages are provided in the school library
- ii. The need for resources is discussed and identified by media teacher, teachers and students.
- iii. Access to the internet is available to all teachers and students at the computer labs, library 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 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.
- Parents are encouraged to arrange classes during weekend for students with a low competence in any language.

## 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 .

### **Revised by :**

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