



Language Policy

2025-2026



Tehran
International
School



IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

KNOWLEDGEABLE

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

THINKERS

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

COMMUNICATORS

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

PRINCIPLED

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

OPEN-MINDED

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

CARING

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

RISK-TAKERS

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

BALANCED

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

REFLECTIVE

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.



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Introduction

Language is central to learning, communication, and cultural identity, and it plays a vital role in the educational experience of students at Tehran International School (TIS). Our language policy is designed to reflect both the philosophy of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) and the unique linguistic context of our school community.

As an international school located in Tehran, we recognize that the majority of our students' mother tongue is Farsi, while English is the primary language of instruction and academic communication. In addition, we welcome students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, many of whom bring valuable multilingual skills to our community.

This policy outlines how we support language development in English, maintain respect for students' mother tongues, and provide opportunities to value and celebrate linguistic diversity. It also clarifies expectations for teaching, learning, and assessment in the IBDP, ensuring that all students are equipped with the language skills necessary to succeed academically and to engage as global citizens.

1. Philosophy

At Tehran International School, we believe that language is central to learning, personal identity, and cultural understanding. As an IB World School, we recognize that multilingualism enriches our community and fosters international-mindedness. Language development is the responsibility of all teachers, staff, students, and parents. Our policy reflects the IB's mission to develop lifelong learners who are open-minded, knowledgeable, and respectful of diverse cultures and perspectives.

2. Language Profile at TIS

Our student body represents a linguistically diverse community, with students bringing different levels of proficiency in Farsi and English. The main groups can be described as follows:

A. Farsi as Mother Tongue

The majority of students have Persian (Farsi) as their native language. Persian remains the main language of communication at home and among peers. Within this group, some students have limited proficiency in English, requiring additional support to access the IB curriculum effectively.

B. Farsi Mother Tongue with English Fluency

Some students were raised or educated in international contexts. While Farsi remains their mother tongue, they are also fluent in English, often using it as their main academic

language. These students are typically bilingual and move comfortably between Farsi and English in both academic and social contexts.

C. Bilingual Students with Developing Proficiency

A group of students communicate in both Farsi and English, though their proficiency in one or both languages may be developing or limited. These students often switch between the two languages, reflecting their bilingual environment. They may require targeted language support to strengthen academic language skills, especially in English.

D. International Students

A smaller group of students come from other countries and linguistic backgrounds. They are generally fluent in English, which enables them to access the curriculum. Some may have limited proficiency in English and thus benefit from tailored support.

This dynamic mix of language backgrounds contributes to a culturally rich and multilingual environment, fostering the IB's mission of international mindedness, intercultural understanding, and language development for all learners.

3. Aims

The aims of our language policy are to:

- Ensure access to the curriculum for all students through appropriate language support.
- Promote proficiency in at least two languages in line with IB requirements.
- Encourage students to value and maintain their mother tongue(s) and cultural identity.
- Support the acquisition of academic language necessary for success in the DP and beyond.
- Foster a school culture of respect for linguistic and cultural diversity.

4. Mother Tongue Support

Mother Tongue refers to the language most commonly and comfortably used to communicate within a home and family setting. Respect for the languages and cultures of students is a form of intercultural education, making children feel valued and interacting securely with others. Thus, valuing the mother tongue is a means to promote self-confidence, pride towards the family, and a positive social identity. These are very important goals as confidence in one's own ethnic or cultural identity leads to greater acceptance and appreciation of diversity and, therefore, to more harmonious and tolerant relationships, contributing to social cohesion.

TIS recognizes the importance of developing and maintaining students' literacy in their mother tongue for their personal, social and academic growth. The school believes that developing a

student's mother tongue can accelerate the rate of language acquisition inclusive of English and languages other than English. Mother tongue supports student learning by assisting with the conceptual understandings that drive the curriculum, and through deconstruction of meaning as required. Therefore, students are allowed and encouraged to use their mother tongue to access the curriculum and foster personal success. Our support strategies include:

- Encouraging families to continue using mother tongue at home.
- Providing resources (books, media, digital tools) in multiple languages.
- Offering opportunities for peer collaboration and cultural celebrations.
- Facilitating School-Supported Self-Taught Language A (when possible)

5. Language Learning in the Diploma Programme

- **Group 1 (Studies in Language and Literature):** At Tehran International School we offer Persian and English as Language A. Also, the school may support Self-Taught Language A if a student is willing to study her mother tongue which is not either English nor Persian.
- **Group 2 (Language Acquisition):** Language B is considered as an extra language-learning course for students based on their interest and/or prior knowledge of the language. The aim of this course is to teach the language to the students and improve their language knowledge and skills. In the Diploma Programme, we offer IB Languages B and ab initio in Spanish, German and French (higher level or standard level). Also, we offer English B at standard and higher levels for those students who select any language rather than English for their language A.
- **Bilingual Diploma:** Offered to students meeting IB criteria (two Language A subjects, or one Language A and another subject taught in English).
- **Support for English Language Learners (ELLs):** Targeted support is provided for students developing proficiency in English. Teachers across all disciplines are responsible for scaffolding academic language.

6. Language Across the Curriculum

All teachers are language teachers. They share responsibility for:

- Embedding subject-specific vocabulary.
- Scaffolding academic reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
- Encouraging effective communication in multiple contexts.
- Supporting inquiry-based learning that values language diversity.

7. Professional Development

Teachers receive training in:

- Strategies for supporting multilingual learners.
- IB expectations regarding language in learning and assessment.
- Cross-curricular approaches to language development.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Leadership:** Ensures the policy aligns with IB standards and is regularly reviewed.
- **Teachers:** Implement inclusive language practices and support student development.
- **Students:** Commit to developing proficiency in at least two languages and respecting others' linguistic identities.
- **Parents:** Support language learning at home and in the community.

9. Resources and Facilities

The library in TIS has a rich and extensive range of physical and digital resources. The resources are frequently renewed and updated. Our list of resources include:

- ✓ Fiction, Non-fiction, Reference books (both in Persian and English)
- ✓ CD and DVDs on various fields for both educational and entertainment purposes

There are other facilities available to students in the study area such as:

- ✓ Brand new desktop computers
- ✓ High bandwidth Internet connection
- ✓ Self-study tables

10. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years (or sooner if required by IB updates) by the Language Policy Committee, which includes board of education including teachers, coordinators, and educational director.

References

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