

# AIA Language Policy

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2021-2022



## Vision and Mission

### VISION

Our vision at Alexandria International Academy is to create a **community of learning** between our students, parents and educators and support it with **values and principles** to develop **knowledgeable individuals** who are caring and tolerant of others.

### MISSION

Alexandria International Academy strives to develop **socially responsible** individuals open to exploring new ideas and concepts from a global platform and at the same time **preserving their own principles** and heritage.

Alexandria International Academy creates a challenging multicultural environment with **inspirational educators** from across the world **and international education** programmes supported by a philosophy of **interrelated learning curriculums**.

These Values and programmes reinforced by **parent involvement** create a **community of learning** that develops knowledgeable individuals who are **caring** and accepting of others.

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## PHILOSOPHY

- School should create an environment where students **learn to draw on their own personal experiences and heritage** as a fundamental part of their learning and understanding process.
- Students can achieve **a deeper understanding by transcending traditional boundaries** between subjects.
- The school is responsible for instilling **a life-long desire for learning**.
- School should create an atmosphere where students are encouraged towards intellectual inquiry and critical thinking.
- A complete education is not limited to academic studies but must also comprise the various arts and physical education to ensure the holistic development of students.

## Language Policy Statement:

The language of instruction at AIA will be English in the primary school. The school recognizes that language is central to learning and that all its students will not be comfortable in the language of instruction, therefore the school will assist students in improving their understanding and usage through suitable support programmes. The school will also encourage students to develop their own mother tongues and provide opportunities for this to happen.

AIA ensures that both Arabic, as the mother tongue, and English, as the language of instruction, are given primary importance as academic subjects.

The school understands that all teachers are in effect language teachers with responsibilities for facilitating effective communication. By integrating language into every aspect of the curriculum students will learn the importance of culture, diversity and sensitivity towards others, which in turn will enhance personal growth, cognitive development and facilitate international understanding.

The school seeks to enable students to function as international citizens, developing the ability to function capably and comfortably within and between languages and cultures. The capacity to speak more than one language is an integral part of this preparation and all students at AIA will be provided with opportunities to learn additional languages (English as the language of instruction, Arabic as the mother tongue and French as a second language).

## Language Profile at AIA:

The cultural and linguistic background of the student population at AIA is similar since we have 100% native families. The economical background of students range from middle to upper class families. The parent community is a mix of entrepreneurs and professionals from diverse professions.

The school believes that the contribution of parents, students, teachers and the wider community supports the development of a caring language community and confident language learners.

## Summary of Language Profile:

- All students at AIA have Arabic Language as their mother tongue, native speakers.
- All students are second language learners of English.

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- English is the medium of instruction and this is commonly accepted to all.
- All students are introduced to French as a second language starting from grade 1.

### Language Roles and Responsibilities:

All members of the school community have a role to play in the development and maintenance of the school's language programme. The learning community at AIA all shares the roles and responsibilities.

The Role of Teachers	The Role of Students	The Role of School Leadership	The Role of the Family
Consider the language needs and abilities of all students when planning activities across all areas of the curriculum.	Take every opportunity to learn and provide feedback and reflection on their learning.	Provides teachers with access to information about their students to inform the teaching and learning process.	On going directly communicating with the school community regarding their child's language development.
Supports the needs of EAL students in learning through the use of English while they are learning English.	Shows interest in learning and participates in activities and learning experiences.	Provides staff with opportunities for professional development to ensure that teachers can access the latest information about strategies and resources.	Complies with any additional requirements for additional support
Use assessment strategies that allow all students to express their learning across the curriculum.	Take ownership in learning and seek help when needed.	Promotes a culture that values diversity and ensures that multicultural perspectives are incorporated in all aspects	Reads and returns all forms and notifications sent from language teachers and/or coordinators regarding their child's language learning.
Keep assessment record to indicate the growth of language understanding and skill	Attends one on one support group if required.	Encourages home-school partnership.	
Inform parents of students' progress.	Has the right to end support groups when sufficient proficiency has been demonstrated through work and performance.	Ensures that policies and all learning programs are put in place with the language learning needs of all students in mind.	
Identifies individual students' language	Show respect to teachers and peers.	Ensure that language policies require that	

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needs and collaborates with other teachers to design appropriate intervention programmes.		multicultural perspectives are incorporated in all learning areas.	
Provide opportunities for all students to share the diversity of experiences			
Develop classroom activities that relates to and builds upon student's experiences			
Attends relevant professional development to support student's language development.			
Works with coordinator and all other teachers in the design and implementation of the curriculum to cater for the needs of language learners			
Identify language needs and implement intervention programmes for indiv. students.			

### **The role of the Library:**

The library is fundamental to the language programme at AIA. It provides a learning space and an environment to promote the love of books, reading and a place for research. All classrooms have a library corner that is changed regularly by students and teachers from the main library

The library at AIA is resourced with books of all genres and categories and is accessible to all students and staff. The library has books in English, Arabic and French to send a message that all languages are celebrated and supported. The school sees the library as a valuable resource to promote international

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mindedness. AIA continues to add to these resources. Every year, teachers collaboratively make decisions on what to purchase and submit this list to the librarian and the leadership team.

At the kindergarten section and the lower primary there are two library lessons every week. Grades 2 - 5 get one library lesson a week. Students borrow books to read at home and return them the next week to borrow more books.

## **The Language of instruction will be English.**

To continue to develop Reading and Writing in both English and Arabic, the school's English and Arabic Departments work to adopt effective approaches and strategies to encourage students to read and raise the standards. Developing proficiency in reading and writing Arabic is also paramount. This is an ongoing process.

- All students have six 40 minute lessons of Arabic languages each week.
- All students have an average of 10 to 15 lessons 40 minute each of English language each week.

## **Second Language:**

French will be taught as an additional language for the purposes of this policy. There will be differentiation in instruction at all levels depending upon the student's prior knowledge of the language.

AIA students learn French as an Additional Language from Grade 1 to 5.

## **Language in the Primary School (Grade 1 – 5)**

### **French as a 2nd Language**

The second language taught at AIA is French. It starts from grades 1 to 5.

Grades 1 to 3 get three 40 minutes of French lessons per week.

Grades 4 to 5 get two 40 minutes of French lessons per week.

## **Practice Implementation of Language Skills:**

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### Grade Level Reading Expectations - A-Z Reading Program:

Grade Level	Beginning of the Year	Mid Year	<i>End of Year</i>
<i>KG – PreG1</i>	<i>AA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>G1</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>H</i>
<i>G2</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>O</i>
<i>G3</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Q</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>G4</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>U</i>
<i>G5</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>X</i>

### Grade Level Reading Expectations -Scholastic Reading Program:

Grade Level	Beginning of the Year	Mid Year	<i>End of Year</i>
<i>KG – PreG1</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>G1</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>G</i>
<i>G2</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>J</i>	<i>L</i>
<i>G3</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>O</i>
<i>G4</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Q</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>G5</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>U</i>

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## Reading Strategies taught explicitly - Cafe Menu

Comprehension I understand what I read		Accuracy I can read the words		Fluency I can read accurately, with expression, and at a rate that matches the text		Expand Vocabulary I know, find, and use interesting words	
First	Set purpose for reading	First	Look carefully at letters and words	First	Read texts that are a good fit	First	Tune in to interesting words
Active Reading	Use prior knowledge to predict and connect with text	Word Parts	Use beginning and ending sounds	Improve Fluency	Use punctuation to enhance phrasing and prosody	Figure Out Word Meaning	Use prior knowledge and context clues
	Check for understanding; monitor and self-correct		Blend sounds; stretch and reread		Adjust and apply different reading rates to match text		Use pictures, illustrations, and diagrams
	Back up and reread		Chunk letters and sounds together		Reread text		Use word parts
	Make and adjust mental images; use text to confirm		Flip the sound		Read voraciously		Apply understanding of figurative language
Analysis of Reading	Ask questions throughout the reading process	Word Understanding	Recognize high-frequency words on sight				Use reference tools such as dictionary, thesauruses, and glossaries
	Make and adjust predictions; use text to confirm		Use picture clues				Ask someone to define the word for you
	Infer and support with evidence		Cross-check: Do the words . . .				Read voraciously
	Recognize literary elements (genre, plot, character, setting, theme, problem/resolution)		• look right?				
	Retell; include sequence of main events		• sound right?				
	Summarize text; include important details		• make sense?				
	Use main ideas and supporting details to determine importance		Use prior knowledge and context				
	Use text features to learn important information (titles, headings, captions, graphic features)		Skip the word, then come back				
	Analyze how visual elements integrate and contribute to the meaning of text		Read voraciously				
	Determine and analyze author's purpose and support with text						
Recognize and explain cause-and-effect relationships							
Compare and contrast within and between texts							
Read voraciously							

**BEHAVIORS THAT SUPPORT READING**

Get started right away • Stay in one spot • Work quietly • Read the whole time • Increase stamina • Ignore distractions • Persevere

The CAFE Book: Engaging All Students in Daily Literacy Assessment and Instruction, Expanded Second Edition by Gail Boushey and Allison Behre. Copyright © 2020. Stanhouse Publishers.

## Editing Marks used in the Writing Process Across the School:

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**Capital Letters:** names, places, titles, months, etc.  
 My birthday is in **N**ovember.  
 Mariam and **I** would love to go to **I**taly.
- 

**Handwriting:** neat and readable  
 ✓ My letters sit on the line and I leave equal spaces between my words.
- 

**Agreement:** Subject and noun agreement.  
 Nouns and verbs are correctly used together.  
 The dog bark at the cat.  
 A A dog barks
- 

**Missing:** You are missing a word. Add it!  
 He is sitting on x sofa.  
 the
- 

**Punctuation:** periods, quotes, commas, apostrophes  
 That is quite a suprise!  
 Can I use your pencil?
- 

**Spelling:** Check all words; look for homonymes and use a dictionary.  
 Adam has ate pets at home.  
 s eight

## 6 Traits of writing Checklists:

 <b>6-Traits of Writing Checklist</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Ideas and Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have clear main ideas in my writing.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> My writing stays on topic.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> My paper is packed with details.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I made a picture in the reader's mind.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Organization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have a beginning, middle, and an end.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The first line hooks my readers.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> My writing uses a strong ending.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> My writing uses transitions words.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Readers do not feel lost when reading my paper.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sentence Fluency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> My sentences flow and are easy to read.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Every sentence begins a different way.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have short and long sentences.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have complete sentences.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Voice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Does this sound like me?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I used emotion and expression when writing.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I brought energy to my writing.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> You can tell that I know a lot about my topic.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Word Choice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> My words stand out.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I avoided "boring" words.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I used words that will paint a picture in my reader's mind.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I was careful not to use one word too many times.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Conventions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> My paper looks neat and clean.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I used punctuation and capital letters.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I indented each paragraph.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> My spelling is correct.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All my letters are facing the correct way.</li> </ul> 

As a PYP candidate school, we are committed to the following practices to bring our mission statement to life and shows how the school supports language learning,

- The school places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, host country language and other languages (IB Standard A, Practice 7).
- Teaching and learning addresses the diversity of student language needs, including those for students learning language(s) other than their mother tongue (IB Standard C3, Practice 7).
- Teaching and learning demonstrates that all teachers are responsible for language development of students (IB Standard C3, Practice 8).
- Assessment at the school aligns with the requirements of the programme(s) IB Standard C4, Practice 1).
- Collaborative planning and reflection recognizes that all teachers are responsible for language development of students (IB Standard C1, Practice 8).
- The school utilizes the resources and expertise of the community to enhance learning within the programmes (IB Standard B2, Practice 11).

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### **The school places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, host country language and other languages (IB Standard A, Practice 7).**

At AIA language is taught holistically. Each programme has specific objectives for speaking and listening, reading and writing, and viewing and presenting that are appropriate to the students level. We promote inquiry-based authentic learning of different genres.

The school invests in qualified language teachers for the language of instruction, mother tongue language and second language.

English is integrated into units of inquiry or organised into stand-alone language sessions.

We greatly value children continuing to learn in their mother tongue. We encourage families to talk, read and write with their children in their mother tongue. Students are allowed and encouraged when needed to use their mother tongue to access the curriculum. For example, they may conduct a survey or interview members of the community in their mother tongue. They may share their learning and progress with their parents and family members using their mother tongue.

### **Teaching and learning addresses the diversity of student language needs, including those for students learning language(s) other than their mother tongue (IB Standard C3, Practice 7).**

Language lessons are differentiated based on students' needs. This may include individualized instruction within or outside of the classroom. Teaching strategies may include working in small groups, using different resources for different levels of language development and at times changing the level of questioning and/or tasks for individual students.

Students' language needs are assessed and determined based on initial and ongoing assessments throughout the year. Teachers differentiate in different ways according to students' needs. For example students can be placed in flexible ability groups or be grouped by ability for reading groups.

### **Teaching and learning demonstrates that all teachers are responsible for language development of students (IB Standard C3, Practice 8).**

AIA focuses on the transdisciplinary nature of language learning by recognizing and modelling the role of language in each subject and the language of instruction, mother tongue language and second language, and by developing an understanding of the IB objectives.

The basic skills of communication - oral, written and visual - are explicitly planned for using our scope and sequence. Teachers enable students to see language in context as a mean of self expression, exploration of self and the world around them.

It is an expectation throughout the school that fostering an enjoyment and love of reading, students will be encouraged to read at home and at school. They will read a wide variety of genres and understand their features. Students will be read to, read with or read independently every day at home. A variety of reading strategies will be introduced and practiced daily to support students in the mechanics of reading and comprehending the meaning of what they read. Teachers also make use of guided reading and literature circles to develop reading skills.

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The writing process of drafting, revising, editing and publishing is modeled and explored in all languages. Using model texts, students and teachers analyze the features and traits of different texts before starting to do shared writing and/or individual writing. They will be encouraged to revise their texts and self/peer edit. The final stage of writing may involve students sharing their writing with others, keeping it for themselves, or publishing it for a chosen audience.

### **Assessment at the school aligns with the requirements of the programme(s) IB Standard C4, Practice 1).**

Assessment is integral to teaching and learning at AIA. Using a variety of assessment tools and strategies to determine knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes towards language. Along with teacher formative and summative assessment, students are often asked to peer or self-assess based on criteria shared or co-constructed with students. Learning goals are made clear at the beginning of tasks to facilitate self and peer assessment.

Assessments are recorded and shared with parents in different ways (please refer to assessment policy).

### **Collaborative planning and reflection recognizes that all teachers are responsible for language development of students (IB Standard C1, Practice 8).**

Since students learn about language through language, we understand that all teachers are responsible for language development of students at AIA. As a result collaborative planning and reflection is built into the regular schedule of staff as well as being the focus of staff meetings throughout the year. Teachers plan collaboratively during grade level meetings, meetings with the PYP Coordinator, with language teachers, and assisting staff. This way, we are able to develop links between different subject areas and departments around the school.

### **The school utilizes the resources and expertise of the community to enhance learning within the programmes (IB Standard B2, Practice 11).**

All language teachers are responsible for sourcing and ordering a range of quality texts of different genres so that students have access to and can explore a variety of texts. The PYP Coordinator and language teachers collaborate with the librarian in ordering books of different languages for the library and as classroom resources.

Students have access to other resources such as magazines - that the school subscribes to - in a variety of languages, which helps students be aware of current affairs and fosters an interest in reading, and develop confidence, fluency and comprehension. The use of ICT is an integral language tool. Students have access to individual iPads to access programs and tools to support their language learning. The school is subscribed to RazKids Reading and RazKids Writing program and all students have free access to the programs to facilitate language learning. Games, art, music, maps and artefacts are used to help students make connections to their language learning.

The community is a valuable resource to aid language learning. Field trips such as museums, theaters, libraries and historic locations are often destinations that students visit. Guest speakers such as storytellers, entrepreneurs or representatives from different local organizations frequently visit the school, they speak in English, French or Arabic. International student exchange programs such as The Baltimore Luxor Alexandria Sister City Committee, are organized for students to be exposed to different cultures and promote international mindedness.

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Parents' involvement is important at AIA. They visit students in various community events such as Mothers' Day, Sports Day and other occasions. Presentations and language skills in English, French and Arabic are showcased to parents and other members of the community through projects such as assemblies, the PYP Exhibition, school productions, Student-Led Conferences and 3-Way Conferences.

## **Mother tongue**

AIA actively supports mother tongue development. At present there is daily instruction in Arabic during the school day. All PYP students get six lessons of Arabic Language instruction. Students who are in need of extra support get two or three (depending on student's individual needs) extra Arabic lessons per week during the school day in collaboration with the homeroom teacher.

## **EAL Policy**

All students whose first language is not English are provided with EAL support. Under this provision students attend small group instruction in English with specialist teachers during the language lessons.

Admission to the school does not depend upon the level of prior knowledge of English. The school will provide support to the student who has limited knowledge of the language.

AIA aims to foster both Arabic (mother tongue) and English as the main language of communication that includes oral communication, written language, reading, viewing and presenting.

Teaching and learning of languages will include elements of both language and literature. The aim is to develop the student's skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking in the language so that he/she will be able to communicate effectively in a variety of different ways to different audiences. They will enjoy reading both for facts and for pleasure and communicate their thoughts and opinions in clear terms.

## **Assessment**

Assessment is carried out in accordance with the School Assessment Policy guidelines.

## **SUPPORT PROGRAMMES**

The school has support programmes in place to support language standards.

Some of the initiatives already in place are:

1. One-on-one sessions for students who experience difficulty in Arabic, English or French language.
2. Support staff assigned to students demonstrating some learning difficulties.
3. Teacher development support from the Additional Language Specialist. Weekly mentoring sessions provided to language teachers of English and French, and regular sessions with the Arabic department.
4. Weekly staff development meetings.
5. Lesson observations and teacher feedback.

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## RESOURCES

The school is constantly striving to develop higher language standards.

Some of the initiatives already in place are:

1. Library weekly sessions for all classes.
2. Online English reading websites, such as RazKids and Epic.
3. Online English writing website, RazKids. (In process)
4. Arabic Reading Project

### **Policy Review Process:**

Following a full review by teachers, students, parents and the Pedagogical Leadership team and the Board, this policy has been updated in November 2021 and will be applied as of December 2021. Policies will be reviewed by the language committee members to ensure its relevance, consistency and that all members of the community have a clear understanding of the policy. The language policy is updated every year during the first school term from August till September.

The next review will be in August 2022.