



Policy Name	Language Policy
Related Policies and Legislation	
Policy Category	Education Program
Relevant Audience	All Treetops Community
Date of Issue / Last Revision	17 August 2011 11 May 2017 15 February 2018
Date Set for Review	February 2021
Person/s Responsible for Review	Treetops Administration

Language Policy

Purpose:

To outline the School's linguistic and academic goals and defines the programme designed to help our students attain these goals. This policy is intended to provide an overview and guiding principles for language

Definition of Language

Language is the symbolisation of human life, communication, the recording of all knowledge, the basis of history and culture. It encompasses written, oral, aural and visual genres. At Treetops, the concept of language is not limited to vocabulary and grammar. Treetops recognises the importance of non-verbal communication, such as body language, facial expression and gestures, and meta-language.

Language of Instruction

The language of instruction at Treetops Montessori School is English. Treetops strives to ensure that its students develop English language and literacy skills to the highest level in order to assist them to function at the highest level in later life. Moreover, language is crucial to all learning and all Treetops' teachers, across the curriculum and across all age groups, recognise their individual responsibilities as language teachers.

Learning a Second Language

Treetops Montessori School recognises the importance of students learning a language other than their mother tongue. Treetops offers instruction in a second language from K-10, and as part of all Year 11 and 12 programmes. The current K-10 second language is Japanese. The current Year 11 and 12 International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) language is Japanese. Year 11 and 12 IBDP students can also learn a second language on-line through Pamoja (including French, Mandarin and Spanish). Competency in a second language enriches and broadens the minds of children and helps them appreciate that there are world views other than their own. This, in turn, supports Treetops vision that our educational community makes a difference through the education of its children.

Supporting Non-English Speakers

Treetops Montessori School also recognises the importance of supporting students for whom English is not their mother tongue. Such support is offered through Enrichment Program IEPs and a flexible approach to curriculum delivery.

Aims

- To ensure the effective delivery of the Western Australian Curriculum and IB Curriculum for English.
- To ensure that language skills are developed across the whole curriculum and across all age groups.
- To provide appropriate enrichment program support to children experiencing difficulties with literacy.
- To provide all students with the experience of learning a second language.
- To ensure the effective delivery of the Western Australian SCSA and IB Curriculum for Languages.
- To ensure that the second languages at Treetops are clearly articulated throughout the school.
- To ensure that the development of language skills takes into account all aspects of the child's developmental needs.
- To support non-English speakers in developing their written and spoken English language skills.

Philosophy and Methodology

The Montessori approach to education focuses on the whole personality of the child; the faculties of intellect, deliberation, initiative and independent thinking. Treetops' approach to language, across all areas of the curriculum and across all age groups, follows this overall approach:

- Staff across all subject areas and age groups are encouraged to be creative and imaginative in facilitating language development and are made aware of professional development opportunities to support their role in the classroom.
- Children are free to talk to one another in the classroom and time is always devoted to expression, discussion and reflection. Both the receptive (listening, reading, viewing) and the expressive (speaking, writing) are explored to their fullest dimensions.
- Language materials aid the development of all aspects of a child's language. These materials are age and skill appropriate and are easily accessible to the children themselves, as part of the prepared classroom environment. Materials developed for other learning areas include the potential for language development.
- Children work both independently and collaboratively on a range of activities. There will often be several different activities, using different materials, being undertaken at the same time within the same classroom. Children are encouraged to help each other and pass-on their own knowledge and understandings. Older children often participate in activities for younger children such as reading aloud, giving oral presentations and organising and managing activities.
- Children engage with as many text types (genres) as possible. Younger children experience the richness of different oral and written traditions, through storytelling and the empowerment of naming the world around them. Older children learn to work with different genres to achieve different effects and develop expressive and receptive skills in order to engage with the world around them. Young adults develop analytical skills, working with and responding to a variety of texts in a critical manner.

- Cultural context is central to language development. All age groups engage with the second language cultures, through the experience of food, music, customs and the celebration of culturally specific events. Excursions and incursions are organised to further facilitate language development.
- Second language development is fostered through exchange student and scholarship programmes, participation in summer camps, reciprocal school visits and staff professional learning.
- Language is a significant component of our commitment to peace education, both in the development of peaceful individuals and of individuals who can find peaceful solutions to areas of conflict.
- The importance of language development is formally acknowledged throughout the school year with events including Book Character Day, Literacy Week, the celebration of national days, student contributions to in-school publications, end-of-term Shuukai (community gatherings), class presentations, parent mornings/afternoons, book readings and involvement in poetry and story writing community projects.

Language Protocols

Treetops Montessori School uses the following:

- Standard English spelling for reading and writing.
- NSW Foundation lettering for handwriting.
- Standardised, authorised referencing systems as appropriate to the task and the subject area.
- An expectation that all members of the school community will use respectful, considerate age-appropriate language when communicating with each other verbally or in writing.