

LANGUAGE POLICY



*Knowledgeable
Caring*

*Principled
Balanced*

*Inquirers
Thinkers*

*Communicators
Reflective*

*Risk-takers
Open-minded*



Language is a tool for human communication- it is essential for both personal and social development of an individual striving to survive among others. Language serves as a medium to help students grow internationally and develop more open-mindedness, along with the acceptance of other cultures.

Preface

Language learning plays a major role at GDGWS. As English often is the student's first language at GDGWS, it is designated as the language of instruction. All teachers are considered teachers of language and therefore strive to develop a caring and dynamic language community.

We therefore believe that the language policy will aim to:

- Ensure the effective delivery of the curriculum
- Develop language as a powerful tool both in societal communication and personal reflection
- Help in monitoring the teaching and learning of language
- Ensure that the language skills developed in the students enable them to use, understand, and appreciate the varieties of languages available

It is the dire need for communication and constant sharing of information and knowledge that endows language as one of the most important factors of learning here at GDGWS. Our school takes pride in being a multi-cultural and, therefore, multi-lingual community. We are a host to students seeping in from diverse ethnic backgrounds and hence, are keenly observant to the linguistic challenges that may arise in such a situation. Bearing this in mind, our school makes every effort to create a curriculum that caters to an array of languages and learning in varied media through a dynamic language policy.

Language Philosophy

- Language learning is an ongoing process. It is a key factor in intellectual growth and helps in developing personal and international understanding.
- All teachers are teachers of language, as we recognize that a good understanding of language is fundamental to learning. As the working language and the language of instruction at GDGWS is English, we endeavor to ensure that the language is developed through the curriculum.
- Learning language (what students instinctively pick up through day-to-day interaction with others), learning about language (how language works), and learning through language (developing the skill to help reflect on a theme, concept, or issue), provides the most supportive environment for language teaching and learning.
- The acceptance of an additional language enriches personal growth, enhances first language development, and promotes international-mindedness.

We recognize that the development of the mother tongue is crucial for maintaining cultural identity. GDGWS is represented by 33 nationalities and has 25 languages being spoken by its pupil community. A diverse language profile brings in the challenges of diverse language needs. We are conscious of the fact that many of our pupils, Indian and overseas, come from homes where English is not their primary language. Therefore, we engage outside support to meet the needs of students whose mother tongue is not English on one hand, while on the other, we encourage families to continue speaking, reading, and writing the language at home.

Principles of our Language Policy:

- *To make internationally minded students who believe that there is a voice among many others¹*: Our language policy aims at creating a global community bringing together many languages for learning, thus creating students with an international approach towards knowledge.
- *Impart broad-based general education that provides a solid base for further studies²*: This aim of the IB is achieved through many approaches; one being the language policy, which caters to the needs of both foreign students seeking an Indian education and domestic students in search of a foreign learning system. Our language classes and courses are available, support almost any type of linguist.
- *To provide students with a broad range of subjects to stimulate and nurture their interests and skills³*: At GDGWS, we consider the varying areas of interest for different students and, to this effect, promote and encourage any form of participation or interest in a language both in and beyond the classroom. The language policy of our school hones each child to be a budding linguist and to create a deeper, stronger understanding of not only the structural but also the literary forms of a language.
- *To make students aware of the society they live in and establish a sense of citizenship and brotherhood⁴*: The first step to becoming a global citizen is the acceptance of different forms of culture and society that are distinct from our own, starting with a language. Students at GDGWS are constantly reminded of the necessity of language to understand ethnicity different from ours- this takes shape from a young age, right through till their graduation from High School.

^{1,2,3,4} IB mission and strategy, International Baccalaureate, <http://www.ibo.org/mission/>

GDGWS aims at embedding each one of the IB's long-term objectives into the language policy to create a well-directed and structured linguistic system in the community. In doing so, every student is fostering an international-minded approach to his or her learning.

Our school does not follow a stringent academic elitist approach to admissions. Keeping this policy in mind, it ensures that these students benefit and make the most of their time spent in this linguistically vibrant environment through additional language programs that address their immediate requirements.



These programs are under constant improvement and are updated to meet the needs of these student groups.

While knowledge of English is not a prerequisite for admission to any of the Programs in the School, it is the language of instruction and learning throughout the school. Students who come from non-English speaking backgrounds or who have had little or no previous experience of the language are introduced to it through the school's English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Course. Through this programme, the pupils are provided with additional support, whilst they continue to be part of the Language A English Course. The school will offer English as a Second Language (ESL) at the Middle School Level after assessing the language capabilities of the student. Our endeavor is that all pupils must succeed in speaking, listening, reading, and writing English both socially and academically. In this context, all teachers in the school become de facto language teachers and will make instructional adjustments to suit the needs of English Learners in their subject group. This delivery model functions as Push-In, where the English Learner is supported by the English teacher and the ESOL teacher working hand in hand; Pull-Out, where the EL is pulled out from a non-academic block for intensive English learning, and Scheduled Class period, where the ESOL class is provided as a structured, timetabled lesson. Therefore, the pupil attends all English A classes from day one.

The activities used as a part of ESOL are –drills, role-plays, communicative tasks, and videos.

This, in turn, enables the students to participate constructively and with confidence within the larger English-speaking community in the school. These programs will also determine the academic status of these students, the progress that they are making in all the areas of learning [except foreign languages], and the challenges that they may face in the course of their learning, thus enabling the school to further modify these programs to help build their existing skills.

Primary Years Program (PYP) –ages 3 to 10

During these tender years, language is introduced as a form of simple expression and a way to communicate thoughts, interests, and feelings. This is done by honing the students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills through various interesting activities.

The primary medium of instruction is English, which is compulsory and is taught from the very beginning of schooling years to create a sort of comfort level with the language. Though English is the primary language, there is extra support for non-speakers to hone their skills in the same language.

Hindi is introduced to the students, right from Nursery, where the focus is on spoken Hindi, and this advances to written Hindi in KG. This approach to Hindi immerses the students into the Indian sphere of learning, hence creating an appreciation for the current country of education.

In grade 4, the options of French, German, and Spanish are given to the students, and they need to choose one of these. This early introduction to such languages, the school feels, opens the minds of the students to a broad learning touching upon more than one language and hence, enriching the process. While the learning of a foreign language is mandatory from Grade 4 itself, exceptions are made where a student may be facing severe learning disabilities or is faced with the challenge of learning more than one foreign language [in the case of students who are non-English speakers].



Second and Third Language:

All pupils will be presented with the opportunity to learn an additional language. The choices on offer are: Hindi, French, Spanish, and German, which they will continue till grade 10

All pupils except EL will study one language from Band 1 (First language) and one from Band 2 (Second language).

IGCSE Program- age 14 to 16

Through these years of education, the need to balance out the time between other subjects and personal interests of students is taken into consideration; hence, the language system is slightly changed for these years of the curriculum.

English is taught as the primary language and is compulsory for all students participating in the CAIE IGCSE exams in a particular academic session. There are two streams provided here: English as a First Language and English Literature. English as a Second Language is provided for those facing challenges with English as the First Language.

Learning a foreign language is mandatory only for the ICE (International Certificate of Examination) award in the IGCSE programme. The language alignment is such that all students moving in from Grade VIII have the opportunity to continue with the second language of their choice. It is to be noted that, as per CAIE IGCSE requirement, admission into a language program at this level will largely depend upon the students' previous experience in the language. The foreign language options available are French, German, and Spanish.

International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IBDP)- age 16 to 19

At the IB Diploma level of education, it is necessary for students to take up two languages: one from Group 1 and the other from Group 2. The same is not required of the course students.

- For Group 1, the term used is Language A. In this group, English and Hindi are offered at the school. The school offers options in Group 1, namely Language and Literature (for English), Literature (for Hindi).
- Students who have at least two years of prior experience in learning a language can be offered that language at level B in Group 2. The languages offered are Hindi, French, English, Spanish, and German. The school also allows students to take self-taught languages in this group, e.g., Arabic, Korean, Japanese, etc. In addition to this, the school can also extend help if required to support them with communication with their tutor.
- For those interested in a new foreign language at the beginner level, French, German, and Spanish Courses are available as ab initio.
- We encourage students from all backgrounds who are non-native speakers of the Group 1 language and encourage mother tongue propagation through peer learning activities and conducting a language week. Hindi Diwas is celebrated to encourage the host country's language.

The learning of a foreign language not only allows a better understanding of the concerned cultures and appreciation of the same, but also allows students to respect other perspectives that are different from theirs.

International Baccalaureate Career Related Program (IBCP)- age 16 to 19:

In line with the IB philosophy and the unique demands of the IBCP, the policy emphasizes multilingualism, academic literacy, cultural understanding, and workplace communication skills. English is the primary language of instruction across all IBCP components, including Personal and Professional Skills (PPS), the Reflective Project, Service Learning, and Language and Cultural Studies (LCS). However, given the linguistic diversity of our student body, we recognize and support the development and use of students' mother tongues through classroom activities, cultural events, and optional integration within academic tasks.

Language and Cultural Studies (LCS) Integration

As a unique feature of the IBCP, the LCS component allows students to:

- Explore an additional language (such as Hindi, French, German, Spanish, etc).
- Examine global issues through the lens of language and culture.
- Investigate how language shapes identity, perception, and values.
- Research comparative cultural themes relevant to their context and career interests.

This fosters intercultural understanding and strengthens both personal identity and global competence. The Language and Cultural Studies (LCS) component serves as a bridge between academic and intercultural learning. It provides students with the opportunity to explore an additional language, engage with global issues, and examine how language shapes personal and societal identities. Through LCS, students develop the skills to compare cultures, reflect on their values, and communicate with awareness in a multicultural context. In parallel, the Career-related Studies (CRS) component integrates language skills relevant to specific professional fields by developing technical vocabulary, communication strategies, and industry-relevant literacy practices. This ensures students are prepared for real-world work environments and global engagement.

Conclusion

At GDGWS, every teacher is essentially a language teacher. The content of her/his lesson revolves around a certain communicative purpose that respects and addresses an audience with a certain linguistic competence. All teachers receive continuous input or feedback to help them evolve and improve the content of their lessons, and are encouraged to enroll in the ESOL courses. All the philosophies of the language policy are based on Communication, which is one of the important learner attributes of IB concerning the ATL skills.

As IB learners, students are groomed in different languages. The skills of language are further enforced with the incorporation of ATL skills like Thinking and Research skills. Various skills like interactive, productive, and receptive are enhanced through the curriculum and opportunities given in inter/intra-school activities.

References

IBO. (2008, April). *Guidelines for developing a school language policy*. Retrieved from https://resources.ibo.org/ib/resource/11162-occ-file-g_0_ibboxx_amo_0804_2_c/?

This policy applies to and must be reviewed by the following stakeholders:

- The leadership and management team of GD Goenka World School
- All GDGWS staff involved in the teaching and assessment of IB students
- GDGWS students who are assessed both internally by the school and externally by the IB
- Parents and guardians of GDGWS students

The admission policy is available to all stakeholders on the school website, at the school ERP, the admission office, and with the coordinators.

Reviews:

Drafted: August 2009

Review 1: August 2010

Review 2: August 2013

Review 3: August 2014

Review 4: July 2019

Review 5: March 2022

Review 6: May 2022

Review 7: May 2025

Next review: July 2026