



المدرسة الملكية الكندية-القاهرة  
Royal Canadian School-Cairo

# Language Policy Handbook

## **Table of Contents**

- **MISSION; VISION AND VISION STATEMENT**
- **PURPOSE OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY**
- **LANGUAGE PROFILE AND ADMISSIONS POLICIES**
- **LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES OVERVIEW**
- **LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**
- **SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROGRAMME**
- **SUPPORT SERVICES**
- **LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND OTHER LANGUAGES**
- **PARENTS AND COMMUNITY**
- **COMMUNICATION OF LANGUAGE POLICY TO THE RCS COMMUNITY**
- **REVIEW PROCESS**
- **REFERENCES**
- **APPENDICES**

## **MISSION; VISION AND VISION STATEMENT**

### **IB Mission**

The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

### **RCS Vision**

RCS Cairo aims to cultivate future leaders who demonstrate the global understandings, empathy and skills to solve 21st century challenges and make their world a better place.

## **RCS Mission Statement**

RCS will nurture intellectual curiosity, academic excellence, environmental awareness and pride in community, host country and home country.

## **PURPOSE OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY**

The language policy at RCS is a comprehensive framework that articulates our school's linguistic and academic objectives. It establishes a program specifically designed to support our students in achieving these goals.

This policy serves as an informative guide, offering an overview of our approach to language learning at RCS. We believe in immersing students in a linguistically diverse environment, where language permeates the entire curriculum, providing authentic learning opportunities.

Through our culturally rich and diverse environment, we foster language learning across various subject areas, enabling students to develop language proficiency and cultural understanding simultaneously.

By implementing this policy, we aim to nurture students' linguistic abilities, promote intercultural competence, and equip them with the necessary communication skills for success in our global society.

## **LANGUAGE PROFILE AND ADMISSIONS POLICIES**

### **A. RCS LANGUAGE PROFILE**

Approximately 99% of our student body speaks English as an additional language. All of our administrative and teaching staff speak English and the majority is fluent in at least one other language.

The language of instruction and the primary language of communication in the school is English. For formal documents, Canadian English is used.

Arabic is widely used within the school administration. French is also strongly encouraged and introduced at elementary.

German is also offered at RCS from grades 6 till 12.

All students are required to study French and Arabic from Grades 1-10.

The standard bibliography and referencing format is MLA (Modern Language Association).

## **B. ADMISSIONS POLICIES**

At RCS, we recognize the importance of a solid foundation in a student's mother tongue for academic success. As part of the admissions process, we assess a student's language profile based on their previous academic performance. It is essential that applicants demonstrate age-appropriate literacy and proficiency in a language.

To facilitate effective communication and integration into our academic programs, all previous school records must be translated into English for evaluation purposes.

For students entering RCS in the DP 1 year, proficiency in Academic English is crucial for engaging with course materials and successfully sitting the DP examinations. Therefore, language proficiency assessments are conducted as part of the admissions process specifically for DP 1 applicants.

If a student is deemed incapable of accessing information and expressing themselves at an appropriate level, their admission to RCS may be reconsidered.

Once admitted, students will be required to complete a comprehensive Language Profile questionnaire for all languages offered at RCS. This information will assist in determining the appropriate language group placement. Within two weeks of enrolment, language teachers will assign newly admitted students to the language group that aligns best with their proficiency level.

In our efforts to maintain diversity among our student body while considering available resources and class composition, we strive to balance the levels of language proficiency.

## **LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES OVERVIEW**

### **A. PEDAGOGY**

At RCS, we acknowledge that all teachers play a crucial role as language facilitators, regardless of their specific subjects or grade levels. Recognizing this responsibility, our teachers are expected to actively support language acquisition and foster effective communication skills within their respective classes.

We believe that language development goes beyond language-specific lessons, and it should be integrated into all aspects of education.

By incorporating language acquisition strategies and providing constant opportunities for communication, our teachers create an environment that encourages students to express themselves confidently and effectively.

At RCS, we emphasize the collaborative efforts of all educators to ensure that language learning is nurtured across every grade and subject, thereby supporting students' overall linguistic development and academic success. The pedagogical attributes of the IBDP as well as guiding documents are outlined in the table in **Appendix B**.

### **B. ASSESSMENT**

Language acquisition is a dynamic process that unfolds in distinct stages, with each student progressing at their own pace. At RCS, our language teachers are responsible for assessing and supporting students in all language skills—reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Regular differentiation through scaffolding or extension is employed based on individual needs.

Formative and summative assessments conducted in the classroom provide valuable insights into students' language growth. To ensure fairness in assessment, language teachers collaborate to standardize students' work. Additionally, standardized tests, external moderation, and examinations in the High School offer further evidence of students' language acquisition levels (outlined in **Appendix C**.)

### **C. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

in the elementary school and, when necessary, in the middle school, our EAL staff participates in co-teaching or push-in practices within grade level and subject area classes. The primary objective of co-teaching and push-in is to assist the classroom or subject area teacher in implementing differentiation and language acquisition strategies effectively.

Through the co-teaching model, EAL teachers collaborate with classroom or subject teachers, ensuring that they receive the necessary support and professional development to seamlessly integrate these strategies on a consistent basis. They work together to plan lessons that address the needs of all students, offering valuable insights and ideas for developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills across various subjects.

Our commitment to professional development includes a range of opportunities focused on differentiated instruction. These may include curriculum review and assessment moderation sessions, staff meetings, as well as off-site workshops and conferences. These avenues provide our teachers with further knowledge and skills to meet the diverse language learning needs of our students effectively.

## **LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

IBDP students are required to study one language and literature course (an A language). RCS offers English as A language. RCS believes that developing a child's English language can accelerate the achievement in all subject areas, increase self-esteem, and enhance intercultural understanding and international mindedness.

### **A. ENGLISH**

In each level of the school, students study English (language and literature or language acquisition). When students begin the IBDP program, they may study English as their A language if their skills in all four language areas (reading, writing, listening, speaking) enable them to access this curriculum.

## **SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROGRAMME**

### **A. EAL PULL-OUT AND SUPPORT CLASSES**

English language learners who are unable to fully access the academic curriculum delivered in English receive specialised instruction in English language acquisition from qualified staff on a regular basis.

### **B. IN-CLASS OR CO-TEACHING SUPPORT**

EAL students may also receive support in their grade level and subject area classes from qualified staff. In the IBDP, EAL staff provide in-class support and co-teaching for humanities, science and mathematics classes whenever possible.

### **C. LANGUAGE B CLASS**

In the IBDP, students study German as their language B course. This course follows the IBDP curricula and develops students' language and literacy competence in German as well as intercultural competence. The German B language classes are scheduled against the French B classes in the timetable. Depending on students' ability, age and rate of language acquisition.

The German Language Acquisition programme service model at RCS is consistent across the programmes and described in detail in **Appendix E**.

## **LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND OTHER LANGUAGES**

Studying a third language is a requirement for all students in Grades 1 to 9, except for those receiving learning support. In IB Diploma language B Standard Level course is offered in Grades 11 and 12. For EAL students, their mother tongue counts as a third language.

### **A. ARABIC**

Students at RCS learn Arabic as the language of the host country and as a requirement of the Egyptian government.

Language acquisition Arabic is taught in two ability groups). Students getting excellent results are considered for transfer to language A Arabic. Decisions about moving from one group are done in consultation with all parties in order to make the move successful. Native or near native speakers are usually placed in Arabic A language classes; however Arabic B language remains an option in some cases. The school offers Arabic as an A language and as a B language subject at IB Diploma level.

Details about the provision for Arabic in each IB programme are outlined in the table in **Appendix F**.

### **B. FRENCH**

The primary purpose of learning additional languages at RCS is to foster intercultural awareness and promote an international mindset by acquiring the language of different cultures. This provides students with opportunities to reflect upon and explore diverse cultural perspectives. As the IB curriculum is deeply rooted in multilingualism, our school aims to develop students' multilingual abilities. This term encompasses complex, rich, and dynamic language skills that encompass proficiency in more than one language.

During the admissions process, RCS assesses a student's prior knowledge or exposure to the target language. Based on this assessment, students are placed in the appropriate B language and B language phase. Our teachers implement differentiated instruction methods to cater to the diverse phases and learning styles present within the classroom.

By customizing instruction to accommodate individual needs, we aim to provide a supportive and inclusive environment that facilitates language acquisition and



growth. Details of the B language provisions in each IB programme are outlined in the table in **Appendix G**.

### **C. German**

As described under the English language acquisition section, German language learners may study German as their B Language at IBDP level. This course develops students' language and literacy competence in German as well as intercultural competence. In the IBDP, students may study German B at standard level.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **A. LANGUAGE LEARNING AND THE LIBRARY AND MEDIA CENTRES**

Information literacy is a fundamental skill for lifelong learning, applicable to all fields of study, learning environments, and educational levels. It empowers learners to navigate content, delve deeper into investigations, develop self-direction, and take ownership of their own learning. An information literate individual possesses the ability to:

- Determine the scope of information needed
- Access information effectively and efficiently
- Critically evaluate information and its sources

The RCS libraries play a crucial role in promoting and facilitating information literacy across all subject areas and for all members of the RCS community. Our libraries house databases containing a wealth of professional materials, scholarly articles, newspapers, and magazines in various languages.

School librarians are available to provide training sessions upon request, ensuring that students, teachers, and staff have the necessary skills to navigate these resources effectively. Additionally, future plans include setting dedicated periods on a weekly basis or creating drop-in sessions to further support information literacy development.

### **B. LEARNING SUPPORT**

In situations where a student is identified as having additional learning needs, such as language difficulties or being gifted and talented, the Learning Support program at RCS offers tailored intervention and support according to the referral process. The Learning Support department collaborates with teachers to address the specific requirements of students who have been identified as needing special assistance with language learning.

To address these needs effectively, support can be formalized through either an In-class Support Plan or an Individual Education Plan, which may involve short-term or long-term interventions. In cases where the student is an English language learner, the EAL department works closely with the Learning Support department and other teachers to provide the most comprehensive and appropriate support for that particular student.

At RCS, our aim is to create an inclusive learning environment where all students can thrive. By working collaboratively with teachers and other relevant departments, we strive to meet the unique learning needs of each individual student, ensuring they receive the necessary support to reach their full potential

## **PARENTS AND COMMUNITY**

### **A. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Our parents play a crucial role in our learning community and provide tremendous support for language learning. We actively communicate with parents about the vital importance of maintaining academic proficiency in their child's mother tongue through various channels.

In the High School, parents generously contribute selflessly to offer their translation and interpretation skills to assist during meetings, ensuring effective communication amongst all members of our community.

We greatly appreciate the active involvement and support of parents in strengthening our language learning programs at RCS. Together, we create a rich and inclusive learning environment for all students.

### **B. PUBLISHED MATERIALS**

As RCS is a new school, our students, parents and staff members at RCS come from different educational systems. To maintain consistency in published materials, Canadian English spelling is used for formal written documentation.

The font for published materials for external use is Arial (which is the font used in this document).

- Dates will be written in Canadian form: month / day /year:
- 08/12/2014 is the eighth day of December, 2014
- 08 September is the eighth day of September
- Times will be written using the 24 hour clock: o 16.00 is 4 o'clock in the afternoon

## **COMMUNICATION OF LANGUAGE POLICY TO THE RCS COMMUNITY**

The language policy and the handbook will be introduced to the RCS community through a variety of pathways including staff meetings, PTA meetings, grade level meetings and Newsletters. New staff will be familiarised with the document during orientation.

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

The language policy will be reviewed regularly as part of the cycle of policy reviews, curriculum review cycle and the whole school improvement plan. The handbook will be updated as needed.

The Leadership team will review the implementation of the policy and handbook in classrooms and throughout the school on a regular basis as part of the appraisal process.

## REFERENCES

Allen, Allen M. *Thought, Word and Deed: The Roles of Cognition, Language and Culture in Teaching and Learning in IB World Schools*. International Baccalaureate Organization, 1 May 2011.

Carder, Maurice. *Bilingualism in International Schools: a Model for Enriching Language Education*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 2007.

*Language and Learning in IB programmes*. International Baccalaureate Organization, Sept. 2011.

*Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes*. International Baccalaureate Organization, April 2008.

*Towards a continuum of international education*, International Baccalaureate Organization, 2011.

*Guidelines for school self-reflection on its language policy* (International Baccalaureate 2012)

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Admissions Process Regarding English Language Learners

RCS accepts students at all levels of English language acquisition up to the start of the school year of Grade 8. Students with no or limited English cannot be accepted into an IB route program thereafter. Students' grade level placement will be determined by the school through the admission process.

Students applying after the beginning of Grade 8, who fulfil one or more of the following criteria will be required to submit an extended piece of academic writing and evidence of achievement in English. Furthermore, the student may be asked to complete the achieved on-line English placement test.

- Does not have English as their mother tongue and/or
- Has not had previous schooling in English as the language of instruction and/or Has received EAL support in their previous school

Students should have achieved the required language proficiency level based on the indicators for each grade level (8 to 10) of the Common European Language Framework.

Acceptable evidence of English language ability might include a portfolio of school work, video recordings of an oral presentation in an academic classroom, an extended piece of academic writing, and results from a standardized English language acquisition test.

## Appendix B: Language Learning Pedagogy

	Language Learning in the IBDP
Pedagogical attributes of programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considers prior knowledge</li> <li>• Develops language in context in each content area</li> <li>• Promotes collaborative learning</li> <li>• Provides appropriate feedback to support learning</li> <li>• Accommodates diverse learning styles</li> <li>• Values and respects students' ideas</li> <li>• Makes expectations explicit</li> <li>• Embraces a multitude of perspectives</li> <li>• Enables students to understand how judgments about learning are made, and how to provide evidence of their learning</li> <li>• Develops meta-cognition, structured inquiry and critical thinking</li> <li>• Promotes engaging, challenging, rigorous, relevant and significant learning</li> </ul>

## Appendix C: EAL Programme Exit and Monitoring Procedures

	IBDP
Exit criteria and evidence examined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Score a 85 or above on the EAL assessment in G10</li> <li>• Achieve a 4 or above in all content areas across the curriculum</li> <li>• Provide an extended writing sample for English language and literature teachers</li> </ul>

## Appendix D: Mother Tongue Programmes

	IBDP
Mother Tongue Programme description	<input type="checkbox"/> Students have time during the school day to work on projects and/or receive instruction in their mother tongue.

## Appendix E: EAL Programme

	IBDP
<b>Support for Instruction in subject areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-teaching as needed</li> <li>• Assistance with accommodated and/or modified assessment and assessment development</li> <li>• Assistance with teaching strategies to make content accessible for EAL students</li> </ul>

## Appendix F: Arabic Language Programme

	IBDP
<b>Organisation of Classes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers recommend the course and level according to previous performance</li> <li>• First language Arabic students or students with sufficient linguistic competence take either language A course in literature or language and literature</li> <li>• Students may change from Arabic language B to A (or vice versa) after consultation with their teacher, in agreement with the principal and after parents have been informed</li> </ul>

## Appendix G: Language Acquisition Programme (French & German)

	IBDP
<b>Organisation of Classes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers recommend course and course level according to previous performance.</li> <li>• Students who already speak the language at home but who have not developed their writing, reading, oral and aural skills will have the opportunity to study one of the languages B at a higher level.</li> <li>• Support for students with no prior exposure is offered in and outside classes, if and when necessary.</li> </ul>
<b>Curriculum Aims and Overview</b>	<p>The language B syllabus is followed in the IBDP for the following courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• French</li> <li>• German</li> </ul>