

Language Policy

Excellence, Diversity, Learning, Integrity,
Community



Adopted – September 2017
Version – 1.0
Reviewed– September 2020
By – SLT
Review March 2021

Language Policy

Rationale

VISS is committed to language learning and encouraging students to be effective communicators. Language development is seen central to the pedagogical approach at VISS and all teachers are in practice language teachers across the school. We respect that our student body comprises of variety of first language speakers with proficiency in more than one language. To that end, VISS is committed to providing opportunities for students to engage with the language of the host country and learn an additional language other than the language of instruction.

VISS Language Programmes:

English is the language of instruction and the primary language of communication at VISS. It is the first language for some of our students and a second or third language for a significant proportion of the school population. A large proportion of the student body comprises of students from the Arab League of Nations with varying levels of Arabic proficiency.

In the Primary School, English is taught to all students through the Australian English Curriculum. In Grades 6-10, English is taught to students through the Australian English Curriculum with a specific focus on developing skills necessary to access the IB Diploma Programme in Grades 11 and 12. Students are exposed to a range of texts from a wide variety of cultures through the medium of English. Every effort is made to provide students with texts and material that is culturally and contextually relevant.

Along with Arabic, French is available as an additional language for students from Grade 7 to 12.

English

Pre-KG and KG1 –

Holistic English Language Learning approach

Prep to Grade 10 –

Australian English Language curriculum

- Prep to Grade 5 – 2 periods of 1 hour each per day i.e. 20 hours over a 2 weeks cycle.
- Grade 6 to 10 – 12 periods of 40 minutes each over a 2 week cycle.
- ESL Support for specifically identified students across the school during regular English lessons.

Grade 11 and 12

- IB English A Literature
- IB English A Language and Literature
- School based English Language and Literature course for alternative high school pathway.
- Grades 11 and 12 – 12 periods of 40 minutes each over a 2 week cycle.

Arabic

UAE Ministry of Education requires all students from Arab League of Nations (22 nationalities) to study Arabic irrespective of their competency in the language from Grade 1 until Grade 12. Furthermore, all other students (non-Arab League Nations) are required to study Arabic from Grade 1 until Grade 9. In Grades 11 and 12, students from the Arab League of Nations are able to study French as an additional language but are required to take the Ministry Arabic Language exam at the end of each year. Support for these students is offered after school hours. In order to promote learning of the host country language (Arabic), VISS provides an opportunity for Pre-KG, KG1 and Prep students to start learning Arabic at the early learning stage.

VISS Initiative

- **Pre-KG** – 2 periods of 30 minutes each per week.
- **KG1 and Prep** – 3 periods of 40 minutes each per week.

It is a Ministry of Education requirement that Arabic is offered for the following number lessons across the school:

- **Grade 1 to 3** – 4 periods of 1 hour each per week.
- **Grades 4 and 5** – 7 periods of 1 hour each over a 2-week cycle.
- **Grade 6 to Grade 12** – 8 periods of 40 minutes each over a 2-week cycle.
- **IB Arabic** – 12 periods of 40 minutes each over a 2-week cycle.

Grade1 to Grade 10 – Compulsory Arabic

- Arabic regular for students from Arab League of Nations.
- Arabic special for students from Non-Arab League of Nations.
- Streaming of Arabic special classes for various ability students.

Grade 11 and 12 – Optional Arabic

- IB Arabic B HL and SL
- Compulsory Ministry of Education Arabic Language Curriculum for students from Arab League of Nations.

French

French is an additional language that students are able to study as a part of their holistic learning experience in the Australian Curriculum and in preparation for their study of an additional language in the IB Diploma Programme.

- **Grade 7 to 9** – Compulsory French for 2 periods of 40 minutes each over a 2-week cycle.
- **Grade 10** – Compulsory French for 8 periods of 40 minutes each over a 2-week cycle. (Only for students from Non-Arab League of Nations)
- **Grade 11 and 12** – Optional French
 - IB French Ab Initio and French B HL & SL for 12 periods of 40 minutes each over a 2-week cycle.
 - School based French course for alternative high school pathway for 8 periods of 40 minutes each over a 2 week cycle.

Opportunity for mother tongue development:

- VISS is committed to offering self-taught languages in Group A of the Diploma Programme based on requests from students and availability of support in the region.
- The school encourages CAS and other activities in the unstructured curriculum to support the development of a variety of mother tongues of the student body.

Communication of the Language Policy

- Parents have access to this policy through the school's website and information sessions at school.
- Students become familiar via information sessions at key stages in the academic life at VISS.
- New staff are informed about this policy during orientation sessions at the start of the academic year.

Parental & Community involvement

- Languages faculty run Arabic language lessons for interested parents, staff and members of the VISS community.
- Languages faculty host a languages week that celebrates the cultural context of languages to promote appreciation of diversity in the community.
- VISS Students participate in Arabic reading competitions and events held in the community to promote the learning of Arabic.

Links with other school policies

Admissions policy:

- Prep to Grade 5 – English assessment (varies dependent on the Grade level). If the student is 12 months or more behind, they may not gain admission.
- Grades 6 to 10 – Students will be required to take an English entrance exam to ascertain proficiency in English. Students who are more than 6 months behind the expected Australian achievement level in English at entry level may not be admitted at VISS.
- Grade 11 and 12 – students will be required to take an IB entrance exam to ascertain proficiency in English.
- All students from who belong to Arab League of Nations must study Arabic.

Language Policy Review

Senior Leadership Team will regularly review the implementation of this policy in the classroom and through the school