



SCOTTISH HIGH
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Language Policy

Scottish High International School

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1. Philosophy:

SHIS is located in Gurgaon which has grown to be an IT corporate hub and is catering to a cosmopolitan culture. For these professionals English is a necessary medium of communication, trade and interactions at all levels.

English is accepted as an international language which is also reflected in the attitudes and aspirations of the parents that seek admission to SHIS.

The language policy of SHIS has been designed keeping in mind the varied requirements of the students whom we consider as the major stakeholders, the society, another important stakeholder, national curriculum framework which is a beacon of designing the language policies of educational institutions till senior secondary levels in India, the CIE and the IBO.

At SHIS we understand the due importance to be given to Hindi and various other vernacular as well as international languages that are mother tongue of the respective students. A very elaborate culture of blending this international language – English with the native language or mother tongue of students be it Hindi / Korean / Spanish / Tamil etc has been laid out as a part of our language philosophy and policy.

With the above mentioned stakeholders and the varied requirements, the language policy is an exhaustive written document which is open to review and up gradations, annually.

The other guiding light of this document is the emphasis that is laid on English being the major language of instruction and communication. This should not be read as an imposition of the language or its transgression into the domain of the mother tongue of the student of her/his native language / culture, as English in the present context is considered to be more or less a mother tongue for a large majority of our educational fraternity.

English as a language of instruction implies that the students seeking education at SHIS are looking forward to various facets of learning, be it reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing and investigating, in English. At the same time, the learner as well as the teacher gives due respect and recognition to her / his native language / culture.

The other major purpose of the School Language policy is to outline a framework wherein the journey of education has a multilingual, futuristic, global, and international minded approach. This should be a good opportunity for the educational fraternity of the organisation to explore, share, appreciate and if required, absorb a variety of cultures.

English is also the functional language of the organisation for various operational and developmental activities including managerial, governance and academic platforms.

2. Purpose and Objective of the Scottish High Language Policy:

The language policy of Scottish High International School is designed to achieve the following objectives -

- That language is the core of teaching and learning
- That due consideration and weight age is given to native language / mother tongue.
- That language acquisition is an ever growing process
- That proficiency in the language aids learning in other academic areas
- That language is a mirror of culture, tradition and identity of the user
- That language acquisition fosters respect for cosmopolitanism
- That all teachers are language teachers and
- That the various stakeholders appreciate the multilingual philosophy and culture of SHIS.

3. Language Policy Designing, Monitoring and Review Committee:

The SHIS Language Policy is a bi product of deliberations, surveys, feedbacks, inputs and interactions with various stakeholders from time to time. The final draft was prepared under a steering committee that comprised the Chairman, the School Director (IBDP Coordinator), the Initial School Principal, The Primary School Principal, Senior School Head , Head of the Departments, Language Teachers, Community representatives, the parent representatives and the student community.

Small committees are constituted as and when required to look into the revisions and to address the shortcomings or feedbacks of various stakeholders.

The reviews take place on a yearly basis, at the end of the academic session. The last one being September, 2014.

4. Language Situations, Practices and Profiles:

Education is an ever going and ever encompassing activity that covers all the facets of life and learning. Language plays an omnipotent and omniscient role as no communication can happen without a language – verbal or non verbal. In a school environ major emphasis is laid on the acquisition of skills that talk of verbal aspects be it speaking, listening, writing or viewing.

At SHIS an equal emphasis is laid on pre knowledge and acquisition. This holds truer when it comes to the student who could be bilingual or multilingual. As already stated in our philosophy statement most of the students seeking admission at SHIS come from homes where English is more

of a mother tongue. At times we have students joining our academic fraternity coming from vernacular backgrounds or from international environments where English is not the major medium of instruction. In these cases special initiatives – ESL (English as a Second Language) is in place wherein the student/s are exposed to activities / inputs that aid in their smooth transition from the mother tongue/ native language to English. Special care is taken at all times that at no time the respect and identity of the learner and her/his culture and traditions are compromised upon.

At the time of admission proper systems are in place to ascertain the linguistic background and convenience of the learner as well as the parent. This aids in putting in practice as well as making arrangements to ensure that the learning of the child is not impeded or affected by the variation in the language of instruction – English and the child’s mother tongue / native language. Quarterly review, of the language profile of the learner’s also helps in realising the above mentioned goals and objectives.

Language teaching at SHIS is aimed at skill acquisition and is enquiry oriented. This is in consonance with the broader guidelines of various curriculums that are in practice at our school. Language learning is an integration of orals, writing and visuals. To achieve the acquisition of the various skills we:

- Conduct elocutions, declamations, debates, speeches, talks, dramatisations, PowerPoint Presentations, group discussions, story-telling and etc.

5. Acquisition Phases:

Language acquisition at SHIS like any other educational system occurs at various levels in integrated manner, keeping in mind the phase at which the learner becomes a part of the process at SHIS.

PYP:

A young and eager recipient enters the SHIS journey in the initial school. Here the learner is exposed to initial nuances of dressing, walking, sitting, eating, speaking, listening and various motor skills not to forget the art of socialising and community living.

This is the stage where we exhibit, and practice, and teach due respect and importance to the learners’ mother tongue / native language, culture and traditions. A gradual introduction through phonetics is made into the world of English language. Various tools of learning and skill acquisition are put in place. They include oral communication, viewing, storytelling, colouring, fun filled activities, walks, swimming, dining, and personal hygiene activities.

The PYP is a seven plus years programme wherein the language acquisition happens in a very fast paced yet fun filled, expressive and inquisitive manner. This is also a critical phase wherein all Teachers play the role of language teachers. The acquisition of language involves vocabulary building, refinement of grammatical skills, expressions – oral, aural as well as written, investigation, viewing correction and numerical analysis. This is blended with the acquisition of aesthetic language in the way of music, dance, drama, and painting.

Since the intake of the learner happens –externally – new admissions, and internally – yearly up gradation it is important that a proper investigation and assessment and inputs are in place. The admission document / portfolio helps the education providers – Teachers, to put in place the appropriate tools of teaching and learning which include weekly exposure to mother tongue / native language, Teachers, speakers, facilitators. The exposure / interaction with the mother tongue / native language, speaker, Teacher, facilitator is paced as per the requirement of the learner.

The above exercise fosters respect for multiculturalism as well as high esteem in a learner’s mind about her / his culture, tradition and richness of language.

Middle School:

By now the learner has acquired considerable proficiency in languages. This is the time when we introduce refinement of various aspects of expression and investigation. Emphasis is laid to ensure that the learner effectively communicates her / his ideas, learnings, and responses through presentations, assignments, classroom activities and periodic assessments – formative and summative.

Even at the middle school practices are in order to:

- Ensure exposure to native language, culture, traditions through celebration of international days, festivals – Korean Children’s Day, Halloween Day, etc. Which happens across the school.
- Ensure incorporation of vernacular, native vocabulary in the learning – teaching modules (wherever required concepts and technical jargons are explained in English – the medium of instruction as well as in Hindi / mother tongue / native language).
- Enrich the general vocabulary as also to instil in the minds of the learners a feeling of respect for various languages.
- Ensure timely interventions of native language / mother tongue, speakers, tutors, facilitators, whenever required –for all who find English challenging.

Through these incorporations a spirit of internationalism and multilingualism is fostered in the school environment. We have observed that a congenial international environment is being propagated at SHIS as a result of these initiatives.

The school follows a three language formula as per the requirements of the National Curriculum framework.

English is the first language as it is the major language of instruction.

Hindi which happens to be the mother tongue of majority of students in North India is the second language. This helps the students recognise, respect and propagate their native language, culture and traditions. All children opt for Hindi as a second language and for the students coming from across the shores as well as those to find Hindi language acquisition highly challenging special remedial classes are provided and the assessment tools are designed as per their level of acquisition.

Sanskrit, French, German and Spanish are offered as third languages from grade four to grade eight to inculcate an understanding about the classical languages, their origin, and inculcate in the students a sense of internationalism.

Senior School

National Curriculum – ICSE and ISC:

The role of Teachers becomes more subject content specific by this stage and yet every teacher sustains the spirit of a language teacher. Although very little intervention is required yet every teacher ensures timely inputs with regard to native language / mother tongue. The students are also encouraged to refer to electronic devices and the school resource centre so far as inputs on technical jargons etc are concerned. The school corridors, library, dining hall and sports fields are a buzz with various dialects and languages. We, as a centre of education and excellence discourage restrictions of any kind, rather believe in propagation of a free environment wherein the learner finds herself / himself free to express in the language of choice. The students are expressive and get enriched with the jargons of various subjects they are exposed to. By now the student has acquired a reasonable level of expertise as far as language acquisition is concerned and it becomes more refined on a day to day basis. The students are more into creative writing and critical analysis. They are enquirers, researchers, and communicators, knowledgeable, open minded and balanced to a great extent. The demands of the national curriculum assessment require a set type of expression from the students especially in language assessments which are more of theoretical in nature. At SHIS the students start taking initiatives and carve a niche in the fields of leadership programmes, state, national and international events and symposiums.

From grade nine onwards students opting for the Indian board – ICSE / ISC are given the liberty to choose any one language from Hindi, French, and Spanish as their second language as per the guidelines of the board.

International Curriculums:

IGCSE:

Quite a number of students opt for IGCSE curriculum after graduating from Grade 8. The curriculum demands a high level of theoretical expertise. The teaching learning process which culminates in a bi-annual assessment requires a higher degree of proficiency in as far as language and written expression is concerned.

Since quite a number of students enrolling for this programme are multilingual, the native language / mother tongue interventions tend to increase. Special care is taken and the teachers initiate interventions to facilitate multilingual approaches to learning teaching activities irrespective of the stream i.e languages, human sciences, managerial studies and etc. In other words every teacher plays the role of a language teacher.

IBDP:

It is imperative that the IBDP student exhibits a high degree of competence in English as now most of them are preparing for higher education wherein English would be a major medium of instruction, nationally as well as internationally. In case a student is seeking admission to a university where a particular national language is a medium of instruction the school offers self taught mode in Group 1- Studies in Languages and Literature. Appropriate inputs from the school fraternity and infrastructure are provided to such students whatever be their number. The degree of competency should be looked at in the following modes:

- Capability of comprehension in English – coding and decoding.
- Capability of organisation of thoughts and ideas
- Capability of expression – written, oral, aural, viewing, investigation and analytical
- Capability of analysis.

Group offerings as per IBO:

Group 1: Study in Language and Literature

At SHIS we offer English A Language and Literature, Literature; Hindi A Literature (though we have had no takers for this) and student’s native language – Self-taught.(we have arranged for specialist Korean experts to help the students who have taken Korean Self-taught)

Group 2 – Language Acquisition

Ab Initio for beginners – French and Spanish

Language B HL /SL Hindi, English, French and Spanish to those who have minimum two years of exposure to the language especially at middle school level / secondary level.

Group 3 to Group 6:

The teaching learning environment, tools and systems are designed in a manner that ensures language competency of expression – oral, aural, written, investigation and analysis.

Hindi, as a mother tongue connects the students at times easily and conveniently to the subject matter / unit being discussed. Also, it makes easier for the Teacher to make the students understand the various learner profiles of IB. At times the local or the global environmental issues required to be addressed in Hindi / mother tongue/ native language. This may include documentaries / local visits to spread awareness or collect data. As and when required the students are allowed to use language converters.

Special care is taken of and emphasis is laid on providing inputs in mother tongue / native language of the learner to make sure of comprehension of technical terminology and that of assessment. The learner appreciates the uniqueness of language – jargon of various subjects she/he is studying.

6. Special Education Needs Students:

SHIS can proudly boast of having one of the most well designed and functional SEN department with special emphasis on integration SEN students in the main stream education. To achieve this end a special department which includes oral, aural, written expression training, motor skills department, medical intervention department, and etc. have been established as a part of the main

infrastructure and at present nine students with SEN requirements are benefitting as a result of this facility.

Specially trained teachers have been appointed, who meticulously work to ensure that these students become confident to be a part of main stream education. These students are not only doing well at their academics but are also carving a niche for themselves in the field of sports and extra-curricular activities. It is the endeavour of all members of SHIS fraternity that these students should be able to take up the challenges and responsibilities of main stream life with due consideration to the special needs and live a normal life like any other student who graduated from SHIS.

At present there are a total of nine students that have been diagnosed as Special Education Needs students.

7. Role of Parents and the Local Community:

Parents of the students studying at SHIS are upheld as one of the stakeholders and so are the local community representatives. Their role in the monitoring and revision of the School Language Policy is significant. From time to time their inputs are sought in the way of student-parent-teacher interactions (quarterly) and the developments are shared with them. These interactions give us a fairly good idea about the status of the child's confidence in the language of instruction – English, as also the level of intervention that has been provided by the teaching community at SHIS to the respective students. As a result of this continuous process we have been able to develop a very comprehensive and ever evolving, multilingual, cosmopolitan language culture at the School.

8. Recognition of Native Language / Mother Tongue:

At SHIS all efforts are made to blend seamlessly the teaching and learning of English which is a major medium of instruction with the learner's mother tongue / native language. In order to achieve this objective various tools have been put in place and they are upgraded according to the requirement of the various learners enrolled at SHIS. Tools like interactions with experts, native speakers, building of vocabulary, worksheets, exposure to audio visual inputs, talks, celebrations, competitions, class boards, clan boards, have helped us achieve this very important objective of education and development of respect for language, culture, and tradition of our student and teacher community. Being in northern part of India, where Hindi is most commonly spoken and also Hindi being the national language of the Country, in addition to celebrating International week, we also celebrate Hindi Week in September as 14th September is celebrated in all over the country as Hindi Day. Our Library and resource room has books to cater to Hindi as well as other native languages of the country in addition to French, Spanish, German and Korean language books.

Beginning from the Initial school parents/tutors/facilitators and language experts are invited to be a part of our learning teaching system. Reading programmes by respective parents, workshops on various topics, visits to local markets, social centres, inter school events, picnics, overnight stay camp, celebration of festivals – regional, national and international, have all contributed immensely to the development of a truly cosmopolitan culture at SHIS. We have short term, long term exchange programmes, nationally and internationally to foster a spirit of fraternity and internationalism or 'Unity in Diversity'

9. Links to various Policies:

The School Language Policy is the torch bearer for all other documents that govern the academic environment of the school.

Admission Policy:

Beginning with the admissions be it the initial school, the primary years, middle school, national curriculum or international curriculum, an enquiry is made wherein the parent informs the school about the child's native language / mother tongue, language of instruction at home, their preferred choice of the medium of instruction and any other significant input about the child's learning aka language acquisition skills. This complements the assessment tools – written tests, interview, medical assessment (SEN students). These two inputs are passed on to the respective School Heads, Coordinators, HODs and Teachers concerned which in turn helps the team to device appropriate methodologies for carrying out the academic programme for the student/s.

Assessment Policy:

The assessment policy of SHIS is another exhaustive document which talks highly of the language acquisition skills of the children giving due weight age to the proficiency in the mother tongue / native language of the learner. From the time the student seeks admission to the time the student graduates from the school, a continuous, comprehensive, assessment goes on which is corrective and instructional in nature and avoids being punitive. The assessment tools are taken as aids to help the educational team device appropriate strategies for the refinement of the learners various faculties of which language acquisition is the most important.

At all times the School Language Policy is a reference point and the moment the student is found to be faltering corrective measures are put in place which includes interaction with mother tongue / native language / language acquired experts, availability of e-devices for reference, peer group interactions, platforms for expressions, and reference resources.

Similarly fully appreciating the fact that all teachers are language teachers timely and appropriate inputs are given to respective students regarding their language skills and due compensation is made while assessing their scripts during the summative assessments. This is should not be read as being soft so far as proficiency in the language of instruction i.e English is concerned. We at SHIS take sufficient care that our students graduate with higher degree of grasp over the language of instruction and also walk out with a great amount of satisfaction that their mother tongue / native language has neither been neglected nor looked down upon.

The assessment of languages whether it is the language of instruction or the language of acquisition is carried out in a very scientific manner. The assessment is continuous and comprehensive and includes not just properly laid out formative and summative assessments but also includes student's participation at various intra school, inter school competitions, expression at local, social and national platforms. Student's day to day activities, formal and informal occasions, classroom corridor movements and peer interaction inputs.

10. Teachers and Language Learning:

‘All Teachers are language teachers,’ to meet this end the following tools are in place:

- a basic language assessment is conducted for every teacher who becomes a part of the SHIS educational fraternity
- Informal interactions on language up gradation are conducted on a regular basis to ensure that all teachers are in sync with the latest assessment criteria and the nuances of grammar, punctuation and presentation.
- Various language acquisition enriching activities have been incorporated as a part of classroom teaching. These include Power Point Presentations, speeches, talk shows, symposiums, quizzes, debates, lectures, and etc.

It has been observed that these exposures have resulted in enrichment of vocabulary, spontaneity of reactions, deep research oriented investigations and a lucid expression – oral, aural, written and viewing in all the groups that the children take up, irrespective of the curriculum they are studying but more so in the Diploma Programme.

Respective subject teachers brief the students about the detailed procedures of presentations and the minor mistakes they commit while drafting their assignments and answers, so as to minimise the loss of marks.

11. Professional Development Programmes:

The school looks into and provides ample training and professional development to all the teachers. Language Teachers on their part set the tone for appropriate inputs in the staff interactions and the classrooms to prepare the students for internal as well as external assessments conducted by the various evaluation and certification authorities the school is affiliated to.

The professional development platform for the teachers include SAIBSA, and internal subject alike / job alike sessions in the form of weekly collaborative meetings (vertical as well as horizontal). During the TOK classes and otherwise sharing of ideologies, methodologies and learning outcomes as also the discussions on TOK issues gives yet another platform to the respective teachers to fine tune their course content and their deliverance.

Similarly, yearly inputs received from the IB, CIE and the examiner reports are shared with the teachers individually / collectively. This ensures that the learning is passed on to the students thereby improving upon the educational learning and achievements of learners and the teachers.

12. Language Teaching Resources:

SHIS is an ever growing reservoir of knowledge. This knowledge comes from every direction and every stakeholder. The visionaries who brought this school into existence built wonderful resource centres for all age groups. These resource centres are regularly updated and are enriched by not only the works of great writers and thinkers but also has sufficient space for periodicals from various

corners of the world, ICT resources, digital content and are in the process of getting linked to e-resources across the world.

The resource centres are places where the learners as well as the Teachers find enough space and scope to enrich their learning, clear off their confusions and to pen down their learning and thoughts.

The school is also an active member of the British Council, the American Centre, the French Library to augment the resources further.

The school fraternity has free access to all the resources available in the resource centres six days a week. The students are encouraged to make use of the resources where they are also informed by the Resource Person available, about the concept of acknowledging the contribution of these works in their respective assignments. This practice leads to academic honesty.

13. Visibility:

The School Language Policy is a document whose salient features are not just physically highlighted at various vantage points but are also enshrined into the mindset of all the stakeholders through various interactions and school activities.

The salient features of the School Language Policy are flashed in the school brochure; on the school website; in the school chronicles; the various notice boards of the school and classrooms.

Every activity of the school, be it academic or extra-curricular, is so designed that some or the other salient feature of the school language policy is ingrained into the mind of the student and the teacher.

14. Futuristic Vision:

The language policy of SHIS is a flexible and amendable document which is reviewed on a yearly basis, preferably in the month of February i.e the end of the academic activities for PYP, Middle School, IGCSE (2014 onwards) and the National Curriculum. Keeping in mind the global developments, the popularity of IBDP Programme at SHIS and the interest evinced by our expatriate students we forward to introducing various other international languages in Group 1 Studies in Languages and Literature. The school is also open to a situation wherein we could be a bilingual / multilingual educational institution.

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