



# Shanghai Community International School

## 上海长宁国际外籍人员子女学校

### Language Policy Pudong Campus

#### Purpose, Philosophy and Guiding Principles

##### Purpose of the Language Policy

This language policy is a working document developed by staff and administration. The policy is consistent with the stipulated principles and practices of the IB. This policy outlines our school's linguistic and academic goals and defines the program designed to help our students attain these goals. It is intended to provide an overview and guiding principles for language learning at SCIS which permeates the school curriculum through authentic contexts in a culturally rich and diverse environment. Our policy is a statement of agreement—one to which the staff and the SCIS community are asked to commit so our school can achieve its mission.

##### Philosophy

SCIS aims to nurture an appreciation of the richness and diversity of language. Language does much more than promote cognitive growth; it is crucial for maintaining cultural identity and emotional stability. The acquisition of more than one language and maintenance of the mother tongue enrich personal growth and help facilitate international understanding. As language, by its very nature, is integrated into all areas of the curriculum every teacher within the school is considered a language teacher.

SCIS aims to foster in students the ability to think and express themselves with precision, clarity, confidence and imagination in at least two languages. Language development in more than one language enriches personal growth, provides cognitive advantages and is essential to the development of international mindedness. SCIS strives to address the particular challenges of those students who are learning in a language other than their mother tongue. SCIS endeavors to integrate students' cultural and linguistic heritage throughout the curriculum. Ongoing parent education and involvement is essential in ensuring that students maintain the development of their mother tongue, as well as develop the skills necessary to be successful in the language of instruction.

The Language Program at SCIS prepares students to become effective communicators, critical thinkers and active contributors to a global society. As such, students at SCIS develop the essential literacy and language skills necessary to be successful in school and life, including the use and understanding of various media formats. By developing the ability to access, understand and analyze information, students develop the capacity to manage, interpret, evaluate and synthesize information in our increasingly complex and interconnected world. By developing the skills and attitudes needed to express their ideas and opinions in a variety of



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written, visual, digital and oral formats, students are able to design, create, and share information for many purposes in a variety of global contexts and environments.

At SCIS-Pudong, the Language Program meets the needs of a diverse student population with support for individuals, including students learning English as an additional language and those with mild learning disabilities. The Language Program guides students in developing an appreciation for language and builds confidence in their language skills. The program aims to excite students about language learning while developing essential communication and collaboration skills.

<b>We believe:</b>	<b>Therefore, we strive to:</b>
Language is fundamental to learning and permeates the entire curriculum.	Provide an appropriate language and learning program in order to allow all students to access their curriculum in a supportive environment.
All teachers are language teachers.	Ensure all staff members are supported to understand the needs of students learning in a language other than their mother tongue, particularly in English (the language of instruction).
Language learning best takes place in a meaningful context.	Provide opportunities to learn language, learn about and appreciate language, and learn through language.
A proficient level of literacy in the mother tongue language facilitates the transfer of skills to other languages.	Support the maintenance and development of mother tongue directly and indirectly.
Language learning is shaped by each learner's background and experiences.	Value the students' language and literacy backgrounds as the foundation for additional language acquisition and development
Language is a key component of enhanced cognitive development, cultural identity and self esteem	Foster in students the ability to think and express themselves with precision, clarity, confidence and imagination in more than one language.
The acquisition of language links people locally and globally and promotes international mindedness.	Ensure that relationship between language and culture is prioritized and explored through the language curricula and beyond in other subjects. Provide opportunities for all students to be exposed to the host country language and culture.
Administrators, teachers, librarians and other school staff require ongoing professional development in current "best practices" to support their role as language teachers.	Provide relevant and meaningful internal and external professional development opportunities in the field of language learning.



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### **Guiding Principles**

SCIS is a three-programme International Baccalaureate (IB) World School whose principles and practices are aligned with the philosophy of the PYP, MYP and DP. At SCIS we create a multilingual learning environment in which the main language of instruction is English. Instruction in Mandarin and other world languages is provided, while development of mother tongue languages is promoted. The acquisition of additional languages provides students the opportunity to thrive within our culturally rich community. Crucial for the success of the programmes is a rich development of language and literacy for all learners. The ability to communicate in a variety of modes in more than one language is essential to the concept of an international education that promotes intercultural understanding.

### **Language Profile and Admissions Policies**

#### **Language profile**

At SCIS-Pudong, approximately 80% of the student body speaks English as an additional language. Over 30 different mother tongue languages are spoken within the student body representing over 40 different countries. The entire administrative and teaching staff speak English and many are fluent in at least one other language. The language of instruction and the primary language of communication in the school is English. While English is the most common language within the school, the use of other languages in appropriate circumstances is welcomed and celebrated.

#### **Admissions Policies**

Prior to enrollment in SCIS, applicants complete a student background survey that indicates their level of proficiency in their mother tongue, English and other languages. Any application for a student who indicates that English is not their mother tongue will be assessed as part of the admissions process for placement in the EAL program. Students without two years' recent experience in a school where English is the primary language will also be evaluated for possible inclusion into the EAL program. SCIS relies on a mosaic of school records, student interviews, and standardized assessments in order to place students appropriately. The most frequently used assessments for language evaluation are the WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) and the NWEA-MAP (Northwest Evaluation Association Measurement of Academic Progress) test. All applicants are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

### **Language Program Overview**

#### **Pedagogy**

SCIS recognizes that teachers of all subject areas are also language teachers with the responsibility to facilitate language acquisition and promote communication skills



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through their grade level and subject area classes. In order to promote inquiry-based language learning within the context of the PYP, MYP, and DP, it is understood that language instruction takes place all day and in all subjects. We also believe that all students should have the opportunity to learn an additional language. This experience is essential to the international experience and enables students to understand the thinking, norms, and traditions of other cultures.

Regardless of language ability, our school provides a stimulating environment for all students to be able to participate fully in class and other school activities. As the students gain an appreciation for different languages and cultures, they are then part of a more diverse community, which will assist them in interacting and communicating with the culturally diverse local community and world they live in today.

### **SCIS Language Essential Practices**

#### **Classroom Environment**

*SCIS Teachers will:*

- provide an environment where students feel comfortable, confident and engaged in language learning
- employ routines and management strategies that support student language learning
- set up their classrooms to facilitate inquiry, collaboration and communication
- nurture the ideas, strengths, and interests of students by being accepting, caring and encouraging
- model and encourage the use of accurate terminology and vocabulary related to topics being studied
- allow students to express their own ideas and opinions while taking into consideration the thoughts and ideas of others.
- create a visual environment in the classroom that reflects and celebrates the learning process
- set high expectations for all students
- ensure language materials are accessible and developmentally appropriate

**Instruction** (this section refers to instructional strategies, differentiation practices, technology integration, and homework expectations)

*SCIS Teachers will:*

- offer differentiated learning experiences that address a variety of language needs, and learning styles, in collaboration with EAL and Learning Support Teachers when needed, from grades 1 through 12.
- utilize the language scope and sequence in reference to planning, assessing and designing learning experiences
- provide developmentally appropriate topics, resources and lessons
- create authentic learning activities that reflect current realities, inside and outside the classroom.



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- encourage opportunities for student to use their prior knowledge including the host country language, their mother-tongue and English
- integrate technology appropriately to enhance language learning
- adhere to the divisional homework guidelines with emphasis on meaningful homework that is focused on the development of subject area knowledge or skills

**Assessment** (this section refers to general principles of assessment, SCIS Assessment and Reporting Guidelines, and effective subject specific assessment strategies).

*SCIS Teachers will:*

- adhere to divisional assessment practices surrounding language learning
- align assessments to subject area standards and performance indicators
- use assessment to inform instruction and guide student language learning
- use a variety of formative and summative assessment tools and strategies
- provide opportunities for self-assessment and reflection on language learning
- develop and implement common summative assessments
- provide clear and specific feedback to support student progress and development in language
- provide fair, accurate and appropriate assessments
- create assessments that demonstrate a balance of knowledge, skills, and higher order thinking.
- celebrate student success in their language development
- keep accurate records of student progress and achievement

### **Assessment**

While language acquisition follows distinct stages, students' rate of acquisition varies greatly from individual to individual. Therefore, language teachers assess all language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking), regularly differentiating through scaffolding or extension as required. Formative and summative assessments in the classroom provide information on language growth. Language teachers across the school work to standardize students' work through moderation to ensure a fair application of assessment criteria. External examinations in the form of the NWEA standardized reading and language usage tests are administered twice a year to provide evidence of growth within students' language acquisition levels. The WIDA assessment is used to identify initial language levels and to inform placement throughout the EAL Program.

## **English as an Additional Language (EAL) Program**

### **Overview and Goals of the program**

SCIS-Pudong provides an EAL support program designed to assist students to engage entirely with the curriculum and achieve academic success. Students receive extra



language support in the regular classroom, as well as in scheduled EAL classes. EAL teachers work collaboratively with all teachers to ensure understanding and success with curriculum.

The main goal of the EAL program is to support the English language development of English Language Learners (ELLs). The end result of participation in the EAL program is for students to develop the necessary English skills to function independently in all subject areas.

### **Guiding Principles<sup>1</sup>**

The principles that will guide the development of the EAL program at SCIS-Pudong include:

1. Instruction focuses on providing ELLs with opportunities to engage in discipline-specific practices which are designed to build conceptual understanding and language competence in tandem
2. Instruction leverages ELLs' home language(s), cultural assets, and prior knowledge.
3. Standards-aligned instruction for ELLs is rigorous, grade-level appropriate, and provides deliberate and appropriate scaffolds.
4. Instruction moves ELLs forward by taking into account their English proficiency level(s) and prior schooling experiences.
5. Instruction fosters ELLs' autonomy by equipping them with the strategies necessary to comprehend and use language in a variety of academic settings.
6. Diagnostic tools and formative assessment practices are employed to measure students' content knowledge, academic language competence, and participation in disciplinary practices.

### **Subject Specific Skills**

The EAL program does not have curriculum standards of its own, rather, it supports the other curricular areas of the school. However, the WIDA levels of language proficiency and Can Do Statements are used to determine each student's English reading, writing, listening and speaking proficiency, and inform instruction. The EAL program supports students' access to the curriculum in all areas and strives to develop the language skills necessary to meet grade-level curricular standards.

All four areas of language proficiency are explicitly taught and assessed, these are: speaking, listening, reading and writing. The EAL program provides balance across all four skills, though emphasis is placed on listening and speaking at the lower levels of proficiency, and reading and writing at the higher levels.

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<sup>1</sup> The above six standards were adopted from Stanford University's six key principles for ELL education.



### **Levels of EAL**

In the Lower School, EAL is divided into three levels; Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced. Students are assigned to a level after entry to SCIS following the WIDA assessment, NWEA MAPs test and other supporting data. The Lower School is implementing a Pull-Out and Co-Teaching Model to support students who are acquiring English as an additional language. This model allows for the vast majority of students within the Lower School to access instruction in the host-country language.

In Grades 6-10, students are placed in the appropriate MYP Language Acquisition English Phase (1-6). Students are identified via WIDA, NWEA MAPs assessments and other supporting data. Through targeted EAL support, it is expected that students will progress through the different levels and be able to exit the EAL program.

In Grades 11-12 all students with an identified need for assistance in accessing the English-delivery curriculum may be eligible for additional EAL support in their Diploma years, on a case by case basis.

### **EAL Placement Criteria**

- Prospective families will complete an initial home language survey upon application
- Applicants with a home language other than English are assessed for their level of English Proficiency

### **Exiting EAL Support Program**

Student assessment in the EAL program is ongoing. Students continued placement in EAL will be reviewed based on student assessment results on the NWEA MAPs test, student progress against the WIDA standards, and each student's classroom progress.

## **World Language Courses and Mother Tongue Support**

### **Language & Literature**

In order to promote holistic learning within the context of the IB MYP, the stakeholders at SCIS recognize the importance of incorporating the teaching and learning of language throughout the implementation of the program. *Language & Literature* is a required course for each year level. English is the language of instruction for these required courses. In addition, Language & Literature in Mandarin Chinese is available as an elective option for native Mandarin speakers.

### **Language Acquisition (Mandarin, French, English, and Spanish)**



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The mastery of essential language skills – reading, writing, listening, and speaking– is a vital part of a student’s overall development. The importance of students becoming culturally and linguistically proficient in a second language (*Language Acquisition*) is recognized. Any students that are not receiving additional English support through the EAL program or English Language Acquisition, are required to learn an additional language. Within the Lower School all students not receiving EAL pull-out services will be enrolled in the Mandarin Program.

Within the Upper School SCIS offers *Language Acquisition* in Mandarin, English, French, or Spanish. Realizing that not every student will reach the same level of language proficiency at the same time, a continuum of *Language Acquisition* courses organized by MYP phases is offered that meet both the developing academic and social needs of all learners in order for students to achieve his or her personal best. Our Mandarin host country language program offers extensive coverage of the language from beginner level to fluency.

All SCIS teachers are considered language teachers. They support the school’s reading, writing, and oral language practices as well as the IB learner profile. Students receive instruction using an interactive, immersion approach to second language learning.

### **Mother Tongue Support**

At SCIS-Pudong the majority of the student and parent population is multilingual, including those whose home language is a language other than English. Therefore, it is imperative that opportunities are provided to assist students in continuing to improve and deepen their understanding of their mother tongue. Ongoing mother tongue development contributes to increased higher order cognitive thinking skills and the transmission of cultural identity. Therefore, included in our multilingual, multicultural staff are speakers of several languages, who are often called upon to assist when translators are needed for parent conferences. Some staff responsibilities also include the translation of school communications to various languages.

When possible, the mother tongue is used in conversations between community members to ensure the clarity of the message. SCIS aims to foster in students the ability to think and express themselves with precision, clarity, confidence and imagination in at least two languages. Language development in more than one language enriches personal growth, provides cognitive advantages and is essential to the development of international mindedness. SCIS strives to address the particular challenges of those students who are learning in a language other than their mother tongue. SCIS endeavors to integrate students’ cultural and linguistic heritage throughout the curriculum.

SCIS supports community based mother tongue language programs by providing parents and community organizations access to school resources and facilities. Additionally, ongoing communication and parent education takes place to assist



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parents in understanding their role in the development and maintenance of students' mother tongue. The SCIS library media center supports mother tongue maintenance and development by attempting to acquire materials that are linguistically representative of the school's population.

Students in IB Diploma Program are supported in their efforts to pursue the study of group I in their mother tongue. Support of this self-taught language study is provided by the school counselor, the IB DP coordinator, and the librarian.

### **Mandarin Program**

SCIS prioritizes the study of Mandarin across from prekindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The Mandarin language program serves as a vital link to our host culture and country. Mandarin is also prioritized because it represents one of the largest mother tongue language groups in our student population.

#### **Mandarin in the Lower School**

Beginning in prekindergarten, students are grouped by ability level for Chinese language. At SCIS-Pudong we offer two tracks of study, the Chinese Language Arts (CLA) Track and the Mandarin for Speakers of Other Languages (MSOL) Track.

#### **Chinese Language Arts (CLA) Track**

The aims of the Chinese Language Arts (CLA) track are to help students become highly proficient in literary analysis of studied works, the ability to produce oral and written commentary of studied works or on studied topics, and the ability to produce reports and presentations based on findings from informational research.

The CLA track is for native or near native students who live or have lived in a Chinese intensive environment, thus these students enter SCIS with near grade-level abilities in speaking. The Chinese Language Arts track has two levels. Level A students have reading and writing capabilities consistent with their age and the sophistication of their oral language development. Level B students have a noticeable gap between their reading and or writing capabilities and their age and or level of oral language development. Both groups have strong Chinese cultural and linguistic background. As the differences between Levels A and B are primarily in reading and writing, it is possible that the same teacher teach these courses simultaneously provided that the level of textual support is differentiated to account for entry-level differences.

#### **Mandarin for Speakers of Other Languages (MSOL) Track**

The aims of Mandarin for Speakers of Other Languages (MSOL) track are to help students develop a cultural connection to our host country, China, to develop functional ability to exchange information in Chinese contexts, and to acquire the



foundational linguistic knowledge necessary to progress beyond social language use.

### **Structure**

Mandarin is offered in continuum starting in the nursery. In the early grades, nursery and preschool, Mandarin is taught as part of the classroom routines through interaction with and activities provided by the Mandarin teaching assistant. Students in grades prekindergarten through grade five receive scheduled instruction daily. Mandarin is an

elective course in the upper school and meets according to the schedule of a full-time course. All students, regardless of course enrollment are expected to gain a fundamental appreciation for Chinese culture and language through participate in Chinese cultural events, activities, and in some cases through Chinese culture classes.

### **Placement**

New students are interviewed upon arrival and tentatively placed. Assessments and anecdotal evidence are collected during the first two weeks of class and adjustments are made as necessary. Students with native or near native abilities are placed in the Chinese Language Arts (CLA) track. For students being placed in the Mandarin for Speakers of Other Languages (MSOL) track listening and speaking are heavily emphasized when determining placement in Novice 1 and Novice 2. Placement in Novice 3 level is based on a combination of listening/speaking and reading/writing. Reading and writing are increasingly more emphasized when determining placement in Intermediate and Advanced levels.

Returning students are placed in the appropriate level based on a combination of class performance, teacher recommendation, and achievement on summative assessments in the fourth quarter of the previous year.

### **Mandarin in the Upper School**

#### **Mandarin Language and Literature Track (Mandarin A):**

Mandarin A is studied at the native speaker level and is not a language acquisition course. The Mandarin A track is designed to help students become highly proficient in literary analysis of studied works, the ability to produce oral and written commentary of studied works or on studied topics. Students in this track in grades 6-10 are placed the MYP Mandarin A course. Students in the DP can choose Mandarin A as their Studies in Language and Literature course as their only Language A or as a second Language A course.

#### **Mandarin Language Acquisition Track (Mandarin B)**

The aims of Mandarin Language Acquisition track are to help students develop a cultural connection to our host country, China, to develop functional ability to exchange information in Chinese contexts, and to acquire the foundational linguistic knowledge necessary to progress beyond social language use.



### **Structure**

The Mandarin B track is organized into 6 phases in the MYP (grades 6-10). Each phase is organized into a one-year course. Students typically progress through the phases in order but teachers have the discretion to place students non sequentially if appropriate. Students in the Diploma Program can choose Mandarin B as their Language Acquisition course. SCIS also offers Mandarin ab initio as an option in the Diploma Program.

### **Placement**

New students will be evaluated by the Mandarin department and placed appropriately according to their phase or native level. SCIS recognizes that language placement must be flexible in order to best meet the needs of our students. Each placement decision is an individualized process involving a review of educational records, an evaluation of the student's skills in all language domains, and consultation with families and the administration.