

LANGUAGE POLICY

Philosophy:

The teaching and learning of language at GMA is based on the premise that Language study, including English, Modern Languages and the Native Language Arabic, develops international understanding, reinforces cultural identity, enhances personal growth, promotes effective communication, international mindedness and enables students to become active inquirers.

In the early years stress is on competence in reading, writing, listening and speaking. This ensures that pupils are successful and while building on self-esteem, engage with the world beyond the classroom.

Students learn language, learn through language and learn about language. All teaching and learning are driven by the idea that through language instruction, we are encouraging intercultural awareness, new perspectives, a culture of curiosity, as well as an appreciation of the richness of our world's diversity. We strongly believe that through this exploration of language, students develop as deeper learners. Through the study of language and literature, pupils compare texts from different cultures and traditions and genres gain an appreciation of the linguistic heritages that contribute to the richness of spoken and written language.

All students experience an enriched, language program in which English is the primary language of instruction and Arabic is taught as an additional language to enable students to appreciate host country language and its culture. French, Hindi, Spanish, German or Malayalam is chosen as optional second language to felicitate options for a modern language or a mother tongue.

Second Language such as Hindi, French and Spanish is introduced in Grade 1 at Modern and continues right up to the IB Program. While Hindi, French and Spanish are offered at the Standard Level of the languages; Spanish, French and German are offered at the AB Initio stage. All foreign languages come together in the IB Program under Group 2 category.

Rationale:

The students should be able to:

- experience language in imaginative, original and diverse ways through all genres and disciplines.
- communicate keeping in mind the logical, mechanical, emotional and critical components.
- cultivate the ability to communicate meaning in written language.
- adapt style and language appropriately when speaking and writing.
- use the conventions of English or any other language being studied effectively, accurately and meaningfully.
- make fresh connections between ideas and real-life experiences through meaningful dialogue.
- analyze characters and situations and respond appropriately.
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Overview:

- English is the language of instruction.
- English as a subject is taught through:
 - Language Arts in the Primary School.
 - Language A in the Middle and Senior School.
 - Language A in the IB Diploma programme (IB DP Group 1).
- Modern Languages and mother tongues (India) are taught through:
 - French in the Primary School.
 - French Hindi and Malayalam in the Middle and Senior School.
 - French, Spanish, Hindi and other languages (by arrangement) as Language B and Ab Initio in the IB Diploma programme (IB DP Group 2).

- As a policy of learning of the host country language and culture, Arabic Language is taught through:
 - Arabic B for non-Arabs as per UAE Ministry of Education Curriculum Standards for Grades 1 to 9
 - Language B Arabic Language is provided for IB Diploma students (IB DP Group 2).
- In case of new admissions in Grades 2-6, students are allowed to select their second language (Hindi/French/Malayalam/Spanish). In case of new admissions in grades 7-9, the second language is offered based on previous experience with the language and an entry level test.
- Students are allowed to change the second language in grades 1-7.
- If a child wants to change the second language for any reason for the next academic year, a written application or request is made to the Principal by the 1st week of November. Only after the approval of the Principal can the child be permitted to change the language.
- Students coming from a different curriculum are permitted to take French or Spanish only after clearing the Entry Level Test at the time of the admission.
- Students who are new to the language in grades 2-7 are offered the beginners curriculum and provisioned with enhancement to support language acquisition at par with grade level expectation within the academic year.
- Arabic B instruction in grades 6-9 is designed to be facilitated as per the number of years of learning the language (as specified in the UAE Ministry of Education Curriculum Framework)
- Students are expected to speak in English in all classes except Arabic, Islamic Studies, and other language classes.

Linguistic Cultural Opportunities:

The school offers a multitude of opportunities to gain exposure to various languages and cultures through parent involvement, special day celebrations, music, art, festivals, assemblies, and curricular units.

All languages are equally valued and used as a medium of instruction during the school day. All our teachers speak more than one language, although English is the common language used for all collaborations, planning meetings and communications within the school. Subject teachers (except the second language) teach in English.

Students are provided with an array of opportunities to develop the IB attributes in the learner profile and to become effective, multilingual communicators and members of the global community.

International Benchmarking examinations like the Diplôme d'Etudes en langue française (DEL F) carried out the French Embassy and the French Ministry of Education in the U.A.E enhances the student portfolio thus enabling the child to apply in Universities across United States, Europe and Africa. From the Goethe Institut in Dubai, students appear for the DALF examinations in German which comes under the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages examinations.

Language Immersion Programs are offered to students in Year 1 and Year 2. During the pandemic students attended online sessions with native speakers in France, Spain, and Canada. During this program, students develop a holistic approach on the vibrant culture of the region as well as the language nuances by corresponding with their French, Canadian or Spanish counterparts.

Language Program at Modern:

Kindergarten:

In the early years stress is on competence in reading, writing, listening and speaking. This ensures that pupils are successful and while building on self-esteem, engage with the world beyond the classroom.

Primary School:

The Primary School provides a strong, challenging curriculum. Our students become skilled and knowledgeable in the main subject areas: Mathematics, Language Arts, Science and Technology, Social Studies, Personal, Social and Physical Education and the Arts while acquiring either French or Hindi as a second language. Arabic is studied by all students.

Modern High strives to make every student proficient in three languages. All students will have the knowledge of and the ability to use three languages, but not all of them to the same extent. Students vary in their ability to learn a second language; some will achieve functional proficiency in the target language while others will become truly bilingual. The acquisition of language must be seen as a continuum along which each individual student progresses at his/her own speed and eventually attaining the level required to take the ICSE or PYP examination.

Language acquisition is closely woven throughout the curriculum through these strands:

- Oral – Listening and Speaking
- Visual – Viewing and Presenting
- Written – Reading and Writing

In the Primary Section there is focus on:

- promoting inquiry-based authentic language learning
- imbibing the transdisciplinary nature of language learning
- incorporating the teaching and learning of language into the programme of inquiry
- developing the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and media literacy
- integrating the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and media literacy
- providing for the teaching of additional languages
- promoting consistency of practice in the teaching and learning of all languages where more than one language of instruction is used
- providing an intellectual structure for conceptual and critical thinking within and beyond the PYP transdisciplinary framework
- modeling context-specific academic language
- constructing language learning goals in collaboration with the students
- incorporating translanguaging processes and strategies

Middle and Senior School:

The program operates within the curricular framework of the ICSE, MYP and ISC Program.

Students are guided by the fundamental concepts of holistic learning, intercultural awareness, and communication. The program encourages students to make links within and across subject groups through cross curricular links.

We aim for each student to reach the highest level of proficiency in a second language. Students who join in the middle of the term have varied backgrounds and levels. We offer many language levels to allow students to develop language ability to their highest potential.

Languages include English, Arabic, French, Hindi and Malayalam. These courses follow the curriculum that would prepare the students for the ICSE, MYP and ISC examination.

DIPLOMA PROGRAMME:

Essential Agreements for the Teaching of Language:

All students are:

- encouraged to maintain and value their own native language and to value the native language of other students.
- taught language by all faculty and have opportunities to read and write across the curriculum.
- given access to support classes as appropriate.
- encouraged to become fluent in more than one language and are encouraged to apply, a balanced program of instruction including listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, presenting and critical thinking.
- encouraged to develop a love of language and literature.
- encouraged to develop a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, respond to and appreciate texts and media messages.
- taught literacy skills in context.
- encouraged to express themselves, orally and in writing, in a variety of media and situations.
- given time to reflect on their learning and to apply techniques appropriately.
- encouraged to share and develop their work in a social context.

- encouraged to take risks and use self-correcting techniques, receive constructive and specific feedback from teachers and peers.
- encouraged to read and interpret a broad range of literature reflecting a variety of cultures.
- taught through, a variety of technological and information resources they have access to.
- encouraged to explore language through the arts.
- encouraged to view language as a tool for learning.

Assessment:

Assessment is ongoing - prior knowledge is assessed and formative, summative strategies are seen as essential to learning and teaching. Teachers maintain records of all assessments and the data is used to effectively monitor student's progress and alter course material. A greater understanding of the school's assessment system can be found in its Assessment Policy.

Language policy for students with Special Educational Needs:

- Almost all students with SEN access the Language program in the regular classroom with their peers.
- They may be supported by services that may include learning support from specialist staff, regular teachers/TAs or volunteers and mentors.