



LANGUAGE POLICY

Introduction

English is the language of instruction at MICS and developing competence in the English language is crucial to a student's success in school and beyond. It is a belief that the ongoing language development for MICS students is a shared responsibility between parents, students, and teachers. These stakeholders are responsible for supporting language acquisition and ensuring all students use English appropriately.

The board recognizes and accepts that English may not be the student's first language. Students with limited English proficiency may be accepted at MICS as long as the school is able to provide for their needs with the required level language support. Therefore, there is a language screening process for all students whose mother tongue is not English. Acceptance at MICS will not take place until this screening has been implemented.

Further, it is the belief that all students should have the opportunity to experience learning a second language.

Through effective communication in their mother language, students are sensitized to cultural diversity and better able to understand the global world in which they live. To that end, MICS students have the opportunity to work with both counselling staff and their own families in selecting which language B courses to study during their schooling.

The language policy is intended to provide an overview and guiding principles for language learning at MICS.

GUIDELINES

All applicants are required to indicate their proficiency in their mother tongue, English, and other languages. Any application for a student who indicates that English is not their mother tongue will be reviewed by the admissions committee, including the school support services team coordinator. The support staff will have the opportunity to review the submitted portfolio evidence of English language acquisition and interview the new student individually before placement in a programme.

When English is a second/additional/foreign/language, the school must be sure that the student will be able, through available ESOL support, to access the curriculum.

We recognize that all teachers are also language teachers who have the responsibility to facilitate language acquisition and promote communication skills at their grade level and content area classes.

Students who are identified as requiring additional support in English to access the curriculum will be given support through the student support services programme and assessed regularly to monitor progress. Support may be in the form of pull-out fashion or integrated with an educational assistant support.



Language Programmes

All students are required to study in the English medium and at each level, students are to be exposed to English language and literature.

Studying a second language is a requirement for all students. French and Spanish is offered at all levels. Cultural Mfantse is offered at primary and Cambridge lower secondary levels.

Scope and sequence of language offerings

Primary grade 3-5, Basic 1-5	Conversational French, Spanish cultural Mfantse
Cambridge secondary 1- grade 6, Basic 6	Introductory French 1, introductory Spanish 1, cultural Mfantse
Cambridge secondary 1-Grade 7, Basic 7	Introductory French 2, introductory Spanish 2, cultural Mfantse
Cambridge secondary 1-Grade 8, Basic 8 &9	Introductory French 3, introductory Spanish 3, cultural Mfantse
Cambridge secondary 2-IGCSE-Grade 9	French -foreign language, Spanish foreign language, Mfantse
Cambridge secondary 2-IGCSE-Grade 10	French- foreign language, Spanish foreign language, Mfantse
IB Diploma 1-Grade 11	French-ab initio, SL and HL, Spanish ab initio and SL
IB Diploma 2-Grade 12	French ab initio, SL and HL, Spanish ab initio and SL

Mother Tongue

The school understands the importance of Mother Tongue instruction as a means to helping students maintain their first language skills. However, because MICS is committed to establishing sound English skills for all its students and because of the complicated scheduling, staffing and space logistics involved, MICS may not offer Mother Tongue instruction during the school day. The school does support Mother Tongue instruction after school hours and on Saturdays, subject to the following conditions;

- * The school endeavours to provide dedicated classrooms space for the programme, according to Board-approved rental guidelines
- * The respective Mother Tongue community assumes administrative responsibility and maintenance of instruction standards within the programme;
- * The respective Mother Tongue community recruits, hires, and supervises, the teachers;
- * The programme is subsidized in full by the Mother Tongue community; and

If the Mother Tongue classes are held on campus, the contractual regulations regarding orderly use of the school facilities are to be strictly observed. Groups are expected to reimburse the school for any and all property damage.



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IB Diploma

Through language study, students learn about perspectives and become more knowledgeable and caring. The following courses are on offer;

Group 1 Language A

Only English language and literature (HL and SL) will be offered as Group 1 subject at MICS. Students who register for English A SL will be part of the HL class and the teacher will modify instruction and assessment to meet their needs.

Group 2 Language B

French and Spanish languages will be offered as Ab initio SL at MICS. Ab initio SL is for a beginner who has no previous experience of the language and is taught outside the country or countries where the language is spoken.

French and Spanish will be offered as Language B SL and HL at MICS. Language B SL is for a language learner who may intend continual study of the language beyond the Diploma Programme and who has 2-5 years' experience in the target language and is not taught other subjects in the target language.

Language B HL is for a language learner who is fluent and intends to study the language at the level for a future career, to or to meet a Diploma Programme requirement, and who has 4-5 years' experience of the target language and is not taught other subjects in the target language.

Students taking SL will be part of the HL class and teachers will modify instruction and assessment to meet their needs.

Group 3-6 subjects

All group 3-6 subjects are taught in English. Students will be familiarized with subject specific language, technical terminology and computer language. They must understand that every subject has its own unique language of communication.

Assessment for Diploma candidates

At the Diploma level the student must meet a standard of fluency to allow them to think in English. All prospective candidates for the Diploma Programme are required to complete a series of assessments.

The goal of these assessments is to determine language proficiency and the skills necessary to be a successful DP candidate. The candidate will complete the following assessment prior to entry.

1. Reading and Writing Task: This assessment requires the student to read a piece of literature and respond to the text by writing short answers that demonstrate reading comprehension.
2. Short Essay: This essay written in English states the reason why students want to be enrolled in the IB DP. The writing is assessed as follows: content, organization, style, language, and mechanics.

Allowance is made for students who may have scored lower due to English as a second language issue.



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English Language Proficiency

Students with limited English proficiency may be accepted as long as the school is able to provide for their needs with the required level of language support. Therefore, there is a language screening process for all students in Grade 7 and above whose mother tongue is not English. Acceptance at MICS will not take place until this screening has taken place.

English language proficiency is not the only factor that is taken into account when considering admission to the school and eligibility for the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program. A student's proficiency in their mother tongue, as well as their previous academic history is also considered. It is, therefore, imperative that the school receives accurate and up-to-date school records for the previous two years. All records must be translated into English.

In Grades 7-12, where a potential student has had little or no prior experience of English-medium education and/or little in the way of English language teaching, the Admission's Officer liaises with the Secondary ESOL Teacher to arrange an assessment of their English language proficiency. This screening involves a formal test of reading comprehension as well as a writing task. An oral interview is also conducted.

After the initial assessment, a decision is made about whether or not ESOL support is required. The student's application is then referred to the Admissions Committee for decisions on admission, class placement and course selection. The school's Counsellors and/or IG/IB Coordinators are involved in the admissions process as necessary.

In Grades 7-10 all students who, after assessment, are considered to be in need of extra support in English are placed alongside their peers in an advisory class and follow the curriculum. They may be scheduled with ESOL specialists in lieu of other languages. They may also have subject-specific support (e.g. English).

ESOL support focuses on the specific language requirements and skills needed by students to access the grade level curriculum. Students in grades 11 and 12 must demonstrate a high level of English language proficiency to succeed in the very academically challenging courses of the IB Diploma Programme. There is no specialist ESOL support provided for students at this level.



Description of ESOL Proficiency Levels

For the purpose of establishing a common understanding of proficiency levels, the following descriptions will be used:

Level of Proficiency

Beginning	Limited or no previous education in an English medium setting. Requires full academic and social support
Intermediate	Some previous education in an English medium setting or equivalent. Displays confidence in social settings, but requires support for subject content and language development.
Advanced	Several years of educational experience in English. Benefits from language enrichment and refinement, but does not need support for subject content.
Independent	Extensive educational experience in English. Does not need support, but progress should be monitored.

Reading Criteria

Independent	Advanced	Intermediate	Beginner
Approximately 1 year or less below grade level	Approximately 1-2 years below grade level Requires support for advanced concepts	Approximately 1-3 years below grade level Has general comprehension but requires support for complex ideas, figurative language, etc.	More than 3 years below grade level Demonstrated literacy skills in first language May be able to decode in English but with limited comprehension



Writing Criteria

	Independent	Advanced	Intermediate	Beginner
Content	<p>Message is clear and addresses topic</p> <p>Demonstrates good use of detail and development</p>	<p>Message is understandable and addresses topic</p> <p>Demonstrates use of detail and development</p>	<p>Addresses topic and conveys a general message</p> <p>Little evidence of detail or development</p>	<p>Demonstrates limited understanding of topic</p>
Organization	<p>Uses the writing process</p> <p>Ideas are clear, coherent and well organized</p> <p>Uses clear paragraphs with effective transitions</p>	<p>Uses the writing process</p> <p>Ideas are coherent and organized</p> <p>Attempts made toward paragraphing</p>	<p>Demonstrates an attempt to sequence information/events</p> <p>Paragraphs and transitions are weak</p>	<p>Demonstrates little understanding of organizational features</p>
Style	<p>Writing is individual and expressive</p> <p>Writing is fluent and flows naturally</p>	<p>Writing is individual</p> <p>Writing flows easily</p>	<p>Writing may use repetition of familiar vocabulary/ideas</p>	<p>Limited vocabulary</p>
Language	<p>Uses a range of descriptive detail</p> <p>Uses a wide range of vocabulary</p> <p>Uses a variety of compound/compound sentence structures</p>	<p>Uses descriptive detail.</p> <p>Uses an adequate range of vocabulary</p> <p>Varies sentence structure, leads and endings</p>	<p>Uses simple sentences</p> <p>Vocabulary is adequate, but basic</p>	<p>Limited vocabulary</p>

Mechanics	Few errors in conventions, grammar and syntax	Errors in conventions, grammar and syntax do not interfere with meaning	May have errors in conventions, grammar and syntax, but general message is understandable Demonstrates basic understanding of writing mechanics and grammar	Meaning may be affected due to limited understanding of conventions, grammar and sentence structure
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Accessing the Language Programme:

The language programme is open to French speaking secondary and gap year students looking to develop their English before furthering their studies. Students attend classes to improve their English language speaking and writing skills and assist the French Teacher with tutoring and monitoring in the French Language classes offered at the school. Students wishing to enter the language programme may apply for a 3, 6 or 9 month programme. Students attending the language will receive a certificate of attendance.

Adopted	August 2015
Amended	August 2019
Modified	January 2024

References

IBO (August, 2015). DP: From principles into practice, "Language options and language support" section.

IBO (2008). Guidelines for developing a school language policy

Guidelines for school self-reflection on language policy