



Language Policy

HEANY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Language Philosophy

Language learning is vital for the construction of meaning. It provides an intellectual framework to enrich thinking and support all learning. At Heany Park Primary School language learning builds upon prior knowledge and holistically explores the needs and interests of our students.

At HPPS our aim is to facilitate the development of language learners who are creative, confident and effective communicators. Language learning is fundamental to all areas in our school and our goal is to promote cultural awareness and build international mindedness through the programme of inquiry and learning of another language as well as supporting the students who have mother-tongue influences.

Language Profile

English is the language of instruction at Heany Park Primary School. As it is a communication skill for all areas of the curriculum it is considered a priority and is the foundation of our curriculum. The fundamental skills of language, as outlined in the Victorian Curriculum and the PYP Language Scope and Sequence, are taught explicitly at all year levels.

Although all students speak English, a significant number of students have parents born overseas and have strong cultural roots from other countries. Approximately 80% (81.4%) of our student population has English as their first language. There are (20) different mother tongues spoken in our school community other than English. These languages and dialects include Afrikaans, Arabic, Bahasa Malaysia, Bulgarian, Cantonese, Chinese, Croatian, Dari, Farsi, Hindi, Indo-Aryan, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Nuer, Persian, Polish, Sinhalese, Tagalog, Tamil, Thai and Vietnamese.

Acquisition of more than one language enriches personal growth and helps facilitate international mindedness. Indonesian is learnt at HPPS in addition to the language of instruction. Students from Foundation to Year 6 participate in a weekly lesson with an Indonesian specialist teacher. Learning in the additional language adopts an inquiry approach and is incorporated into the transdisciplinary programme of inquiry where possible. It is supported through a range of resources, including books, online activities, digital resources, musical instruments and cultural games. Lessons include both language learning and cross-cultural awareness. In unique ways, languages require learners to engage in self-reflection because effective communication in a new language requires the learner to move outside the norms, practices and acquired behaviours of their first language.

English as an Additional Language

It is our goal to help international students integrate into our classroom settings by learning English as quickly as possible. Students are immersed in English but also encouraged to think and explore ideas in their mother tongue. Some new arrival students have the opportunity to attend an English language school.

Individual student needs are met by the classroom teacher. We recognise that students who are learning English as an additional language in Foundation to Year 6, learn English more readily through interaction with their peers. Therefore, we include English language learners in regular classroom activities.

Definition

Language is fundamental to learning, thinking and communicating, and permeates the whole curriculum therefore all teachers are language teachers. It is necessary, not only to learn language, but also to learn about language and through language. Learning best takes place in authentic contexts, and literature plays a special role in enabling this to happen. The strands of oral, written and visual communication are learned across and throughout the subject areas. Each aspect is only relevant in relation to the whole.

Purpose

To provide students with a rich, challenging and transdisciplinary inquiry-based Language Program that transcends all areas of the curriculum and provides students with the opportunity to:

- listen, read, view, speak, write, create and reflect on spoken, written and multimodal texts across a growing range of contexts with accuracy, fluency and purpose
- analyse, understand and communicate by expressing ideas and feelings to build relationships with others and with the world around them
- understand that the formal elements of learning English involve Writing, Reading and Viewing, Speaking and Listening, which are interrelated
- explore language and construct meaning in authentic, relevant, challenging and transdisciplinary contexts that empowers and enriches their daily lives
- develop international mindedness by exploring the learning of world languages, including the use of mother-tongue and any indigenous languages, as an integral part of becoming a global citizen
- value and respect mother tongue languages within our community to assist in deepening understandings about cultural and personal identity
- share personal stories in order to develop a deep understanding of one's own culture in order to develop inter-cultural understanding and multiple perspectives
- learn Indonesian as an additional language to enable students to foster an appreciation and enjoyment of the connection between language and culture

Guidelines

1. The learning environment itself is a resource for learning and will be stimulating, provocative and will promote learning.
2. Language will be taught through relevant and authentic contexts in the Units of Inquiry.
3. Language learning is a developmental process. The starting point will always be the learners' prior experience and current understandings, skills and attitudes.
4. Learning spaces will be language rich environments, well-resourced with multiple text types and displays, including a wide variety of print.
5. Teachers will strive to develop a caring language community in which all students feel accepted, and confident that they will be supported by others in language learning and in taking risks.
6. Teachers will structure teaching and learning using the Heany Park agreed instructional models so that students have opportunities for explicit teaching, structured feedback, reflection and success within a balanced literacy approach.
7. Teachers will use the Fountas and Pinnell Continuum of Literacy Learning to plan instruction, and the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System as an accurate and reliable tool to identify the instructional and independent reading levels of all students, F-6, and document student progress through one-on-one formative and summative assessments.
8. Feedback will be sourced from peers, teachers and through self-reflection.

Implementation

1. The Literacy (PLT) Team will be responsible for the Language Program, including organisation and resources.
2. Teachers will collaboratively ensure that the Language Program is based on the Victorian Curriculum expectations, IB-PYP Scope and Sequence documents and the school-based IB-PYP Programme of Inquiry.

3. Teachers will collaborate across the school to develop and implement the Language Program and ensure that Reading and Viewing, Writing, and Speaking and Listening are incorporated into a balanced Literacy Program.
4. The Literacy (PLT) Team will liaise with the IB–PYP Co-ordinator and Librarian to ensure that appropriate texts and resources are available within the Library collection, in digital and/or hard copy, as appropriate.
5. A minimum of 10 hours per week of instructional English will be taught through explicit teaching of skills and the six Units of Inquiry.
6. Students will be assessed at regular intervals, and as deemed necessary, throughout the year, as per the Assessment Schedule.
7. Student progress will be reported in mid-year and end of year Student Reports. Teacher judgements and cohort data will be shared via the school's Student Result Data document.
8. Students will reflect on their learning throughout the year and collate their achievements in their individual Student Portfolio.
9. Students will share their progress in Three Way Conferences held annually.

Components of the Balanced Literacy Program

1. Modelled reading is conducted as a whole group, small-group, or one-on-one activity. Modelled reading involves the teacher reading in a fluent and phrased manner to model effective reading behaviours.
2. Guided reading is a generally more formal, instructional reading activity conducted one-on-one or with small ability-level or needs based groups. Students reading either fictional texts or texts during these sessions. Whenever appropriate or possible guided reading activities are linked, either to the unit of inquiry, or the text type being taught during the inquiry.
3. Guided Reciprocal reading is a release of responsibility from teacher to students. Students take on roles - predicting, clarifying, question generating and summarising to facilitate the analysis and discussion of a text.
4. Literature Circles give a greater release of responsibility to students and facilitates students working in a group with specific roles to engage in more in-depth analysis of quality literature.
5. Independent reading involves students not only reading fiction books, but using non-fiction texts for research linked to their unit of inquiry.

Writing

1. Modelled Writing involves whole class or a small group. It involves the teacher composing and writing text, making explicit the considerations and thinking behind a piece of text as well as articulating the process. The writing is the teachers' and the students are observers. Teachers teach the structure and language features of the particular text type associated with the unit of inquiry.
2. Interactive writing involves the teacher and small groups of students jointly composing a text with shared responsibility for the recording at various points in the writing. Teachers record the words the students know and engage students in problem solving and recording the words that provide challenges and opportunities for new learning thus easing transition to independent writing.
3. Shared writing involves the teacher (as scribe) and students collaboratively composing a piece of writing. Meanings, topics, ideas and choices of words are discussed, negotiated and decided by the teacher and students. The approach enables the students to participate in writing experiences, resulting in much richer writing than students would be able to write for themselves. Students can focus on composing and thinking without being encumbered by the complexities of the recording aspects of the writing process.

4. Independent Writing involves students taking responsibility for their own writing. In developing written communication students are expected to read and write for enjoyment, instruction and information. They are also expected to develop an extensive vocabulary, recognise and appreciate the variety of literacy styles, genres and structures and develop competency in grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Speaking and Listening

Speaking and listening experiences focus on the explicit teaching of different forms of spoken language, speaking and listening processes, strategies and conventions, and the contextual aspects associated with understanding oral texts. Oral language learning also focuses on expressing ideas and feelings and understanding non-verbal communication. Meaning and new understandings are socially constructed, therefore collaborative group work and dialogic tasks are facilitated frequently across all programs.

Visual literacy

Visual literacy involves developing students' visual language skills so they can read visual texts and understand how images and language are constructed to convey ideas, values and beliefs. Visual texts may include maps, diagrams, timelines, tables, graphs and various other forms of media and are used throughout the Program of Inquiry.

Support Programs

Heany Park Primary School has a responsibility to recognise and support language development to ensure that all learners are provided with the environment and the necessary language support to enable them to participate fully in the academic program and in the social life of the school as well as to develop as individuals. Support is provided to students with the greatest need, based on the data collected through our Assessment processes.

Professional Development

Administration members, Teachers and ES staff will require ongoing professional development in the fields of language learning and teaching. Vertical and horizontal teams within the school facilitate collaborative professional learning. The Victorian PYP network provide further valuable professional learning for staff.

Evaluation

The School Council reviews its policies every four years to ensure the needs of the School Community are met. The review process will be informed by any new knowledge to hand and feedback from all stakeholders. Any common or recurring issues will be addressed and information provided to the school through the staff, student and parent opinion surveys will be taken into account.

Heany Park Primary School has developed this Language Policy in collaboration with staff, parents and the school community.

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Signed:

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