

Philosophy

At Roots Millennium Schools, we value linguistic diversity among school communities and are dedicated to supporting mother-tongue development, along with the acquisition of additional languages. Multilingualism increases cognitive abilities, including problem-solving, creativity and memory, as well a learner's ability to communicate in diverse environments. All teachers are language teachers and are responsible for teaching language within and across subject areas.

As language is the key to all learning, all teachers at RMS are committed to language acquisition for all students in all classes, across all subjects. Development of language skills, both spoken and written, is critical to strengthening communication and is an expression of culture. Through language, our students acquire the ability to think and to learn, to develop social skills and values, and to acquire knowledge. Since each language reflects the values, history, and way of thinking of those who use it, learning another language is a particularly effective means of understanding and respecting others.

Parental and community support is vital for the successful implementation of this policy. Language learning and teaching is an ongoing partnership between our schools, students and parents. The six fundamental skill areas developed are listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting.

Consequently, our students leave RMS with an intercultural understanding, and respect for the need to be adaptable, as they become threads of a multilingual and intercultural fabric.

Mission and Beliefs:

“ Roots Millennium Schools aims to bring out the best in a child/student mentally, intellectually, academically, physically, entrepreneurially and culturally by developing the attitudes, skills, knowledge and values in the students, thus required to meet the Global Challenges as millennial in the 21st century through advancements in our school curriculum, teaching pedagogy, School culture, learning environment and enabling technology.”

The RMS mission statement lays the foundation for our language policy. As language forms the basis for all learning, this policy is critical for helping the school achieve its mission and aspires to fulfil each aspect of the mission statement. Inspiring and challenging young minds as a caring and committed

international community to achieve excellence, assume responsibility and pursue life-long learning is what RMS aims for.

We believe that language is central to learning and encourage our students to be bilingual or multilingual. In line with the principles and practices of the International Baccalaureate, we recognize that because language is central to learning, all teachers are in practice language teachers.

We respect that our student body speaks a diversity of languages and is at home in a diversity of cultures. We also believe that language learning promotes mutual understanding and respect, and our approach is inclusive.

Purpose of the language policy

This language policy is a working document developed by MYP language teachers and MYPC .The policy is consistent with the stipulated principles and practices of the IB. This document outlines our school's linguistic and academic goals and defines the program designed to help our students attain these goals.

Many students have quite varied linguistic backgrounds. They range from coming directly from the dual language Primary School program to entering Secondary School with no second language experience. We offer many language levels to allow students to develop language ability to their highest potential.

Our program operates within the curricular framework of the IB Middle Years Program. We are guided by the fundamental MYP concepts of holistic learning, intercultural awareness, and communication. Our program encourages students to make links within and across subject groups through global context and interdisciplinary unit planning process.

The RMS Language curriculum maps serve as a guide for language instruction in listening, speaking, reading and writing at all academic levels. Ongoing professional development is provided to all teachers to facilitate them in achieving the set language goals.

Language and Literature (Language A)

At RMS English is the language of instruction for everyone. All the administrative and teaching staff speak English and play a key role in helping students develop language proficiency. Our students have been taught in English as first language since early years and when students begin the IBMYP program in grade 6, they study English as their language A and are required to study it as Language A each year of the IB MYP till grade 10.

Language A courses at RMS are created using the Whole Language philosophy, which focuses on making meaning in reading and expressing meaning in writing. In Language A courses, students read full-length, high quality and culturally diverse novels as a class, in small groups, and independently. Students write essays on various reflective and/or evaluative topics and interact with text through discussion. Language A curriculum is designed to affirm, reflect on, and extend identity, as students explore and understand themselves through the study of language

Language Acquisition (Language B)

In addition to supporting students in their development of the language of instruction, we also respect and celebrate the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of our learning community. The acquisition of language must be seen as a continuum along which each individual student progresses at his/her own pace.

RMS strives to make every student proficient in more than one language. All students possess the knowledge and ability to use at least two languages, but not all of them are equally proficient. Language Acquisition is currently offered to our students in Urdu and German and the level, a student is placed into German or Urdu, is determined on an individual basis backed by teacher recommendation. Language Acquisition must be sustained in the same language for all five years of the programme.

The school offers German and Urdu from subject group Language acquisition. Language B is taught in six phases, German is taught at phase 1-2 and Urdu being the mother tongue is taught at phase 4,5 and 6 at grade 6, 7 and 8 level. RMS expects students to continue the study of German and Urdu until Grade 10 to fulfil the requirements of the IBMYP and IBDP. Depending on student needs, two phases may be taught in one group. Students getting excellent results in phase 4 are considered for transfer to language A.

Decisions about moving from one group, be it from one B group to another or from language B to language A are done in consultation with all parties in order to make the move successful.

In order to fulfil the certification requirements of the MYP 5 (Grade 10), all students must study a language A and a language B (or a second language A). Prior to this, students may take both language B German and language B English, but they must have a one or other as a language A in MYP 5 in order to receive a full MYP certificate.

However, the language profile of individuals and their progression will be considered when advising students on their language placement. Language teachers utilize online learning and differentiated instructions as much as possible to meet the needs of various language acquisition levels in each class.

Admission to RMS

As part of the admissions process, applicants are required to provide information about their proficiency in English, their mother tongue, and any other languages. Acceptable evidence of English language ability might include a portfolio of school work, video recordings of an oral presentation in an academic setting, an extended piece of academic writing, and results from a standardized English language acquisition test.

Furthermore, the student may be asked to complete an English language assessment test. Qualified students are admitted at all grade levels, if the class size permits. Students of all linguistic backgrounds are considered for admission.

Mother Tongue Support

We support the development and improvement of mother tongues because good language skills in the mother tongue increase self-esteem and can enhance the rate of English and other language learning. Progression in English ought not to be at the expense of a student's mother tongue. We celebrate mother tongues through events such as Interpretive reading competition, national day, Independence Day, declamation and debates etc.

We are not offering any mother tongue other than Urdu. We encourage and support students to sit for Urdu examination for IGCSE examinations to meet the requirements of IBCC (Inter Board Chairman Committee). Our libraries offer a wide range of materials in several languages.

Foreign Language Support

Successful language learning can only be accomplished through a thorough support system within the school and a full partnership between our school and the parents. (Parents as Partners agreement)

Based on teachers' recommendations supported by the results of each student's Oral Language Assessment in Grade 6, we offer additional exposure to the target language by providing a Saturday Language Camp from January until May, every year. This camp targets students in Grades 6, 7 and 8. It is highly recommended that students who have been identified as needing further reinforcement to strengthen their English or German skills attend these classes.

We offer extra support in the target languages after school. Teachers run tutoring sessions in English and German on a drop-in basis. Students can also benefit from extra help by making appointments with their teachers outside of class as well as attending various departments' tutoring sessions.

In order to facilitate students, learn languages more effectively teachers will:

- map out what resources students may need to enhance lessons, when starting a new unit of inquiry
- Communicate with the library and/or technology specialists at least one week prior to starting a new unit or lesson
- Encourage students to use a dictionary, thesaurus, or other reference materials for the support and development of language
- Not allow students to translate papers or academic writing in Google Translate or similar resources

Communication of Language Policy to the Parents and RMS Community

Parents are an integral part of our community of learners and provide tremendous support for language learning at RMS. The school uses many methods to communicate with parents the critical importance of maintaining academic proficiency in the mother tongue. The Language Policy is shared with staff,

families, and students through a variety of media. Staff members learn about the Language Policy during specific collaboration times set aside for policy study. We have an internal schedule for parent teacher conferences to inform families and students of the details of the policy. In addition, the Language Policy is highlighted during the IB MYP orientation seminar as well. The policy is available on our website in written form. This will allow our Language Policy to be accessed by all families, students and teachers.

The language policy will be introduced to the RMS community through a variety of pathways including staff meetings, PTM, grade level meetings and Director's and Principal's News and Notes. The policy will also be available on the RMS official website. New staff will be familiarized with the document during orientation.

Policy Creation Process

The Language Policy has been devised by a committee of Directors, IB MYPC, Principal, Academic Coordinator two Language A teachers, a Language B German teacher and Language B Urdu teacher. The work of the committee was informed by publications from the IBO, example Language Policies from IB World Schools, as well as the training received at the IB workshop. The committee held five meetings, following an agenda aligned with the MYP Standards and Practices tied to language. Staff members were made aware of the policy-making process through regular updates of the meeting agenda items.

Review Committee

The Language Policy committee, with the support of their departments, will continue to review, support, refine and build our Language Policy once every year. We will review the policy every year to ensure we are meeting the needs of all our students and provide a report to the entire staff and parents yearly.

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. Every three years, a committee will be assembled to perform a complete examination of the Language Policy. The committee will include, but is not limited to, a representative from the Language A department, a representative from the Language B German department, a representative from the Language B Urdu department, the IB MYP Coordinator, a member of the Academic Administrative Team. The purpose of the committee will be to study the current document to ensure its accuracy and to provide continued support to meet the needs of all of our learners. Our first full review will take place during the 2015-2016 academic session.

Each year the Language Policy committee will be responsible for updating the language profile section of the document. The members of this committee will deliver the language surveys and tabulate results to gain an accurate picture of students' language needs. If there are significant changes in the profile, requiring changes to our programs and practices, the committee will also update the necessary sections of the Language Policy.

The implementation of the Language Policy, in all MYP classrooms at RMS, will be reviewed by the MYP Pedagogical Leadership Team (which consists of the Director, Principal, Academic Coordinator, Secondary Lead Teacher and the IB MYP Coordinator), as part of the teacher observation process.

Bibliography:

- 1. Guidelines for developing a school language policy - IB OCC Document for 2014***
- 2. Language Policy - Atlanta International School**
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- 4. Language Policy Candidate School 00703 Middle Years Programme**
- 5. Language Policy San Jose High School and Burnett Middle School**
- 6. Language policy (*Information on the International Baccalaureate's support for languages, language courses and languages of instruction*)**
- 7. York International School 2014-15 MYP Language Policy**
- 8. Second-language Acquisition and Mother-tongue Development (A guide for schools) January 2004**
- 9. Prairie Seeds Academy International Baccalaureate MYP Candidate School**