



Think International School

Think - Inquire - Inspire



LANGUAGE POLICY

Policy statement and philosophy

As an IB world school we aim for our students to be effective communicators and to be able to express themselves confidently in more than one language. We value the diversity of languages within the multilingual profile of our school community.

At TIS we recognise the importance of a strong foundation in a child's home and family languages (Mother Tongue) and that this directly relates to strong language acquisition in other languages. Language learning is transdisciplinary and so all teachers at TIS are teachers of language. We believe that multilingualism is a means of affirming cultural identity and developing international-mindedness in our students and the learning community. We support a multilingual approach that recognises the importance of mother tongues in supporting additional learning.

Language learning includes learning language, learning about language and learning through language. At TIS we believe that language learning and acquisition is a constructive, developmental process, where students develop by building on their prior skills and knowledge.

Language Profile

At TIS there are at least fourteen different languages spoken at home (Appendix 1). The majority of our families indicate English and Cantonese as their mother-tongue, and also the main language spoken at home.

The main language of instruction at TIS is English, using the UK English spelling conventions. All students study Chinese (Putonghua) daily, using traditional Chinese characters.

Definitions:

Chinese refers to the written language

Cantonese and Putonghua refer to the spoken languages

Admissions

1. Applicants are required to indicate their language profile on the application form.
2. Interviews are held in English, including reading and writing at an age-appropriate level.
 - a. Interviews may also be held in another language such as Cantonese and/or Putonghua, with the help of fluent speakers within the teaching staff.
 - b. Students applying for Years 1 to 6, who have checked advanced or intermediate Putonghua or Cantonese, will have an interview in Chinese to determine class placement for Chinese lessons.

Programmes: teaching and learning and pathways

The languages taught at TIS are English and Chinese. The PYP Coordinator and Language Leaders oversee the development of the programme. The English Language scope and sequence has been developed in line with the PYP Scope and Sequence and underpinned by the Ontario English Curriculum. The Chinese Language scope and sequence has been developed in line with the PYP Scope and Sequence for Language.

In lessons, children may discuss new learning in any language which will help them enhance their understanding of new ideas and skills. Outside of lessons, children may use any language they choose to communicate, as we celebrate the diversity of a multilingual school and recognise the importance of language as part of our identity.

1. Planning

- a. Planning for language learning is a collaborative process, including the specialist teachers.
- b. Language planning is integrated into the units of inquiry or planned as stand-alone lessons.

2. Teaching

- a. Language is taught through authentic links with the Programmes of Inquiry or through stand-alone language lessons.
- b. Language is taught through the four strands: speaking and listening, reading, viewing and presenting, and writing. The teaching of these strands takes into account both the receptive (receiving and constructing meaning) and the expressive (creating and sharing meaning) aspect of each domain.
- c. Differentiation for language learning happens within the classroom.

3. Assessment

- a. Ongoing formative assessment takes place throughout the school year. Information from these regular assessments is used to inform future planning, to ascertain the levels at which students are working, to inform goal setting and to report to students and parents.

- b. Summative assessments are included within each Unit of Inquiry.
- c. Standardised assessments are completed at the beginning of each Term for Language (English reading and writing) PM Benchmarks and writing assessed against a standard rubrics.
- d. Assessment data is recorded in the Think Drive, Seesaw and teacher's records.
- e. Student progress is reported to parents according to the reporting cycle in the assessment policy.

4. Specific to Chinese

- a. All year groups have daily Chinese lessons of one hour, with a specialist teacher.
- b. Chinese classes are streamed: CAL (Chinese as an additional language) and Advanced.
 - i. Chinese classes for Early Years students are not streamed.
- c. Class placement may be determined at interview (see Admissions 2b)
- d. Students moving from Early Years to Year 1 are streamed according to continuous assessment data.
- e. On rare occasions a student may be promoted from the CAL class to the Advanced class based on their progress and assessment data.
- f. A student may be moved from the Advanced class to the CAL class based on their progress and assessment data. (see Appendix 2)
- g. All decisions on class placement will be discussed with the parents.

5. Learning support

- a. Students with identified barriers to learning, including language difficulties, will have an Individual Education Plan or an Individual Learning Plan written by the class teacher, with support from the Head of Primary, specialist teachers, parents and students. This may also involve consultation and advice from external agencies. This will be reviewed each term by all parties involved.
- b. Support for students who are not proficient in the language of instruction occurs under the guidance of the classroom teacher.

The school library and resources

1. The school library at TIS is an integral part of learning and teaching. The library promotes lifelong learning and encourages student choice giving them the freedom to make their own decisions about reading for pleasure as well as reading for research and information. The library inventory includes books in English, Chinese traditional characters as well as a growing collection of texts reflecting the school community's Mother Tongue languages.
2. The reading scheme used at TIS is the Oxford Reading Tree.
3. Students have the opportunity to use a range of resources both print and virtual to support their language learning including but not limited to:
 - a. guided reading sets
 - b. class sets of novels
 - c. online resource subscriptions (Reading Eggs, Education City)
 - d. dictionaries (English, Chinese and Bilingual)

- e. Bilingual books

Parental involvement

At TIS we believe that parents are important partners in their child's learning. It is important that parents understand the school's language philosophy and approach to teaching and learning. Sharing students' learning and running parent workshops will facilitate this understanding. This policy shall be shared in the parent handbook and reviewed with input from the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC).

Professional Development (PD)

PD for language learning shall be part of the regular PYP workshop cycle. All teachers are language teachers and are therefore required to attend.

Policy review

The language policy will be reviewed regularly as part of the policy review cycle. The policy shall be reviewed with input from all school stakeholders as appropriate.

References

- IBO. *Language and Learning in IB Programmes* 2014
- IBO. *Programme Standards and Practices*, 2018
- IBO. *Reviewing a Language Policy*, 2018
- IBO. *Primary Years Programme Learning and Teaching*, 2019

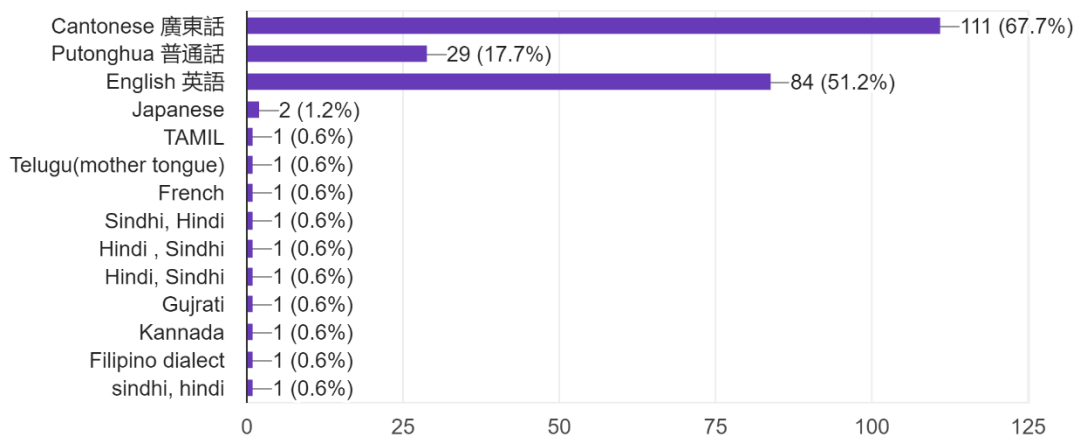
Appendix 1: TIS Language Profile 2020-2021

A survey was sent to the parent community in January 2021. The language profile of the TIS community includes 14 different languages (see table below). The majority of families speak Cantonese or English at home.

Cantonese	English	Putonghua/Mandarin
Japanese	Tamil	Telugu
French	Hindi	Sindhi
Gujarati	Kannada	Punjabi
Indonesian	Javanese	

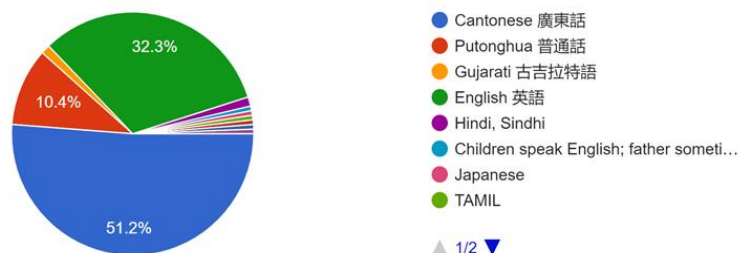
Mother tongue (fluent home language) Check as many as apply 母語和常用語言

164 responses



Main language spoken at home 在家裡說的主要語言

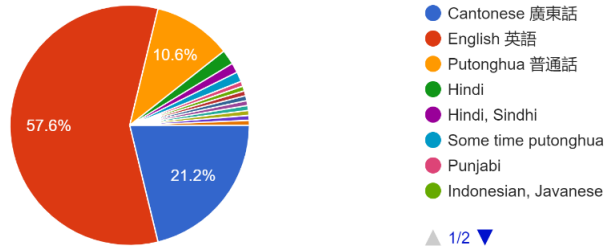
164 responses



March 2021

Other languages spoken (additional languages) 使用的其他語言

151 responses



Appendix 2: Procedure Advanced to CAL Class

