



Stars of Knowledge International School

Language Policy

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Stars of Knowledge International School: A Commitment to the IB PYP

1. SOK Mission

We believe in nurturing inquiring, knowledgeable, and compassionate learners within an inclusive and collaborative community where students feel safe to explore diverse perspectives, take risks, and embrace challenges. By empowering students through innovative teaching practices, we aim to develop each student's unique talents, equipping them with the skills and mindset needed to contribute positively as global citizens in a diverse and interconnected world.

SOK Vision

We cultivate creative innovators who are principled and open-minded, proud of their identity, religion, and homeland while embracing global perspectives. We encourage the exploration of diverse ideas and the development of unique talents, preparing students to be responsible global citizens.

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.

2. Introduction

At Stars of Knowledge (SOK), we believe that a strong bilingual education is essential for our learners' success. We recognize that since language is central to learning, all teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication. Our school fosters a rich linguistic environment where both Arabic and English are celebrated and emphasized. English is the primary language of instruction for the following subjects: Language Arts, Math, Science, ICT, Social Studies, and Drama. It is complemented by a well-defined Arabic curriculum for Arabic Language arts and Islamic studies that aligns with our mission, the International Baccalaureate philosophy, and local educational standards, including the Saudi Ministry of Education guidelines.

3. Philosophy of Language Learning at Stars of Knowledge (SOK)

At Stars of Knowledge (SOK), we appreciate the diversity of languages and cultures that make up our school community. We believe that language is more than just a tool for communication; it is a vital part of how we think, learn, and connect with the world around us. Our approach to language learning is grounded in several core principles:

3.1 Language as a Foundation for Learning

We view language as the heart of all learning at SOK. Through language, students make sense of the world, engage in critical thinking, and share ideas across various subjects. Language learning goes beyond academics; it influences every aspect of a student's life, both in and out of the classroom.

3.2 Language as a Path to Global Citizenship

Learning new languages opens doors to understanding diverse cultures and perspectives. By mastering more than one language, our learners become more aware of the world around them, helping them grow into responsible global citizens—a value that is central to our mission as an IB school.

3.3 Language, Personal Identity, and Cognitive Development

A student's mother tongue is closely tied to their sense of identity and confidence. By mastering their home language, students strengthen their self-identity, making it easier for them to learn new languages and succeed academically.

3.4 Language and Social-Emotional Growth

Language is also key to emotional development. Through social interactions and conversations, students build confidence and explore their identities in a nurturing environment. This emotional growth is just as significant as academic success.

3.5 Learning Through Interaction

We believe that language learning thrives on real-world interactions. Every activity, conversation, and event at SOK provides students with opportunities to practice their language skills, helping them become more effective communicators.

4. Language Community and Profile at Stars of Knowledge

4.1 Students' Profile

The student community at Stars of Knowledge (SOK) primarily consists of Saudi Arabian citizens who speak Arabic as their first language. In addition, we proudly welcome students from various nationalities, each contributing their unique perspectives and enriching our diverse school environment.

4.2 Language of Instruction

Building cognitive skills in both languages enriches our students' learning experiences. By using students' native languages to help them grasp a second language, we create a supportive atmosphere that nurtures their growth. Our focus on vocabulary across all subjects helps ensure that every student is well-equipped for success.

At SOK, we are committed to promoting Arabic and English in every aspect of our school community. We ensure that all communication is available in both languages, reinforcing the importance of maintaining home and family languages while developing proficiency in our core languages. This comprehensive approach enhances language skills and fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures within our community.

4.3 Language Outside the Classroom

While English is the language used for instruction, students can choose which language they use outside the classroom, such as during breaks. This flexibility supports developing and maintaining their mother tongue and encourages students to take agency over their language choices.

4.4 Host Country Language

In addition to English instruction, the school follows the Saudi Ministry of Education's guidelines for the Arabic language and literature curriculum. This ensures that students meet national educational standards and remain connected to their linguistic heritage.

4.5 Language Among Staff and Administration

At Stars of Knowledge (SOK), we embrace English and Arabic as primary communication languages, showcasing our dedication to bilingualism. Our teaching and administrative staff come from diverse cultural backgrounds, enriching our inclusive learning environment. We encourage our teachers to promote and support multilingualism among our students.

We use English and Arabic for professional communication and official correspondence with educational authorities and accrediting bodies. This approach helps us maintain clarity and consistency in all our interactions, reflecting our commitment to our international community and local roots.

4.6 Language of Communication with Parents

We recognize the importance of clear and accessible communication with parents and guardians. Therefore, the language of communication with parents is elective and based on their preferences. Whether parents choose to receive school communications in Arabic or English, we ensure that they are fully informed and engaged in their child's educational journey, fostering a strong partnership between home and school.

5. Language Learning at SOK

5.1 English Language Learner (ELL) Support

At Stars of Knowledge, we aim to support students whose English proficiency is below their grade level. Success in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program requires substantial reading and writing skills, and we aim to help all students reach this standard.

We identify students needing English Language Learner support (ELL) through various methods, including classroom observations, assessments, and admission testing. Each student's enrollment is assessed case-by-case, and a tailored support plan is implemented to ensure optimal learning outcomes. We offer English language support as needed.

Support by Grade Levels:

KG-G1: For early learners, support is integrated within the mainstream classroom. These grade levels emphasize a hands-on approach and integrated lessons, enabling students to develop their language skills naturally through practical learning.

G2-G5: ELL students in these grades participate in three guided reading classes per week, where they can receive extra help to improve their language skills. Teachers offer targeted language support through personalized assistance in the classroom using a push-in model. Based on the teacher's observations, a pull-out model may be implemented when necessary.

In addition to instructional support, we may provide assessment accommodations to ensure that language barriers do not impede students from demonstrating their knowledge effectively.

5.2 Mother Tongue Support

Since most of our students are Saudi citizens, their mother tongue is Arabic. To support this, we follow the Saudi Ministry of Education's guidelines for the Arabic language curriculum. This ensures our students meet national educational standards and connect strongly to their linguistic and cultural heritage.

While the Ministry requires four Arabic language classes per week for each grade, we go above and beyond by allocating seven classes. With three extra classes dedicated to enhancing reading and writing fluency, this additional commitment provides our students ample opportunities to strengthen their skills and excel academically in their mother tongue.

Each grade has a weekly library and guided reading class, split between English and Arabic, allowing students to develop literacy skills in both languages.

The school's extracurricular activities, such as the morning assembly and weekly podcast, are presented in Arabic and English, further promoting bilingualism and cultural appreciation among our students.

5.3 Additional Languages

Multilingualism and Its Importance

We firmly believe that multilingualism is a vital part of a comprehensive education. Communicating in several languages enhances cognitive skills and fosters cultural awareness and empathy among people from different backgrounds. Learning multiple languages enriches a child's educational journey and prepares them for a world where cross-cultural communication is crucial.

As educators, we are dedicated to cultivating these skills in our students, providing them with the necessary tools to succeed in a multicultural environment.

Future Language Program

In line with our dedication to multilingualism, we plan for a future language program focused on teaching additional languages. We recognize the importance of beginning this initiative with French, a language celebrated for its global relevance and cultural depth.

This academic year, we have initiated an experimental program for our Kindergarten (KG) students, offering weekly one-hour French classes. We are confident that this initiative will act as a pilot program, enabling us to gather insights and evaluate the effectiveness of early language instruction. Depending on the feedback and interest from our students and families, we plan to broaden our language offerings in the future, adapting to the evolving needs.

6. Language Assessment at SOK

At Stars of Knowledge (SOK), we emphasize the development of all language skills—both receptive and productive as essential means of communication. Our approach to language assessment is continuous and comprehensive, ensuring that students are assessed in various ways to capture their full range of language abilities.

Assessments include written tasks, oral presentations, listening exercises, speaking activities, comprehension assessments, and evaluations of grammar and structure. This comprehensive assessment strategy is implemented in both English and Arabic, reflecting our commitment to bilingualism and fostering proficiency in both languages. Using these diverse assessment methods, we can effectively monitor and support each student's language development.

7. Professional Development for Teachers at SOK

At Stars of Knowledge (SOK), every teacher is a language teacher. To support this belief, we provide ongoing professional development that empowers our staff with the skills they need to enhance language instruction throughout the curriculum.

We offer a variety of engaging opportunities, including webinars, workshops, model lessons, and peer visits, all designed to help teachers refine their approaches to language teaching. Our webinars and workshops keep our teachers up to date with the latest strategies in language development and inclusive practices. Model lessons showcase how to effectively integrate language skills into different subjects, while peer visits encourage collaboration and sharing best practices among colleagues.

These professional development activities ensure that our teachers are well-equipped to support students' language growth in English and Arabic. This contributes to their academic success and nurtures their personal development.

8. Language Policy Review

We understand that our language policy needs to be dynamic and flexible, allowing it to evolve with the changing needs of our school population. To ensure its relevance and effectiveness, the language policy will be reviewed annually as it is considered a living document. This ongoing evaluation process allows us to adapt to new insights, practices, and the diverse linguistic landscape of our community, ensuring that we continue to meet the needs of all students and staff.

9. References

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