



PLEDGE HARBOR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

PHIS LANGUAGE POLICY

ACADEMIC YEAR: (2022-2023)

MEMBERS OF STEERING COMMITTEE:

**Adnan Chowdhury, Mary Herbel Santiago, Prachee Sinha , Sujata
Chowdhury, Rajani Roy, Babita Sidhu**

PLEDGE HARBOR LANGUAGE POLICY

“All IB Programs value language as central to the development of critical thinking which is essential for cultivating intercultural understanding and responsible membership in local, national, and global communities”

— MYP Language & Literature, IBO

PHIS LANGUAGE POLICY: PHILOSOPHY

By integrating language into every aspect of the curriculum, we are teaching our students to be part of a caring and committed international community that enhances their personal growth, cognitive development, and international understanding. Our **Language Policy** encompasses programs that reverberate the IB benchmarks where students across the world become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

English is the **Working Language** of IB instruction at PHIS. It is also the language to be used for internal and external assessments as well as admissions requirements.

Assessments are conducted in English to ensure students can access the curriculum which is mostly delivered in English.

Apart from English, we also promote the use of our *mother tongue*, which in our case is mostly **Bangla**. All courses, apart from Bangla, are instructed and assessed in English.

Procedures of Admissions to PHIS

At PHIS, we are determined to focus and appreciate the capability of each student. Our admission procedure is based on the level of understanding of the context, concept, and requirement needed for the program and grades learners are opting for. For non-proficient students in English, we have English as a Second Language (ESL) department. The classes are designed in a way that has the constructive and practical features to enable students to be able to understand the target language. As a continuum school, our primary focus is to ensure and instill the knowledge required for program-specific lessons and development in the target language areas from Primary Years Programme (PYP) to Middle Years Programme (MYP) until Diploma Programme (DP).

The admission assessments are IB-aligned benchmarks exams that assess their conceptual and contextual understanding of texts. It also assesses their ability to comprehend and to produce oral and written texts. Students who intend to get admitted need to take an assessment which is in English, Mathematics, and Bangla (their mother tongue).

During the diagnostic examination, the following protocol should be followed:

- a) Rubrics clarifying task-specific requirements should be shared with the students.
- b) Facilitators should try to understand the ability of each student in terms of delivery, connection, and interpretation of the content and context.

- c) Facilitators should diagnose the student's understanding of the complexity of the target language.
- d) Facilitators should assess the student's language level with the help of the ESL teachers.

The final decision is based on criteria of PHIS admissions. The five stages/ phases of learners' aptitude are:

1. Beginners;
2. Pre-intermediate;
3. Intermediate;
4. Upper intermediate and
5. Advanced

The results of the interview, assessments, and eventual recommendations are made by the Heads of Language Departments. They will determine the placement of the student in appropriate programs.

Support for ESL

Students with limited English language skills are accepted throughout Primary and Middle School. They are supported through **English as a Second Language** (ESL) program.

All second-language learners enrolled at PHIS must be assessed upon enrollment in the following areas: *comprehension (oral and written)* and *production (oral and written)*. Based on the students' aptitude at the time, a decision will be made as to whether or not ESL sessions are required. This is offered in order to meet the demands of the students who are enrolled who came from schools who are not using English as a medium of instruction.

Depending on the students' ability, students will spend as much time in the ESL program as needed until they reach a level of proficiency that allows them to participate in their classes. Each student must take English language classes in order to adapt to the medium of instructional language, i.e. English.

ESL classes are small group classes. This tailors the class content to the students' needs. This system also facilitates interaction among students. The ESL teachers are giving exclusive and intensive efforts to monitor the students' progress in the regular classes.

PHIS expects that students would be proficient enough to cope with the school curriculum. The ESL teachers are assigned specific amounts of time required for the students depending upon their need to reach up to the level of competence in the language of instruction required for the MYP and DP.

In MYP and DP, two parallel classes are offered: *English Language and Literature* and *English Language Acquisition*. Students whose English language skills need further development are placed in *Language Acquisition* classes.

Language is integral to exploring and sustaining personal development and cultural identity, and provides an intellectual framework that supports the construction of conceptual understanding.

--- MYP Language & Literature, IBO

LANGUAGE PROGRAMS AT PHIS

Primary Years Program (PYP)

- Focus should be on how children best learn – practical approach, using a variety of strategies which are linked with and developed through the unit of inquiry, content, and context of the subject.
- Reading, speaking, writing, use of media and other required skills, all need to be covered and linked in each of the programs so that the learners are adapting with the level of complexity and work towards the goal in achieving their needs.
- Collaborative planning between class teachers and specialists is an integral part at PHIS. To ensure the best possible approach, vertical and horizontal collaboration within the Department as well as the whole school curriculum are conducted.
- All languages are valued. PHIS strives to make every learner proficient in two languages at the same time.
- A learning portfolio is kept to monitor the learners' progress in the PYP. We keep a record of each student and their progress so that the essence of being a continuum school is always in practice.
- After consulting with the teaching and learning community, additional assistance in the English language is offered to Early Years learners who require extra support after school.
- Tailored assistance is given through the creation of individualized lesson plans and differentiated teaching strategies to address specific learning needs.
- Library lessons for both English and Bangla are seamlessly integrated into the daily routine to provide extra language support.

Middle Years Programme (MYP)

- *Language acquisition* and *language and literature* classes are offered to the students. This is decided by the department with the help of a two step assessment procedure. We are transparent and promised to ensure the procedure is followed strictly so that each student can be guided accordingly.
- There is consistency in how *language acquisition* and *language and literature* is taught, no matter the language of instruction. The language department conducts both horizontal and vertical alignment meetings.
- Students must be able to study at least one additional language (or a second language from the *language and literature* subject group) sustained across the entire year in each year of the MYP.
- Subject-specific portfolios are kept to monitor student's progress throughout their time in MYP.
- Students are given the option to take MYP E-Assessment exams in *English Language & Literature*, *English Acquisition* and *Spanish Acquisition*.

Diploma Programme (DP)

- Languages offered in the Diploma Programme are both in *Language A and B*. Bangla being the mother tongue and Bangladesh the host country, *Bengali A: Literature* is offered. *English A: Language & Literature* is also offered. For Language B, *English Language Acquisition* and *Spanish Ab Initio* are offered.
- School supports students to make informed self-taught language options.
- Students are given the option to write their Extended Essay (EE) in both Bangla and English.

Career-Related Programme (CP)

- All IBCP related courses will be run in English languages, the same as IBDP group 3, 4, 5 and 6 subjects.
- Spanish will be offered to CP students as it is for DP students. Bangla will also be offered. These are for students who want to pursue a bilingual diploma/certificates.

Mother Tongue Support

We acknowledge the importance of all students' **Mother Tongue** in promoting personal identity and maintaining cultural heritage. Students from PYP, MYP to DP study *Bangla* as one of their subjects. They are also free to speak their mother tongues outside of academic use.

Cultural programs, festivities and occasions upholding Bengali culture are carried out by staff and students throughout the academic year in the school campus. During assemblies and events, the national anthem is sung. Such activities not only ensure the nationalistic feelings amongst Bangladeshi students, the programs also allow the foreign students to appreciate and learn the Bengali culture and customs, further allowing opportunities to create **international mindedness** within the PHIS campus.

The Tuesday morning assembly is conducted in Bangla to foster and enhance the learners' language skills in that particular language. Drama facilitators take measures to ensure that learners are also encouraged to express themselves in Bangla during their classes. This freedom of expression is actively encouraged and witnessed during exit assemblies. In the Primary Years Programme (PYP), Bangla songs are incorporated into the Music curriculum in accordance with the unit integration requirements.

In PYP, a specific lesson is assigned for the library to enhance reading skills and knowledge of Bangla language and Bengali culture.

Some of the events where direct mother tongue practices are held:

- 21 February as The International Mother Language Day
- 26 March observing Independence Day.
- 13 February is the Spring Festival (Pohela Falgun)
- 14 April is the Bengali New Year (Pohela Boishakh)
- 16 December the Victory Day of the country

Literary Club

As part of moving towards international mindedness, PHIS maintains the *Literary Club* in order to introduce and facilitate the appreciation of the literary arts.

The primary objectives of this club shall be:

- To move towards international mindedness
- To develop language and literary-related abilities of the learners/ students
- To help show respect to other languages and cultures
- To bring diversities in thoughts and actions

Communication

- All school communication materials and correspondence will be produced in the *Working Language* English. However, specific documents (targeted at universities or to parents) can be communicated in the *Access language*, Bangla. (Refer to *IB Language Policy, Updated February 2014, and page 2*).
- Reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and presenting are taught allowing students to enhance skills needed in the classroom as well as for real-life situations.
- Teachers must instruct through various types of learning strategies. They will use visual aids and printed materials in the language of instruction.
- Students are given the opportunity to engage in conversations, gather information, and produce outputs in the target language.

Instruction

	PYP	MYP	DP	CP
We use all studied languages as a medium of inquiry, providing opportunities to challenge first language speakers and to develop second language speakers.	Y	Y	Y	Y
The ongoing language development of students is the responsibility of all teachers, parents and students.	Y	Y	Y	Y
We understand that we have a diverse student body with diverse needs and that differentiation within our classes is crucial for success for all students.	Y	Y	Y	Y

We teach language through context.	Y	Y	Y	Y
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We strive to participate in as much professional development as is possible.	Y	Y	Y	Y
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We give ongoing feedback on students' progress in all languages offered	Y	Y	Y	Y
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ASSESSMENT OF GRADES, GRADING SYSTEMS, REMEDIAL ASSISTANCE

Assessments should follow the IB PYP, MYP and DP Assessment Criteria. Assessment criteria should be explained, discussed and used all throughout the year to ensure that students are very familiar in terms of how they are being assessed. Assessments should follow the best-fit judgment, ensuring that enough formatives are given before the submission of the summative assessment task.

In PYP, we follow and share assessment criteria such as rubrics and checklists. Differentiation is provided to students who are struggling. Support classes are also given. If there is proper documentation, accommodation should be provided to students with learning difficulties.

All students benefit from the assistance of language development found in their academic courses as aided by their content instructors. Language development support can be found in each classroom at PHIS. Formative assessments are designed not only around assessing the acquisition of content knowledge and skills but also around engaging students in regular use of *Standard Academic English* as well as the language of the content. The instruction, reflection and assessment of content knowledge and skills lead to summative assessments that are regularly reviewed with alignment to the language of instruction and the language of the IB standards, practices and assessments.

PHIS provides regular after-school tutorial sessions whereby students are able to get one-to-one or small group support in meeting the course expectations. Moreover, since PHIS is a residential Boarding School, it is customary that teachers make themselves available after school hours to assist students who are lagging or not performing up to their potential. Prior to exams, the Curriculum Office regularly schedules after school sessions for students who need help in certain subjects.

THE USE OF THE LIBRARY FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

Language Support Mechanisms:

The expansive PHIS library provides a learning environment as well as the necessary up-to-date digital one particularly geared to IB. We have a three-storey well-resourced library to meet the requirements of each student.

It is a three-floor facility where students can work individually or in groups in a quiet and attractive environment. The library is equipped with WIFI. The first floor caters to the PYP students, the second floor to the MYP students, and the third floor to the DP students. Students can find a central formal seating with chairs and tables or sofas for a more relaxed study setting. Some seating options are scattered to provide better isolated working stations.

Shelf space for printed materials store approximately 8,388 titles nearly equally divided between English and Bangla language. Magazines are carried in three languages through 22 subscriptions. A balance is maintained in titles in different subject areas, interests (current events, sciences, literature, history, geography, economy, etc.) and reading levels. A growing selection of videos is also available for the IB learner.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

Differentiation and support are given for students who need language support for SEN (language delay or a language based dyslexia who require speech therapy). If a further opinion is needed, PHIS recommends seeking professional help.

INCORPORATING INTERNATIONAL-MINDEDNESS

PHIS strives to offer a multitude of opportunities to help students gain exposure to various languages and different cultures through real-life experience: art, music, festivals, assemblies, multicultural events and clubs, curricular units and field trips.

Creativity, Action & Service (CAS) activities give opportunities for students to focus on the linguistic and cultural diversity of the community and allow for the practice of languages other than their first language

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Coordinators' responsibility is to ensure that staff is made aware of professional development opportunities as well as to evaluate and acquire suitable professional development resources. Workshops for teachers are provided (either online or face-to-face) to ensure teachers and staff are cognizant of the latest methodologies and acceptable methods of teaching as prescribed by IB Guidelines. A variety of resources provides teachers with current research and best practices in language learning.

IBCP/DP/MYP/PYP coordinators decide the training/ workshops for teachers based on needs and requirements of the curriculum.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS

In PHIS, we believe it is the shared responsibility of all stakeholders: parents, students, teachers, administration, and staff to support and uphold the *language philosophy* as well as to ensure that all students use English responsibly. Each individual has a responsibility in learning and teaching language.

The Teachers:

- Use a variety of strategies to help students comprehend, interpret, evaluate and respond to a variety of sources (verbal and written) even when the sources are in a language other than the students' first language.
- Expose students to a wide range of sources reflecting a variety of cultures. Give students specific and constructive linguistic feedback.
- Seek continuing education regarding language instruction.
- Provide multiple types of assessment. Matching assessment to students' learning profiles and language proficiency ensures that every student has an opportunity to demonstrate what he/she knows.

The Students:

- Become an active language learner through inquiry and authentic real-life applications.
- Become fluent in a language other than his/her mother tongue and are respectful of another individual's language and culture.
 - See language as a tool for life-long learning.

The Parents:

- Value the development of language skills.
- Participate in meetings regarding the IB Program and language instruction.
- Agree with the Language Policy of PHIS.

REFERENCES:

IB Language Policy. International Baccalaureate Organization, 2014 *Guidelines for Developing a School Language Policy*. International Baccalaureate Organization, 2008

“Language & Literature”. International Baccalaureate Organization,
<https://www.ibo.org/programmes/middle-years-programme/curriculum/language-and-literature>