



## SEAFORD NORTH Primary School

# LANGUAGE Policy

### Philosophy

The need to communicate is instinctive and language is the common thread that links people in its written, spoken and visual forms, and reflects culture.

The ability to use language to communicate effectively is necessary to express thoughts, ideas and feelings. Using language is a complex social practice that involves using visual, verbal and non-verbal cues, signs and codes to produce, receive and respond to information in order to make meaning.

Language plays a vital role in empowering the learner and provides an intellectual framework to support conceptual development and critical thinking. Understanding one's own culture and language naturally leads to understanding, appreciating and enjoying the language and culture of others.

Seaford North Primary School recognises that the acquisition of language permeates all learning, and therefore, all teachers are language teachers. Language is crucial in nurturing the full development of each learner and fostering the values of diversity, international mindedness and intercultural awareness.

### Language Profile

As of 2023, Seaford North Primary School has a school population of approximately 480 students. Our school is predominantly English speaking and we have a small number of families who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. A number of mother tongue languages other than English have been identified including: Dutch, Croatian, French, Hungarian, Russian, Afrikaans, Urdu, Greek, Italian and Cantonese.

### Language Learning

Our school values, *Collaboration, Inclusion and Responsibility*, play an integral role in our approach to Language teaching and learning.

We value *Collaboration*, therefore we...

- Foster collaborative learning spaces, underpinned by Essential Agreements, that support students to work together and interact in a manner that is meaningful for their learning
- Collaborate as a staff (horizontally, vertically and cross-curricular) to plan for, teach and assess language
- Co-construct goals, learning intentions, success criteria and assessment rubrics
- Confer with students to identify, monitor and reflect upon language learning goals
- Partner with parents/carers to support language learning at home
- Establish opportunities for parents/carers with expertise in languages beyond English to share with students

We value *Inclusion*, therefore we ...

- Ensure language learning experiences are differentiated to meet the needs of all students
- Bring students' first language (mother tongue) into classroom practices
- Promote intercultural awareness and international mindedness, including learning, exploring and celebrating Chinese Mandarin language and culture
- Utilise inclusive language across the school and at whole school events such as assembly and concerts
- Create learning spaces that are safe and accessible for all learners
- Explore other views and acknowledge differences

We value *Responsibility*, therefore we...

- Ensure language is taught explicitly, using current science and research
- Support and encourage students to take responsibility when working towards their language learning goals
- Are accountable for student growth and progress
- Report student progress based on triangulated data
- Communicate effectively with the community
- Educate students to be able to show and display respect for themselves and others

Students are supported to recognise the transdisciplinary nature of language—they use language within and across the subject areas and in a way that transcends them, both inside and outside the classroom.

The fundamental skills of English, as detailed in the Victorian Curriculum, and further informed by the PYP Language Scope and Sequence, are explicitly taught at all year levels. All classes have allocated time for the teaching and learning of the specific skills involved in reading, writing, speaking and listening, which are differentiated to meet students' individual needs.

The belief that language permeates all learning, sees a focus on language learning beyond the traditional subject areas. The three language strands as identified by the PYP, oral language (speaking & listening), visual language (viewing & presenting), and written language (reading & writing), are embedded throughout the curriculum. Students experience and apply skills from both the receptive aspect of

receiving and constructing meaning and the expressive aspect of creating and sharing meaning across all three strands. (PYP Language Scope and Sequence, 2018, p 5.)

The learning of, about and thorough language is authentically explored within relevant Units of Inquiry and specialist subjects, leading to purposeful application of language. Students are supported to become skilled communicators who are literate and effective inquirers – able to make meaning and explore the world around them.

The learning process simultaneously involves:

- learning language—as learners listen to and use language with others in their everyday lives;
- learning about language—as learners grow in their understanding of how language works;
- learning through language—as learners use language as a tool to listen, think, discuss and reflect on information, ideas and issues (Halliday, 1980).

## Language of Instruction

English is the language of instruction at Seaford North Primary School. English is also the predominant language spoken throughout Australia. Seaford North Primary School respects and acknowledges the First Nations Peoples, upon whose land we live and learn. We acknowledge that the First Nations Peoples are made up of many different and distinct groups each with their own culture, language, beliefs and practices and seek to build understandings in culturally appropriate and sensitive ways.

## The English Programme

The English programme aims to develop in students:

- The ability to speak, listen, read, write, view and present with confidence, purpose and enjoyment
- A knowledge of the ways language varies according to context, purpose, audience and content and the capacity to apply this knowledge
- A knowledge of linguistic patterns and structures used to construct different texts and the ability to apply this knowledge, especially in writing
- The ability to discuss and analyse texts and language strategically and critically
- A knowledge of the ways textual interpretation and understanding may vary according to cultural, social, and personal experiences and differences, and the capacity to develop reasoned arguments about interpretation and meaning
- Opportunities to engage in learning within meaningful contexts and with purpose

## Implementation

- All students at our school will study an English course based on the Victorian Curriculum Standards, including the cross-curriculum priorities

- The teaching of language should be in response to the previous experience, needs and interests of the student
- English study for each student will be no less than 10 hours per week.
- Language provides a vehicle for inquiry – In an inquiry-based classroom, teachers and students enjoy using language, appreciating it both functionally and aesthetically
- Utilise a collaboratively developed, 'Seaford North Primary School – Model of Teaching,' that is based on the e5 inquiry approach
- Where possible, students will be assessed in order to develop personal goals related to language development
- Student's individual performance will be monitored using formal measurements and learning opportunities will be provided to cater for the needs of each student
- Student progress in English will be reported in half year and end of year academic reports, as well as be reported in the school's annual report
- Take home reading is to be an essential part of the School's Language programme. It is expected that all students will read regularly at home and a record of this reading is to be maintained. Parents will be informed that students are expected to read at home
- Our Language Learning Specialist and Mandarin Specialist will be responsible for coordinating the School's Language Programme and will be resourced through the Language Curriculum budget
- Identified students are supported through various Language intervention programmes to both enable and extend
- English programmes/approaches such as SMART spelling, Little Learners Love Literacy, VCOP and 6+1 writing traits will be utilised and resourced through school budgets
- Professional Development in up to date Language practice will be provided to all staff and new staff will be inducted and supported to implement Seaford North Primary School Language practices

## Supporting Mother Tongue

Seaford North Primary School values and respects all members of our school community and we encourage our students to embrace their cultural heritage.

Enrolment information is used to create a language profile for the school. At enrolment, the language experiences of students are recorded and used to inform learning.

Seaford North Primary School strives to celebrate the language richness and diversity of our community, inviting students and families to share aspects of their mother tongue and integrating this language where possible.

It is acknowledged that the development of mother tongue language is crucial for cognitive development, affirming self-identity and maintaining cultural identity. For the majority of our students English is in fact their mother tongue. For a significant few however, English is a new language and we do provide support programmes. For students that do enter our school with no English language we will provide a tailored Individual Education Plan (IEP) emphasising language support. This will be developed in consultation with parent/carer input and monitored by our School's Intervention Team and classroom teacher.

## Chinese Mandarin Language Instruction

We understand the importance of embracing other cultures and languages and pride ourselves on our Chinese Mandarin Programme. All students from Foundation to Year 6 partake in one 60-minute block per week by our qualified Language Other Than English (LOTE) teacher. These sessions, where possible, connect to the whole school Programme of Inquiry, while still ensuring essential basic language instruction is occurring. Lessons include both language learning and cross-cultural awareness.

In addition to the Chinese Mandarin program, we aim to inspire interest in Chinese culture and language through diverse experiences and opportunities including whole school celebrations of culturally important events such as Chinese New Year, Chinese performance lunch time club, dual language signs, displays of student learning, cultural posters and displays, incorporating Mandarin words and phrases in school assemblies and daily classroom operations.

## Professional Development

Professional Development is an essential factor in ensuring a rigorous Language Programme at Seaford North Primary School. Specified budgets allow for onsite and offsite PD in the area of language. All necessary official PYP Professional Development is offered and completed by all teaching staff. The Literacy Learning Specialist, in conjunction with the school leadership are responsible for planning professional development for all staff based on best practice, evidence-based teaching and learning. The local school network and Victorian PYP network provide further valuable professional learning for staff.

## Resources

- The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies: <https://aiatsis.gov.au>
- PYP Language Scope and Sequence (2018)
- Guidelines for Developing a School Language Policy (2008)
- IB Programme Standards and Practices (2020)
- Guidelines for School Self-reflection on its Language Policy (2021)
- Language and Learning in IB Programmes (2014)

## Policy Review and Approval

Policy last reviewed	2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	2027