Language Policy 2024/25

Kent College Dubai

Approved by Principal:	Tim Hollis
Approved by KCD Board Representative:	Andrew Spencer
Last reviewed on:	August 2024
Next review due by:	August 2025
KCD Authorised Stamp	

I acknowledge that I have read, understood and accepted ownership of this policy document and at the next formal review, the below signatories will replace those named above.

Tim Hollis, Principal, Kent College Dubai   Andrew Spencer,

Table of Contents

1. Kent College Mission, Vision and Values

Mission
To develop happy pupils, in an engaging, enabling and empowering environment, based on traditional core values in pursuit of career readiness and excellence

Vision
Developing the full potential of each individual.

Values
 Integrity, Tolerance and Respect

2. Purpose and General Principles

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is committed to supporting multilingualism as fundamental to increasing intercultural understanding and international-mindedness, and is equally committed to extending access to an IB education for pupils from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. With these aims in mind, Kent College Dubai (KCD) has instituted its language policy to provide a framework that will ensure that the IB's values and aims in relation to multilingualism and access are reflected in the organisation's activities.

This language policy defines the ways in which the school provides support to pupils and teachers for the implementation of the IB Diploma Programme.

3. IB Language Policy Committee Members

The IB's language policy committee is comprised of the following staff members:

- Arran Elmes - IBDP Coordinator
- Elizabeth Manrique - MFL HoD SS
- Branwen Montgomery - Language Acquisition for IBCP
- Lina Merza Aboualzahab - Arabic HoF WS

The Language Policy Committee is responsible for maintaining this policy, monitoring its implementation and considering recommendations on proposals related to the IB languages courses offered and supported in school.

The Language Policy Committee will meet as required (but no less than twice each year) to review language policy issues and make recommendations to SLT. The policy will be updated annually.

4. Definitions

i. Working Languages
The language in which the school communicates with its stakeholders is English.

ii. Language of Instruction
The language in which the school delivers the IB Programmes and courses to its pupils is English.

iii. Mother-tongue
This may denote the language learned first; the language identified as a "native" speaker; the language known best; the language used most. When used in this document, it includes all those meanings.

At KCD, we acknowledge the importance of developing a pupil's mother-tongue language.

Information regarding pupils' mother-tongue resides in the school's pupil database and is accessible by school staff.

At the beginning of each academic year, teachers receive a list of pupils' mother-tongues other than English. Teachers are encouraged to use this information to develop lesson plans that emphasise differentiated instruction and that honor multicultural diversity.

Besides Arabic, Spanish, French and German, KCD does not currently offer any additional mother-tongue face-to-face teaching for languages at school. However, we do support the independent option in taking IGCSE exams and facilitate/arrange all exams requirements as needed (In previous years we had Italian, Greek and German IGCSE candidates).

KCD encourages the Arabs Native speakers to take external qualification (IGCSE, First language) alongside the MOE curriculum.

10% of our Year 11 pupils wish to access the Diploma Programme in a language other than their mother-tongue.

iv. EAL
At KCD, we have an EAL specialist in the Pupil Support Services Team to support pupils who will access the Diploma Programme (and indeed the Senior School curriculum) in a language other than their mother-tongue. The accepted nomenclature at Kent College is therefore 'EAL pupils' and 'ELL pupils' you will find references to this in the school and department development plans and other school literature.

ELL pupils refer to English Language Learners who are new to speaking the English language and are limited in their fluency and use of the language. EAL pupils refers to pupils who speak English as an additional language

v. Host Country Language
The official administrative language of the host country is Arabic.

4

vi. Language course
An academic course in which IB pupils acquire a new language, or improve their knowledge of a language in group 1 or group 2 of the IB Diploma or in the language development course in the IBCP.

5. Languages Philosophy

The committee agreed that the language philosophy within the IB Programmes at KCD centred around:

- **Developing internationally minded young people who are well prepared for the linguistic challenges of life in the 21st century:** pupils will have a sound understanding of how language competency can enhance their future education and careers prospects; they understand the reasons for learning languages.

- **Fostering a passion for language learning:** pupils will approach their language lessons with passion and enthusiasm, and will enjoy the linguistic challenges set whilst developing their problem solving and analytical thinking skills.

- **Preparing pupils with the language skills and knowledge that they will need to participate in a global society:** pupils can communicate effectively in their chosen language of study. They will develop their listening, reading, writing and speaking skills, and will be able to use these in a range of relevant contexts.

- **Equipping pupils with the linguistic expertise to enable them to collaborate and compete with their peers from across the globe:** pupils can use the latest technology to research, communicate and collaborate in the target language.

- **Celebrating diversity of language and culture:** pupils recognise that all languages should be equally valued and celebrated

- **Supporting bilingualism and mother tongue development recognising that it is the 'thinking language' and underpins cognitive growth:** opportunities are available for pupils to take a range of qualifications in their mother tongue, and can use their home language to develop their thinking in any subject if appropriate.

- **Supporting teachers' knowledge of how language and learning are connected:** all IB teachers will feel confident as teachers of language, no matter their academic specialism. The CPD programme will develop all teachers' linguistic knowledge and confidence.

- **Creating opportunities for IB pupils to contribute to the development of languages throughout the school community:** IB pupils take on the role of 'lead linguists', offering stretch and support for pupils in KS3 and KS4. They are positive, passionate linguistic role models.

- **Recognising the importance of language acquisition and development for adults in school as well as for pupils.** The school will celebrate the contribution that multilingual staff members can make, and will support staff who wish to develop their language skills.

6. Effective Language Learning

Effective language learning across all disciplines will be supported through:
- Identifying pupils' language needs, recognising the skills they bring to school and ensuring equality of access to the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.
- All pupils receiving such support are listed on the Inclusion Support Register which is updated termly or when a new student is admitted.
- All teachers have awareness of teaching of English as well as in the teaching of their own subject area, and thus share responsibility for the language development of pupils. The school is looking to expand its Pupil Support Services Team (PSST) to include an EAL specialist to provide EAL teaching with EAL pupils on a regular basis.
- All EAL students are assessed at the admissions process and a support plan put into place if additional English language instruction is needed. This could be in the form of:

  - Pull out from humanities lessons and given additional English support
  - External provider provision from Eton Institute
  - Arabic exemption

7. Ensuring Inclusion and Equity of Access to the IB Programmes

i. The role of all School Staff
Individual, social and emotional factors affect pupils learning English as an additional language. Creating a supportive environment involves taking this into account when planning lessons and in day-to-day interaction with pupils.

ii. Good practice
Although every teaching situation is different, these principles underpin good practice for teaching EAL learners:
- Activating prior knowledge
- Providing a rich contextual background to make input comprehensible;
- Actively encouraging comprehensible output
- Drawing the learner's attention to the relationship between form and function; making key language elements explicit eg. vocabulary and the grammar of each subject;
- Developing learner independence.
- Use of translation tools to support learning.

iii. Support for mother-tongue languages

KCD also recognises that reference to or use of the mother-tongue at home and at school is supportive of cognitive development and is committed to supporting mother-tongue development through:

- Providing foreign language books in the library. Currently we have books available in Arabic, French, Spanish and German
- Many members of staff are multilingual or bilingual. We have Arabic, French, Spanish, Italian and German, Portuguese, Afrikaans, Urdu, Hindi, Japanese, Tagalog cognitive speakers available.
- Bilingual IB pupils support younger pupils in language development lower down the school (to be included in our CAS programme).
- Accelerated lingual groups are offered in Arabic, French and English to extend the most able pupils during Study Hall and after-school online activities.
- The importance of the use of the mother-tongue is acknowledged and supported throughout the school.
- The nationality of each student and information about their language profile is indicated on the school management information system (iSAMS) which is available to all teachers to assist in preparing suitable lessons.
- If a student is identified as ELL, this is also noted on the management information system (iSAMS) and is available to all staff. ELL pupils are also listed on the Inclusion Register with a Pupil Profile (IEP) which specifies learning needs and support strategies. Highest need pupils receive additional language support sessions and in-class support from the PSST department.

iv. Support for the Language of the Host Country

The acquisition and development of the host country language (Arabic) has very high priority at Kent College. In earlier years, Arabic was compulsory in Years 7 -10 for all pupils and until the end of Year 12 for Emirati and all Arab nationals. The take-up rate at IGCSE amongst non-Arabic pupils is high non-native languages. All Arab nationals study Arabic as part of the IBDP or IBCP programme and complete the requirements of the local Ministry of Education alongside their studies.

The host nation language features prominently in:
- Assemblies, where presentations are often in both English and Arabic
- The National Anthem which is played each morning
- Signage and displays are in Arabic as well as English and the Learner Profile is displayed in Arabic
- 'Arabic Week' each year sees local writers and personalities presenting and promoting both the language, culture and heritage of the host country.
- All major events for IB pupils (Graduation, Speech Days, Flag Day, Remembrance Day, etc.) all have elements presented in the host-country language.
- Celebration of UAE National Day is an annual event, including a week-long celebration of the UAE, its leaders and culture.

v. Language Acquisition

The acquisition of new languages is at the heart of the curriculum at KCD. In earlier years studying one or two languages (other than English and Arabic) was compulsory in years 7 to 10. An additional language is compulsory in Years 10 and 11 and pupils can take IGCSE in their mother tongue where applicable. In the IB Programmes, the languages offered in group 2 are Arabic, Spanish, and French, the focus language for the IBCP language development course will be decided by learners during induction. All IBDP programmes can be offered at Higher Level, Standard Level and some at Ab Initio, depending on demand from pupils.

8. Parental Involvement

Parents need to become an integral part of our community of learners and may be able to provide support for language learning. The school will investigate using methods to communicate to parents the critical importance of maintaining academic proficiency in the mother tongue.
Parents are involved by:
- Providing ECAs in mother tongue
- Donating mother-tongue resources for the library
- Mother tongue language support groups with a contact person for many of the mother tongues represented at the school.
- Invigilating external exams/ serving as readers for pupils who require this support.
- Translating important documents and/or interpreting during meetings.

9. Embedding the Policy into Practice

The language policy will be introduced to the KCD community through multiple pathways including staff meetings, INSET sessions, Heads of Department and Faculty meetings and the school newsletter. The policy will also be featured on the KCD Website. New staff will be familiarised with the document during orientation.

The language policy will be reviewed annually as part of the curriculum review cycle and as part of the whole school improvement plan.

The Leadership team will review the implementation of the policy in classrooms and throughout the school on a regular basis as part of the appraisal process.