



WHOLE SCHOOL LANGUAGE POLICY

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1.	Revision of original document, pending approval by Board	Oct 2023	SLT, BoD
2.	Secondary date for MYP Authorisation	Feb 2025	HoSec, HoS
3.	<i>Subject to review every 2 years, or as needs dictate</i>		

SCHOOL MISSION

As a student-centered, family-focused community, we will guide learners on their journeys towards fulfilling their individual potential, embracing their own independence and internationalism in a safe, supportive and challenging environment.

IB MISSION STATEMENT

The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Renaissance International School is passionate about delivering the IB's Mission through the Learner Profile, its approaches to teaching and its approaches to how students learn.

Learner Profile

The 10 Attributes of the Learner Profile are as follows:



Everything taught at Renaissance International School involves and is delivered through the 10 Learner Profile Attributes with the defined intention of helping our students become truly global citizens and a proud Renaissance IB student in the process. These ten attributes help build character and resilience.

1. Philosophy of Language Teaching and Learning

Renaissance International School Saigon, is a PYP and DP authorised school and a candidate school for the MYP¹. This school is pursuing authorization as an IB World School. IB World Schools share a common philosophy - a commitment to high-quality, challenging, international education-that we believe is important for our students.

At Renaissance, we create a challenging and motivating environment that nurtures an appreciation of the richness and diversity of language. The acquisition of more than one additional language, along with maintenance of the mother tongue, supports our aim of developing international mindedness by enabling our community to see and appreciate diversity and commonality; understand local and global issues; coexist with disagreement; show strength with compassion and have a willingness to grow together.

We support international mindedness, an appreciation of our local context and multilingualism through the provision of second language Vietnamese, Korean, Chinese and French, in addition to English. Equally important is the opportunity for students to develop their mother tongue(s) with the school providing first language Vietnamese, Korean and Mandarin.

The School aims to provide students with the opportunities and a safe environment to think critically and express themselves both academically and socially in at least two languages. For this to be possible, every teacher and teaching assistant within the school is considered a language teacher for their year group and/or subject area(s). Within this context, we believe language learning should take place through inquiry, allowing students to explore and identify connections and differences between languages and subject areas.

Given the linguistic backgrounds of our students, we believe that English language learning must be supported by a strong English as an Additional Language (EAL) programme from Year 1 to Year 11. Classroom practice at all levels must be differentiated to suit the language learning needs of the students. English is both the language of instruction and in most cases the language of examination. All teachers at Renaissance are viewed as content and language teachers, regardless of subject matter and the pedagogy is to be scaffolded accordingly.

Parents/guardians are considered equal partners with the school faculty in language learning and support their child to develop and maintain their mother tongue. Parents can use the following strategies:

1. Reading at home in their first language
2. Ask about the school in their first language to encourage making connections across languages
3. Organise play dates
4. Attend school events to share cultural and linguistic diversity
5. Work collaboratively with the school to develop literacy resources in their mother tongue

2. Language Profile

Renaissance is in a predominantly Vietnamese and Asian expatriate area of Ho Chi Minh City. Its location therefore impacts directly on the school's demographic and language profile. There are currently 13 different languages spoken as a first language at the school with most students using English as an additional language, as indicated in Table 1: Language Profile of Students at Renaissance International School

Vietnamese	Korean	Russian	Thai	Malay	French	Cantonese
Mandarin	Indonesian	Hindi	Japanese	Bengali	English	Italian

3. Admissions Policy

The School's [Admissions Policy](#) states:

¹ * Renaissance International School Saigon is a Candidate School* for the MYP. This school is pursuing authorization as an IB World School. These are schools that share a common philosophy—a commitment to high quality, challenging, international education that Renaissance International School Saigon believes is important for our students.

* Only schools authorized by the IB Organization can offer any of its four academic programmes: the Primary Years Programme (PYP), the Middle Years Programme (MYP), the Diploma Programme, or the Career-related Programme (CP). Candidate status gives no guarantee that authorization will be granted. For further information about the IB and its programmes, visit www.ibo.org

Renaissance International School admits students from 2 years of age by 31st August of the academic year of entry. They may not join earlier and must be fully 'house-trained'.

Generally, the placement of students into their respective year groups will be appropriate to their age and ability. The decision to offer a place will be made by the Head of School, taking into account the views of the relevant Faculty, Leadership and/or Admissions staff:

- that the school is able to meet the needs of the student;
- that the student can satisfy the rigours and requirements of the curriculum specific to that student at point of entry;
- the age of the applicant;
- their previous educational experience/performance (including behaviour);
- outcomes of the interview process, where applicable;
- CAT 4 Cognitive Ability Test data;
- English proficiency test data.

When enrolling in the school, different English proficiency levels are required for each Year groups, as identified in the Admissions Policy:

- For entry into Years 3 to 5, applicants will need to obtain a mean standard age score of 100 or above in their CAT4 Cognitive Ability Test.
- For entry into Years 6 to 9, applicants will need to obtain a mean standard age score of 110 in their CAT4 Cognitive Ability Test.
- For late entry into Year 9, **after 1st January**, for Years 10 and 11, applicants will need to obtain a mean standard age score of 115 in their CAT4 Cognitive Ability Test **and** demonstrate B1 level language proficiency of the CEFR framework.
- For entry into Years 12 to 13, applicants will need to obtain a mean standard age score of 115 in their CAT4 Cognitive Ability Test **and** demonstrate B2 level language proficiency of the CEFR framework.

The School provides English as Additional Language (EAL) support to students where required from Year 1 to Year 11. Renaissance International School currently operates a tiered system where the level of support is based on language proficiency. In time, the school will move to a CLIL model that ensures all faculty are equally adept at meeting the EAL needs of students.

See [EAL Tiering Policy](#) for more details.

For entry in Years 10 and 11, applicants need to demonstrate a B1 level of English proficiency, or alternatively score at least 100 points on three non-verbal sections of their CAT4 Cognitive Ability Test to be considered. For admission in Years 12 and 13, all applicants should demonstrate a B2 level of English language proficiency (CEFR Framework).

4. Language Programme Overview

At Renaissance, every teacher and teaching assistant is considered a language teacher for their year group and/or subject area(s). The language of instruction is English except for Chinese, French, Korean and Vietnamese lessons where teachers are expected to make the learning experience authentic by using the relevant language. Classroom practice at all levels must be differentiated to suit the language learning needs of the students. At Renaissance, parents/guardians are considered partners in learning and support their child to develop and maintain his/her/their mother tongue.

Essentials:

- Language development and acquisition is the responsibility of all
- English is the primary medium of instruction
- English develops as a process over time through purposeful use (listening, speaking, reading and writing tasks) across all curricular areas
- In English, a phonics-based approach is used across the range of Early Years to Year 3
- English is acquired in addition to the students' home language(s)
- The use of English is promoted in a challenging and responsive learning environment for all students

- English language instruction is delivered and assessed using developmental outcomes based on curriculum documents and syllabi (PYP, MYP, Cambridge IGCSE and the IBDP). EAL as a subject is not assessed or linked to a curriculum – instead it is considered a support programme which is assessed internally and not reported on.
- Vietnamese (host country language) is taught to most students as part of the curriculum
- The language of instruction – apart from Vietnamese and foreign language classes – is English

Guidelines:

- Staff are encouraged to complete Language Acquisition training and participate in Professional Development promoting best practice
- Staff integrate language instruction across the curriculum through subject content
- Staff scaffold curriculum to make content accessible
- Staff use the teaching and learning model of language acquisition (model, deconstruct, joint construction and independent use)
- Staff create lessons that provide students with many opportunities to listen, read, speak, and write in English in a variety of interactive ways
- Student’s needs are met with additional support or extension in their language learning using a collaborative approach
- Students who are considered EAL receive support focusing on acquiring language in the context of the mainstream curriculum and classroom learning
- EAL Students are supported using a graduated, tier system where students with greater language needs receive greater support
- Communication is at the heart of the learning experience
- Classroom environments, practices and materials are differentiated for students’ language abilities
- Staff support the individual language needs of students
- Staff enhance and maintain language development through authentic language experiences in a safe environment
- Students’ language use is dynamic and extends beyond the school setting
- Parents are partners in learning and support their child to develop and maintain his/her/their mother tongue
- Support is provided both in class and withdrawal by EAL specialists
- All stakeholders play a vital role in nurturing the diversity of language and culture in our school community
- At Renaissance International School, all academic staff are language teachers and work to support multi-lingual learners

4.1 Early Years and Primary

Our Early Years programme is based on Development Matters (2023) of the United Kingdom; It is a developmental framework implemented within the International Baccalaureate Philosophy and approach. Our Primary Curriculum is also rooted in the British National Curriculum.

Students are provided the opportunity to study an additional language to English from Year 2 onwards with EAL support provided from Year 1. All Vietnamese passport holders are legally required study Vietnamese from Early Years onwards (140 mins in Primary,). Non-Vietnamese passport holders study Vietnamese as an Additional Language (VAL) in this time.

Language learning is involved in all learning that takes place at school. It is considered an essential vehicle for inquiry and the construction of meaning. When thinking about language learning, all teachers are committed to developing an understanding of:

1. **Form – What is it like?**
5. **Connection – How is it connected to other things?**

2. **Function – How does it work?**
3. **Causation – Why is it like that?**
4. **Change – How is it changing?**
6. **Perspective – What are the points of view?**
7. **Responsibility - What is our responsibility?**
8. **Reflection – How do we know?**

If a student does not require EAL support, see section 5.5 for requirements, parents and students from Year 3 up make a choice between French or Chinese as a language choice. Students in Year 2 who do not require EAL support take part in a language carousel to ensure they gain exposure to both Chinese and French.

This is displayed in Table 2: Language Provision in Early Years and IBPYP below:

Year Group	English 1 st Lang	Vietnamese 1 st Lang	EAL	VAL	Chinese	French	Korean 1 st Lang				
Nursery	Y	Y									
Reception	Y	Y									
1	Y	Y						Y	Y		
2	Y	Y						Y	Y	Y	Y
3	Y	Y						Y	Y	Y	Y
4	Y	Y						Y	Y	Y	Y
5	Y	Y						Y	Y	Y	Y
6	Y	Y						Y	Y	Y	Y

4.2 Development and Maintenance of Home Languages

Renaissance International School Saigon is committed to supporting the development and maintenance of learners' home and personal languages. The policy aims to recognise and value the linguistic diversity present among learners, foster cultural identity, and promote inclusive and equitable educational opportunities.

4.3 Middle Years Programme

At Renaissance International School, we share the belief that acquiring and developing the language of a community provides learners with the possibilities to reflect upon and explore cultural perspectives of our own and other communities. All IB MYP teachers at Renaissance are committed to:

- *encouraging students to gain competence in an additional language with the long-term goal of multilingualism*
- *enable students to develop lifelong learning skills*
- *encourage students to develop an awareness and understanding of the perspectives of people from other cultures (IBO, 2022)*

In the IBMYP, an adapted curriculum based on the English National Curriculum is taught using the IB philosophy. It is an expectation that Global Contexts are aligned across all subjects and languages to support interdisciplinary learning.

All Vietnamese passport holders are legally required to study Vietnamese, not less than 90 mins per week. Non-Vietnamese passport holders study Vietnamese as an Additional Language (VAL) in this time. Tiered EAL support is provided for all students that meet the requirements from Years 7 to 9. This choice can be changed on a case-by-case basis after discussion with teaching staff.

4.4 IGCSE

All Vietnamese citizens must study Vietnamese in the IGCSE years. For all other nationalities, we strongly recommend, where offered, that students follow the First Language course at IGCSE level. For Vietnamese, Chinese and English students follow the Cambridge International IGCSE First Language courses for the respective languages. For Korean, students follow the Renaissance pre-diploma foundation course designed to meet the needs of our students. If students wish to opt-out of studying their mother-tongue, then this must be with the written consent of their parents, understanding the implications of doing so.

Students for whom English is their mother-tongue or who possess a higher language proficiency in English will also have the opportunity to take both the English First Language IGCSE and World Literature IGCSE in order to develop their use of language and develop a deeper understanding of cultures and experiences.

IGCSE English as a Second Language is offered to provide opportunities to provide students with opportunities to develop their language proficiency in all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Students studying the IGCSE programme can broaden their language learning even further to study IGCSE Foreign Language French or Mandarin. For students following the EAL programme or IGCSE English as a Second Language, decisions about appropriacy of studying a foreign language are made by the coordinator based on a range of data and the students' future study pathways and aspirations.

4.5 IBDP

Language A courses are offered in Vietnamese, English, Chinese and Korean. Students are encouraged to follow Language A in their home language. Where appropriate, students can study both language A in English and their mother-tongue. In some situations, the school can offer students school-supported self-taught Language A if their mother-tongue is not that of the languages offered at Renaissance International School Saigon. In these cases, students are advised to study English A to support their development in language and literature.

In the diploma. All students must study either two Language A course, or one Language A and one Language B/ Ab initio course. Renaissance International School Saigon offers Language A courses in Vietnamese, English, Chinese and Korean and Language B courses in English, Chinese, and French (including French Ab Initio).

Library

The library stocks a range of linguistic resources, such as books, literature, digital media, and other learning materials, are provided to enable the development and maintenance of home/personal languages. These resources are diverse, inclusive, and reflect the cultural backgrounds and lived experiences of learners.

Multilingualism

Renaissance International School Saigon recognises the importance in aspiring for multilingualism and supporting students' language development. We value and integrate the diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds of our students into our teaching and learning practices. This includes ensuring that resources, materials, and assessments reflect and honor different cultures and languages, allowing students to connect their own experiences and background knowledge to their learning journey.

We offer comprehensive English language acquisition courses to support students whose home/personal languages differ from the language of instruction and foreign language courses to broaden students' linguistic range.

English Language Pathways

Renaissance International School Saigon provides both first language and language acquisition English courses. In the IGCSE and IBDP, data is used by the coordinator to determine the most appropriate language pathway for each student based on their individual language proficiency and needs. The data used to inform this includes, but is not limited to, cognitive ability testing, Oxford placement testing, Accelerated Reader Testing, teacher assessment (both formative and summative), and externally validated examination data.

All English Language pathways lead to an externally validated qualification at IGCSE and IBDP level.

Language Acquisition

Assessment across language acquisition in IBPYP and IBMYP takes a variety of forms, and it is based on the Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR) and the IB language acquisition objectives. It can be formative, diagnostic and/or summative but the essential point is that whatever assessment strategy is adopted it must be complimented by the natural assessment and learning interactions that occur between teacher and student in the classroom. In IBPYP students are assessed using a 1-6 scale whilst students in IBMYP, IGCSE and IBDP are assessed using a 1-7 scale.

For more information on reporting and assessment at Renaissance please refer to the Assessment and Reporting Policy and Procedures [here](#).

IGCSE English as a Second Language is offered in the IGCSE programme. This pathway suited to learners with a working knowledge of the language and who want to consolidate their understanding to progress in their academic career. This course is particularly appropriate for students who are relatively new to following a full English-speaking

curriculum. This course is a language acquisition and developmental pathway. It is recommended that students who have studied English as a Second Language study English B in the diploma.

First Language

This pathway is suitable for students for whom English is their mother-tongue or who possess a very high language proficiency in English.

This pathway is suited to those students for have been studying predominantly in English for a considerable amount of time. This pathway is for those students with a secure use and understanding of English.

Students studying First Language English also can develop this further to study World Literature alongside the IGCSE First Language Course. This pathway serves as preparation for the English A course in the IBDP.

5. INCLUSION AND EQUITY

5.1. IB Diploma Programme – Alternative Pathways

It is recognised that the challenge and academic rigor of the full IB diploma programme is not appropriate for all learners, due to their length of experience studying in English or specific learning needs. Therefore, we offer different pathways in the Diploma Programme to give all students access to an IB education in an appropriately supportive and challenging way. See IBDP Pathways process in Admissions Policy.

5.2. EAL Support

EAL support is offered from Years 1 to 11 to students who demonstrate a language proficiency below B1.1 in one of the four macro-skills covered by the Oxford Placement Test and are deemed by the EAL Department to require support over the medium to long term. An additional fee is charged for EAL support. The school uses a tiered approach to the level of support being provided. The minimum number of EAL lessons per tier are outlined below. Students may move tier or graduate from EAL at the end of a term depending on their progress.

The allocation below should be used as general guidance and does not include TA in-class support:

Tier	Primary	Secondary
Tier 1	5 x 45 minutes	5 x 60 minutes
Tier 2	4 x 45 minutes	3 x 60 minutes
Tier 3	3 x 45 minutes	2 x 60 minutes

Students who receive EAL support do not study any other additional language (MFL) until they graduate from the EAL programme. EAL classes have a high teacher to pupil ratio and cover both accuracy and fluency in the four macro-skills with a focus on grammar and vocabulary building. EAL teachers plan collaboratively with homeroom and subject teachers.

5.3. EAL Assessment and Graduation

The NASSEA Framework guides formative assessment of EAL students in IBPYP. When a student successfully demonstrates they can perform most of the skills required on Tier 3, when assessed against the EAL Assessment Descriptors, they will take the Oxford Placement Test. If the test shows the student to be B1 in Listening and Language Use, a 2-week period of in-class observations will be initiated. In this period, students will not receive EAL support. If the student is successful in class without EAL support, graduation will be confirmed. EAL students in IBPYP are assessed using a 1-6 scale, please refer the EAL Assessment Descriptors for more information.

When a student graduates from EAL, it is expected they will be able to access the curriculum and perform at a 2 or above using the mainstream assessment scales.

The graduation process will be triangulated through the use of:

1. The EAL Assessment Descriptors
2. Oxford Placement Test
3. Subject Teacher and Class Teacher Reporting Data

Refer to the [EAL Tiering Policy](#) for more details.

6. Assessment

Assessment is an indication of student achievement and recognises that teaching, learning and assessment of that learning are fundamentally interdependent. Its focus is not only on what has been achieved but also on how students are learning how to learn.

Measurement of the progress of students, the evaluation of this progress and the teaching programmes involved in it are all central to sound educational decision making. Assessment practices are used to promote a positive attitude towards learning languages, encourage the pursuit of excellence in line with the school's mission and contribute to the success of all students.

Assessment practice at Renaissance International School is based on the understanding that students have different learning styles, perform differently according to the context of learning and should receive feedback that is positive, constructive and outlines achievement as well as areas for improvement.

7. Collaborative Planning

Due to the transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary nature of language learning, all teachers are expected to plan collaboratively. In the IB PYP, collaborative planning takes place bi-weekly throughout each unit of inquiry. In addition to this, all homeroom teachers meet weekly with the PYP Coordinator to ensure curriculum alignment across the school.

In the Secondary school, teachers are expected to plan collaboratively so that Global Contexts and Key Concepts are aligned across subjects and languages. To support this, staff are required to complete Unit Overviews that are shared with parents, students and staff.

8. Professional Development

All teachers and teaching assistants are viewed as language teachers for their grade of subject area. To support learning, in Early Years and Primary language teachers co-plan with class teachers to enable collaboration and the sharing of best practice.

Throughout the school, staff have the opportunity to attend INSET training sessions which are run throughout the school year by EAL specialists and/or class and subject teachers. Internally, there is the opportunity to for teachers and TAs to access the Bell Foundation and Naldic portals on the CPD Hub [here](#).

The school is also a member of FOBISIA and EARCOS, and, therefore, all staff have the opportunity to attend training and conferences organised by these organisations.

9. Student Support Services

9.1. Language Learning and The Library

The Library is committed to the development of a diverse, inclusive and balanced collection with the representation of the mother tongue and a variety of cultures. Such commitment is embedded in the Library's collection development policies. These policies include the representation of the cultures and languages in our community. Therefore, the Library will always provide a comprehensive collection on multilingual books for our patrons, students and classes; as well as multilingual dictionaries in the school's languages.

The Library is also committed to the instruction of digital citizenship and digital literacy: and it does so by providing fixed classes in IBPYP and flexible classes for IBMYP, IGCSE and IBDP. In these classes, literacy skills are developed to read and comprehend multi-sourced texts.

Finally, the Library supports the IBDP by ensuring the collection responds to the diverse needs of the IBDP students performing their independent research for the different IBDP milestones, as well as providing constant support in the process of developing said research.

9.2. Learning Support

The Learning Support Department maintains a strong focus on language acquisition. Specialist staff work with students to help individuals improve their comprehension and communication skills. Most learners are non-native English speakers, and the majority of the students need additional support with their language development as a key area of focus.

The school's [Student Support Services \(incl SEN\)](#) document provides further guidance.

10. Parent and Guardian Involvement

Parents and guardians are integral parts of our learning community. We believe they provide the opportunity to introduce authentic language learning opportunities to the students. These learning opportunities take the form of literacy and community events along with invitations to read to the students in their mother tongue. Parents and guardians are consulted on both policy and resources through the form of Parent Information Sessions.

11. Published Materials

Renaissance International School acknowledges, respects and appreciates the diversity of the cultural and linguistic backgrounds within our community. To maintain consistency in published materials, British English spelling is used for all formal documentation. The spelling patterns taught in lessons should also follow the rules of British Spelling.

Published materials, such as parent handbooks, curriculum guides and units of work, are available to the community upon request or on the school's website www.renaissance.edu.vn