

School Policy Documents *Schulleitlinien*

2023/24



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Admissions Policy

Status

The International School Westpfalz (ISW) offers the following programmes through Cambridge Assessment International Education: Cambridge Primary, Cambridge Lower Secondary and Cambridge Upper Secondary (IGCSE). ISW is also an accredited examination centre for the University of Cambridge's IGCSE qualifications. The school currently accepts applications for children aged 4 years and above for the mentioned programmes.

Instruction

Language instruction at ISW is compulsory. The main language of instruction at ISW is English. We have a very strong host country language programme. German, which is also the mother tongue of 40 % of our families, is taught four days per week from Reception (aged 5 to 6) to year 6 (aged 11 to 12). In Middle School (students aged 12 to 14), English and German are taught at least 4 periods per subject per week. In the Secondary School (ages 14+) students will study IGCSE German and A level German.

Admission

ISW accepts students regardless of ethnic background, sex, religious and political beliefs.

The admission process involves the following stages:

- a. making an appointment to visit our school by email or phone
- b. a tour around the school in the company of the School Principal
- c. an interview with parents and, wherever possible, with the student
- d. viewing and discussion of previous school reports (if available)
- e. the satisfactory completion of a Trial Week in the appropriate class

Once registration has been approved:

- f. completion of the appropriate forms, including the reading and approving of our 'Confirmation receipt of School Policy Documents'
- g. written confirmation of acceptance by the School Principal
- h. payment of the corresponding Registration, School Development and Tuition Fee invoices

Support Services

Language learning support (in German and English) is provided to students with the expectation that they will become self-confident in those areas. We also provide basic Learning Support and coaching for children who have academic, emotional and social needs. We can only accept limited numbers of students within the Learning Support Programme. We work very closely with parents and guardians and when necessary with outside specialists to ensure that the children's needs are looked after and met. Any additional fee (e.g. consultation fees) charged by an outside specialist will have to be paid by parents / guardians. Unfortunately, at this moment, we are unable to admit students with severe learning and emotional difficulties.

Aufnahmeprozess

Status

Die International School Westpfalz (ISW) bietet die folgenden Programme durch Cambridge Assessment International Education an: Cambridge Primary, Cambridge Lower Secondary und Cambridge Upper Secondary (IGCSE). Die ISW ist auch ein anerkanntes Prüfungszentrum für die IGCSE-Qualifikationen der Universität von Cambridge.

Die Schule nimmt z.Z. Anmeldungen für Kinder ab dem Alter von 4 Jahren für die genannten Programme an.

Unterricht

Der Sprachunterricht an der ISW ist obligatorisch. Die Unterrichtssprache an der ISW ist Englisch. Wir haben ein sehr starkes Gastland-Sprachprogramm. Deutsch wird an vier Tagen in der Vorschule (Reception, 5 bis 6 Jahre) und täglich in der ersten bis zur sechsten Klasse (11 bis 12 Jahre) unterrichtet. In der Mittelschule (Schüler/Schülerinnen im Alter von 12 bis 16 Jahren) werden Englisch und Deutsch mindestens 4 Stunden pro Fach die Woche unterrichtet.

Aufnahme

Die ISW nimmt Schüler unabhängig von Geschlecht, Religion und politischem oder ethnischen Hintergrund auf.

Der Aufnahmeprozess beinhaltet die folgenden Phasen:

- a) eine Terminvereinbarung per Email oder Telefon, um die Schule zu besuchen
- b) eine Tour rund um die Schule mit dem Schuldirektor (School Principal)
- c) ein Gespräch mit den Eltern und, wenn möglich, mit dem Schüler
- d) Überprüfung und Diskussion der bisherigen Schulzeugnisse (falls vorhanden)
- e) eine Probewoche mit zufriedenstellenden Abschluss in der entsprechenden Klasse

Nach Bestätigung der Anmeldung:

- f) Ausfüllen der entsprechenden Aufnahmeformulare, einschließlich des Lesens und Genehmigens unserer Empfangsbestätigung der „School Policy Documents“
- g) schriftliche Bestätigung der Aufnahme durch den Schuldirektor (School Principal)
- h) Zahlung der entsprechenden Aufnahme-, Schulentwicklungs- und Schulgebühren

Zusätzliche Förderung

Sprachförderunterricht (Learning Support) in Deutsch und Englisch wird den Schülern mit der Erwartung gegeben, dass sie in diesen Fächern selbstständig werden. Wir bieten auch grundlegende Förderung und Coaching für Kinder, die emotionale und soziale Probleme haben. Wir können nur eine begrenzte Anzahl von Schülern in das Förderunterricht-Programm aufnehmen. Wir arbeiten sehr eng mit Eltern/Erziehungsberechtigten und mit externen Fachleuten zusammen, um sicherzustellen, dass die Bedürfnisse der Kinder erkannt und erfüllt werden. Jede zusätzliche Gebühr (wie Praxisgebühren), die von externen Fachleuten verlangt wird, muss von den Eltern/Erziehungsberechtigten getragen werden. Leider sind wir momentan nicht in der Lage, Schüler mit ernsthaften Lernschwierigkeiten oder emotionalen Schwierigkeiten aufzunehmen.

Academic Honesty Policy

This document, first produced in December 2008 and updated yearly, is the collaborative work of all teaching staff at ISW. This document represents the school's essential agreements on academic honesty and is therefore binding to all members of the ISW community.

Philosophy

At ISW, we believe in respectful interaction among all members of our community and this includes the need to show respect towards the work and ideas of others. We promote ethics and social responsibility which we believe are essential components of education. We also believe that dishonesty can cause harm to our entire school. It is with these important beliefs in mind and in order to value our learning partners' authentic work that we have drafted this Academic Honesty Policy to which we (learning partners and mentors) shall commit ourselves.

Purpose

This policy explains the school's expectations for honest academic practice on the part of its students. It also sets out the responsibilities of its staff in modelling, developing and promoting academic honesty and penalising plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty.

Objectives

The ISW Academic Honesty Policy aims to consolidate a community based on trust, academic integrity and honour. It specifically aims to:

- clarify the concept of "academic honesty" and "academic misconduct" and what is expected of learning partners by the school
- ensure that learning partners, mentors and administrators understand that the responsibility for upholding academic honesty lies with them
- prevent learning partners from gaining an unfair advantage over other learning partners through acts of academic misconduct
- ensure that learning partners understand that academic dishonesty is a violation of the trust of the entire academic community and, as such, is an unacceptable practice, which will result in severe consequences
- set out the procedure for investigating malpractice and the penalties involved.

What is academic honesty?

An authentic piece of work is based on a student's own, individual and original ideas. Therefore, all assignments, whether written or oral, completed by a learning partner for assessment, will use that learning partners' own language, ideas and style. In the case where a learning partner uses the ideas of other people, we expect him or her to give credit to the ideas and work of those people.

What is academic dishonesty?

Academic dishonesty means that the work presented in a written or oral assignment without citation is not the learning partners' own work or that he/she has used external sources during a test / examination or other assessment to gain unfair advantage over his/her classmates.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including (but not limited to):

- plagiarism: taking work, words, ideas, pictures, information or anything that has been produced by someone else and submitting it for assessment as one's own work
- copying: taking work of another student, with or without his or her knowledge and submitting it as one's own work
- cheating during tests/exams: communicating, verbally or using body language with another learning partner in an exam, bringing and using unauthorised material into an examination room
- falsifying data: creating or altering data which has not been collected in a fair scientific investigation
- collusion: helping another learning partner to be academically dishonest
- duplication of work: submitting the same work for different assessments

Prevention of Academic Dishonesty

It is recommended that learning partners keep all rough notes and drafts that they produce during assessments / examinations and that at the end of the assessment / examination they hand in their rough work or notes to mentors or invigilators.

Mentors will ensure learning partners are made aware of the conventions of referencing sources and be able to use them in their work. Mentors will also make learning partners aware of the consequences of neglecting to cite references, whether through carelessness or deliberate action.

ISW will ensure parents and students are familiar with the forms of academic dishonesty and its consequences through

- the Cambridge orientation programme held for incoming Cambridge learning partners and parents
- publication of the academic honesty policy on the school website
- inclusion of the academic honesty policy in the Welcome Pack provided to all learning partners and parents entering ISW
- posters in classrooms and around the school

ISW, in line with Cambridge recommendations and practice, may submit random or selected pieces of work to external bodies for verification and evaluation of sources.

Investigating Suspected Cases of Academic Dishonesty

If a mentor or a learning partner suspects that another learning partner may have breached the school's standards of academic honesty, he or she should inform the Head of School or the School Principal at once. The learning partner concerned will be informed and he/she will be given the opportunity to respond / defend himself/herself.

The Head of School, School Principal, the IGCSE Coordinator and the teacher involved, will interview the learning partner. The learning partner will be given sufficient time to prepare a response and will have access to all evidence. They will be allowed to have in attendance a friend, relative or advisor during the interview. If it can be shown that there has been academic dishonesty, the mentor who investigated the case will make a recommendation to the School Principal and an entry will be made into the learning partner's file.

The Consequences of Academic Dishonesty

Any learning partner who has been found to be academically dishonest in any of the ways mentioned above will have a record of this put into his or her file, and this will be communicated to the learning partner's parents. If the work has been submitted towards an assessment, a 'ZERO' or FAIL mark will be awarded for the assignment.

A second violation of the academic honesty code will result in the matter being referred to the Head of School for disciplinary action, which may be suspension from class or suspension from school for a limited period of time. Parents will be notified and an entry will be made into the learning partner's file

A third violation of the academic honesty code will result in the learning partner being permanently excluded from the school.

Consequences of Academic Dishonesty in IGCSE coursework/examinations

A learning partner who has been found to be academically dishonest in any of the above ways will have a record of this put into his or her file, and this will be communicated to his/her parents. The student will be officially withdrawn from the corresponding examination.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF LEARNING PARTNERS, MENTORS AND PARENTS

All ISW staff, learning partners and parents should make sure that they are aware of the contents of this document, what academic honesty and dishonesty means in the context of our school and what the consequences can be.

Learning partners should recognise that they are ultimately responsible for their own work and that the consequences of any breach of the standard of academic honesty will be theirs alone. They should talk to mentors or to their coaches regularly about their work and show drafts of it at various stages in the production process. They should ask them for advice if they are at any time unsure of what they have done in relation to referencing sources and citing quotations.

Homeroom mentors should explain the content of this policy to their learning partners.

Subject and classroom teachers should talk to their students regularly during the drafting of work and at different stages of the production process and provide guidance in the subject-specific requirements of academic honesty.

Parents should speak to their children about the need to be honest and how important academic honesty is, both at school and in higher education.

Coordinators & School Principal should ensure that academic honesty / dishonesty are explained to staff, students and parents and make available the Academic Honesty Policy for perusal at any time.

Grievance Policy

The following is the procedure to be followed in the event of a grievance or disagreement between members of the ISW community.

1. Any member of the ISW learning community may address a grievance within the rules of this policy. This includes Learning Partners as well as mentors, parents or other staff.
2. All grievances will first be addressed directly to the person/s involved.
3. Parents needing to intervene in conflicts between Learning Partners must do so through the Learning Partner's mentor, the School Principal or the Head of School, as opposed to directly addressing the child or the child's parent(s).
4. If the complainant feels unable to address their difficulty without support, they are invited to include another member of the ISW learning community as mediator. This mediation may be provided by the Head of School, School Principal, a member of the leadership team, a staff member, a member of the P&F Executive Committee or the Class Representative. The mediator is to strive to maintain neutrality and to facilitate a satisfactory resolution of the conflict.
5. A Learning Partner directly involved in the problem may be included in discussions if deemed appropriate by all involved in the grievance.
6. Grievances will not be addressed via a third party as this limits the ability to solve the problem constructively or to ask for more detail and does not reflect respectful behaviour toward members of the learning community. Should a member of the ISW community share a grievance with a third party, this will be communicated directly to the person concerned as soon as possible.
7. Grievances can only be resolved with the participation of all parties concerned.

Beschwerderichtlinie

Das folgende Verfahren ist im Falle einer Beschwerde oder einer Auseinandersetzung zwischen Mitglieder der ISW Gemeinschaft zu beachten.

1. Jedes Mitglied der ISW-Gemeinschaft kann eine Beschwerde gemäß diesen Richtlinien vorbringen. Dieses schließt die Lernpartner ebenso ein wie Mentoren, anderes Personal und die Eltern.
2. Alle Beschwerden werden zuerst direkt mit der betroffenen Person besprochen.
3. Eltern, die in Konflikte zwischen Lernpartnern eingreifen wollen, müssen das durch den entsprechenden Mentor, den Schuldirektor (School Principal) oder den Schulleiter (Head of School) tun und nicht mit dem Kind oder den Eltern des Kindes direkt sprechen.
4. Wenn der/die Beschwerdeführer/in sich nicht imstande fühlt, das Problem ohne Unterstützung anzusprechen, steht es ihm/ihr frei, ein anderes Mitglied der ISW-Gemeinschaft als Vermittler hinzuzuziehen. Diese Schlichtung kann von dem Schulleiter, dem Schuldirektor oder einem anderen Mitglied des Führungsteams, Mitglied des Personals, einem Mitglied der P&F-Executive Gruppe oder einem Klassen-Elternvertreter geleistet werden. Der Vermittler bemüht sich um Neutralität und trägt zu einer befriedigenden Lösung des Konflikts bei.
5. Ein Lernpartner, der direkt von dem Problem betroffen ist, kann in die Diskussion einbezogen werden, wenn es von allen Beteiligten erwünscht ist.
6. Beschwerden werden nicht über Dritte angesprochen, da dies die Möglichkeit beschränkt, das Problem konstruktiv zu lösen oder weitere Einzelheiten zu erfragen und da dies kein respektvolles Verhalten gegenüber den Mitgliedern der Lerngemeinschaft darstellt. Sollte ein Mitglied der ISW Gemeinschaft eine Beschwerde mit einem Dritten teilen, wird dieses schnellstmöglich direkt an die betroffene Person kommuniziert.
7. Beschwerden können nur durch die Teilnahme aller betroffenen Parteien gelöst werden.

Learning Support Policy

ISW MISSION STATEMENT

To develop in children the qualities that will allow them to meet the global challenges of tomorrow is our objective. Through a learner-centred approach, with a strong emphasis on empowering children and adolescents to become balanced, caring and respectful individuals, we aim to create a community of autonomous, life-long inquirers who will be knowledgeable and skilful, committed to their learning and committed to taking meaningful action that will improve their own lives as well as the lives of others.

Introduction

At the International School Westpfalz, we value all children equally and strive to help all children reach the standards set out in our Mission Statement. This document outlines the systems and professional practices used to support and integrate the children who have Learning Support Needs at our school.

We recognize that we are a small, English-speaking school with limited staffing resources on site and thus cannot support every child with Learning Support Needs. We would feel it immoral to attempt to progress children that we clearly cannot progress to the standards that we want to achieve. Our philosophy with regards to Learning Support Needs has been designed, like all of our policies, with the child's (Learning Partner's) best interests in mind.

We hope that this policy will clearly outline how we assess, monitor and support Learning Support Needs at ISW.

Definition of Learning Support Needs

A child can be defined as having Learning Support Needs 'if they have a difficulty that calls for special educational provisions to be made for them' (UK SEN code of Practice, 2001). These may include:

- Learning difficulties
- Physical difficulties
- Medical Issues
- Emotional difficulties
- Behavioural difficulties
- Communication difficulties
- Sensory problems
- Gifted and Talented
- Language support needs

The Role of the Learning Support Coordinator

A Learning Support Coordinator has been employed to support students' needs in the Primary school at ISW. The position is full-time. In our Middle School programmes, we offer the provision for support meetings between students and mentors both within as well as after school hours.

The Learning Support Coordinator:

- maintains a list of students who are receiving support and/or special education services;
- implements a tracking system to monitor the progress of children with learning difficulties;
- co-ordinates the administration of the whole-school screening programme;
- liaises with outside agencies to arrange assessments and special provision for pupils with special needs; arranges for classroom accommodation and resources, as appropriate.
- works closely with the Head of School, School Principal and class teachers to implement school policies on learning support
- consults with individual class teachers on a regular basis;
- consults with the school staff on a regular basis;
- meets and/or communicates with the parents of each pupil who has been selected to receive Learning Support on a regular basis
- involves parents and teachers in the development and evaluation of the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) where this IEP is deemed necessary
- carries out a diagnostic assessment of each pupil who has been identified as experiencing low achievement
- maintains records of students recognised as 'gifted and talented';
- provides supplementary teaching for relevant pupils;
- maintains a record of attendance of pupils at supplementary teaching sessions;
- oversees the implementation of standardised assessment in the areas of mathematics, reading and reading comprehension each year and maintains relevant records

Gifted and Talented (GAT) Pupils

Pupils who are recognised as Gifted and Talented in their learning are given the opportunity to extend their learning by means of additional support. It would be usual for such pupils to be offered extension work in many of their lessons, and there are other opportunities for Gifted and Talented pupils to learn beyond the curriculum.

Identification of Children with Special Educational Needs

We believe early identification of Special Educational Needs is of vital importance and is a responsibility for all staff members. We feel that communication and awareness are highly significant in aiding the early identification of children with Special Education Needs and promote these skills and attitudes within the school.

Children who have, or are suspected of having Learning Support Needs may be identified through:

- Application process – information given on the application form when joining ISW
- Participation in the trial week process
- Assessment tools
- Professional judgement
- Evidence from outside agencies
- Parental judgement
- Informal discussions amongst colleagues

To ensure there is suitable time for our staff to be in a position to judge, or build concerns, we request a full week's trial before a new child is enrolled. We also request parents or fee-payers to inform us of any Learning Support Needs at the time of application.

Once identified as having, or suspected as having Learning Support Needs the relevant staff and parents will meet with the Learning Support Coordinator to confirm the concerns and to discuss suitable processes to enhance the child's learning. These meetings will be coordinated by the Learning Support Coordinator. The outcome of the meeting may determine a request for further professional assessment. This would most often be the most likely request when suspicions of Special Educational Needs are involved and children are being identified.

ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND FURTHER PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

‘Further Professional Support’ refers to the support for a learner that is ‘beyond’ the teacher’s normal day to day practice. Further Professional Support may come in two forms, Internal Professional Support and External Professional Support.

Internal Professional Support concerns the support of staff, organisations, diagnostic tests or tools within ISW. This includes English as a Second Language (ESL) services, German as a Foreign Language (GFL) services, staff mentor sessions, colleagues, and either in-class or pull-out support from the Learning Support Coordinator. Internal Professional Support may require additional payment or may be manageable without additional payment. These factors will be discussed in the formal meeting.

External Professional Support concerns the support of external professionals and organisations, most likely being the support of doctors and therapists. This will almost certainly involve additional payment. As is normal practice in schools, it is the parents or fee-payers responsibility to organise the locating and financing for any further Professional Support services. Should the staff request such External Professional Support and it is not actively carried through by the parents or fee-payers, ISW and the teachers concerned will not assume responsibility for the progress of the child’s learning. This may even lead to the Head of School or School Principal refusing the continuing admission of the child. As a school we strive to assist the parents where possible.

Maintaining our high standards at ISW, the teachers involved in a child’s progress meet with any Internal Professional Support staff involved with that child’s progress. The staff work together by offering support, resources, advice, sharing observations and sharing strategies. It is highly important for the External Professional to offer support to the teachers involved in the child’s learning too. This support may be in the form of suggested strategies, advice or resources. Should the External Professional not cooperate with the teachers involved, we will not accept responsibility for the progress of the child’s learning. Naturally, we will strive to cooperate with the External Professionals as effectively as possible and welcome them into our ISW community.

Once children are assessed, or for those children who have already been assessed with a Learning Support Need, further professional support may be requested and children will often be placed on an Individual Educational Plan (IEP). Please see below for more information.

ASSESSMENT AND REVIEWING PROCEDURE

What is an IEP?

An Individual Educational Plan (IEP) is a planning, teaching and reviewing tool that highlights the individual process of support individually created for that child. An IEP will only highlight that which is additional to, or different from the differentiated curriculum. An IEP sets out Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timed (SMART) targets, yet we at ISW aim to keep them in simple language, making them as understandable for parents as possible. The IEP will also indicate the professionals involved in the process (highlighting whether Internal, External or both are required), resources required, strategies required, review dates and outcomes. Please refer to Appendix 1 to view an ISW IEP template.

Who is involved in writing an IEP?

IEP targets will be written by the Learning Support Coordinator in collaboration with the relevant staff, parents and if necessary with other relevant external professionals too. An IEP will be reviewed at the end of each school Term. The review of each IEP will involve all parties involved in writing the IEP, including the parents. Where appropriate, other relevant professionals may be involved in reviewing an IEP too. Copies of the IEP will be given to the parents and if appropriate, other External Professionals. Naturally, these documents will be passed on to their new school once a child leaves ISW.

Who will be placed on an IEP?

If a child is deemed to be in need of long-term Learning Support, the child will be placed on an IEP. Please note that when assessment is carried out and information is received from an External Professional regarding the child's special educational needs, the child's IEP may be subject to change.

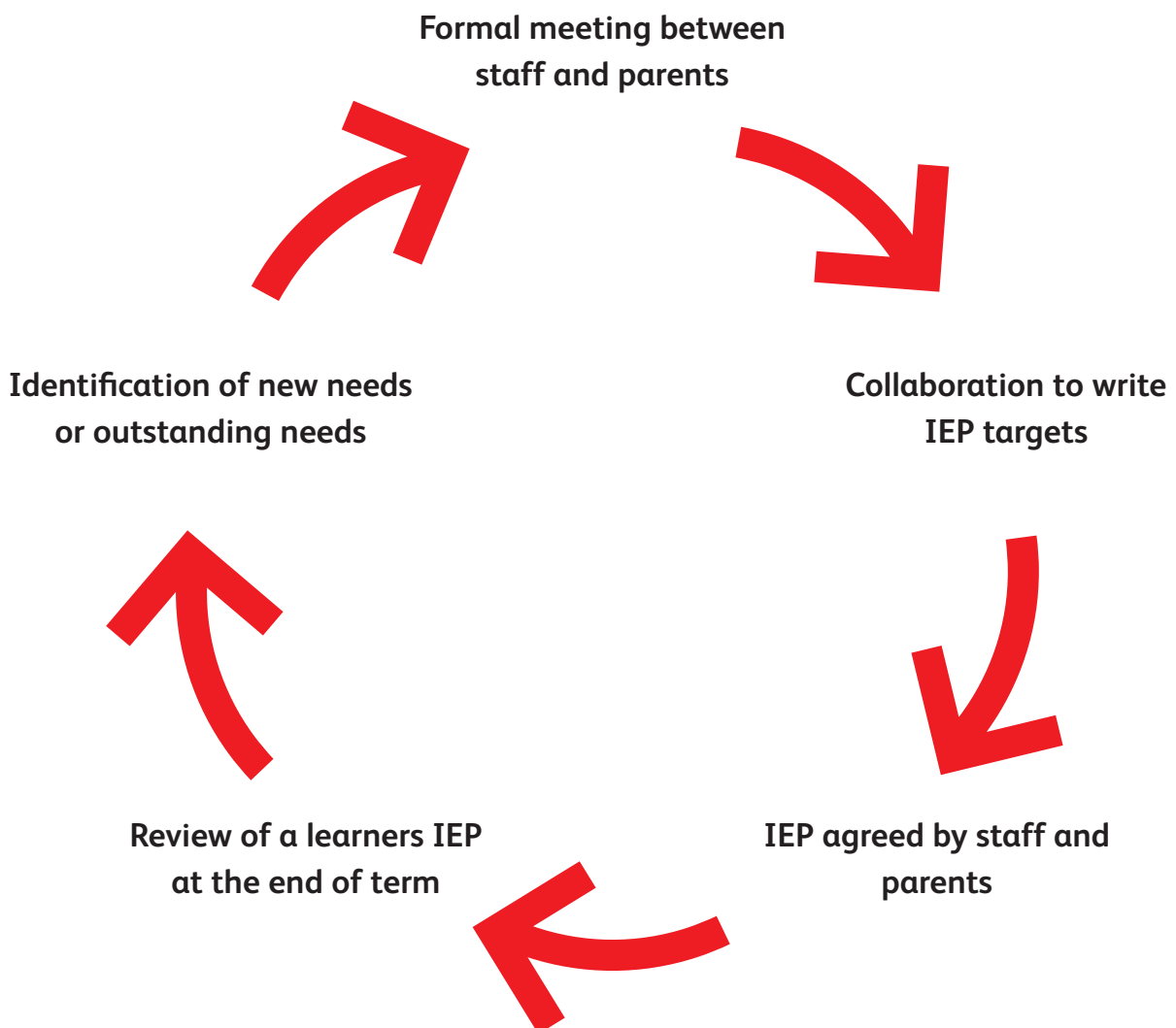
What happens after the review of an IEP?

IEP's are usually ongoing working documents. The flow chart in appendix 2, illustrates the normal cyclical process of an IEP with a child working towards new targets or incomplete targets. Of course, a child can leave the cyclical process when sufficient progress has been made that a child is no longer considered a Learning Support student.

Head of School's and School Principal's Rights

The Head of School and School Principal hold the right to refuse admission to any child who has needs that cannot be suitably met at ISW. Further, the Head of School and School Principal hold the right to refuse the continued registration of any child whose needs cannot be supported any longer. The Head of School and School Principal also hold the right to refuse admission to any child for whom not all relevant information was given at the time of application, regardless of whether they are already enrolled. We feel that these rights are in the best interest of the child themselves and the whole school.

The Cyclical Process of an IEP (Appendix 1)



Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Sample (Appendix 2)

Pupil's Name

IEP Start Date

Review date

Student D.O.B

Class Teacher

Child's Strengths

People Involved in the IEP Development

SMART Targets

specific, measurable, achievable,
realistic and timed

Strategies, action, resources
and tools required.

Progress / Comments

1.

2.

3.

Parent's Signature

Teacher's Signature

LSC's Signature

Other participants

Agreed parent action

Assessment Policy

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I. Overview

Assessment is the gathering and analysis of information about student performance. It identifies what students know, understand, can do and feel at different stages in the learning process. Assessment is integral to all teaching and learning.

Everyone concerned with assessment – children, teachers, parents and administrators – must have a clear understanding of the reasons for the assessment, what is being assessed, the criteria for success and the method by which the assessment is made.

Both learning partners and teachers will be actively engaged in assessing student progress as part of the development of their wider critical thinking and self-evaluation skills. Teachers will also be concerned with evaluating the efficacy of the programme.

We describe the taught curriculum as the written curriculum in action. Using the ISW written curriculum, and in collaboration with colleagues and children, the teacher generates questions which guide structured inquiry and instruction.

These questions address key concepts which help lead to productive lines of inquiry. Assessment focuses

on the quality of student learning during the process of inquiry and instruction and on the quality of the products of that learning. Assessment is, therefore, integral to the taught curriculum. It is the means by which we analyse student learning and the effectiveness of our teaching and acts as the foundation on which to base our future planning and practice. It is essential to our goal of guiding the child, from novice to expert, through the learning process.

II. Why Do We Assess Students' Work?

A. PURPOSES OF ASSESSMENT

The purposes of assessment are to:

- promote student learning
- provide information about student learning
- assist in the evaluation of the Programme of Studies.

Promotion of Student Learning

Effective assessment will:

- support student learning by highlighting areas of strength and giving feedback to assist further growth
- provide students with the opportunity to assess their own work and progress
- encourage students to take pride in what they do
- give students a sense of purpose
- make students accountable.

Provision of Information about Student Learning

Effective assessment will:

- find out what students know and can do
- show how well students can apply what they know
- show whether students can reflect on what they know
- measure students' ability to enquire
- show what students remember and understand, of what has been taught, covered, explored or discussed in class
- reveal areas in which students are experiencing difficulties
- determine the interest level of students
- help the teacher understand how individual students think
- monitor students' performance over a period of time
- provide data to support discussions with parents and colleagues about student progress
- indicate how a student is performing in comparison with others in the group
- help teachers evaluate whether students are keeping pace with age-appropriate cognitive development

Programme Evaluation

Effective assessment will:

- determine whether specific skills are being mastered
- identify areas that require further instruction/practice/explanation
- reveal which activities lead students to actually learn what they are supposed to learn
- determine if particular strategies used by teachers have been effective in developing understanding of a concept
- allow insight into students' methods of thinking and problem-solving
- allow teachers to reflect on the effectiveness of their previous planning
- give a focus to future planning and teaching
- allow insight into what is happening in the classroom
- make teachers accountable
- establish and maintain the consistency of what is done across a Year Level
- identify common programme weaknesses across a Year Level
- identify elements in the programme which should be removed from it
- suggest new areas of focus, new activities and new materials and resources for inclusion in the programme
- help ensure that overall curriculum goals are being met

B. PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

Effective Assessment should:

- be consistent with the school's philosophy
- serve a worthwhile purpose
- be varied
- cater to different types of intelligence
- help develop our understanding of the whole child, ie. his or her academic, social, cultural and emotional characteristics
- be authentic (based on real, or realistic, problems or situations)
- evaluate knowledge, content and method as well as presentation and correctness
- be based on what the child has studied
- be directly related to specific scope and sequence elements
- be a learning experience in itself
- be continuous throughout the learning process
- be student-friendly
- be transparent
- be as simple as its purposes will allow
- be teacher-friendly
- be planned at the start of the unit
- be consistent across the year level
- be consistent throughout the Primary School

Effective Assessment should allow teachers to:

- Create instructional plans to guide inquiry
- Understand feedback from students
- Clearly define student needs
- Direct instruction
- Define expectations and outcomes for students and teacher lead inquiry
- Adapt for learning styles and critical thinking
- Acquire data that can be used to inform students, teachers, year levels, school, and community
- Collect both quantitative and qualitative data
- Prepare for future inquiries and student questioning

Effective Assessment should allow students to:

- Demonstrate and share their learning and understanding
- Set goals for reaching expectations
- Use their own learning strategies and build on their own strengths
- Develop critical thinking skills to enhance their understanding
- Build confidence in their own work and self
- Express their points of view and understanding
- Understand what their own needs are and how to improve
- Use their prior knowledge to build on and guide the inquiry process

Effective Assessment should allow parents to:

- Understand student learning
- Provide support outside of school
- Celebrate learning and student accomplishment
- Observe and track student progress and growth

III. What Do We Assess?

Through the Cambridge International Primary Programme, ISW mentors strive to provide the opportunity for learners to construct meaning primarily through structured inquiry. This is accomplished by emphasising the connections between subject-specific knowledge, transdisciplinary skills and themes. Our Units of Study provide a focus for inquiry, while literacy and numeracy provide the tools. Subject specific assessment also occurs outside the spectrum of the Units of Study. Feedback should be given on student progress and performance in all areas.

IV. When and How Do We Assess?

Assessment is something that occurs everyday in some fashion. A variety of assessments demonstrates our belief that children learn in different ways, at different rates, and at different times. The result of assessment is considered a critical element that influences teacher decision-making and guides student learning.

A. TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS

Pre-Assessment

- All teachers will assess students' prior knowledge and experience before embarking on new learning experiences in an appropriate way.

Formative Assessment

- Through a variety of methods, ongoing and regular assessment will be used during the teaching and learning process to inform teachers and students about how the learning is developing. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked and provide feedback that is responsive to student needs and informs teaching practice.
- Formative assessments may take a variety of formats (including, for example, anecdotal records, student reflections, student/teacher feedback, peer to peer evaluations, student conversation, classroom participation, individual and group information or progress, skill development, etc.).

Summative Assessment

- Summative assessment happens at the end of a teaching and learning process or experience and is planned for in advance. The assessment is designed so that students can demonstrate their learning in authentic contexts and apply it in new ways. This allows the teacher to measure the understanding of the central idea and inquiry points, but also can inform and improve student learning and instruction.
- Summative assessments may take a variety of formats (including, for example, tests, examinations, reports, essays, presentation, projects, etc.).

B. ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Assessment strategies form the basis of a comprehensive approach and represent our answer to the question, "How will we know what we have learned?" These methods of assessment include a broad range of approaches and have been selected to provide a balanced view of the student.

Observations

All students are observed regularly with a focus on the individual, the group, and/or the whole class.

Performance Assessments

Students are presented with a task that represents the kind of challenges that adults face in the world beyond the classroom. It requires using a repertoire of knowledge and skills to accomplish a goal or solve an open-ended problem. In addition, it entails the thoughtful application of knowledge rather than recalling facts. It has an identified purpose or audience, involves a realistic scenario, it has an established criteria and requires developing an authentic product or performance.

Core Skills Assessments

The focus is on the process and skill application rather than on the product. These skills are a key element of the Unit planning process and are regularly observed in real contexts using checklists, narrative notes, and inventories. (Research, Thinking, Communication, Self-Management and Social Skills)

Open-Ended Assessments

Students are presented with a challenge and asked to provide an original response. The answer might be a brief written answer, a drawing, a diagram or a solution depending on the nature of the inquiry.

Tests/Quizzes

These single-occasion assessments provide a snapshot of students' specific knowledge.

Portfolios

These are collections of the children's work that are designed to demonstrate successes, growth, higher order thinking, creativity and reflection. A portfolio should be thought of as an exhibition of an active mind at work. Portfolios are in use throughout the Primary School.

C. ASSESSMENT TOOLS

The previously identified assessment strategies are put into practice at ISW by using the following assessment tools:

Rubrics

Rubrics are established sets of criteria used for scoring or rating children's tests, portfolios, or performances. The descriptors tell the child and the assessor what characteristics or signs to look for in the work and then how to rate that work on a predetermined scale. Rubrics can be developed by children as well as by teachers.

Benchmarks/Exemplars

These are samples of children's work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged. Benchmarks/exemplars can be used in conjunction with rubrics or continuums. Benchmarks should be appropriate and useable within a particular school context.

Checklists

These are lists of information, data, attributes, or elements that should be present.

Anecdotal records

Anecdotal records are brief, written notes based on observations of children. These records need to be systematically compiled and organised.

Continuums

These are visual representations of developmental stages of learning. They show a progression of achievement or identify where a child is in a process.

V. How Do We Report?

Reporting is a means of giving feedback from assessment. Assessment without feedback merely serves as judgment; feedback is the component of assessment that lets us make sense of judgment and improve our work. Our school culture encourages both assessment and feedback.

Effective reporting should:

- involve parents, students, and teachers as partners
- reflect what the school community values
- be comprehensive, honest, fair, and credible
- be clear and understandable to all parties
- allow teachers to incorporate what they learn during the reporting process into their future teaching and assessment practice

A. CONFERENCES

Parents, students, and teachers are all valued partners in the reporting process and in sharing the responsibility both for learning and for accounting student progress. Pathways for communication need to be open and reciprocal.

Parent/teacher conferences:

One parent teacher conference per year will be held in Term 1. This is an opportunity to address goals and concerns for the year to come. Parent teacher conferences can be organised throughout the year on a needs basis.

Student-led conferences:

One student-led conference per year will be held in Term 3. This is an opportunity for the student to lead their own conference with their parent and/or teacher(s) to discuss their own learning and progress during the year. The student is able to highlight what they feel is important and share their strengths and weaknesses as they see fit. In these conferences students will plan their own presentation, with teacher modelling and practice beforehand.

Teacher-student conferences:

These conferences will be held on a continuous basis throughout the school year. This is an ongoing process that should almost happen daily. These can be formal or informal. Formal to be held when needed and the informal is part of everyday best teaching practice.

B. WRITTEN REPORTS

Report cards are sent home at the end of each Semester. The student reflection element allows the students to reflect on their “self” and set goals for the future. We also strive to communicate, share, and reflect on student learning during the course of, and at the end of each unit and across all subject areas.

C. PORTFOLIO

Purpose: To identify student growth and to provide a continuum for students to track their learning process and define their growth as a learner. The portfolio is to provide data to parents, teachers, and students on student progress for individual reflection, student-led conferences, parent-teacher interviews, and teacher reflection/data collection. Students use Bulb, a digital portfolio that can be built upon throughout their school life and beyond. It can showcase exemplary work in all formats.

Selection/Collection Process:

Both student and teacher can select items to go into the portfolio. The work collected should reflect the student's growth as an inquirer / learner. Everything put into the portfolio should be placed by the student (where possible).c

Reflection:

Key pieces placed in the Portfolio should have a reflection completed by the teacher, the student or both.

D. ASSESSMENT FOLDERS

Assessment Folder:

Teachers will maintain a red Assessment Folder for their class. This folder will include formal assessment items on all students in the class. This folder is to be kept by the teacher and is confidential. It will include the following:

- Mark Book (formal assessment records)
- Term Assessments per Subject
- Specialist Assessments
- IEP Plans for Learning Support Students
- Additional information as required

Language Policy – Primary

INTRODUCTION

This document describes our perspective on language, important principles when learning a language and how these principles influence our teaching of language.

It provides the school with a framework that will promote consistency in approach between year levels and between subjects.

It provides parents with information about our principles and our practices and assists them in understanding our curriculum.

It will assist teachers in the planning, presenting and evaluation stages of teaching.

It will be a tool for teachers to reflect on their language practice and guide professional development and appraisal.

The points in this policy describe what we value and what we want to work towards. Our practices may not reflect all the points described in this policy but we aim to put our principles into practice.

PHILOSOPHY

At ISW we believe that language is the medium of inquiry. We strive to help everyone appreciate the aesthetic and functional uses of language. We believe that language is a vehicle for transdisciplinary learning, and as such, provide a learning environment that promotes, generates and supports effective communication and language development. We understand that since language is central to learning, all teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating effective communication. As communication in the world changes, we are committed to adapting language instruction to reflect the evolution of language in a modern world.

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

English is the language of instruction at ISW. English is offered both as a 'native' language and as 'ESL'. The focus of language is its application across the subject areas and throughout the transdisciplinary Programme of Study (POS). The programme of study provides an authentic context for learners to develop and use language. Wherever possible, language is taught through the relevant, authentic context of the units of study.

Language is used as a tool to communicate needs, feelings, ideas and experiences, to develop an understanding of the world and to construct meaning. It is essential for the development of social, emotional and cognitive skills. Language is used differently in different contexts and for different audiences and changes over time. It has certain conventions that need to be adhered to but it also allows individuals to express themselves creatively. Everyone expresses themselves in a unique way.

The ISW scope and sequence documents identify the key expectations considered essential in language learning. Language development is concerned with acquiring and applying a set of skills and attitudes as well as an understanding of the use of language. The ISW Language programme consists of three strands which operate interactively. Each of these strands involves different cognitive processes.

Language skills can be further developed by challenging student's level of understanding and providing good models of effective communication. There are different developmental stages as well as learning styles in learning a language. Individual students will progress through the different stages at their own pace. Developing confidence as a communicator is critical in everyone's language development.

PURPOSE

Good language skills are required for:

- expressing one's needs and feelings
- understanding another's needs and feelings
- constructing meaning, reflecting and making sense of the world, individually or with others
- acquiring and sharing information, knowledge and skills for practical reasons, personal interest, pleasure and scientific development
- expressing creativity through writing, poetry, singing, composing music etc.

Students demonstrating strong language skills:

- They inquire into language use and language structures. They use language to acquire information and to make sense of the world around them.
- They are able to express their thoughts and ideas clearly.
- They are competent users of oral and written language forms in a variety of situations. They listen attentively and pay attention to detail. They speak confidently and clearly. They read fluently with good comprehension. They write clearly, concisely, accurately in a style appropriate for the purpose.
- They are willing to attempt to read, write or speak in situations where they may not feel totally confident.
- They have acquired the vocabulary and understanding to discuss language structures, text forms and literary styles.
- They are aware that language is powerful that it can have a profound effect and it must therefore be used responsibly.
- They show care in their use of language and are aware of how the use of language can affect others.
- They respect differences and similarities between languages, dialects and personal communication styles. They understand that language can be used as an expression of bias.
- They can express themselves orally as well as in writing and find a balance between listening and speaking in communicating with others. They read a variety of written material and are able to write for different purposes and audiences.
- They reflect on their language development and consciously work at improving their language proficiency.

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF TEACHING LANGUAGE

We believe that students become good communicators when:

1. Students are engaged in a wide variety of activities in which they are actively involved in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

In practice this means that we offer a wide variety of teaching and assessment tasks in which students actively generate meaningful language, rather than producing isolated language structures. Students are actively involved in selecting their own reading materials for pleasure and research purposes, in addition to the books they read to support their reading development.

2. The language curriculum is embedded in the whole school curriculum and language activities are meaningful and relevant.

In practice this means that our teaching is generated from the Units of Study. The teaching of elements of language such as text structure, grammar, spelling and vocabulary are taught as much as possible in the context of the Unit of Study and have relevance within that context.

3. The learning environment

a. is positive, comfortable and supportive and encourages verbal expression

In practice this means that we want to develop the student's confidence through:

- positive feedback
- working in small groups
- offering ample opportunity for oral reading/oral presentation/role play/songs
- offering ample opportunity for discussion/different viewpoints/debate
- providing opportunities for students to choose what they're comfortable with and to improve through practice

b. contains a variety of resources and is text and print-rich

In practice this means that:

- we work towards a well-stocked school library that contains reading schemes as well as books that represent our multi-cultural setting and include a variety of text forms
- we use technology in language learning
- we use a range of teaching resources including DVDs and games
- student produced materials, such as books and projects are displayed and labeled
- records of student discussions and student and teacher questions are displayed

4. Students are involved in assessing themselves and receive continuous feedback.

In practice this means that:

- we use portfolios, rubrics, self-reflections and mini conferences to encourage self-assessment
- we use the writing process, including drafting, editing and sharing work with others as a means to reflect and improve upon our ideas
- whenever possible, students are involved in designing assessment criteria to analyse their work

5. Different linguistic backgrounds are recognised and appreciated.

In practice this means that we work towards:

- displaying posters and labels that reflect the different languages in our school
- having books in different languages, including bilingual versions of stories
- make connections between languages (both in German language classes as well as English classes)
- use international celebrations to recognise and learn about different languages

6. Mother tongue development is valued and supported.

In practice this means that we:

- Do our best to acquire resources in the mother tongues spoken at the school
- show respect and interest towards mother tongue languages
- encourage parents to keep using mother tongue at home, with the understanding that there may be an initial period of focus required for the acquisition of English.

7. Students and teachers reflect on language as a system with patterns and structures and as a tool for communication in different situations.

In practice this means that we:

- give the opportunity to study different text forms/genres and look at how they address audience, purpose and context
- reflect on the patterns and structures of language at text level, sentence level and word level
- discover rules that govern patterns when studying different text forms
- reflect on what is the most appropriate form of communication for the purpose

8. The different language strands are taught in an integrated fashion.

In practice this means that we use:

- writing activities and oral language activities as a follow up of reading activities or vice versa
- integrate the different language strands in the units of study

9. Differences in developmental stage and learning styles are acknowledged and suitably catered for.

In practice this means that:

- we differentiate in the tasks we set, which includes specific goals for individual students
- we differentiate in the support we provide and the type and amount of feedback we give
- we use different grouping strategies to suit different abilities and learning styles

10. The teacher models effective communication strategies.

In practice this means that we:

- model different reading and writing strategies
- demonstrate how to speak and listen effectively in various situations
- model correct usage of language elements
- present and explore a variety of literary and non-literary text types

GERMAN INSTRUCTION

Acquisition of more than one language enriches personal growth and helps facilitate international understanding. German is offered as the 'second' language, both at native and non-native speakers' level. German language lessons are compulsory in the Primary School. Our students in Reception through to Year 6 receive 4 hours of German each week. Mentors provide instruction to support oral and written language.

LANGUAGE PROFILE

When students enter ISW, they may be assessed by either the Learning Support Coordinator (English) or the German Coordinators (German) to establish their language background. The Learning Support Coordinator provides support for students for whom English is a Second Language (ESL), gifted and talented students, and students with additional language support needs. The German Coordinators provide support for students for whom German is a Foreign Language (GFL).

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) INSTRUCTION

Students that are identified as speaking another language other than English will be assessed by the Learning Support Coordinator upon enrolment at ISW. Students that qualify for ESL support are withdrawn during the school day by the ESL Coordinator. The time spent with the student is predetermined by their needs and abilities and is adjusted during the school year.

GERMAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (GFL) INSTRUCTION

Students that are identified as 'new' to the German language will be assessed by the German Coordinator upon enrolment at ISW. Students that qualify for GFL support are withdrawn during their class' German Lessons by the GFL Coordinator. The time spent with the student is predetermined by their needs and abilities and is adjusted during the school year.

MOTHER TONGUE SUPPORT

At ISW we encourage parents and students to continue to communicate in their mother tongue whenever possible. We believe that development of mother tongue language is crucial for cognitive development and in maintaining cultural identity. It enables our school community to develop our intercultural awareness and understanding, and enables students to maintain esteem for the language, literature and culture of their home country.

We strive to support our diverse population by developing our library resources for mother tongue support. As students with new languages and culture enter our school, appropriate resources will be purchased whenever possible. A variety of resources in mother tongue languages will continue to be purchased through our annual library budget. We encourage parents to arrange mother tongue classes outside of school. If there is enough interest, some languages can be offered as a part of our after-school activities programme. Additionally, parents are invited into the classroom and to school events whenever possible to share their language and culture. We are committed to providing a school environment that supports students in their mother tongue language.

LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

Oral language, comprehension, writing and oral reading are assessed on a regular schedule, at the end of each marking period, with results used to inform instruction. These results are kept in the red Class Assessment Folder in each classroom. A variety of formal benchmark assessments are used to record student progress in reading and reading comprehension each year. These assessments are the primary responsibility of the Learning Support Coordinator.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The main responsibility for the professional language development of staff members lies with each individual. When there is a school-wide focus on a language element, staff will be sent to appropriate PD by the School Principal. The school administration will ensure that staff is made aware of PD opportunities whenever possible.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- (i) It is the responsibility of all teachers at ISW to implement the school's language policy. All staff will share this responsibility to ensure that this Language Policy is a working document.
- (ii) Teacher appraisal / evaluation (conducted by the School Principal) will also be based on the standards and practices set in this language policy.
- (iii) The School Principal invites all teachers and coordinators to participate in workshops / meetings to review and update the school's Language Policy – ideally every year or whenever the need arises.
- (iv) The School Principal will select the most appropriate professional development courses for teachers regarding language teaching and learning.
- (v) Input / ideas from staff attending language workshops or courses are valued and used to fine tune the school's language policy.
- (vi) It is the responsibility of every teacher to keep up to date with developments in language teaching and learning.
- (vii) All teachers are responsible for providing information to parents on their language program.
- (viii) All members of staff (teachers, assistants, coordinators, librarian, secretaries and School Principal) have to understand the different constituents of this school's language policy, be aware of the Cambridge Assessment International standards, practices and philosophy in relation to language teaching and learning and be ready to communicate the above to parents and students, whenever the need arises.
- (ix) It is the responsibility of the school to continuously provide adequate teaching resources and materials to assist teachers in the delivery of the different programmes.
- (x) It is the responsibility of all parents to actively promote at home the development of the languages that are taught at school by providing as many opportunities as possible for discovery, exploration, listening, viewing & reading.

