

Language Policy - 002223

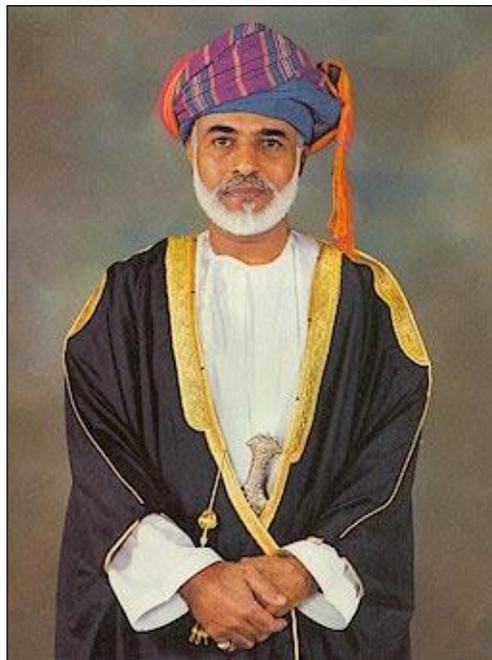
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Mission Statement

“The Sultan's School is a co-educational school offering a bilingual Arabic-English education from early childhood to pre-university.

The school seeks to provide a broad and balanced education to the highest quality which reflects and strengthens the Omani and Islamic culture while encouraging an international perspective and developing critical, creative thinking in its students”



THE SULTAN'S SCHOOL

LANGUAGE POLICY

Although this policy applies particularly to students following the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP), the principles and practice described apply throughout the school

I. PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE POLICY AT THE SULTAN'S SCHOOL

- The Sultan's School is a bilingual school delivering its educational programmes through Arabic and English. Our programmes are monitored by the Ministry of Education.
- After the completion of the primary and middle school programmes, the school offers the International General Certificate of Education Programme for secondary students. The IGCSE curriculum is largely delivered through English as the main language of instruction.
- Upon graduation from the IGCSE Programme, students then continue with the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme.
- The school believes that the acquisition of the best possible language skills is one of the fundamental tools for educational progress.
- As over 95% of our students are from Omani or other GCC nationalities, Arabic is predominately the mother tongue language which is fostered throughout the curriculum.

I.2 As an IB World School, The Sultan's School strives to follow the IB Learner Profile, especially in its language policy. We want each student to be:

- An inquirer: to use language to gain new information or knowledge in order to make sense of the world;
- A thinker: able to express thoughts and ideas clearly, succinctly;
- A communicator: with competent uses of oral and written language in a variety of situations, to be able listen attentively to details, speak confidently, read and write with fluency and comprehend what is conveyed;
- A risk taker: willing to attempt to read, write and speak in all situations;
- Knowledgeable: to have acquired vocabulary and understanding to discuss literary styles;
- Caring: to show care in use of language and the effect that language has on others;
- Principled: aware that language is powerful and has a profound affect; must use it responsibly;
- Balanced: to express himself/herself orally, visually and in written form and to balance listening and speaking when communicating with others;
- Reflective: to reflect on their language usage and development and consciously work towards proficiency;
- Open-minded: to respect the differences and similarities in languages, dialects and personal communication skills.

I.3 The Sultan's School believes that:

- Language is the key to learning;
- Linguistic and cultural diversity is a rich resource that contributes to learning;
- Language is to be taught through the programme of inquiry ;
- Language is the means for inquiry;
- All learners are language learners and all teachers are language teachers.

1.4 We believe that all students can learn and experience success in another language; to that end, we provide a foundation for the lifelong process of language acquisition. Our language programme:

- Fosters respect for other cultures;
- Prepares students to become productive members of a global society;
- Promotes awareness of one's own language and culture;
- Allows opportunities for interdisciplinary connections.

2. LANGUAGES AT THE SULTAN'S SCHOOL

2.1 The language programme at The Sultan's School:

- Acknowledges both the receptive and the expressive aspects of language;
- Surrounds the students with language in visual, oral and written ways;
- Enables students to communicate and express themselves to solve problems, explore the environment;
- Influences change in others and identify their own self-concept;
- Creates awareness and open-mindedness of the many forms of communication and the many languages we can use to interact with others;
- Recognises that there is a variety of valuable languages, such as in mathematics, the Arts and technology, to be respected and promoted as a means of interpretation and expression.

2.2 School Language Profile

The majority of students at The Sultan's School are bilingual (Arabic and English) and can use both with ease. Students are encouraged to use both languages as appropriate throughout the school day. The vast majority of students receive a bilingual Diploma.

2.3 Language of Instruction

In Islamic Studies, Social Studies and Arabic, the language of instruction is Arabic. In all other classes the language of instruction is English.

2.4 Languages Offered in the IB Diploma Programme

The Sultan's School offers both Arabic and English Language A and Language B at higher and standard level, as well as Arabic Ab Initio in the Diploma Programme. In addition, we use the IB online programme offered by Pamoja for Ab initio languages; Spanish and French have been studied in this way. In support of the mother tongue/first language/native languages, we also have the ability to offer school supported self-taught languages in IBDP Group I if the need arose.

2.5 Language Practices in the IBDP - English and Arabic Language A & Language B

The Sultan's School offers various levels of Language A Language & Literature and Language B courses in which students are placed based on achievement scores. We have a language section within the IBDP Admissions Policy. As a bilingual school the expectation is that every student takes Arabic A in years 12 and 13. The study of Arabic A ensures that the students receive a bilingual IB Diploma which is prestigious and attractive to universities. Arabic A also supports the Omani Ministry examinations. Consequently all year 12 students would be expected to study Arabic A unless they studied IGCSE Arabic as a Foreign Language in years 10 and 11. We also follow the recommendations of the IBO regarding language selection:

“ Language B is an additional language-learning course designed for students with **some** previous learning of that language. ... The most important consideration is that the course should be a challenging educational experience for the student.”

3. STRANDS OF LANGUAGE AT THE SULTAN'S SCHOOL

The Sultan's School believes that success at IBDP can only be achieved if clear language practices are followed throughout the school. In this way all teachers will contribute to the language development of students.

3.1 Reading

3.1.1 Students will learn to read with accuracy, with a high degree of fluency and comprehension; they will receive daily instruction in how to develop as a reader and will be given meaningful feedback on how to improve their reading strategies.

3.1.2 Reading is broken into three branches of delivery for learning:

- Home Reading: in the earlier years, parents and children form a link between home and school, establishing a passion and desire to read;
- Classroom Reading Teachers allow time to read in class. This includes reading to children, quiet independent reading and guided reading in small groups;
- Reading strategies: each teacher reveals, models and teaches strategies used when reading. Teachers provide the tools for reading.

3.2 Writing

3.2.1 Students will be able to present information in a written format to reflect their knowledge, research, ideas and feelings. Students will be able to write in a variety of functional grammar layouts, in relation to their audience. Students will write daily and receive explicit instruction in grammar and spelling.

3.2.2 Interconnection of writing skills:

- Teachers will plan a balance of modelled, shared, guided and independent writing tasks;
- Students will be taught to write in a variety of functional layouts for different purposes and audiences following English scope and sequence;
- Teachers will engage students in the writing process and emphasise process and product;
- Teachers will provide opportunities for students to write every day, exposing them to a variety of texts and extended writing tasks across the curriculum;
- Teachers will ensure that students perceive both an audience and purpose for their writing;
- Students are taught punctuation and grammar in context of their stages of development;
- Teachers will explicitly teach a range of spelling strategies and provide appropriate spelling activities;
- Teachers will encourage students when dealing with new words to analyse and look at the structure relating to word meaning.

3.3 Listening and Speaking

- The school values an awareness regarding the power of oral language and how both expressive and receptive language help students to connect with others.
- We want students to talk about their thoughts, feelings and opinions and to use speech responsibly to inform, entertain and influence others.
- Students will speak confidently to a variety of audiences as well as appreciate that listening is important and the importance of active listening.
- We want our students to ask and answer questions and contribute to discussions in a range of formal and informal situations.

3.4 Class activities

Class activities are designed to include and offer support for students who are not proficient in the language of instruction.

- Students are encouraged to participate in individual, paired, group and whole class activities across the IB curriculum;
- Teachers model skills of speaking and listening to encourage students to speak clearly, confidently, fluently and appropriately;
- Teachers use questions that challenge the student to think at various levels and respond accordingly;
- Students use class presentations, debate and public speaking to apply speaking and listening skills in a safe peer environment;
- Students prepare, deliver and listen to individual presentations for a variety of purposes: to inform, to persuade, to direct, to entertain.

3.5 Additional support

The Sultan's School has a number of Omani students on scholarships for whom the language of instruction (English) is an additional language. The majority study Language B English and as boarding students they have the opportunity to have additional English support for their other subjects during evening study hall.

3.6 Host country

The Sultan's School values the language and culture of Oman by:

- Considering, whenever possible, all aspects of the host culture when planning units of work;
- Supporting teaching staff in their appreciation of Omani culture and language, including Arabic lessons for the teaching faculty;
- Recognizing and explaining important host country festivals and celebrations within the school.
- This fits within the Mission Statement of the school which states that the Sultan's School is a coeducational school offering a bilingual Arabic and English holistic education... which strengthens Omani and Islamic culture whilst encouraging an international perspective...