



Woodford International School

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Language Policy

WIS Mission Statement

Woodford International School (WIS) is a community of learners that builds on each child's strengths, drawing from our diverse local context and a rich international curriculum, to develop globally ready learners equipped to shape their future and achieve their dreams.

Woodford International School (WIS) is located in the Solomon Islands and has over 20 nationalities from around the world. We are committed to providing children with the essential language skills to become effective global citizens.

Philosophy

We believe that:

- Through language, our children acquire the ability to think and to learn, to develop social skills and values, and to acquire knowledge.
- Language is integrated across the curriculum and is a mode for teaching and learning through inquiry.
- Every teacher is a language teacher and every teaching situation is an opportunity for language learning.
- The PYP Learner Profile is integral to teaching and learning language because it represents the qualities of effective learners and internationally minded students.
- A strong foundation in the home language is crucial for cognitive development, transferable skills and in maintaining cultural identity.

Language of Instruction

At WIS we consider English to be the common educational language of the school and the language in which all our students are able to communicate with one another, however, it is recognised that some of our children may want to use their own language to clarify and consolidate meaning. While we actively promote the use of English as a tool for learning and as a shared means of communication with others, we do not discourage the use of other languages. We believe the exploration and use of home languages is beneficial for maintaining cultural identity and allows children to better understand and appreciate the world around them.

Common Language of Communication in the WIS Community

For the School to continue to maintain a strong sense of community and inclusion, there must be a common language of communication. All written communication including the WIS website, promotional materials and communication between staff and parents is in English. Depending on available resources, translation will be made available to our Mandarin speaking community.

On the playground and during transitions

At WIS we believe that diversity in language is a positive element in the school, therefore no language is banned from use on the playground. However, students are encouraged to communicate with their peers in the common language of English so that students aren't excluded due to the use of an unfamiliar language.

Additional Languages

WIS believes that the acquisition of more than one language enriches language development and helps to facilitate international understanding. At WIS, children from Year 2 to Year 5 learn Mandarin as an additional language.

Additional Language Support

There may be occasions when it is recommended by the Woodford Educational Support Team (WEST), that a student receive the support of the WIS ESOL programme. Students with other identified needs may also benefit from additional language support by the WEST teachers. Such requests are considered on a case-by-case basis with parents informed of such a decision. WEST will track the support and progress of those students who are not proficient in the language of instruction. The WEST team will also support classroom teachers with strategies and professional development to manage diverse language needs in the classroom.

Parents

At WIS we believe that the role of parents is vital in language development, as from a very young age the brain learns to associate a person with the language spoken together. The consistent use of home language is essential for its shaping value in the student's behaviour and thought. We encourage shared stories of culture, traditions, and views, as this leads to continued language and relationship development. Through high quality interactions, in both their home language/s and English, children can successfully become multilingual, which carries significant advantages in cognitive, socio-emotional and linguistic areas of development.

We believe that students learn best when:

- Language is presented through meaningful, authentic experiences.
- Inquiry is used as a vehicle to facilitate language learning.
- Language is integrated across the curriculum.
- Teachers consistently model accurate and effective use of language and prepare students for new learning through immersion, modelling and scaffolding.
- Early intervention is provided for students who experience difficulties with language acquisition or have special education needs.
- A risk free environment is provided, fostering a variety of communication modes.
- Learning is transdisciplinary with vocabulary, procedural terms and text forms taught within and across disciplines.
- Parents are partners in their child's education and the school community is seen as a resource for language learning.
- Learning experiences are multisensory, i.e. different media are used in the teaching and learning process.
- There is encouragement to reflect on language and develop language awareness.

- The environment is an inspiring, creative and engaging place that enriches their language development.
- A variety of teaching strategies are used and a balanced language program that includes speaking, listening, reading and writing is implemented.
- There is ample opportunity to speak, read, write, listen, view and think critically.
- There is encouragement to read authentic literature from a variety of genres.
- Many opportunities to express themselves creatively are provided.
- We acknowledge that children are unique and learn language in a variety of ways.
- Teachers use a variety of assessment and recording strategies.
- Parents support learning without imposing undue pressure because they understand that learning is developmental and children progress at different stages.
- As a community we value all languages and cultures. This helps affirm and empower the identity of each individual learner.

This policy is a working document, which will be reviewed and amended on an as-needs basis.