



## PEAK SCHOOL - LANGUAGE POLICY

At Peak School all teachers are teachers of language. We believe that language transcends boundaries between disciplines and the learning process simultaneously involves **learning language, learning about language and learning through language**. This is achieved through the interrelated skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and viewing and presenting.

Language proficiency is essential for intellectual, social and emotional development. Competence in languages allows people to participate in the community and fulfill their potential as individuals. It enriches personal identity, links people locally and globally and promotes the development of intercultural understanding. The acquisition of language is a life-long, dynamic process that permeates all learning. At Peak School we recognise the need to support language development to ensure that all students are provided with a rich and supportive learning environment which is open, responsive and reflective. We believe that this will enable students to participate fully in the school's inclusive curriculum and to develop as responsible, global citizens.

### Primary Language of Instruction

In accordance with ESF policy, English is the primary language of instruction at Peak School and is recognised as the language of inclusion throughout the school, and within the school community. A whole language approach to learning is incorporated throughout the curriculum. A planned and integrated English language curriculum (oral, written and visual communication) is delivered through the ESF scope and sequence which is aligned to the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) framework. The Conceptual Understandings outlined in the I.B. English 'scope and sequence' are used in the planning, teaching and assessment of all language strands across the school.

As an International community we recognise the wide range of language learning backgrounds and experiences of our students and support their diverse learning needs through a differentiated curriculum. An early intervention programme identifies and assesses the learning needs of the students and appropriate language support is implemented.

*Refer to English Scope and Sequence and English Language Handbook.*

### Additional Language Provision

Putonghua is taught as an additional language at Peak School, demonstrating our commitment to the local community and the greater China region. The provision of Putonghua enriches language development, which is crucial for promoting cultural understanding and values. The Chinese programme also embraces aspects of Chinese history and culture. All students at Peak School have the opportunity to learn Putonghua within the context of the IB PYP framework and the ESF Chinese Scope and Sequence document. The Chinese curriculum has Seven Developmental Phases which outlines

expected outcomes and provides opportunities for students to learn at an appropriate pace whilst being challenged to achieve their potential. These stages of development are designed to support and challenge our students who come from varying backgrounds and competency in Chinese, from non-native to near-native speakers of Putonghua and other dialects. At Peak School, a majority of the students are non-native speakers with little exposure to the language beyond the Chinese lessons. To facilitate student learning, Putonghua is delivered through a flexible, differentiated, outcomes based programme with a focus on all strands (i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing), with a particular emphasis on listening and speaking. Students are challenged according to their level of ability with a majority of non-native and near native speakers potentially reaching Phase 4. It is acknowledged that students who arrive mid-primary school with no Chinese exposure, may need to start at Phase 1 and may not be able to achieve the goal of Phase 4 when leaving at the end of Year 6. (e.g. a student who arrives in Year 5 may start at Phase 1 and may be unable to reach Phase 4 by the end of Y6).)

Beginning the academic year 2014-15, Chinese classes are divided into three groups across each year level to allow for smaller classes of 20 and a more personalized approach to ensure student's work at their appropriate level in Years 3 - 6 and in mixed ability groups in Y1 and 2.

*Refer to Chinese Curriculum Scope and Sequence 2014.*

### **Mother Tongue Maintenance**

Peak School actively supports the importance of Mother-Tongue maintenance to benefit the linguistic and cognitive development of the child. We acknowledge that learning and development of the Mother Tongue scaffolds the acquisition of higher order thinking skills and enhances second/additional language learning. Research indicates that students' level of language and literacy competence in their first language influences their rate of second language learning. The development of a student's first language is, therefore, not only of value to the student's identity and community but also to the student's education.

Mother-Tongue development is promoted through our school mission and values, and is exemplified through school practice. We support this with appropriate strategies (resources, cultural celebrations, extra-curricular lessons) Parents are actively encouraged to promote language learning at home and at school through our 'Parents as Partners' programme and links with the ESF languages team.

At Peak School cultural and linguistic diversity is celebrated and students are encouraged to use home language to develop and demonstrate their understanding.

Our curriculum ensures that it meets the needs of the diverse language abilities of our students providing early intervention and inclusion. The learning enhancement teachers and educational assistants support class teachers in their roles.

### **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

EAL students are those who have language backgrounds other than English. All children who speak English as an additional language will be included on the EAL register in order to

monitor their progress. The EAL students who require additional support are tracked in their acquisition of English and appropriate strategies for support are implemented.

All students should have equal access to the curriculum. At Peak School we are committed to developing a positive self-image in our EAL students by nurturing their home language. We promote a positive attitude towards, and an awareness of the challenges facing EAL students by adopting effective teaching and learning strategies that cater for their linguistic and cultural differences.

Our 'Languages at Home' profile provides us with key information on the students' linguistic background to ensure that, on acceptance to Peak School language needs are supported and developed. This enables teachers to differentiate and modify their curriculum accordingly.

In accordance with ESF Admissions Policy, admission to Peak School is dependent on a child demonstrating the linguistic ability or potential to access a curriculum taught in English.

## Library

The school library is the 'hub' of the school and contains quality resources from a variety of cultures and in a number of languages. The school is committed to providing rich and quality resources in the library and recognises that the library is central to help assist the development of international mindedness and research to support and enhance learning. The librarians play a proactive role through the preparation of resources and digital platforms to support students, staff and parents in their learning.

*Refer to Library Policy 2018*

*Policy Reviewed in June 2018 – Peak School Staff*