

# Language Policy



**The Arab Evangelical Episcopal Church Council  
(Ahliyyah & Mutran)**



## Language Policy

### Philosophy:

As a primary tool for communication, language is essential to learning, preserving, and reflecting culture and identity. As the world progresses in every facet of life, so do languages; thus, the role of language as a vehicle and tool of thought, communication and self-expression is integral to further personal and professional growth and development. Language also plays a key role in fostering understanding between people and bridging cultures.

The acquisition and development of the mother tongue is crucial for the construction of one's sense of self, understanding of the world and relationships with others. Therefore, proficiency in the mother tongue builds the foundation for all learning as well as learning other languages. Particularly in the early years of schooling, mother tongue proficiency is vital for concept formation as well as literacy and numeracy attainment. Accordingly, our students acquire a solid foundation in Arabic in the primary years while they also embark on learning additional languages, specifically English. Our aim is to graduate bilingual students; therefore, we offer English as of the Kindergarten and English is the main language of instruction as of Grade 6.

As a school that embraces intercultural understanding, internationalism, and multilingualism, Ahliyyah & Mutran promotes the learning of modern languages. Therefore, French is offered as part of the curriculum in the Primary and Middle Schools. German and Mandarin are on offer as of Grade 6. These languages may also be offered at ab initio level in the IBDP/IBCP when applicable.

At Ahliyyah & Mutran, we believe that language is developed across all curricular areas and that all teachers are language teachers who nurture the love of language, reading, self-expression and creativity in learning and living.



## Practices and Procedures:

The Language Policy is a whole-school document, which is divided into separate sections for K-5, 6-10, and 11-12. The Policy has been developed jointly between the three divisions of the school involving the Heads of Divisions, Coordinators, and teachers in considerable discussion of each component and of the changing needs of learners at different stages of development.

By offering the Continuum, Ahliyyah & Mutran students acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable them to be:

### **Inquirers:**

Students use language to engage in inquiry in order to acquire information and knowledge.

### **Thinkers:**

Students use language as a tool for thinking and expressing their thoughts with clarity, while also seeking to understand and interpret knowledge and information.

### **Communicators:**

Students use oral and written language competently in a variety of situations. They articulate and interpret messages about ideas, values, and beliefs.

### **Risk takers:**

Students are confident enough to use language to venture into unexplored areas through reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and presenting.

### **Knowledgeable:**

Students continuously strengthen their command of language in order to continually open doors to greater knowledge.

### **Principled:**

Students respect the power of language and use it appropriately.

### **Caring:**

Students show sensitivity in their use of language and are aware of how the use of language can affect others.

### **Open-minded:**



Students respect linguistic differences and variations in communication styles. They apply language to explore aspects of personal, local, and other cultures.

**Balanced:**

Students show balance in both receptive and productive communication, through exploring a wide range of genres within oral, written, and visual communication.

**Reflective:**

Students reflect on their use of language, the importance of their mother tongue(s), and their own strengths and weaknesses. Language is the tool used to be reflective in all areas of life.

**Kindergarten and Primary School:**

Ahliyyah & Mutran’s Kindergarten and Primary School are dedicated to building proficiency in mother tongue in order to equip learners with the ability to develop their language repertoire and learn the tools to become creative, independent and critical learners rooted in their culture. Most classes are taught in Arabic and students use Arabic as the main language of communication. In order to promote inquiry-based language learning within the context of the PYP, Ahliyyah & Mutran recognizes the importance of incorporating the teaching and learning of language throughout the trans-disciplinary themes of inquiry. The aim is for students to develop and master essential language skills, which is vital for students’ overall development. A variety of literary and non-literary texts is integrated into our POI to foster the love for, appreciation and enjoyment of language and the rewards of learning.

- **Language of Instruction**

Arabic is the language of instruction at Ahliyyah & Mutran for all subjects K-5. English is offered as an additional first language, so that students reach a level of proficiency in all language skills at the end of the PYP in preparation for a shift in the language of instruction from Arabic to English in the Middle School.

Support is provided directly to students whose language skills need further development. This support program is offered in Grades 1-5 in the Primary School.

- **Additional Language**



French is taught as an additional language and is obligatory in Grades 1-5. The program is presented in an interactive method and focuses on articulation and pronunciation, so students can develop an appreciation of the language and use it to communicate.

### **Middle School (Grades 6-10):**

To be successful in a complex global society, students need to develop their language and communication skills. The language program lies at the heart of Ahliyyah & Mutran's vision for its students: to become independent, critical thinkers, lifelong learners, and responsible citizens. The program encourages students to appreciate literature and to understand that language is fundamental to learning. Language is both an essential tool for learning and a medium for communicating meaning, intent, analysis, and emotion. The language program involves and challenges students, preparing them for the next stage of their education; this demands mastery of the full range of language skills.

- **Language of Instruction**

The language of instruction in the Middle School transitions from Arabic to English. In Grades 6-10, all subjects are taught in English except Religion, Arabic and PHE.

Arabic and English classes in the Middle School provide a rich language environment. Classes focus on the major language areas of reading, listening, speaking, writing, viewing, and presenting, and all students are provided with ample opportunities to improve their abilities in each area.

Since the language of instruction in the PYP is Arabic, students do Language and Literature in Arabic in the Middle School. However, since English is not their mother tongue, they start with Language Acquisition in Grade 6 and slowly progress into Language and Literature in Grade 7. Students are continuously assessed in Grade 7 in order to determine whether they can smoothly transition into Language and Literature or continue with Language Acquisition.

Support is provided directly to students whose language skills in their mother tongue, whether English or Arabic, need further development. This support program is offered in Grades 6-10 in the Middle School.

- **Additional Languages:**

To promote multilingualism and international mindedness, students are offered an additional language other than Arabic and English.



By the end of Grade 5, students apply for DELF Prim and they have the choice of continuing to study French or to acquire German or Mandarin as an additional language. Students continue with their choice until Grade 10. Students who continue with French can do DELF A1 in Grade 7, DELF A2 in Grade 8 and B1 in Grade 10. Students who opt for German can do the Fit 1 exam in Grades 8&9 and Fit 2 exam in Grade 10.

Although French, German and Chinese are taught within the regular school day and the teachers follow MYP principles, the three subjects are not part of the MYP.

### **Students' pathway in languages in the MYP:**

- All students learn Arabic, their mother tongue and/or language of the host country, from K – 12.
- The mother tongue of our students is Arabic and the language of instruction in the PYP is Arabic.
- Although the language of instruction in the MYP is English, students are still expected to study Arabic as Language and Literature.
- Students whose mother tongue is not Arabic are integrated in the Arabic classrooms and are offered one-on-one support as needed.
- Students are guided as to which courses they will take in the DP based on their academic performance in the language courses in the MYP.
- Students are exposed to the local language and culture through homeroom teaching periods, weekly assemblies, and school activities.
- Students are exposed to other cultures through the study of world literature in language classes.

### **High School (Grades 11-12):**



The working language in the IBDP/IBCP is English excluding Arabic, French or German IB courses. In Grades 11 and 12, the school offers 2 Arabic Language courses, and 3 English Language courses as follows:

- Arabic A: Literature (Higher - Standard Levels)
- Arabic: Language B (Higher - Standard Levels)
- English A: Language & Literature (Higher - Standard Levels)
- Literature and Performance (Standard Level)
- English: Language B (Higher Level)

Based on their performance in the language courses in the MYP, students in the IBDP/IBCP will either take two Language As or one Language A and one Language B, or, in some cases, two Language Bs. The course taken should academically challenge the student.

An informal diagnostic test based on Language Acquisition is administered to students in French and German at the end of Grade 10. Students achieving 3 and below can-do ab initio level in that language in the IBDP/IBCP. Students who complete French DELF A2 CANNOT do French ab initio in the DP.

- **Language Development in the CP**

The Language Development course in the CP is a school-designed course that focuses on the selected career-related study and is structured around the four chosen themes. The course is based on the CP requirements.

- **Libraries**

A wide range of literary and non-literary texts is found in the school libraries to support and supplement classroom resources. The aim is to help students become independent and committed readers, through free interaction with a variety of texts, in order to develop their literacy skills and their ability to engage critically with literature. The school library includes English and Arabic fiction, non-fiction, and periodicals. It is also developing a more inclusive selection of French, German and Mandarin resources. Several online databases are also available for easier access to different resources and to aid in the development of language.



Librarians contact embassies of students from different nationalities in order to provide books for those students in their mother tongue.

- **References**

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**NOTE:** All school policies are reviewed and updated at the end of every academic year by the Language Coordinators, Program Coordinators and Heads of Divisions. Those interested in joining the revision committee are invited to do so when the opportunity is advertised.