



ESF International Kindergarten Tung Chung Language Policy

Our Philosophy

At ESF Kindergarten Tung Chung (TCK) we believe that language is fundamental to communication, learning and thinking therefore it is embedded in everything we do. All teachers in TCK are language teachers. Language is integral to all areas of learning as children learn to use language, learn about language and learn through language.

We strongly believe that all children are competent readers, writers, speakers and listeners, regardless of age, phase of development or language background. Language learning is on a developmental continuum. Our personalised approach ensures that we are responsive and support every learner to build on their prior experiences wherever they are in their learning journey.

We recognise that language is a vehicle for inquiry, self expression and communicating ideas. Thoughtful communicators are able to make meaning about the world around them and develop powerful relationships. Through modelling and purposeful interactions we support all children in language learning.

We recognise that parents are children's first teachers and therefore we work in partnership with them to develop a shared understanding of our aims and values in relation to language learning. We support and encourage parents to become actively involved in their child's language learning.

We believe that language learning is most effective when embedded in authentic, real life experiences. Therefore we promote and provide a play based environment and a wide variety of language learning opportunities.

We believe that using language and experimenting with language requires courage. Therefore, we foster a growth mindset attitude and have high quality and nurturing interactions to model and support children in developing relationships with others and to understand the world around them.

We provide a well planned environment where language learning is visible and print rich. Our school is a place where children are curious about language and the world around them and develop a lifelong love and enjoyment of language. Our written curriculum is coherent, consistent and designed so children with different language backgrounds and cultures can develop and deepen their understanding to become internationally minded citizens.

Language Profile of the School

Tung Chung kindergarten's population consists of over 19 nationalities speaking more than 7 different languages. The language of instruction is English. Mandarin is offered to every student as an additional language. We have an international staff of teachers and educational assistants with a wide range of language backgrounds.

Language of the host country - Chinese (Mandarin)

We believe that the acquisition of more than one language enriches personal growth, facilitates international mindedness and respect for others. The ability to communicate in more than one language allows students to participate more confidently and effectively in their community and in the greater global community. Mandarin is the primary language spoken in mainland China by 70 percent of Chinese speakers. Children in the kindergarten learn Mandarin (hereafter called Chinese) as an additional language. We provide Chinese instruction through play and inquiry based learning experiences that are relevant and engaging to the children. The Chinese curriculum is integrated with units of inquiry. The curriculum is focused on speaking and listening and is planned to teach children key words and phrases. Each child receives one fifty minute lesson per week. The Chinese teacher is also available during shared spaces to play, interact with and to scaffold children's learning.

Support for Mother Tongue

We value the development of home languages and recognise that a strong foundation in a child's mother tongue strengthens the learning of a second language. We believe that valuing and recognising a child's mother tongue is important to their cultural identity. English is the language of instruction at TCK and for many of our parents this is the primary contributing factor for choosing our kindergarten. At TCK we comply with the ESF Admissions policy in relation to Language. The language profile of the community is varied and complex with many of our children speaking more than one language in the home. The language profile of our community varies from year to year.

We provide the following support for Mother Tongue:

- Establishing each family language background through admissions and beginning of the year Hopes and Fears consultations
- Celebrating and making connections with family and cultural backgrounds
- Parents complete a cultural and language survey (K2 How We Express Ourselves UOI)
- Parent information sessions are provided on how to support language development
- Inviting parents and community members to share stories in mother tongue
- Employing a range of teaching strategies to support children learning English as an

additional language

- Children are permitted to use their Mother Tongue to communicate while developing their English Skills
- Grouping children in classes with similar cultural and language backgrounds

Support for English as an Additional Language Learners

English as an Additional Language (EAL) is defined as all children for whom English is not their first language. We work in partnership with parents to identify and learn about language background and cultural identity of the children and families. We acknowledge that our community is diverse and ever changing. By doing this we provide opportunities to share our own cultures and learn about others ensuring tolerance, open mindedness and international mindedness. We promote an inclusive respectful environment. A wide variety of strategies are used to support the language needs of EAL students such as: modelling language, scaffolding language (peers and adults), use of props, gestures and visual aids and targeted English Language booster groups. EAL students who require additional support are identified through teacher observation and WellComm assessments. Assessment data informs personalised and differentiated learning and teaching.

Support for Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

We see children as individual learners and support their needs and celebrate their successes. Planning is informed by assessments and differentiation supports and extends learning. We work in partnership with parents and start with finding out more about their language background from them. A range of strategies to support language development are developed and recorded by the class teacher and full time Learning Support Lead Teacher. They are reviewed and shared with families on a regular basis. At TCK early intervention is valued and promoted as positive in supporting ongoing development. We collaborate with external agencies such as Speech and Language therapists and provide onsite private and external therapists to support children where appropriate. We work in collaboration with the ESF SEN Advisor and base our practice on the ESF SEN policy and procedures.

The written curriculum

TCK has a developmentally appropriate language program that takes account of student needs and interests. Language outcomes are planned for in all units of inquiry. The PYP and ESF language scope and sequence are the guiding documents for all planning. Oral, visual and written language as well as digital literacies are planned for. Weekly planning identifies specific areas of focus for language learning and notes the language that teachers and students may be using in play experiences.

The taught curriculum

We provide authentic, meaningful and creative opportunities for language learning within all of our units of inquiry. All children are encouraged to express themselves orally and develop strong listening skills. Children are provided with opportunities to take part in small and large group discussions. Children are encouraged to reflect and think about their language learning. Our language learning is inquiry play based and includes both child directed and teacher guided instruction. Children are encouraged to appreciate and enjoy oral language through rhymes, songs and stories on a daily basis. Teachers actively model speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing and presenting. Within areas of play and our environment, we provide learning opportunities through mark-making, role-play, construction, music and movement. We aspire to develop a love of reading through our well equipped classrooms and TCK library and discuss a range of texts, written and oral stories using a variety of media and digital literacies. Ongoing professional development training in powerful interactions, sustained shared thinking and all aspects of language learning is provided for all teachers and Educational Assistants. Reflective documentation and language rich displays which include students' voice and teacher interpretation and reflection are evident throughout the school.

The Assessed Curriculum

Assessment is integral to all language teaching and learning. At TCK formative assessment for learning is an ongoing process in which the adults are listening, observing and documenting language learning of all students. This is through play and interactions with peers and adults, responses to stories and instructions, storytelling, recounting familiar stories and events. This informs future planning to ensure that all students' developmental needs are considered and catered for. The WellComm language assessment is used as a tool to support assessment of language. It is used with all K1 students in term 1, and through K2. The data is used to provide support or extend for students and informs future language planning.

Library and Resources

The TCK library is available for children to access each day throughout the session. We have a wide range of high quality and multi-modal texts that reflect the international nature of our community including a growing collection of Chinese language texts. Use of the library is planned for and language learning opportunities are highlighted in all units of inquiry. All library and multimedia resources are catalogued and organised in the Library CEO system. Texts are tagged with keywords to reflect their relevance to the essential elements of the PYP. Children have the opportunity to borrow books to take home from the library on a weekly basis. Information literacy learning is a shared responsibility for all teachers and educational assistants. Story sacks have been created with particular focus on

learner profile attributes for classroom use. We have a large professional learning library accessible for all staff.

Each class has a well resourced reading space and both teachers and students select texts to connect with both units of inquiry and student interest. Opportunities for writing and mark making are provided in all areas of learning throughout the kindergarten.

Each class is equipped with a laptop, a set of iPads, cameras, Mimio interactive hardware and software and audio visual materials to support both teaching and learning. Continuous Professional Development in Language is provided for all staff to ensure we are able to deliver a language rich curriculum.

Resources

Making the PYP Happen

PYP Language Scope and Sequence

ESF Language Scope and Sequence

ESF Essential Agreement for Language (English) 2014-2015

Early Years in the PYP : Educators Perspectives

ESF international kindergarten Language policies