



# Seabrook Primary School

## Language Policy

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### Philosophy

Language is an integral part of our world. It is fundamental to learning and permeates our program. It underpins our functioning; it empowers our communication and enables us to make meaning of a diverse world. To function effectively in society children need to speak, listen, read, view and write with confidence, purpose and enjoyment in a wide range of contexts. Language is a tool that enables people to find information and to express their ideas and opinions.

Students need to:

- learn language
- learn about language
- learn through language

Our school values and supports development in

- the language of instruction – English
- the students mother tongue languages
- students exposure to further languages

At Seabrook we currently provide

- English as the language of instruction
- ESL instruction and support for students with little or no knowledge of English
- Italian instruction in all year levels
- Many opportunities to gain exposure to various languages and cultures through music, art, festivals, assemblies, community events and diverse units of inquiry across the curriculum

Through enthusiastic, meaningful experiences students will develop an understanding and appreciation of language. A rich, literate environment in which all aspects of language are developed is necessary. This will nurture an appreciation of the richness of language and a love of literature. Literacy develops through the active engagement of learners and through meaningful interactions, rather than isolated activities.

Language is a complex web of connections. All strands are taught and learnt simultaneously. Language connects all elements of the curriculum.

Language involves:

- speaking and listening
- written communication
- reading
- visual communication- viewing and presenting, digital learning, multimodal texts etc.

## **Beliefs About Mother Tongue Language**

Members of the Seabrook community come together with a vast range of languages and language experiences. Due to the nature and diversity of the student population, we recognise the need to provide an environment that is respectful of all mother tongue languages, where all cultures are valued and to provide an inclusive environment for students and community members. We believe a solid foundation and continued development of the mother tongue language is essential in the development of language and is crucial in maintaining identity, cultural understanding and empathy.

Language connection between home and school is vital as are connections between classrooms, the library and the wider community.

To encourage and support mother tongue development we:

- provide bilingual dictionaries, books and DVDs, in a range of languages
- display posters and labels in different languages, have children share greetings, songs, counting and varied writing systems
- have bilingual versions of well known stories
- celebrate international mindedness and diversity
- encourage children to bring in a wide range of artefacts
- encourage parents and community members to visit classrooms, read stories in different languages and share experiences
- support families to access language classes- offer information, support applications

## **Languages Other Than English (LOTE)**

Seabrook Primary School offers the children from Prep to year 6 the opportunity to learn Italian. We believe exposure to more than one language offers multiple perspectives, enriches personal growth and helps facilitate international understanding. Our LOTE teachers nurture, inspire and challenge students to explore, expand and realise their capacity to acquire another language. This provides students with the opportunity to access the world through the eyes of another culture and heritage. LOTE learning broadens the students knowledge, extends their cognitive skills and enhances understanding and appreciation of others. This allows them to reflect on their own language, develop more understanding of how other people think and feel, communicate and relate. The children learn to empathise with others through learning another language.

The language strands – listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting are taught simultaneously. The children learn the language, learn about language and learn through language.

The LOTE program provides students with stimulating and inspiring experiences. All children are valued for their efforts and individuality and are encouraged to “have a go”. The mission statement, learner profile and attitudes are all displayed and explored during the LOTE program.

## English As a Second Language (ESL)

At Seabrook we believe that our ESL program should:

- support children in their integration into the school's academic and social programs. In a relaxed, nurturing and stress free learning atmosphere, students develop the confidence necessary to take risks and accept their own linguistic experimentations
- provide instruction which allows children to develop English according to their individual needs and abilities
- be an enjoyable experience for children as this will foster the students motivation, interest, desire to learn and their level of achievement
- build on the cultural and language experience of the child
- help maintain communication between home and school
- build on what is already known

English is the language of instruction at Seabrook Primary School. The students are immersed in an English speaking environment and are nurtured and supported – linguistically, emotionally, socially by the classroom teacher, support staff and the school community. The goal of this support is the development of confidence and independence so students can interact and join in with English speaking students as quickly and as often as possible.

The Seabrook Primary School program is designed to provide support to children as they move into a new language. Through this support they will learn and use English. We think of ALL teachers as teachers of English because we know that all of our students are developing their knowledge and understanding of English in every subject and class in which they participate.

New arrivals will often access the Western English Language School for intense language instruction in a small group setting.

Often the students at Seabrook will work in small, flexible groups. They will develop concepts, vocabulary and structures which will allow them to receive (listen and read) and express (speak and write) the English language. The students will learn both social and school English. Social English will help students function successfully in the classroom, in the playground, at birthday parties etc.

The language that is used in classrooms is more difficult and complex than social English. It is the language and skills that students need to be successful in learning. Sometimes teachers will concentrate on the vocabulary and concepts that the student will need for classroom work. Support staff and the classroom teacher cooperate to give the ESL students the best possible preparation in this kind of language acquisition.

Within the classroom students learn about the conventions and structures of English so that they can use language correctly. Vocabulary and spelling are practised and implemented in authentic writing tasks. Though language permeates all learning and inquiries there are many units of inquiry which focus on language. Specific vocabulary development helps children access the information required to explore inquiry. By participating in a wide range of school activities such as singing, dancing, art activities, sport, camps, excursions, assemblies, etc students are continuously using and reinforcing their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

Students who join us with very limited or no English cannot be expected to participate as fully as fluent speakers of English therefore teachers modify or adapt the experiences to reflect the level of the student's competencies. As the ESL student gains fluency in English the teachers' expectations rise to reflect the child's growing knowledge and use of English.

## **Purpose**

At Seabrook Primary School our teaching and learning practices are aimed at improving outcomes for all students. Our Language Curriculum aims to provide each student with a range of appropriate experiences to enhance their literacy skills in all components of language learning.

## **Aims**

The purpose of the Language Program is to:

- ensure all children are supported and extended, enabling them to develop and improve their literacy skills
- provide a challenging and comprehensive literacy program that encompasses all modes of language learning
- develop students' self esteem, confidence, proficiency and independence in language learning

## **Implementation**

Classroom practices in language learning will reflect the Learning and Teaching Policy which states that:

- all students want to learn and are capable of learning
- as a community we are committed to a constructivist, inquiry based approach to teaching and learning and this in turn promotes inquiry and the development of critical thinking skills
- learning is best supported in classrooms that promote a co-operative approach to learning
- classrooms will promote self-esteem and confidence in learning
- the curriculum is broad and comprehensive and will cater for all students needs
- the curriculum will develop the abilities of each student

We will develop teaching and learning practices that:

- reflect the PYP Language Scope and Sequence, Victorian Curriculum English, school guides, advice from DET and incorporates the First Steps materials
- recognise that literacy involves thinking, speaking, listening, viewing, reading and writing within a relevant context
- build upon previous learning which will lead to future learning
- support a differentiated approach to address the competencies, experiences, learning needs and styles of students
- build confidence in the use of the inquiry process, experimenting and employing creative learning experiences
- recognise that the development of literacy is central to all key learning areas
- teachers will be given the opportunity to share their professional knowledge, expertise and talents through co-operative planning both within year levels and across departments
- through professional development teachers will be given the opportunity to enhance their repertoire of teaching strategies

## **Resourcing**

- a language program budget will be developed in line with the school global budget to manage resources
- in the early years home reading and guided reading materials will be levelled using the Reading Recovery Levels as a guide
- all materials that support the language program will be catalogued through the library and housed in classrooms as needed
- the library program and ICT program will support literacy development
- students will borrow reading materials through the library
- parents will be encouraged to provide additional assistance for students and support in classrooms
- reading support programs will be provided for students in need

## **Evaluation**

The language program will be monitored through:

- outcome measures, the goals and benchmarks stated in the School Annual Implementation Plan and School Strategic Review
- Student progress will be tracked using data, Assessment and Reporting schedule, First Steps or School Based Continua and Suite of Data.
- Individual Learning Improvement Plans will be prepared for students with particular needs.