

LANGUAGE POLICY

Philosophy

As an IB world school, the aim at MIS is “to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect” IB Mission Statement.

“It is through language that we access our own and others’ culture. The role of language acquisition and development from early childhood in order to foster bi-and multilingualism is fundamental.” Helen Drennen, former Director of Academic Affairs at the IB Assessment Centre.

Our school’s Expected Schoolwide Learning Outcomes (the IB Learner Profile attributes) and the IB attitudes underpin our language acquisition programme.

Research indicates that academic growth in a student’s first language is linked to second-language academic success. MIS, therefore, recognises the importance of students’ language development in their mother tongue and aims to encourage and support parents in providing quality mother tongue development. The ability to communicate in two or more languages has both cognitive and practical advantages and MIS is required, under its Indonesian education accreditation, to provide Bahasa Indonesian language lessons as part of the school curriculum. Language is fundamental to all learning. It allows students to understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in a variety of mediums. MIS, therefore, recognises the importance of all teachers in developing language skills across all curriculum areas, and at all grade levels.

School Language Profile

MIS is located in the Indonesian city of Medan where the national language is Bahasa Indonesia. The majority of people in the city do not speak English and few are fluent speakers. Hokkien Chinese is also a prominent minority language in Medan and many families at the school speak this. English is the primary language of instruction at MIS, Language Acquisition and Indonesian Culture and Civics are taught in Bahasa Indonesia.

The school community comprises families from many different countries with a variety of different mother tongue languages, as well as many local Indonesian families. Appendix B details the different languages spoken at the school and is updated annually.

The Board requires that all overseas staff employed at the school be native English speakers to help provide quality language modelling both for students and local staff. Teacher Assistants are all Indonesians who are fluent in spoken English. Many of them are English graduates from Indonesian universities and most have completed their Indonesian teaching degrees. The MIS overseas staff recognise the need to continually support local staff in their own development in English, but also to recognise the high level of language skills they have in their own mother tongue, Bahasa Indonesia. Many local staff also speak their own local dialects, so they are already additional language learners.

Indonesian government requirements involve a specific number of hours learning Bahasa Indonesia at each grade level for all Indonesian students. Appendix C details these requirements. MIS provides Bahasa Indonesia language lessons for all students.

The Language of Instruction

- At MIS English is the language of instruction. MIS promotes the explicit, transdisciplinary teaching of the English language through the IB Programmes the school offers.
- These programmes promote inquiry and concept based, authentic language learning. The intended outcome for MIS students is to become increasingly confident communicators in English, by significantly improving their knowledge, skills and use of the English language, in all areas of language.

Support for Language of Instruction

- English as an Additional Language (EAL)/Secondary Language (SL) teacher support
- If the school enrolment permits, EAL/SL support is provided by a specialist EAL/SL teacher whose time is allocated on a needs basis across the school.
- During the teacher recruitment process, teachers with EAL/SL training and/or experience are given priority to support language needs across the school.
- Teacher planning and practice, across all curriculum areas, recognizes the need to support EAL/SL learners in the classroom, as part of all lessons. If it is thought to be appropriate, withdrawal lessons are provided as scheduling and funding allows.
- Provision of new teaching materials is guided by the language needs of the student population.
- An EAL/SL co-curricular activity will be offered, when needed and funding permitting, for students whose classroom teacher, Coordinator and Head of School feel it is necessary.

Other Additional Languages

- As an IB school, MIS is committed to offering its students other additional languages. This promotes intercultural awareness and understanding, and supports our goal of developing international-mindedness.
- All students study at least one language in addition to English.
- In the PYP the additional language is Bahasa Indonesia.
- In the MYP, all students are able to learn an additional language. Due to government requirements, Language Acquisition is Bahasa Indonesia for all students from PYP 6 upwards.

Mother Tongue

- At MIS, mother tongue describes the language(s) frequently spoken at home.
- Admissions forms provide information on all languages spoken by parents and students and the predominant language (mother tongue) spoken at home.
- In accordance with IB policy, MIS recognises the importance, and encourages the maintenance and development, of a student's mother tongue.
- The library has a range of fiction and nonfiction books in students' mother tongue languages. Where possible, new books in mother tongue languages are obtained. The library skills programme helps students become aware of where to find these resources in the library.
- When planning, teachers consider ways mother tongue can be shared, and given value, in a unit.
- MIS promotes additive multilingualism, where students attain proficiency in other languages while continuing to develop their own.

Host Country Language and Culture

- MIS offers the host country language, Bahasa Indonesia, classes for all students.
- The culture, history and current events of Indonesia are included in this instruction.
- Parent communications are often translated into the host country language.

Assessment

- The English level of new students is assessed using a variety of assessment tools, including MAP assessments, writing samples and running records for reading.
- MIS teachers use inclusive practices and assessment tasks for EAL/SL students.
- MYP assessment criteria descriptors from IB guides continue to be used for major assessment tasks.

DP Language Addendum

Based on the language surveys and consistency with the school programme thus far (in the MYP, we have conducted English as MYP Language A), our survey results suggest a high level of use of English at home. Our school Vision and Mission also require an international education which we believe is consistent with using English as Language A, which

also provides the best service to our students and matches closely to the expectations of our parents from our programme.

Our language philosophy states that, “The ability to communicate in two or more languages has both cognitive and practical advantages and MIS is required, under its Indonesian education accreditation, to provide Bahasa Indonesia language lessons as part of the school curriculum. Language is fundamental to all learning.” To this end, we have included Bahasa Indonesia as our Language B, both to fulfill our government requirements and also to ensure that our students are developing a strong mother tongue (for those who are Indonesian) or host country language.

Host Country Language

We support host country language through the following routes;

- **MYP Language B Bahasa Indonesia**

Our Language B in the MYP level is Bahasa Indonesia. We have a total of two Bahasa Indonesia teachers (doubled since the 2015-2016 school year), and a significant number of our expatriate teachers are at intermediate or advanced level of Bahasa and capable of using the language in social and formal contexts.

- **School Events in Bahasa Indonesia**

We hold

- School events in Indonesian (Sports, Festivals, guest speakers)
- Most staff speak Indonesian

Quote from IBO’s “Guidelines for developing a school language policy” for the IB Diploma Programme:

In IB World Schools offering the IB Diploma Programme, a language policy should enable a student’s language profile to be developed by providing:

- well-resourced special-request and school-supported self-taught options in group 1 to maintain the mother-tongue development
- opportunities for learning ab initio and B languages.

Review of this policy

- A school language survey will be sent out at the beginning of the year to request information to update Appendix B annually. At the time that Appendix B is being updated a committee of administrators and teachers will review the policy, with additional input from parents and students as required.

Links to:

- Appendix A: The five stages of 2nd language acquisition
- Appendix B: A list of the languages spoken by staff and families at the school (updated annually)
- Appendix C: Indonesian government requirements as related to language learning
- Appendix D: Notes for DP
- Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (IB Learner Profile)
- Admissions Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Assessment Policy
- MYP Subject Guides
- IBO MYP second-language acquisition and mother tongue development
- IBO Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes