



Language Policy



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Mission, Vision, Values and Ethos

Our Vision Statement:

The Halley Academy is a place of opportunity where respect, resilience, integrity and collaboration matter. We are a caring community where everyone feels safe, valued and empowered to explore, experience and achieve.

We are proud, articulate, confident, independent learners equipped to take our place in wider society. As lifelong learners we develop our international mindedness and intercultural understanding. This is so that we are in a position to pursue our aspirations and interests as responsible members of a global society who respect and appreciate diversity.

Our Mission:

“Together we inspire, learn and achieve”

Our Values and Ethos:

At The Halley Academy, our values are the cornerstone of everything we do.

Respect

We expect everyone to take responsibility for their learning and be lifelong learners.

Achievement

We aspire to achieve our full potential in everything we do.

Collaboration

We enrich the experiences of all through our local, national and international partnerships. We do this by working together to achieve excellence.

Integrity

We embrace the opportunities we are presented with to show our strong moral principles, the IB learner profile and our respect and acceptance for others.

Resilience

We empower all to develop a 'can do' attitude and have confidence in their ability to progress in the face of challenges.

Introduction

This Language Policy has been developed to set out the philosophy and aims of language teaching and learning at The Halley Academy. The document contains details of The Halley Academy's linguistic context and vision for language acquisition, and outlines of how second-language acquisition and mother-tongue language provision are supported in our community. The Halley Academy strives to ensure that its second-language instruction and support for mother-tongue learners aligns with the principles and mission of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years and Career-Related programmes.

Language Context

- There are 79 different mother tongues spoken by students at The Halley Academy.
- 46.19% of students speak English as their mother tongue.
- Between 2016 and 2018, 46 students currently on roll joined The Halley Academy with very little or no prior knowledge of English.

Language Philosophy and Vision

Language Acquisition at The Halley Academy aims to develop a positive and stimulating environment for language-learning where students become resilient, responsible and reflective individuals who are eager to learn. Teaching supports students to become open minded, inquisitive communicators and engages students not only with the vocabulary and grammar of the mother tongue or target language but also develops intercultural understanding and international mindedness through the use of authentic resources, enrichment opportunities and trips, both at home and abroad.

Definitions

Mother-Tongue - The terms that describe the language student's use at home and/or outside the classroom/school environment include "first language", "home language", "preferred language", "mother tongue", "native language" and "heritage language". For the purposes of the MYP, the term "mother tongue" is used. Many language acquisition students are using more than two languages outside the classroom and learning environment.

Language Acquisition - is a standard linguistic terminology used to describe a language learned subsequently to a first language, and implies that a student also has access to the language for communicative purposes outside the context of the language classroom (in other subject classrooms, outside the school or learning environment, or in the community).

English as an Additional Language learner (EAL) – EAL terminology is provided to those students for whom the Language of Instruction is not the student's first language.

Language A - Mother Tongues (English & Literacy)

English is the language of instruction at The Halley Academy and is a compulsory subject throughout Key Stages 3 and 4 (Years 7 to 11), fulfilling the Language A pathway for both the MYP and IBCP, while students with Additional Educational Needs in the Year 7 and Year 8 nurture groups have additional lessons to support their literacy in English.

Language A - Mother Tongues (Heritage Languages)

The Halley Academy strives to ensure that all students, including those for whom English is an additional language, have the opportunity to celebrate and share their mother tongue and home culture. This includes offering Heritage Language qualifications in students' first language with the support of multilingual members of the local community.

Promotion and celebration of student's mother tongue and culture at The Halley Academy:

- Whole Academy Assembly of European & International Day of Language
- The Learning Resource Centre purchases books in various languages

- Subscription to The Day website for pastoral and values lessons containing articles and resources in various languages
- Students are entered for GCSE exam in their mother tongue (pending availability from exam boards)
- Achievement Assemblies where students are presented a diploma for their performance in their mother tongue's GCSE
- Teachers make links in lessons with student's mother tongue and culture

Language B - EAL

The Halley Academy has a dedicated team of EAL practitioners who work with students for whom English is an additional language, both by supporting them in lessons and running withdrawal sessions where students receive additional instruction in English. Students are also able to sit the Cambridge English assessments alongside their GCSEs to demonstrate their competence in Language Acquisition.

Ros Heath is the Subject Leader Teacher (SLT) in charge of the EAL department and manages the team of EAL Learning Support Assistants (LSAs).

The EAL department runs various interventions in order to support students from Key Stage 3 and 4. Some of these interventions are:

- KS3 withdrawal EAL groups
- KS4 withdrawal EAL groups
- KS3 and KS4 in class support by LSAs and SLT
- KS3 and KS4 exam support across the curriculum (internal and external assessments)
- Training for NQTs and new teachers
- Drop in sessions for individual teachers

Language B - MFL

All students at The Halley Academy, including those accessing the school's Designated Special Provision facilities, study either French or Spanish as an additional language during Key Stage 3. Their learning in these lessons follows carefully constructed syllabi that build grammatical awareness and linguistic skill alongside intercultural understanding. Students in Year 7-8 follow the IB's Middle Years Programme, with students then choosing whether to continue studying languages at GCSE level in Years 9-11. Students who wish to advance further post-GCSE have the option of following the IB Career-related Programme where, as well as continuing their studies in French or Spanish, they will choose another language to study as part of the Language Development element of the Core.

Language Development and the IBCP

It is understood that students who follow the IBCP programme at Key Stage 5 will learn a foreign language in the Language Development component of the IBCP Core. Students will be able to choose from at least four languages offered by the Language Acquisition department:

- French
- Spanish
- German
- Mandarin

The Language Development course is communicative in nature, with a focus on building confidence and competence in oral and written communication through the prism of intercultural understanding. Students will be expected to actively participate in class, complete independent learning assignments and present short projects on each element studied. Students will also be expected to complete a Language Development portfolio, detailing what they learnt each week as well as the Learner Profile attributes they exhibited and their reflections on both their learning and their role as learners.

Language Acquisition: Language Teaching

It is understood that all teachers at The Halley Academy are teachers of language, regardless of their subject expertise; as such all teachers are expected to mark for literacy in English as the language of instruction. Teachers are also expected to make reference within their lessons to international developments in their fields and, where possible, link these with elements of language development. Possible examples of this could include:

- the etymology of key terminology
- the language that would have been spoken by a key figure
- key quotes provided both in English and in their mother-tongue

International-Mindedness: Languages in the Community

The Halley Academy hosts a Vietnamese school on Saturday morning, for members of the local community who want to maintain learning of their mother tongue and relationships with their home culture. Links are also fostered with speakers of other mother-tongues within the community, who then work with the academy as part of the Heritage Languages programme to support and assess students sitting qualifications in their first language.

References:

International Baccalaureate Organisation. Career-related Programme: From principles into practice. Geneva, Switzerland. 2016.

International Baccalaureate Organisation. Guidelines for developing a school language policy. Geneva, Switzerland. 2008.