

Language Policy

2026–27 | TSS-CUR-07

Scope	Whole school: KG1–Year 13
Policy owner	Head of School
Operational lead	Relevant school lead / IB DP Coordinator
IB alignment	Culture 5 (0301-04)
Review cycle	Annual

IB Mission

“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.”

The Sultan's School 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.”

IB Learner Profile

The IB learner profile aims to develop learners who are:

Inquirers	Knowledgeable
Thinkers	Communicators
Principled	Open-minded
Caring	Risk-takers
Balanced	Reflective

Assessment at TSS is grounded in the school's educational mission and aligned with the philosophy and principles of the International Baccalaureate.

1. Purpose and school context

This is a whole-school policy for The Sultan's School (TSS), applying from KG1 to Year 13. TSS is a bilingual Arabic-English school in the Sultanate of Oman. Its educational model combines Omani national requirements with international curricula and seeks to provide a broad and balanced education that strengthens Omani and Islamic culture and identity while developing international-mindedness, academic excellence, leadership, service and lifelong learning.

The policy is designed to operate coherently across the school's phases: Early Years; Primary; Middle School (Years 7–9); IGCSE (Years 10–11); and the IB Diploma Programme (Years 12–13). Where an examination board, the International Baccalaureate, or the Ministry of Education sets a specific requirement, that requirement takes precedence for the relevant programme.

2. Language philosophy

Language is central to identity, culture, belonging and learning at TSS. Arabic and English have distinctive and complementary roles: Arabic is central to Omani identity, culture and national educational requirements; English provides access to much of the international curriculum and global academic discourse. Multilingualism is recognised as a fact, a right and a resource for learning.

3. Whole-school principles

- Every teacher is a teacher of language within their subject or phase.
- Students' home languages and cultural identities are respected and valued.
- Arabic and English are promoted as languages of learning, communication and community.
- Academic vocabulary, reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing are explicitly developed across the curriculum.
- A student's strongest/home language should be maintained and valued while additional languages develop.
- Students are supported to develop proficiency in at least one language in addition to their home/strongest language.
- Language use should be respectful, inclusive and appropriate to context.

4. Language across the phases

4.1 Early Years and Primary

Students experience a bilingual Arabic-English programme combining international and Omani national expectations. Oral language, early literacy, reading for pleasure and confidence in communication are prioritised. Teachers use developmentally appropriate bilingual and visual resources and communicate with families about language development.

4.2 Middle School (Years 7–9)

Subjects taught in Arabic follow Ministry of Education requirements, while English-medium subjects follow the school's international curriculum. Subject teachers explicitly teach the language and disciplinary literacy needed for success and prepare students for the increased academic language demands of IGCSE.

5. IGCSE-specific provisions

In Years 10–11, the IGCSE curriculum is largely delivered through English alongside Arabic and other national requirements. Arabic, English and English Literature form part of the school's published core IGCSE offer, with language placement and examination entry determined by current programme requirements and student profile.

- Subject teachers explicitly teach examination command terms and subject-specific academic language.
- Language support should enable access to subject content without changing the assessment construct.
- IGCSE language choices and entry routes should prepare students appropriately for later DP language placement.
- Where a student follows a language pathway different from the usual TSS route, the rationale and future implications should be clearly communicated.

6. IB Diploma-specific provisions

The DP language offer is reviewed annually according to IB authorisation, staffing, student need and viable provision. Course placement must comply with current IB rules and should provide an appropriately challenging language-learning experience. TSS's bilingual mission means that Arabic and English remain central considerations in programme planning.

- Students receive individual guidance on Language A and Language B placement based on prior study, proficiency and current IB eligibility rules.
- The DP language offer provides opportunities for Language B and, where appropriate and viable, ab initio study alongside Language A pathways.
- Where feasible and compliant, the school supports appropriate options for students whose strongest/home language is not part of the regular taught offer.
- Any school-supported self-taught language arrangement must meet current IB requirements and be approved by the DP Coordinator.
- Language development is supported in all DP subjects, including the academic language required for Theory of Knowledge and the Extended Essay.

7. Language support and inclusion

A student's developing Arabic or English proficiency should not automatically be identified as a learning difficulty, and multilingualism should not mask a genuine learning need. Language and Inclusion staff collaborate when evidence is unclear. Students needing targeted language development may receive additional support according to available provision.

The school considers students' home/strongest languages, prior language learning and proficiency when making placement and support decisions, and reviews this information as needs change.

Developing proficiency in a language of instruction should not, in itself, restrict equitable access to learning or to the IB programme; appropriate support and differentiation are provided within programme and admissions requirements.

8. Resources and community

- Arabic and English library collections, age-appropriate literature and reference resources.
- Digital and multimedia resources that support reading, listening, speaking and research.
- Opportunities for public speaking, performance, debate, writing and celebration of language and literature.
- Family engagement that encourages reading and continued development of home languages.
- Cultural and national events that connect language with Omani identity and international-mindedness.

9. Responsibilities

- Leadership: protect and resource the bilingual mission and support relevant professional learning in language teaching and multilingual education.
- Arabic and English leaders: ensure coherent progression and high expectations.
- All teachers: teach the language demands of their disciplines.
- IGCSE/DP Coordinators: ensure programme language choices meet current requirements.
- Librarian: provide multilingual resources and research support.
- Students: actively develop communication and respect linguistic diversity.
- Parents: support reading and language development at home.

Monitoring, communication and review

The policy will be communicated through staff induction and professional learning, student and parent guidance, relevant handbooks and the school website or parent portal as appropriate. Implementation will be monitored through school data, quality assurance, stakeholder feedback and review of cases. The policy will be reviewed annually and earlier where changes to Omani requirements, examination-board regulations, IB requirements or school practice make this necessary.

Related policies and documents

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour / Student Conduct Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Complaints and Appeals procedures
- Data Protection / Acceptable Use of Technology guidance
- Current examination-board regulations and subject specifications
- Current IB programme documentation and procedures

Reference base

- IB Programme standards and practices (Culture through policy implementation, 0301).
- Current IB guidance relevant to this policy and the Diploma Programme.
- The Sultan's School published curriculum and programme information.
- Applicable Ministry of Education requirements in the Sultanate of Oman.