Oakleigh Grammar	
Policy Document Name	**IB MYP Language Policy**
Date Ratified by Board of Management	August 2024
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1. Purpose

- To support students in understanding how language bridges the past and the future as the carrier of knowledge, culture, and heritage.
- To promote identity development, self-awareness, cultural awareness, empathy, and international-mindedness.
- To help individuals and groups embody the IB Learner Profile attributes and become lifelong learners in a globally focused learning environment.
- To ensure Oakleigh Grammar provides an inclusive, differentiated environment where all disciplines accept responsibility for language development.
- To offer support and provision for students to develop their home/personal languages.
- To offer support, provision, and pathways for international students to learn English and Australian culture.

2. Rationale

The Oakleigh Grammar community represents more than forty different cultures. As such, there are a diversity of language needs that are met including: home/personal language acquisition and English as an Additional Language (EAL).

This policy aims to provide an overview and guiding principles for language learning at Oakleigh Grammar in accordance with the school's Vision, Mission, and Values, the Australian National Curriculum, and with the IB Programme Standards and Practices as an authorised IB World School.

3. Definitions

- EAL: English as an additional language.
- Mother Tongue: A language used at home and beyond the classroom in a sustained, fluent manner.
- Language Acquisition: A course of study in MYP of a language other than English.

- International-mindedness: The promotion of intercultural awareness and understanding through embracing diversity and taking action on local, national, and global contexts.

4. Philosophy

Oakleigh Grammar believes that language learning is essential for intercultural understanding and communication in a global society. The school is committed to developing proficiency in the Language of Instruction, second language learning, and mother-tongue language retention. Language learning supports the IBO's Fundamental Principles and the Learner Profile by fostering intercultural understanding and communication.

5. Language Acquisition – Greek and Mandarin

Greek and Mandarin are offered to MYP students, who develop their language acquisition through inquiry-based learning. Using a differentiated curriculum, Oakleigh Grammar provides an environment where all students can flourish and broaden their linguistic capabilities. The language acquisition programme aims to:
- Foster respect for other cultures.
- Prepare students to become productive members of local, national, and global communities.
- Promote awareness of other cultures.
- Enhance literacy.
- Stimulate intellectual development.
- Support the development of communication skills and self-confidence.
- Allow students to develop multiliteracy.
- Improve cognitive and critical thinking skills.

6. Student Placement and Phases for Language Acquisition

Students in the Junior School are streamed in Language Acquisition Greek in Years 3, 4, and 5. This is considered when they join the Middle School. Year 6 students with a capable or proficient level of Greek are enrolled in Phase 2, while others are in Phase 1. All Year 6 students are enrolled in Phase 1 Mandarin unless they are native Chinese speakers or have advanced proficiency in Mandarin. Teachers work with these students to develop one-on-one goals, including communication with parents.

At the end of Year 6, students select either Greek or Mandarin to continue until Year 10. As per the IB Language Acquisition guide, students can change languages if they have successfully completed Phase 4.

7. Admissions Process for EAL Students

- Testing on Entry: Students entering from Year 6 or any time thereafter are tested to establish their competence in the English language. The Admissions team gather information about new students' English level if they speak English as an additional language, particularly international students. This assessment helps determine the necessary level of language support or extension required.
- Data Collection and Sharing: Results from the assessments are collected and shared with teaching staff to ensure appropriate placement and support for EAL students.
- Supporting Teaching Staff: Professional development will be provided to teaching staff, where appropriate, to equip them with the skills needed to support EAL students, ensuring inclusive and effective teaching strategies are employed.
- Mother Tongue and Cultural Experiences: The school curriculum and calendar will include more mother tongue and cultural experiences to support the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds of students.

8. Responsibilities

Teaching staff are responsible for utilising training resources and strategies to create inclusive and responsive learning environments for all students. This ensures:

- All students acquire a second language (Greek or Mandarin).
- EAL students experience inclusivity.
- Students continue to develop their mother tongues.
- All students enjoy and understand the cultural diversity represented in the community.

9. Differentiation and Assessment

A differentiated curriculum allows students of various phases and proficiency levels to acquire significant language skills. Differentiation in language lessons is based on IB standards and practices. Teaching strategies include small group work, varying resources, and adjusting the level of questioning and tasks for individual students. Units blend MYP aims and objectives with the Australian Curriculum, emphasising listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Formative and summative assessments enhance teaching and evaluate student progress using IB MYP criteria.

10. International Students

International students join Oakleigh Grammar at different stages throughout the year. Their goal is to become proficient in English and achieve academic success. Lessons are differentiated to support their development as learners. During assessments, international students may receive extra time, a scribe, a reader, and/or modified assessments.

Translation apps are discouraged during assessments, but printed dictionaries are allowed. When borrowing from the library, they are encouraged to read texts in English.

11. Short-Study International Students

Short-study students are not expected to complete any formal assessments because of their level of English. These students want to experience Australian culture and language. They can use translation apps on their phones, dictionaries, or devices during lessons to assist them in experiencing success. They should complete the same learning activities and in-class work as part of their experience, although staff should differentiate as necessary.

12. Developing Mother Tongue Languages

Oakleigh Grammar supports mother tongue development to maintain fluency and cultural pride. Literacy in mother tongues supports English literacy development. Initiatives include:
- Displays in multiple languages.
- The learner profile in Greek and Mandarin.
- eBooks in various languages.
- Presentations by Monash University on the importance of mother tongue literacy.
- Videos celebrating mother tongues.

Additional initiatives:
- Lunchtime clubs for speaking mother tongue languages.
- Excursions to Monash library for international book collections.
- Access to Community Languages Victoria for relevant language schools.

13. Professional Development for Teachers

Professional development for staff in language learning and teaching is essential to ensure the effective implementation of the language policy. The school is committed to providing ongoing professional development opportunities, including:
- Language Teaching Workshops: Regular workshops focused on best practices in language teaching methodologies, including the use of technology, differentiated instruction, and inquiry-based learning.
- EAL Training: Specific training sessions dedicated to equipping teachers, where appropriate, with the skills needed to support EAL students, including strategies for inclusive teaching, scaffolding techniques, and cultural sensitivity training.
- External Courses and Certifications: Opportunities for teachers to pursue external courses and certifications in language education and EAL support. This includes funding for teachers to attend conferences, seminars, and specialised training programmes, where necessary.
- Collaborative Planning Sessions: Time allocated for teachers to collaboratively plan lessons, share resources, and discuss strategies for supporting language development across the curriculum.
- Peer Observation and Feedback: A system of peer observation and feedback to encourage reflective practice and continuous improvement in language teaching.

14. Engagement with Parents and the Community

Parents and the community play a crucial role in supporting language development and fostering a culturally rich learning environment. Oakleigh Grammar aims to actively engage parents and the wider community through various initiatives and opportunities.

14.1 Communication and Collaboration

- Planning Language Profiles: Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in the planning of their children's language profiles through scheduled meetings, workshops, and collaborative planning sessions. This ensures that parents are well-informed and can contribute to their child's language development.
- Regular Updates: The school will provide regular updates on language programmes and policies through newsletters, emails, and the school website. Information sessions and parent-teacher meetings will offer additional opportunities for communication.

14.2 Community Opportunities

- Cultural Festivals: The school calendar will include cultural festivals that celebrate the diverse backgrounds of our students. These festivals provide a platform for students and parents to share their heritage and foster intercultural understanding.
- Language Workshops: Workshops focusing on language learning strategies and the benefits of bilingualism will be organised for parents and community members. These workshops aim to equip parents with the tools to support their children's language development at home.
- Meetings with Community Language Schools: Parents will be encouraged to connect with community language schools through organised meetings. This facilitates additional language learning opportunities and reinforces the importance of maintaining mother tongue proficiency.

14.3 In-School Involvement

- Volunteer Opportunities: Parents and community members will be invited to participate in school activities as volunteers. This includes assisting with language clubs, cultural events, and classroom activities that promote language and cultural awareness.
- Parent Committees: Establishing parent committees dedicated to supporting language and cultural initiatives within the school. These committees will collaborate with school staff to organise events and resources that enrich the learning environment.

15. Related Policies
- The Admissions Policy
- The MYP Assessment Policy
- The MYP Inclusion Policy

16. Review Process

This policy will be reviewed as the school accommodates more international students. Admissions, the MYP Coordinator, EAL teachers, the librarian, language acquisition staff, parents, and students will contribute to the review. Data on the languages spoken by students will support mother tongue initiatives and the language acquisition programme. Updates will be communicated via email, meetings, workshops, and the school's online platforms.