



**MEF**

**National Primary School**

**Language Policy**

**2023 - 2024**

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### **Statement of Aim**

At MEF National Primary Schools, we view language as a tool for making meaning in the world. We believe that every student has a personal and a cultural set of experiences, skills, and interests, which must be considered in the teaching and learning process. At MEF, multilingualism and the development of critical literacy are considered important factors in fostering international-mindedness through the promotion of cultural identity, intercultural awareness and global citizenship.

As all teachers are teachers of language, through all our teaching programs, we aim to develop confident, curious, highly proficient and enthusiastic readers, writers, viewers, presenters, speakers and listeners. All language development planning and assessment is created in line with the scope and sequences in our school guidelines, in line with the curriculum objectives put forward by the Turkish Ministry of Education.

As a PYP school we are committed to the following practices:

- The school places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, and other foreign languages (IB Standard A, Practice 7).
- The school utilizes the resources and expertise of the community to enhance learning within the programs (IB Standard B2, Practice 11).
- Collaborative planning and reflection recognizes that all teachers are responsible for language development of students (IB Standard C1, Practice 8).
- Teaching and learning addresses the diversity of student language needs, including those for students learning a 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 program(s). (IB Standard C4, Practice 1).

## Rationale

Language is taught meaningfully and contextually. These contexts vary but often involve the use of real-life scenarios, the local area and a wide variety of text types. We advocate the learning of language through inquiry, allowing students to make connections with context to explore and investigate. The learning of any language is developmental by nature, building constructively on what each individual student knows to help move them forward.

## Mainstream Turkish Language

Turkish is the medium of instruction in MEF National Primary School as this school primarily educates Turkish children.

While determining our mother tongue policy, we set our language objectives related to standards and practices set by the Turkish Ministry of Education considering the developmental characteristics of our students.

Students are given a variety of opportunities to display their language skills via student-led conferences, portfolio presentation days, and during PYP Exhibition. After these performances, parents are requested to reflect on their children's performance through a survey, and the homeroom teachers arrange one-on-one meetings with parents to further gain their insight and both parties take necessary steps accordingly.

In addition, parents have access to students' weekly progression via online learning platforms where they can monitor their children's development in real time.

Moreover, parents are given an opportunity to evaluate their children's language development through the progress cards that are given four times in one academic year, and they are also required to write their comments as to how they will collaborate with the teachers.

Last but not least, the forms teachers fill in during/after teacher-parent meetings allow parents to gauge their children's mother tongue development in a very detailed way, and suggestions are made reciprocally to give support to further the child's language proficiency.

Please access the link to see the parent-teacher meeting form for the Turkish lesson.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Js6HmrzDzL3Izpy0T1rTyjFtL3gZXCHX/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Js6HmrzDzL3Izpy0T1rTyjFtL3gZXCHX/view?usp=drive_link)

In native language development;

- Students will gain lifelong language skills and cognitive skills related to listening / watching, speaking, reading and writing,
- Students will develop themselves individually and socially to communicate effectively using these skills,
- Students will gain knowledge and skills in a way that will enable them to acquire the habit of reading and writing with a love of mother tongue.
- It is important that all levels use the same language in the instructions given for classroom work and homework / reinforcement work.
- It is emphasized in both verbal and written feedback; which profile attribute it reflects to students who display their learning profiles.
- ATL skills are likewise emphasized when the student uses this skill.
- It is emphasized that the texts used in mother tongue lessons are literary texts that focus on universal values.
- Language support is given to the students who need it through "Differentiated Instruction".
- In the admission policy, mother tongue proficiency is sought. The medium of instruction in our school is Turkish. For this reason, students who do not have a good command of Turkish to follow the courses are not registered.

**(ADMISSION AND LANGUAGE POLICY - ARTICLE 5)**

## READING

- In order to improve meaningful reading, in-text, extra-text and intertextual reading selections and children's literature books integrated with our inquiry units are adapted to our program to meet the needs of the learners every year.
- After students become literate in their mother tongue by the end of the first term in 1<sup>st</sup> grade, reading activities such as quiet and aloud reading, correct pronunciation, intonation, meaningful reading, chorus reading, speaking about the text, etc. are carried out under the guidance of the teacher at all other levels in order to improve the level of fluent reading. In this process, we, as teachers, design learning engagements to improve students' fluent reading skills, taking into account the individual differences of students.
- The program is supported with literary texts, stories, nursery rhymes, riddles, poetry and different text types to contribute to the students' native language development.
- It is aimed to develop reading habits through **"Sustained Silent Reading"** programme.
- It is aimed that our students become good readers with the reading activities structured with the "Reading Circle, Process-Based Reading" activities.
- With digital reading platforms, it is aimed to ensure the continuity of reading habits in different environments (at home, school, etc.).
- With library lessons, it is aimed to develop reading habits and to use the library actively and effectively.

## LISTENING

- In the development of the mother tongue, the development of active listening and speaking skill, which emerges as an action as a result of listening, is also considered important as teachers.
- Starting from 1st grade, in order to support the speaking and/or writing language domains as a result of grasping what they are listening to and the implementation of these skills, we provide our students with various methods such as giving instructions, reading instructions, talking about the day, reading a book or text, asking questions, answering questions meaningfully, and presenting with various tools.
- In this way, we further enhance our students' ATL skills and we use them in the feedback giving processes as teachers.

## WRITING

Writing activities such as listening, speaking and reading also play an important role in the development of the mother tongue.

- With writing exercises, it is primarily aimed for students to write legibly, and to gain the ability to write in a way that can be read by second persons.
- While expressing themselves, students are expected to acquire and develop their own unique writing skills through writing process. While creating this skill, it is aimed that students use their creativity skills and develop their own writing styles by using the steps of process writing.
- In the 3rd and 4th grades, the program is structured with learning engagements aimed at helping students gain creative writing skills.
- The school's writing program aims to develop writing skills at all levels.

## **SPEAKING**

- It is ensured that our students use Turkish accurately in accordance with the rules of speaking and writing,
- It is aimed to develop self-expression skills by making prepared and unprepared speeches,
- As teachers who are aware that listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in mother tongue development are processes that are interdependent and develop in mutual interaction, we aim to guide our students to multi-dimensional thinking and research.
- We support our students to become individuals who criticize and discuss various issues they encounter by using their mother tongue accurately and effectively, and who can express themselves verbally and in writing.

## **GRAMMAR**

- Considering the developmental characteristics of our students, we shape the learning objectives related to grammar and spelling rules according to the national curriculum requirements.
- Reaching language taste and consciousness by enriching their vocabulary based on what they read, listen to or watch; we aim to develop their feelings, thoughts and imaginations.

## **UNDERSTANDING**

We aim to develop our students'

- skills in researching, discovering, interpreting and structuring knowledge,
- understanding and critically evaluating and questioning what they read,
- skills of accessing, organizing, questioning, using and producing information from printed materials and multimedia sources.

## **Language Learning Support**

Language Learning Support program is conducted both in the mother tongue and target language, which is English. Learners are given an opportunity to practice the areas that they need to develop in different language domains both within the lessons through differentiation as well as pull out lessons.

## **MAINSTREAM ENGLISH LANGUAGE- (EFL-ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAM)**

Speaking and listening, reading, writing and viewing and presenting are taught as part of the EFL Program. Learning may be integrated into transdisciplinary learning or as a stand-alone lesson. The EFL Program is conducted by two teachers, one native teacher responsible for Language Arts lessons and a non-native teacher responsible for Main Course lessons. Both the teachers can offer support depending on the student needs based on learners' proficiency levels.

It is extremely crucial to involve parents in planning their children's target language profile and development. For the external validation of our EFL Program, and to determine our students' proficiency levels through globally recognised exams, we offer our students to sit "Cambridge English Language Assessment" exams such as Pre A1 YLE Starters, A1 YLE Movers, and A2 YLE Flyers. Students' Cambridge exam results also provide parents with insight into their children's language learning journey. Furthermore, parents have access to students' weekly progression via online reading platforms where they can monitor their children's development in real time.

**(For Grades K-4 EFL Curriculum Objectives, see the EFL Syllabus for each grade/year level under IB Concierge Additional Documents)**

## **Kindergarten**

Mef Kindergarten offers both a full-immersion and part-time/half day English programme for the 5-6 year-olds and a part-time English programme for the 3- 4 year-olds. Thus, kindergarten students develop their ability to speak, understand, build their vocabulary and express themselves in English as well as their mother tongue. Students who learn English as well as their mother tongue Turkish take the first step to have an international mindset.

The Preschool Programme and the PYP language scope and sequencing documents are handled in an integrated manner.

In Mef Kindergarten, the programme focus is on listening and speaking since these language domains are very important for communication, which is an important element in the process of information exchange, emotional connection and meaning making among the learning community.

Learning engagements designed cover both verbal and non-verbal language skills. When planning learning engagements, utmost attention is paid to the age and developmental characteristics of children by exploiting different methods and techniques. When determining these methods and techniques, it is ensured that the student becomes an agent.

Students are provided with opportunities to use body language and words to communicate their needs and express their thoughts through the following task types:

- Circle time activities
- Phonological awareness with activities such as rhymes, finger plays, poems, riddles
- Picture book reading, interactive and shared reading,
- Story telling, story completion
- Imitation games, dramatization (animation),
- Completing a story, creating another story, retelling a story, illustrating a story and creating a new story from pictures

In addition, language development is supported through activities such as asking and answering questions using Wh- questions.

## **English Language Learning Support**

### **Pull Out Lessons**

From the Pre-A1 to the Pre-A2 level, students who need extra support are provided with extra lesson and meet with their teachers during the week for a 35-minute lesson.

The program includes differentiated activities to cater for the learners' needs in line with the weekly lesson contents designed for that particular week. Once a week we have a mixed group with students who have the same level in the target language, English.

### ***In class support***

EFL teachers work in the classroom with individuals or small groups depending on need.

Support might include giving personal feedback for assignments/projects/communicative tasks using a variety of web 2.0 tools.

## **Modern Foreign Languages**

All children learn English as a foreign language in all grades.

From grade 3 onwards students begin their studies in French, Spanish or German. The teachers of these languages give a presentation to the students to familiarize them with the relevant language at the end of second grade and students then decide which MFL they will choose. The following year when they start their language studies they have a month to confirm their choice.

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