

# **TIS Language Policy**

## **Policy Statement**

Tema International School emphasises language learning, including mother tongue, host country language, and other languages. The school utilises the resources and expertise of the school community to enhance language learning through collaborative planning and reflection, recognising that all teachers are responsible for students' language development. Teaching and learning address the diversity of student language needs, including those of students learning languages other than their mother tongue. Assessment at the school aligns with the requirements of the programme(s).

## **Implementation**

Since English is the language of instruction at TIS, all students must take English as a first language subject, and another as a second language to satisfy IB programme requirements.

Where necessary, students whose proficiency level in the language of instruction (English) is below the expected standard are supported through an English as an Additional Language (EAL) programme.

In the Primary School, all teachers offer learning support to students whose first language is not English or who can only express themselves in English once they can.

At the primary school, the school collaborates with parents in decision-making regarding their children's language education, particularly regarding mother tongue selection, to ensure that students receive appropriate support in their language development.

If resources permit, students whose first language is not English can take English as the second language and their mother tongue as their first language at the secondary school.

### **Second languages at TIS include:**

- French, Mandarin, Ghanaian Sign Language, Ewe, Twi and Ga (PYP)
- French and Spanish (MYP and DP)

Language support is provided as per the Learning Diversity Policy.

## **Evidence**

La.1 The TIS language profile is updated annually.

La.2 TIS uses events and activities to demonstrate our commitment to mother-tongue languages.

La.3 Language resources are updated annually to support language learning across TIS.

## **Review**

August 2025

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## SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

### 1. Language Profile

Most students are of West African origin, while others hold passports from the US, UK, Canada, Kenya and China. About 84% of the students also have a mother tongue, including Twi, Fante, Ga, Ewe, Hausa and Ibo. Where possible, these languages, as well as other foreign languages, are supported by teachers to teach these as part of co-curricular activities.

### 2. Language and International-Mindedness

TIS seeks to enable learners to function as internationally-minded global citizens, which, in part, entails the ability to adapt capably and comfortably within and between cultures. TIS organises language development programmes and activities such as annual study tours to France and Spain, language assemblies, sign-language day, mother-tongue day, etc.

### 3. Key Elements of Language Learning

The following subjects are available across programmes: English, French and Spanish, Mandarin, Ghanaian Sign Language and mother tongue.

- PYP English
- PYP Ghanaian Sign Language, French, Mandarin, Ewe, Twi and Ga
- MYP Language and Literature (English)
- MYP Language Acquisition (French and Spanish)
- DP English A: Language and Literature HL and SL
- DP English A: Literature HL and SL
- DP Language B French HL and SL
- DP Language B Spanish HL and SL
- DP Language B Spanish Ab Initio

In exceptional cases, a mother tongue different from English may be taken as a Group 1 language in DP.

To meet the objectives of Language and Literature, teachers of English concentrate on each of the macro skills of language: listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and presenting. These skills are very interactive and interrelated, though teachers may choose to emphasise them in discrete learning experiences.

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At the IB Diploma Programme level, based on the need and availability of resources, there is an option, including school-supported self-taught courses, to take languages other than English as a Group 1 language option to support mother tongue development. TIS works with Pamoja to offer subjects requested by students for whom the school cannot directly recruit a qualified teacher, including teachers of mother tongue languages other than English, which the IB recognises.

Students whose language skills are below the expected standard in certain areas or who do not have English as their first language are offered support to acquire the skills required for success at their grade level. The need for any support is determined by a student's language proficiency level at entry. The support takes various forms, including in-class or inclusion support and/or intensive language learning through withdrawal sessions. At the IB MYP level, students take English as the option for Language and Literature as a subject. At the IB DP level, students can study English A: Literature or English A: Language and Literature at either the higher or standard levels.

At TIS, students take both French and Spanish as an additional language in Grades 7 & 8 using the MYP Language Acquisition curriculum. Teaching and learning in MYP Language Acquisition is organised into six phases, which represent a developmental continuum in acquiring an additional language. When applying the assessment criteria for students, it is important to identify the phase level at which the student is working.

If a student is in their first year of studying French and/or Spanish, they are placed in phase 1. Students with intermediate proficiency in the language are placed in phases 2 to 4, depending on the standard the student has reached. For each phase, there are specific language acquisition objectives, which form a learning progression plan. These descriptors enable teachers to identify, for each student, the phase at which they will commence their MYP Language Acquisition course.

In Grades 9 and 11, students choose French or Spanish as an elective for Language Acquisition, including the option of Spanish AB initio in the DP. In each programme, the relevant objectives are used for teaching and learning. Mother tongue classes are conducted as part of the After-School Activities (ASA) programme (MYP and DP).

### **4. Transdisciplinary/Interdisciplinary Connections**

In subject areas, collaboration and reflection occur among teachers and the learning support team to ensure that all teachers are responsible for the language development of students.

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### 5. Learning Centre

The school's Learning Centre is stocked with enough resources, in both hard copy and digital formats, to support the learning of all the school's languages.

Students also have access to books on the internet ( <https://tis.oliverasp.co.uk>).

At the Primary School, each classroom has a library of books. Students also have access to Epic, an online platform with a vast collection of books not just in English, but also in French and Mandarin. This helps students enjoy reading in different languages and supports their learning.

### 6. Bibliography

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