



Queen Mary Community Elementary Language Policy Primary Years Programme

Policy developed April 2014, review dates listed below

Philosophy:

Queen Mary Community School's language policy has been developed collaboratively with input from various stakeholders at the school. The language policy reflects the core beliefs of members of the Queen Mary school community. It encompasses best teaching practice, specifically related to language instruction. In essence, the policy is an action statement that does not simply state where students need to go with their language development but how they may achieve specific language learning goals. The policy specifically relates to the current demographics of language learners at the school and supports these diverse language learners as such.

All stakeholders of the Queen Mary school community play an active role in language development since language is at the core of learning. Language empowers the learner and provides an intellectual framework to support conceptual development and critical thinking. Through language, students gain a greater understanding of their role as global citizens, which enables them to make authentic connections to the world around them. They acquire greater awareness and appreciation of the Learner Profile attributes. Language learning that includes a second language, in addition to honoring and supporting a child's home language, develops a child's self-esteem. The goal of Queen Mary staff is to develop language learners who confidently utilize their language skills to effectively communicate and make meaning of their learning.

Applicable IBO Standards:

The school implements and reviews systems and processes to improve the operation and sustainability of its IB programme(s). (0201-04)

The school implements, communicates, and regularly reviews a language policy that helps foster intercultural understanding through communicating in a variety of ways in more than one language. (0301-04)

The school plans and implements a coherent curriculum that organizes learning and teaching within and across the years of its IB programme(s). (0401-01)

Students pursue opportunities to explore and develop their personal and cultural identities. (0402-07)

Teachers remove barriers to learning to enable every student to develop, pursue, and achieve challenging personal learning goals. (0403-05)

The school uses assessment methods that are varied and fit-for-purpose for the curriculum and stated learning outcomes and objectives. (0404-02)

Student's Roles and Responsibilities:

- Maintain and value their own home language and value the first languages of other students
- Develop a love of language and literature in all tongues and work to develop fluency in more than one language
- Develop international mindedness

School's Roles and Responsibilities:

- Establish a language policy review process
- Provide inclusion and equity
- Develop a language profile for the school
- Promote inquiry-based language learning
- Understand that all teachers are language teachers

Queen Mary Community School's Language Profile:

Queen Mary Community School is situated in the Lower Lonsdale area of North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The school is located in a diverse socio-economic and cultural community. English is predominately spoken at the school and within the surrounding community. The Queen Mary school community consists of a mix of well-established families and new



immigrants from both English and non-English speaking areas of the globe. There are 35 Indigenous students, 18 of whom are of the Squamish Nation. The others are from a variety First Nations. Using registration records as the primary source of data, the total number of different languages that students are either exposed to, or speak at home is 34, including English. Although 54% of families speak English at home, 46% of families speak more than one language at home. The predominant language spoken at home is English at 54%, followed by Farsi (14%), Filipino (14%), Spanish (3%), Japanese (2%), Mandarin (2%), and Portuguese (2%). It is evident that students bring a rich diversity of language experiences to school. Furthermore, 27% of students attending the school are ELL (English Language Learners). Of this group, a small percentage receive direct instruction from one of the ELL teachers at the school. The majority of the ELL students receive indirect instruction, meaning that they do not attend regularly scheduled classes with the ELL teachers; however, their proficiency in English is monitored by the ELL teachers throughout the school year.

Languages at Queen Mary

Home Languages OTHER than English	% of student population
Persian (Farsi)	14%
Filipino (Tagalog, Cebuano or Visaya, Ilokano, Kankanaey)	14%
Spanish	3%
Japanese	2%
Chinese (Mandarin)	2%
Portuguese	2%
Arabic	1%
Kurdish	<1%
Korean	<1%
Cantonese	<1%
Polish	<1%
Slovak	<1%
Ukrainian	<1%
Vietnamese	<1%
Italian	<1%
Malayalam	<1%
Romanian	<1%
Russian	<1%
Hindi	<1%
Turkish	<1%
Afrikaans	<1%
Finnish	<1%
German	<1%
Greek	<1%
Gujarati	<1%
Punjabi	<1%
Tamil	<1%
Urdu	<1%
Waray	<1%

Thirty-three different home languages, other than English, are spoken by students at Queen Mary, representing 46% (215/463) of our student population.



Role of Language in the Curriculum

Language learning is the connecting element across the curriculum and is viewed as a critical component in the construction of meaning and understanding in all curricular areas. Students learn in social settings where they feel successful and have the opportunity and ability to connect to meaningful and relevant learning engagements in a safe and supportive environment. Language development occurs through authentic language activities in meaningful contexts, in relation to transdisciplinary learning.

Language learning is a creative mode that enables students to communicate for diverse purposes. Throughout the school day students are provided with many enriching opportunities that support the development of learning through language and learning about language. Students are encouraged to be imaginative, creative, risk-takers as they develop language skills in both English and French.

Role of Language in Inquiry

Students effectively inquire by learning language, learning about language, and learning through language, as language is the vehicle that drives inquiry. Different cultures are recognized, honored, and explored through purposeful, engaging communication within the Units of Inquiry. Language instruction focuses on key skills related to effective inquiry; therefore, reading, writing, speaking, listening, and interpreting are explicitly taught to students. In order for students to inquire about their world and express and share their learning, educators at the school use a common language based on the elements of the PYP to ensure continuity of language instruction from year to year.

Provincial Requirements and District Support

Queen Mary's language instruction, and grade scope and sequence, is based on the British Columbia Ministry of Education and Child Care's Language Arts Curriculum <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/english-language-arts/>. This comprehensive curriculum outline states Big Ideas, Core and Curricular Competencies, and Content for each grade level with the focus on what students should "Know, Do, and Understand". Examples of best practices in pedagogy based on current research pertaining to language acquisition and development are included. Educators in the school also refer to locally developed documents that have been written by specialists in the school district (*Reading 44, Writing 44*).

Furthermore, teachers utilize a variety of diagnostic reading assessments to inform instruction and intervention as required. Results of diagnostic assessments guide instruction to ensure that students "at risk" in language development are provided with targeted academic support.

Teacher's Roles and Responsibilities:

Instructional Strategies

Students bring varied personal experiences and background knowledge to school. Since learners possess a diverse knowledge base, teachers provide various opportunities for students to connect their background knowledge to new understandings and learning through provisions of specific supports tailored to the individual learner. Acknowledging the variety of developmental stages and individualized rates of language learning through scaffolding ensures that students' learning needs are met.

Instructional strategies and learning opportunities are provided to students to support the development of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and interpreting skills. Language is modeled, taught, and practiced throughout the school day in a variety of learning contexts. At the school, the focus is on a balanced program of instruction and learning. Students readily engage in rich learning activities that support development of language. Opportunities to listen and review ideas and information are balanced with opportunities to express ideas orally. Students view and interpret others' work and create presentations to be viewed. Students read, discuss, and respond to various genres of literature, non-fiction and multimodal texts. They write for various purposes and audiences in order to communicate thoughts, ideas, opinions, and knowledge. Technology is an important component in language learning and is incorporated in instructional goals within all grades.

Differentiation of Instruction

Language instruction must be responsive to student needs. Educators at the school differentiate between language ability and cognitive ability. They recognize that not all students have the same background knowledge and skills. Instruction is



differentiated to allow students to express themselves in the most effective way based on their skills. Effective formative assessment, combined with flexible language instruction, render an inclusive learning environment that recognizes that all children develop language skills at their own rate.

Role of Specialist Teachers

All teachers are language teachers. At Queen Mary, single-subject (Fine Arts, Library) and specialist teachers, including the English Language Learning (ELL) and Learning Support Teachers (LST), play an important role in reinforcing, supporting, and extending the classroom language learning experiences. Specialist teachers work with classroom teachers in order to connect learning to classroom instruction. Students who receive assistance from ELL and LST specialists are supported through small group and in-class support. The Fine Arts specialist extends language learning through drama, movement, and art. The teacher librarian supports development of the elements of the PYP and the Learner Profile attributes.

Educational Assistants (EAs) work alongside teachers in classes and play an important role in support of home language. Many of our EAs speak languages other than English and are able to facilitate and support students in their home languages. Our Indigenous Support Worker (ISW) is a member of our support staff. This staff member is an Indigenous employee who is responsible for supporting Indigenous students and for sharing Indigenous knowledge, culture, and language in classrooms, for all students. At Queen Mary, all students are introduced to Squamish language through the teachings by the ISW.

Second Language Learning

The primary language of instruction at the school is English. The majority of students attending the school have English as their home language. As per the mandate of the province's Ministry of Education and Child Care, all students in British Columbia must take a second language as part of the required curriculum beginning in Grade 5 unless they are eligible for an exemption that must be documented in the student's Individual Education Plan (see assessment policy). In North Vancouver, the second language chosen by the school board is French and is Ministry authorized with a scope and sequence. Therefore, English is the language of instruction and French is the second language taught. French language is taught in all classes; a French as a Second Language (FSL) teacher supports where needed. Oral and written French is integrated when possible into daily learning and Units of Inquiry in all grades from Kindergarten to Grade 7. Additional French resources (books) are available in the school library and are used to support the teaching and learning of French.

English as a Second Language and Home Language Support

Any student who enrolls into the North Vancouver School District that indicates their home language as a language other than English is screened for ELL instruction as required by North Vancouver School District Policy. The need for additional English Language Learning support is determined by an English Language assessment that is administered by the ELL teachers at the school. By identifying language populations, the school is able to provide individualized support for English language learning, as well as support for home languages through the purchase of resources, access to translators, settlement workers, and reaching out to our multilingual community for support.

Teachers and staff use assessment information to seek out appropriate supports for students. This creates a culture of respect and inclusion, as it acknowledges and integrates represented languages into instruction. Teachers make every effort to meet language needs of individual learners through the use of adapted materials, peer translators, technology, and print resources in the student's home language when accessible, to ensure students, regardless of level of understanding of the host country language (English), can enter into and are engaged in the learning and are provided with opportunities to communicate their learning.

Students learn in a safe and caring environment where they feel supported to learn their new language and become connected to the school community. ELL students receive on-going English instruction in the ELL center as required. The school has made a commitment to students, and our learning community, to continually add to our collection of multilingual resources including bilingual books in different languages.

Queen Mary recognizes the importance of encouraging and helping students share their home language with others. This is often done through the Units of Inquiry and with multi-grade collaboration, such as buddy classes. Furthermore, students can read in their home language during the daily silent reading period.



Professional Development

Educators are encouraged to pursue on-going professional development in language instruction by attending district in-service sessions and in-house professional development. Furthermore, as per the Practices and Standards of the IBO, any professional development opportunities that arise either online or as a PYP workshop that directly pertain to language development, instruction, and pedagogy will be brought to the attention of the teaching staff by the PYP coordinator.

Assessment

Language is assessed based on provincial learning outcomes and the school's assessment practices (please refer to the school's assessment policy).

Parents' Roles and Responsibilities

Parents play an integral role in facilitating their child's language development in both our language of instruction and any home languages. Parents have a responsibility to communicate with the school regarding their child's language needs and development.

The Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is also committed to supporting students by providing additional funding in order to purchase multilingual resources. Acquisition of learning resources in students' home language is on-going as it is recognized that development of home language supports a child's cultural identity, self-esteem, conceptual development, and success as learners.

Procedures and Practices:

These are outlined in the School's and Teachers' Roles and Responsibility sections above.

Links to other policies:

Assessment
Academic Honesty
Inclusion

Essential Agreements:

Staff Essential Agreements – Language Policy

- The language policy will be reviewed annually. The review will be collaborative and include all school staff, parent and student representatives.
- Revisions will reflect the needs of the student population and the instructional beliefs that pertain directly to best practice in language instruction.
- The policy will be made public through the school website. Hard copies will be made available upon request.
- The policy will be adhered to by all staff members at the school and will be reflected through their teaching practice.

References/Additional Resources/Links to Further Information:

Resources

Queen Mary students and staff have access to a variety of print resources located in the school library, guided reading and novel collections, and in individual classrooms. Acquisition of multilingual, multimodal, and culturally and globally diverse resources will continue to be an on-going priority for resource purchasing. Our school board, and our PAC (Parent Advisory Council) are aware of our need to expand these resources and have committed financial support to meet the needs of the PYP. French language materials have also been purchased. Educators are involved in resource purchase decisions with current emphasis on resources needed to support units of inquiry.

Policy Review Procedures and Dates:

The policy will be reviewed each school year by the teaching staff, support staff, and representatives of the school community, including parents and students. It will be revised to reflect changes in pedagogy, beliefs, and the language needs of students. Opportunities to provide feedback and input will take place during the weekly scheduled IB in-service meetings. The IB coordinator, the IB joint committee, which is comprised of members of the parent community, administration, and members of



the pedagogical team, will finalize changes to the policy. The policy will be posted on the school's website. Hard copies of the policy will be made available upon request.

Review dates:

Mar 30th, 2016

October 10th, 2018

May 10th, 2023

November 27th, 2023