



## **Language Policy**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

Not only is language a means of communication among individuals, but it is also a tool to better understand the world we live in. International mindedness is the ultimate outcome of multilingualism which promotes interaction, tolerance, and inter-cultural understanding. Becoming better global citizens can be achieved through the teaching and learning of languages. Our value at Eastwood College lies in being a diverse multicultural community constituting of students, families, and staff members from different countries, backgrounds, and socioeconomic statuses. We appreciate our diversity, and in celebrating it, we offer different languages: Arabic (the mother tongue), English, French, and Spanish. We, at Eastwood College, strongly believe that through teaching and learning languages, our value system is aligned with the learner profile of the IB philosophy in understanding different perspectives, and hence respecting diversity.

### **OVERVIEW**

Our school is committed to providing high-quality language instruction and support to all students in order to help them become confident, effective, and engaged communicators in multiple languages. We base our language learning methodology on the mission of the International Baccalaureate (IB), which seeks to foster the growth of inquisitive, informed, receptive, equitable, daring, and compassionate individuals who contribute towards building a more harmonious and peaceful global community by cultivating intercultural appreciation and reverence.

At our school, we adhere to the belief that language is an enduring educational pursuit which serves as a potent means of fostering communication, comprehension, and self-development and that acquiring proficiency in a language is integral to a comprehensive education. We acknowledge the significance of language aptitude in promoting academic achievement, intercultural harmony, and personal growth, and we pledge to create a nurturing and stimulating atmosphere for learning which empowers all students to achieve their maximum potential as effective communicators.

At Eastwood College, we recognize that language education is key to developing a sense of global citizenship. Our institution is proud to be a richly diverse community, comprised of students, families, and faculty from a variety of nations, cultures, and economic backgrounds. We cherish this diversity, and to honor it, we provide instruction in multiple languages, including Arabic (our native tongue), English, and French.

At Eastwood College, we maintain a firm conviction that language instruction is vital to upholding our core values and aligning with the IB philosophy's learner profile of appreciating diverse viewpoints and fostering respect. Furthermore, we strive to offer our students a chance to engage in enjoyable, imaginative, and intellectually stimulating pursuits by exposing them to language, literature, and non-textual media.

# **LINGUISTIC PROFILE**

## **Mother Tongue Language**

It is our obligation to help students grow and develop skills in different languages while maintaining the mother tongue. Arabic is the mother tongue for most of the students at Eastwood College – Kafarshima. However, children of Lebanese families returning to Lebanon after many years of living abroad have no mastery of their mother tongue language, and hence Arabic is not the language of instruction in the international program they are offered. Furthermore, the Lebanese national educational system gives schools the option to decide on its language of instruction, Arabic, English, or French.

At Eastwood College, Arabic is not the language of instruction in the Lebanese National Program. As a result, Arabic is a subject course like any other at the school. Indeed, Arabic in the Lebanese Curriculum is equivalent to English in the International program. Furthermore, Arabic is promoted as the language of other national program subjects, like social studies and philosophy. However, since students' competence in their mother tongue is directly related to their learning in another language, they are provided with the opportunity to achieve proficiency in their mother tongue as far as written and spoken skills are concerned in a context of conceptual learning. On the other hand, students are permitted to use their mother tongue when deemed necessary to support their learning of a subject offered in a non-mother tongue language of instruction.

## **Language of Instruction**

The objective of our school's language policy is to enhance the students' English proficiency for effective communication and for academic and professional purposes. English language serves as the primary medium of instruction, and the curriculum specifies the scope of language to be taught along with the expected level of proficiency. Students are expected to enhance their language skills in English, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. In addition, our school encourages students to gain an in-depth understanding of English-speaking cultures, traditions, and histories to foster cultural appreciation and understanding. To achieve this, students engage with various cultural modes of expression such as literature, music, art, and other forms.

In this respect, our school has a clearly outlined English curriculum that covers specific topics, teaching approaches, and evaluation methods. Teachers are required to have the appropriate qualifications and expertise to teach effectively, and various learning resources such as textbooks, audio-visual aids, and technology are provided to enhance the learning experience. The effectiveness of language instruction is assessed using defined methodologies. The implementation process is also well-defined, with clearly defined timelines, responsibilities, and monitoring mechanisms to ensure that the policy is successfully implemented.

## **Second Language**

The second language at Eastwood College – Kawashima is French. Our comprehensive French curriculum covers essential topics such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and cultural practices. Our teaching methodologies prioritize the development of all four language skills, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing. French is introduced on the third preschool year, and it becomes a second language in Grades 1 to 9. Although the number of sessions is significantly minimal - 2 ~ 3 periods per week-, students get to be certified in different levels of DELF: Sixth graders are registered for the DELF Prime examination at the Centre Culturel Français in Beirut and for higher DELF levels on their secondary years if they choose French as their language course.

French cannot be offered as ab initio at Eastwood College; it cannot be offered as language A as well. Students can choose French as a Language B course if they have enrolled for it on their Pre-DP Year 10. The same applies for Arabic in the International Program. It is offered as a second language (Lang B), and in different levels of difficulty in Middle School.

By encouraging students to learn French as a second language, we aim to broaden their perspectives, create new opportunities, and equip them for success in an increasingly interconnected world.

## **LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PRACTICES**

Communicating effectively in more than one language is a crucial skill in today's global society. At our school, we recognize the significance of supporting all students in their language development, particularly those who are learning the language of instruction as a second or additional language. Our language acquisition practices are designed to provide a supportive and inclusive learning environment that promotes language development, encourages language diversity, and ensures that all students have access to the language resources they need in order to succeed. Below is a list of language acquisition practices and strategies, which are informed by the latest research in language acquisition and pedagogy.

- 1- Immersion: English Language is the main "A" language at our school. It is reinforced through authentic experience such as Culture Day, MUN, Science Fair, Oral Communication in classrooms, Language Day, Reading Week.
- 2- Input rich environments: Student-based learning is the methodology used at EWC where students are inquirers. They are provided with a rich environment that celebrates their communication skills through authentic materials, such as show and tell, videos, articles, Lab reports, problem solving, flipped classroom.

- 3- Communication approach: Our school embraces the English language in all communication aspects. It is used in school publications such as Online Agenda, e-mails, Google Classroom and the school's website.
- 4- Interdisciplinary approach: Our school advocates for an interdisciplinary approach to language education in which language learning is combined with other subject areas to create an integrated learning experience. However, in the Lebanese Program, some courses are addressed in the Arabic language to abide by the Lebanese system of education.
- 5- Differentiation: The concept of differentiation is highly acknowledged by our school, as we understand that each of our students has unique learning needs and preferences. Therefore, our language instruction is tailored to cater to the needs of all learners. To achieve this, teachers employ a variety of strategies for differentiating instructions including modifying the pace and complexity of instruction
- 6- Task-based-language teaching: This approach involves creating tasks or activities that require learners to use the target language to accomplish a specific goal.

## **IB LEARNER PROFILE AND LANGUAGE NEEDS**

Eastwood College highly acknowledges the vital role of language acquisition throughout the early years of schooling where the basic requirements of language are introduced. As such, reading skills, oral practices (receptive and productive), writing skills, and inquiry-based approaches are instilled at lower age levels. Assessment, whether in reading, writing, speaking, or listening is criterion based. Besides, students are encouraged to reflect on their own performance and evaluate their work.

In upper levels, reinforcing the language acquisition takes place through more emphasis on analytical skills, research techniques, and oral presentations practiced technically and academically. It is a convention at Eastwood College that, the use of language in all nonlanguage courses crucially depends on the proper acquisition of language in language courses.

Eastwood College holds the belief that each student is an individual achiever with his/her own unique abilities, interests, and language acquisition aptitudes. As a means to create an appropriate language atmosphere, the school addresses the needs of its students according to their language proficiency and ensures that their requirements are met.

Aligned with the IB learner profile, our aim is to enhance students' learner profile and assist students in becoming inquirers, knowledgeable individuals, effective communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, well-balanced, and reflective.

The following practices are implemented at Eastwood College:

1. **Second Language Needs Analysis:** To ensure that students' needs are met throughout the school year, a diagnostic test is recommended by language teachers for all students to distinguish their level. Therefore, based on the test's results, students' level will be differentiated as either main stream or learning support. Then another step will be taken throughout the academic year to check students' progress by which the learning support student has the right to change the class level based on his/her performance and results.
2. **Individualized Learning Plans:** Language teachers implement differentiation in their unit plans and assessments through the use of varied activities which are tailored to meet the unique needs of each student. Further modifications in unit plans and assessments are implemented by the LS language teachers to meet the needs of student with special needs.
3. **Parent and Student Involvement:** Parents are provided with continuous updates on their children's progress through various means, such as phone calls, individual meetings, or the online agenda, to closely monitor their performance.

By implementing a learner-centered method to language instruction and by modifying teaching methods to suit students' needs, our main objective is to foster effective language learning that is applicable to each student's ambition, while nurturing the development of the IB learner profile.

## **Promotion of Language and Culture**

We, at Eastwood College, believe in creating an inclusive environment which promotes respect and understanding for all cultures and languages. To achieve this, we prioritize creating a safe and welcoming school environment, promoting cultural sensitivity, and addressing issues related to discrimination or bias.

To further promote multiculturalism and diversity, we hold an annual event that celebrates different cultures and traditions. This event includes food festivals, cultural performances, and heritage fairs, among other activities. Through this event, students have the opportunity to learn from and interact with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, furthering a deeper appreciation for diversity and promoting cultural understanding.

## **Assessment Policy**

Assessing language proficiency involves a wide range of components, strategies, and tools used in both formative and summative assessments. Moreover, each Language Department has developed its own assessment practices that cater to the nature of the language course, such as First language,

Second language, or ab intio. Each subject has a unique assessment policy that includes a distribution of different types of assessments and coefficients.

The assessments consist of diagnostic tests at the beginning of the academic year that help determine the appropriate level for students in Arabic language classes. Additionally, these assessments aid in re-teaching any prerequisites necessary for the following class before proceeding with new major skills. The remaining assessments are conducted in a specific order based on the skills being evaluated, including assignments, quizzes, mid-term/ mid-year exams, final exams, and other forms of formative and summative assessments.

## **Admission Policy**

At Eastwood College, all students who apply to any class level are required to take an English language placement test to determine their proficiency level. Students who apply to the Lebanese National Program must also undergo testing to determine their Arabic language level.

For the targeted educational streams (national and IBDP), students must undergo assessments in both English and Arabic (or French) to determine their proficiency level against the required linguistic profile. If a candidate applying for the IBDP program fails to meet the program's requirements and expectations, and if no feasible solutions are available, the student's admission will be denied.

## **Revision of the policy**

The policy is revised biannually in order to evaluate its effectiveness. The latest updates of its terms are uploaded on our Online Agenda.

*“A language policy is an action statement... It is concerned less with where the students in a school are going, and more with how they are going to get there...”*

*Language Policy In School, Corson (1999)*