



ASPENDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL LANGUAGE POLICY

2017

Our Philosophy

Aspendale Primary School understands that language is a child's first and most powerful learning tool. We value the process of language learning and understand the distinct link between oral language and 21st century literacy, recognising language as the formative building block of a global minded, respectful and inquiring individual.

At Aspendale Primary School we believe that it is through the study of language that individuals learn to analyse, understand, communicate with and build relationships with others and the world around them. The term "language" encompasses a range of literacies, including the understanding of written, oral and visual information, and an ability to interpret numerical information and effectively use and engage with multi-media and technology. We strive to improve students' vocabulary and ability to select and interpret information across all mediums and be able to articulate thoughts, ideas and feelings to demonstrate understanding.

Instructively, research tells us that the greatest influence on students' literacy and language development are the teacher and the quality of the teaching that takes place in the classroom. Our students are given the opportunity to write, read and practice their oral language skills on a daily basis.

The Policy

Aspendale Primary School is a collaborative learning community committed to continuous improvement. Language is fundamental in constructing meaning, modelling skills and attitudes and reflecting on practice and experiences with the primary aim of improving learning and teaching.

The learning process simultaneously involves learning language – as learners listen to and use language with others in their everyday lives; learning about language – as learners grow in their understanding of how language works; and learning through language – as learners use language as a tool to listen, think, discuss and reflect on information, ideas and issues.

Overview

At Aspendale Primary School we recognise that the acquisition of language is a dynamic, lifelong and social process that permeates all learning, therefore, all teachers are language teachers. The teaching of language is crucial in equipping learners with the language skills they need to become effective learners in their own communities, the world of work and society in general. Language is crucial in nurturing the full development of each learner and fostering the values of diversity, international mindedness and intercultural awareness. Language provides a vehicle for learners to engage with the world, and to relate to, and accept responsibility for helping to create a better and more peaceful world.

Expectations

Students experience a balanced and sequential language curriculum based on the Victorian Curriculum and delivered through the Primary Years Programme.

Language Programs offered at Aspendale Primary School

English is the main language of instruction at Aspendale Primary School, and the predominant language in the Australian community. The teaching of English is centered on the conscious and

deliberate study of Language, Literature and Literacy. The study of English is central to the learning and development of all Aspendale students; it helps create confident communicators, imaginative thinkers and informed citizens. It is through the study of English that individuals learn to analyse, understand, communicate with and build relationships with others and the world around them. The role of language is crucial in nurturing the full development of each learner and fostering the values of diversity, international mindedness and intercultural awareness. It helps them become ethical, thoughtful, informed and active members of society.

Aspendale Primary School provides a balanced language curriculum which supports and develops a deep and enduring knowledge about languages and the ability to effectively speak, listen, read, write, view and present with purpose and confidence, in a wide range of contexts. The language curriculum supports the ability to recognise and select language appropriate to different situations, an understanding and application of the conventions of language, and an abiding enjoyment and appreciation of languages.

Providing a program in more than one language is essential when developing internationally minded learners. We support the belief of the International Baccalaureate, expressed in the Learner Profile, that a communicator is someone who understands and expresses ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language, and in a variety of modes of communication. Further, understanding language is fundamental to appreciating other perspectives and developing an authentic sense of Internationalism. Aspendale Primary School students are given the opportunity to become proficient in a second language. It is through learning a second language that students gain a viewpoint from a different cultural perspective. The Second Language Learner program of Chinese, provides all students with the experience of cultural immersion and language development.

Supporting Mother Tongue

Aspendale Primary School recognizes the vital place of students' home language in their speaking and listening development. Our teachers provide an environment that values the language resources that students bring to school and build on these resources to facilitate learning in all subject areas. Learning one's own culture and language is requisite to optimally understanding and enjoying the language and culture of others.

At Aspendale Primary School we acknowledge a child's right to maintain their connectedness to their culture through opportunities to continue to develop their mother tongue. Literacy in the home language is recognised as an important part in the development of all students' self-esteem and cultural identity and is a key component of successful learning in English.

Aspendale Primary School is predominantly English speaking and we have one student from an indigenous background. A significant number of students were born overseas and have strong cultural roots from other countries. English is the main language spoken at home for the vast majority of students, though not all. Some cultures represented at the time of making this policy are: South African, Greek, Indian, Russian, Vietnamese and Chinese. The language of instruction at Aspendale Primary School is English and Additional Language Learning is Chinese (Mandarin).

Student Support

Teachers will identify students with special needs, including EAL, academic and social/personal. Teachers will develop appropriate modifications to the learning program that are consistent with the perceived needs of the student. Where appropriate, teachers will refer students for assessments that may lead to additional support. Classroom teachers will review the student information and develop action plans (ILP) for meeting the student's needs. These plans are implemented for a period of time and evaluated for effectiveness.

Implementation

We believe that language should be taught in context and address a wide range of areas such as reading, writing, viewing, presenting to an audience, nonverbal communication, and speaking and listening. Students have numerous opportunities to use their language skills to pursue personal interests in Social Sciences, Visual and Performing Arts, Literature, Technology, The Sciences, Mathematics and Additional Languages. Technology such as interactive whiteboards, iPads and computers complement and enhance language programs.

Assessment

The prime objective of assessment at Aspendale Primary School is to provide feedback on the learning process. Therefore teachers at Aspendale Primary School use a range of formative assessment tasks to determine what the students know, and what they next need to learn.

Summative assessment of student language learning at Aspendale Primary School is assessed and reported upon using the Victorian Curriculum guidelines.

Assessment tools outlined in the APS assessment and reporting schedule include:

- VCAA On Demand Tests
- Running Records – Fountas and Pinnell Benchmarking
- NAPLAN – Year Level 3 and 5
- PAT (Reading, Grammar and Punctuation, Vocabulary, Spelling)
- SWST Spelling
- Words Their Way diagnostic spelling test
- Online English Interview – Foundation
- Cold Write – Australian Writing Criterion Scale

Student progress and achievement in language is communicated to students and families through:

- Three-way conferences (student, parent, teacher)
- Teacher-Student conferences
- Student Led conferences
- Student Reports – June and December
- Individual Student Portfolios – Digital and Hardcopy
- The Exhibition

Please refer to APS Assessment Policy for further information

Reading

Reading sessions are guided by the Reader's Workshop Model, which consists of the following elements: Read Aloud, Shared or Modelled Reading with an explicit teaching focus, then Independent Reading that involves reading texts that are 'Just Right' or differentiated. Purposeful learning experiences occur daily to build not only a love of reading, but fluency, stamina, accuracy, comprehension and expanding vocabulary. Comprehension is an integral part of all reading sessions, as without it, we are not really engaging deeply with a text. Guided Reading, Reciprocal Reading and Literature Circles can also be part of the Reading session.

Writing (including Spelling and Grammar)

Writing crosses all curriculum areas from Foundation to Year Six. Writing sessions include a clear learning intention, modelled or shared writing, independent writing time, opportunities for individual conferences and a time to share work. When planning writing sessions teachers at Aspendale Primary School incorporate elements of the Seven Steps to Writing Success and VCOP & Big Write programs. There is a balanced approach to the genres and text types taught, using the context of the Units of Inquiry, the Victorian Curriculum and student choice.

Students learn to spell words by studying them and engage in a variety of sound, pattern and word meaning activities tailored to improve their spelling knowledge based on their stage of development. Students' grammar and punctuation acquisition is through word study, writing, reading, and speaking and listening sessions. VCOP elements are taught in order to support student learning of grammar and punctuation.

Speaking and Listening

Oral language underpins all elements of learning at Aspendale Primary School. Students are given opportunities for both planned and unplanned speaking, and are taught the difference between speaking formally and informally. Communication skills for taking part in conversations, listening to and responding appropriately to others are explicitly taught, and processes, strategies and conventions for speaking and listening are included in teaching and learning programs.

LOTE

The language other than English (LOTE) provided at Aspendale Primary School is Chinese (Mandarin). It operates from Foundation to Year Six, through one specialist lesson weekly. The Chinese program is sequential and allows for the development and realistic acquisition of oral, written and visual language skills. The Chinese Second Language Learners Scope and Sequence details specific ways of supporting language development through the Units of Inquiry. The Chinese program incorporates the PYP and Victorian Curriculum Standards.

Library

Language development will be enriched and developed using the school library, through:

- Ongoing explicit teaching of library skills by classroom teachers from Foundation to Year Six.
- Weekly timetabled teaching and borrowing sessions for each class.
- The use of a variety of references including books, visual and technological media to search for, record and present information.
- Ensuring the texts in the library support the Units of Inquiry, reflect the cultural diversity of our students and their interests.

Library resources are updated regularly to expose students to a wide range of literature including world classics and purchasing of Children's Book of the Year short-listed books each year.

Responsibilities of Stakeholders

Effective implementation of the Language Policy requires the cooperation of all stakeholders of the school community.

School Council

The School Council will:

- Ensure that policies and procedures regarding the language acquisition are developed and implemented and are regularly reviewed through the education sub-committee.
- Support APS in implementing the Language Policy, through planning and development of programs, activities and initiatives at school.

School Leadership

The school leadership will:

- Approve funding, facilities, leadership, and resources for the successful implementation of the Language Policy.
- Hold Communication and Language Leaders accountable for the effective implementation of the Language Policy.
- Ensure the planning, delivery, and evaluation of effective professional development meets the unique requirements of APS in relation to the Language Policy.
- Share responsibility for oversight, implementation and revision of the Language Policy and

curriculum efforts.

- Support teachers in their delivery of instruction.
- Provide a supportive learning and teaching environment which encourages development of knowledge, skills and expertise.
- Provide teachers with the opportunity to attend professional learning sessions to expand and enrich their expertise about languages and language learning.
- Promote an embedded professional development model enabling collaboration concerning curriculum, instructional techniques, assessment and student progress.
- Promote the sharing of professional learning through team and staff development meetings.
- Provide for teacher observation with constructive feedback, materials, planning time and staff development opportunities.
- Promote communication with parents concerning students' language development.
- Promote the importance of maintaining a student's development of their mother tongue.
- Promote an extra-curricular program that encourages the use and development of Chinese (Mandarin).

Classroom and Specialist teachers

Classroom and Specialist teachers will:

- Plan for and teach the conventions of language within the curriculum at each level.
- Provide a balanced language program, contextualised through the Programme of Inquiry.
- Use ongoing assessment of language to inform teachers about the individual learning needs of students.
- Plan incursions, excursions and activities to provide explicit shared experiences and develop shared and common language and further enrich language opportunities for all students.
- Write Individual Learning Plans for students requiring further support.
- Teach language skills for social interaction, using English and/or Chinese as the primary language of instruction and social interaction in and out of the classroom.
- Acquire a professional knowledge base in second language acquisition processes, students' developmental language behaviours, and familiarity with students' language learning cognitive styles.
- Integrate language instruction with content instruction.
- Make high-level academic content instructionally comprehensible (scaffolding).
- Create classroom environments that are discourse-rich and process-oriented (plentiful opportunities for students to listen to, read, speak, and write through interactive activities).
- Support and encourage language self-assessment.
- Give ongoing feedback to students on their linguistic and cognitive development by using a variety of balanced assessment strategies.
- Hold high linguistic and academic expectations for all students.
- Build a strong home-school partnership using various means of communication.
- Emulate dispositions for life in an international world (i.e. tolerance for ambiguity, empathy, flexibility, respect for others' languages and cultures).
- Work collaboratively to develop culturally inclusive and age-and developmentally appropriate curriculum and teaching strategies.
- Integrate appropriate technology that enhances language development.
- Select resources which are linguistically accessible and culturally inclusive.

Learning Enhancement Teachers

Learning Enhancement Teachers will:

- Work closely with classroom teachers to identify students' who would benefit from participating in the Learning Enhancement Program.
- Design the Learning Enhancement Program to cater for the students' strengths & weakness in

language learning.

- Align the Learning Enhancement Programs with classroom teaching programs.
- Communicate consistently with classroom teachers.
- Reflect on and review teaching & learning programs regularly.

Administration

A staff member will be allocated the responsibility for coordinating the Communication and Language Program at Aspendale Primary School. With an Innovation and Development team, the CLL Leader will:

- Be responsible for purchasing and maintaining teaching and learning resources.
- Review language programs annually.
- Prepare an Annual Implementation Plan and budget.
- Coordinate relevant professional development for staff.
- Support and inform staff of best practice in language teaching.

Parents

A number of parental actions will facilitate linguistic and academic success for students.

Families are encouraged to:

- Have a positive attitude toward English, Chinese and home languages.
- Promote the advantages of learning other languages.
- Maintain mother tongue literacy skills in the home or after school.
- Encourage and support their children's additional language acquisition.
- Communicate with other parents to exchange ideas and reduce isolation.
- Supply multilingual materials in the home.
- Be knowledgeable about language-immersion in order to support the school's efforts.
- Be prepared to make the long-term commitments that success requires.
- Have realistic expectations of their children and Aspendale Primary School.

Students

Students are expected to:

- Acquire information by listening to oral presentations, interpreting print and graphic material, and observing and recording practical experiences.
- Convey information by telling stories and explaining ideas.
- Think logically through inference, hypothesis, analysis, prediction and evaluation.
- Accomplish practical tasks either individually or by collaborating in small groups.
- Make decisions by identifying alternatives, evaluating evidence and determining appropriate actions.
- Work creatively by using ideas and materials inventively.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every four years as part of the school's three-year review cycle, or at any time that DEECD policy changes influence reporting practices in schools.

This policy was last ratified by School council in.....

September 2017

References

Guidelines for developing a school language policy, IB, April 2008

Making PYP Happen, IB, December 2009

<http://ibo.org/en/language-policy/>

<http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/foundation10/f10index.aspx>