



REIGATE GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
VIETNAM

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## Language Policy

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## Language Policy

As an IB world school, we have considered the IB's philosophy and mission statement in preparing, actioning and reviewing this policy. Our policy, procedures and actions consider the IB Learner Profile, Approaches to Learning and Teaching and International Mindfulness.

In line with the Vision, Mission and Aims of Reigate Grammar School Vietnam, this Language Policy document is designed to give a clear and concise description of the role of language in our school.

## RGS Vietnam Vision

Reigate Grammar School Vietnam aspires to nurture, empower and connect students with their local and global communities, to become international citizens who are active, compassionate and lifelong learners.

## RGS Vietnam Mission

At Reigate Grammar School Vietnam we value community and connection; the relationships we have with one another are central to our happiness and success at School and beyond. Our mission is to care for and support each individual's potential to become well-rounded, life-long learners with a strong sense of purpose based on their core values.

We empower and inspire our pupils by providing a challenging and diverse curriculum inside and outside the classroom that enables them to develop skills as reflective, brave, caring and principled learners.

We encourage our internationally-minded children to be inquisitive, collaborative and innovative by providing an inclusive and supportive environment.

We prepare our Reigatians to use their unique talents and abilities to make this world a better place by providing opportunities to give back to our community.

## Values

- Courageous/Risk-Taker
- Thinker
- Principled
- Caring
- Inquiring
- Balanced
- Communicator
- Reflective
- Open-mindedness
- Knowledgeable

## Overview

At Reigate Grammar School Vietnam (RGS Vietnam), we believe that 'high-quality learning thrives in an environment of tolerance, respect, and cultural and linguistic diversity'. We acknowledge that language is fundamental to learning and permeates all subject areas; with learning and language being inextricably bound, the responsibility of this language policy belongs to every teacher.

RGS Vietnam teachers collaboratively plan instruction in developmentally appropriate ways, which are reflective about curriculum and instruction, scaffold teaching in response to formal and informal assessment of students' progress, and model for students how to learn.

### ***Language and our community***

While the language of instruction at RGS Vietnam is English, our community speaks many different languages. As such, RGS Vietnam embraces this diversity. However, in the understanding of a holistic community English is the predominant language of all communication across the school.

Students and the wider community are encouraged to be inclusive of all languages used around them as appropriate. Use of other languages is therefore fully permissible as long as doing so does not exclude anyone from that communication.

### ***Host country language policy***

- Learning languages at an early age opens one's mind to learning about other cultures, sharpens one's perception and promotes creative and critical thinking. Collaborative work is actively encouraged among students.
- Vietnamese as an additional language is available in the RGS Vietnam Preparatory section of the school
- While Vietnamese as an additional language is not available at RGS Vietnam in the secondary school, this section of the school does much to encourage an appreciation of the host language.
- Within the curriculum opportunities are developed to create links between the host culture and the wider global community.
- Local opportunities are sought to engage the curriculum in real world experiences. This includes the host language as well as culture.
- Within the wider school community Tet provides a focus for direct celebration of Vietnamese culture and International Day highlights the wider cultures of the whole school community.
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### ***Communication with parents and other stakeholders***

All school or programme wide communication with parents as a body is conducted in English, with important communications translated into summaries in Vietnamese and Korean. Semester written reports are produced in English. Only for Vietnamese A and Korean A, is there a translation into the appropriate language. Academic transcripts are only produced in English. Where required for ease of communication, Vietnamese and Korean translation is available at all school events.

## ***RGS Vietnam Preparatory School, Primary Years Programme (PYP)***

### ***Roles within our Learning Community***

#### ***What are the roles of the RGS Vietnam pedagogical leadership team and the language specialists?***

A responsibility of RGS Vietnam's pedagogical leadership team is to support teachers. The PYP coordinator manages issues regarding curriculum, instructional techniques, assessment and student progress.

RGS Vietnam language specialists (Vietnamese, EAL, etc) have knowledge of language development, culture, year-level subject matter, instructional resources, and assessment tools. The specialists set out to reach the following goals:

- Promote effective language teaching and assessment practices
- Nurture the articulation of language expectations in all curricula and programmes

- Work with the pedagogical leadership team to enhance the language programmes

### ***What are the roles of staff?***

Since learning and language are inextricably bound, the responsibility for the implementation of this language policy belongs to every teacher.

Specific facilitating behaviours include:

- Acquiring a professional knowledge base in additional language acquisition processes, students' developmental language behaviours and familiarity with students' language learning cognitive styles
- Integrating language instruction with content instruction
- Providing responsive learning conditions as recommended by the IB and Cambridge (activating background knowledge, scaffolding meaning, extending language, and affirming identity)
- Giving strategic feedback to students and parents on their linguistic and cognitive development
- Holding high language and academic expectations for all students
- Involving parents in the language and academic development of their children

### ***What is the role of the RGS Vietnam Preparatory School Parent Community?***

A number of parental actions will facilitate language and academic success for RGS Vietnam students. They include:

- Having a positive attitude towards English, Vietnamese, Korean, French and their mother tongues
- Modelling how much is to be gained by learning languages (other than mother tongue)
- Maintaining mother tongue literacy skills in the home
- Encouraging and emotionally supporting their children's additional language acquisition and schooling efforts
- Supplying mother tongue materials in the home
- Having realistic expectations of their children and their school
- Sharing mother tongue resources such as books and games
- Promoting their mother tongue in school, through storytelling and games with students during special school events.

Parent involvement is integral to student success. The importance of whole-school communication cannot be overemphasised, and volunteering or providing assistance at school is always welcome.

### ***English Language***

RGS Vietnam is an English medium school, as such, all lessons, apart from other language courses, will be in English. We believe that all teachers at RGS Vietnam are language teachers and that teachers and parents play an important role in language development. RGS Vietnam has an open-door English language admissions policy in the PYP. Students entering RGS Vietnam after the Year 2 level must meet specifics in the RGS Vietnam language entrance criteria.

Through language development, students are given the tools they need to interpret the world around them. Language is also a major component in encouraging understanding and tolerance of other cultural groups and perspectives.

At RGS Vietnam, English Language is taught in context and addresses the following strands: oral language (listening and speaking), visual language (viewing and presenting), written language (reading and writing). Instruction is differentiated to meet the needs of individuals. Language teaching occurs with the

understanding that students bring their own unique cultural backgrounds to any new situation.

### ***Teaching Methods***

By integrating language into every aspect of the curriculum, RGS Vietnam is teaching students the importance of culture, diversity, and sensitivity towards others, which in turn enhances their personal growth, cognitive development, and facilitates international understanding. Through the strong emphasis on language, the school's goal is to foster a deep understanding of language and a love of literature.

Teachers are expected to offer conceptually based programmes that take the language needs of the students into account. All teachers are required to attend professional development and to be responsible for ensuring EAL development is considered when carrying out curriculum planning. The EAL teacher(s) will support class teachers and will take part in collaborative planning. They will also help to prepare resources for the language needs of students and to incorporate appropriate content in their lessons.

### ***Mother tongue and additional language learners***

In Nursery to Year 1, the focus on language development for all students caters for the needs of EAL learners alongside those of native speakers. From Year 2 to Year 6, our qualified EAL teacher(s) as required will support students from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Language acquisition is a developmental process that needs to be supported.

While students are encouraged to use the language of instructions to include all students, the home language may be used at the teacher's discretion to support learning, according to the age, maturity and confidence of the individual student.

By identifying our mother tongue language populations, we are able to inform our teachers and staff so that we can strengthen our learning community and integrate languages into instruction, specific to students' needs. Students that are in need of additional services will be identified at the beginning of the school year or when the student enters RGS Vietnam. In line with the 'Admission Policy', the English proficiency test will be given to incoming students from Year 2 and above. For incoming Year 2 students, the proficiency test will be used to inform the homeroom and specialist teachers, but will have no impact on admissions.

For incoming Year 3 students and above, the admissions test may have an impact on admissions.

Additional support for Year 2 students and above may include: differentiated instruction in class; in-class support with the EAL teacher; identified student may be pulled out for one-on-one instruction with the EAL; or all of or any combination of the aforementioned. (See EAL Policy for additional details.)

Students identified as in need of additional support will be tracked weekly by the EAL teacher and the classroom teacher, followed by a termly evaluation meeting to assess level of student progress and to determine if less, additional, or the same amount of support is needed for the coming term.

Diversity is something that is highly valued at RGS Vietnam and having support systems in place to meet the needs of our learners from non-English speaking countries is a school priority. However, if a student has been attending RGS Vietnam for two full academic years and is not progressing as expected, demonstrating an inability to access the curriculum adequately, then the parents of the students will be informed that there might be a limit to what RGS Vietnam can offer. At this point, other educational institutions may be identified for more suited tuition towards their child's needs.

## **Host Country Language For Students Learning Vietnamese**

### **What is our host country language policy?**

Learning languages at an early age opens one's mind to learning about other cultures, sharpens one's perception and promotes creative and critical thinking. Collaborative work is actively encouraged among students. In Vietnamese classes, students express ideas and explore concepts using Vietnamese; learning the language is not an end in itself.

- Students should be actively involved, feel successful and enjoy the learning experience

Students are encouraged to take risks in Vietnamese, overcome obstacles, and accept mistakes as part of the learning process

- The ability to communicate in Vietnamese is of importance
- Learning a new language is a window to different world cultures and a path towards international mindedness
- We acknowledge that acquiring fluency in Vietnamese requires 5-8 years of consistent exposure
- We acknowledge that language fluency in these year groups will also be dependent upon both support from home and individual abilities to develop the language skills necessary
- In moving to the Secondary, students might be required to complete an entrance test for placement in the correct Vietnamese language level
- We support students wishing to deepen the knowledge of their mother tongue

### **What is the role of Vietnamese?**

The primary focus of Vietnamese teaching at RGS Vietnam is the learning of Vietnamese as an additional language. Learning Vietnamese takes on special significance as it is the language of our host country. Students study Vietnamese to gain the communication skills, both in oral and written language, to deal with familiar and practical needs for future study, work and leisure. In addition, through the teaching of Vietnamese, and through links to Vietnamese culture across the curriculum, students develop an appreciation of our host country's culture as well as an awareness of different perspectives. The learning of Vietnamese at RGS Vietnam seeks to instil an enduring interest in Vietnamese culture alongside a lifelong enthusiasm for language learning. Mother tongue language speakers will receive differentiated instruction within the Vietnamese programme.

### **Teaching Methods**

To implement the overall purpose of learning Vietnamese at RGS Vietnam, a variety of teaching methods and strategies are used. These strategies address the essential elements of the PYP. The Vietnamese programme gives students practical real-life language skills, which can be used outside of the classroom. Students are provided with meaningful and authentic speaking and listening, reading, writing, viewing/presenting (media literacy) tasks. Through these tasks, students develop confidence to use the language in their daily lives.

Vietnamese lessons will be offered to students from Nursery to Year 6. There will be Vietnamese lessons for native-speakers and non-native speakers. All students who are Vietnamese passport holders are required, by the government, to take Vietnamese classes. However, students with additional passports can choose to take additional languages instead of Vietnamese, i.e. French.

### **Korean as a Mother Tongue Language**

Korean is offered as a Mother Tongue option in our school to cater to the school community needs.

Korean is relevant in the school and community context because of the business connections between the two countries. Consequently, at RGS Vietnam, we also offer Korean for Year 1 to Year 6 students.

Students that are Korean passport holders may select either Korean, Vietnamese or French classes for their additional language learning area.

### ***French as an Additional Language***

French is offered in many other international schools around the world, and is the second most widely taught foreign language after English. It continues to be one of the official working languages in many global organisations. Learning French is also relevant in the Vietnamese context because of their historical connections. Consequently, at RGS Vietnam, we also offer French for Year 1 to year 6 students.

Students that are non-Vietnamese passport holders may select either Vietnamese or French classes for their additional language learning area.

## **Secondary School**

At RGS Vietnam, all languages in Years 7 to 13 are taught in context and address the following strands: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. In Years 10-11 students pursue IGCSE language options, whilst Years 12-13 students pursue Diploma Programme language options. Instruction is differentiated to meet the needs of individuals. Language teaching occurs with the understanding that students bring their own unique cultural backgrounds to any new situation.

### **Secondary School English Language**

RGS Vietnam is an English-medium school, as such, all lessons, apart from other language courses, will be in English. We believe that all teachers at RGS Vietnam are language teachers and that teachers and parents play an important role in language development. Students entering RGS Vietnam after Year 7 must meet specifics in the RGS Vietnam language entrance criteria.

Through language development, students are given the tools they need to interpret the world around them. Language is also a major component in encouraging understanding and tolerance of other cultures and perspectives.

Students in Years 10 and 11 follow the Cambridge IGCSE English Language programme.

### ***Mother tongue and additional language learners***

From Year 7 to Year 9, our qualified EAL teachers as required will support students from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Language acquisition is a developmental process that needs to be supported. While students are encouraged to use the language of instruction to include all students, the home language may be used at the teacher's discretion to support learning, according to the age, maturity and confidence of the individual student.

By identifying our mother tongue language populations, we are able to inform our teachers and staff so that we can strengthen our learning community and integrate languages into instruction, specific to students' needs. Students that are in need of additional services will be identified at the beginning of the

school year or when the student enters RGS Vietnam. In line with the 'Admission Policy', the English proficiency test will be given to incoming students from Year 7 and above. Teachers will provide details of language levels for those students moving from the RGS Vietnam Preparatory school to the RGS Vietnam Secondary School to ensure continued language proficiency development.

Students requiring additional support to access the curriculum will, with the guidance of the EAL department, develop an individual support programme including in class and pullout support as well as extra sessions as required within the Extra Curricula structure. The aim of all EAL support is to reduce the input required over time so that by Year 10 all students are operating in English as the language of instruction confidently.

### ***Teaching Methods***

By integrating language into every aspect of the curriculum, RGS Vietnam is teaching students the importance of culture, diversity, and sensitivity towards others, which in turn enhances their personal growth, cognitive development, facilitates international understanding, and fosters a deep understanding of language.

Teachers are expected to ensure their programmes take the language needs of the students into account. All teachers are required to attend professional development and to be responsible for ensuring EAL development is considered when carrying out curriculum planning. The EAL teachers will support Years 7-9 class teachers and will take part in collaborative planning for support materials for students on the EAL register.

### **Secondary School Vietnamese programme**

#### ***Vietnamese first language***

All students who are Vietnamese passport holders are required, by the government, to take Vietnamese classes, up to the end of Year 11. In Years 7 to 11 these students will follow a version of the local National Curriculum.

#### ***Vietnamese as an additional language in Secondary School***

Vietnamese is not currently offered as an additional language to nonnative speakers of Vietnamese from Year 7 to Year 11. As RGS Vietnam expands, and students who have studied Vietnamese in PYP move through the school, it is envisioned that there will be a programme for nonnative speakers of Vietnamese. Vietnamese as an additional language (Language B) is not offered by the IGCSE (Cambridge) and IBDP Examination Boards.

### **French as an Additional Language**

French is offered in many other international schools around the world, and is the second most widely taught foreign language after English. It continues to be one of the official working languages in many global organisations. Learning French is relevant to the Vietnamese context because of historical connections. Consequently, at RGS Vietnam, we offer French from Year 7 to students.

Currently students that are non-Vietnamese passport holders take French classes for their additional language learning area.

In Years 10-11 students can follow the IGCSE French programme.

In Years 12-13 students who have studied French in IGCSE are eligible to take French B in the Diploma



Programme.

### **Korean first language in Secondary School**

Korean first language is offered at all levels in the Secondary School, including IGCSE and IBDP Language A.

### ***Korean as an additional language in Secondary School***

Currently Korean is not offered as an additional language. As RGS Vietnam expands, opportunities will be investigated to offer Korean as an additional language.

### **Diploma Programme and Post-16 studies:**

As in all other sections of RGS Vietnam, English is the language of instruction within the Diploma Programme. It is the common language in which all communication and access to the curriculum occurs.

As stated above, teachers in the Diploma Programme are all language teachers, and as such are required to develop teaching and learning in English with scaffolded and differentiated teaching processes for all students. The support and development of English within the school is paramount. English language learning is not something that happens at a set time with a set teacher, instead it happens across the disciplines and every teacher is required to model the use of language, emphasising clear and concise communication.

Teachers also need to be aware of the Access and Inclusion Policy outlined by the IB that allows for DP learners to receive additional arrangements for EAL needs if they meet IB requirements and have received approved Access Arrangements. (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2022, p. 24-25)

All students in group 3-6 subjects, should have access to physical dictionaries in English to their native language for in class work and assessments, and for use in External Examinations.

All assessment with the exception of additional Language A and B courses is conducted in English as outlined in the RGS Vietnam Assessment Policy. Reporting and feedback on assessments is also undertaken in English, with the exception of Group 1 and 2 where reporting occurs in the language of instruction. Where required, RGS Vietnam administration can translate reports into Vietnamese and Korean for parents, based on individual requests.

### ***Language and admission to the IB Diploma Programme.***

Students who progress from Year 11 into the Diploma Programme at RGS Vietnam will have the opportunity to continue the development of their languages through course selection based on their IGCSE examination results and in school reporting. The school offers both Language A and B subject selections. For Language A, students may take English, Korean or Vietnamese. Language B options include English, French and Spanish. In addition students may take a School-Supported Self-Taught Language A programme if suitable.

Language choice, maintenance and progression are a major focus of the Sixth Form Subject Selection process undertaken during Year 11.

Students entering the Diploma Programme at RGS Vietnam into Year 12 are supported in making language

choices during the application process and then developed with the Diploma Coordinator during admissions. Placement testing may be required for English, Vietnamese, French and Korean, to aid the selection of the correct level and course.

### ***Diploma Subjects and Language teaching***

By integrating language into every aspect of the curriculum, RGS Vietnam is teaching students the importance of culture, diversity, and sensitivity towards others, which in turn enhances their personal growth, cognitive development, and facilitates international understanding. Through the strong emphasis on language, the school's goal is to foster a deep understanding about language and communication.

While the language of instruction in the Diploma Programme is English, the curriculum emphasis is on communication and the links language can make. Subject teachers are required within their planning to develop possibilities for those links to be highlighted and fostered.

Teachers are expected to ensure their programmes take the language needs of the students into account. All teachers are required to attend professional development and to be responsible for ensuring individual language development is considered when carrying out curriculum planning.

### ***Language A (Group 1)***

This level is for a fluent language user, studying in his or her most competent language. This is normally the language of the environment to which the student has been exposed from an early age or for an extended period. Students study literary texts and demonstrate analytical skills in writing and speaking.

Most students in the Diploma Program study English A at either higher or standard level. However, RGS Vietnam also offers Language A classes in Vietnamese and Korean. All students who are Vietnamese passport holders are required, by the government, to take Vietnamese classes, until the end of Year 11. While Vietnamese and Korean students have the opportunity to study an additional foreign language in the IB Diploma Programme, RGS Vietnam encourages students to maintain their cultural first language where possible.

### ***School Supported Self Taught Programme***

Students at RGS Vietnam may also study other “mother tongue” Language A subjects at standard level through the IB school-supported self-taught (SSST) option. Students studying SSST languages do so under the direct guidance of our Group 1 team in a dedicated scheduled support period each week.

Where possible an outside tutor in the language of instruction must also be co-opted, to work under the direction of our Group 1 team, to allow more authentic assessment of student progress within the SSST programme.

### ***IBDP Language A as an Additional Language***

RGS Vietnam recognises that many international students are “3rd Culture” and as such may be proficient in more than one language in Group 1. Students who fit this profile may opt to study two Language A courses from within those offered or from those that can be supported by SSST. These students would not be required to take an additional Language in Group 2 and are eligible for a Bilingual Diploma.

### ***English as an Additional Language in the Diploma Programme***

In the Diploma Programme, English language support is not routinely provided at RGS Vietnam. Students are required to already have an academic level of English that will allow successful completion of the

Diploma when enrolling. Exceptions to this exist where a student is enrolled to complete IB Diploma Courses or is studying a Language A course in Korean or Vietnamese, but still requires support in full to access Groups 3-6 in the language of instruction. If students require Additional English Language Support the IB Access Arrangements policy allows the school to request accommodations for the students that include extra time for completing examinations and other opportunities. In certain instances the school will pursue this opportunity. (add document citation)

***English language in acquisition:***

Classes in DP English B are offered. Students may take a DP Language A other than English. This option is suitable for students who are non-native English speakers or who have recently arrived from a non-English speaking country. On entry to the Diploma Programme, students with this profile will be evaluated to establish whether a full Diploma Programme or a Diploma Courses Programme is more suitable. If a student must take two language B courses, they will not be eligible to pursue the Full Diploma Programme, and be required to pursue Diploma Courses because the Full Diploma requires students to be enrolled in one Language A course.

***Additional Language Acquisition***

All students in the full Diploma Programme are expected to complete a second language study (Language B or an additional Language A). RGS Vietnam offers IB DP Language B in French at both HL and SL, and Spanish ab initio SL. Other ab initio languages can be pursued through the IB approved learning platform, Pamoja for an additional fee. Students taking the full Diploma Programme, must continue the study of a second language in one of the following ways:

DP Language B HL or SL (for language learners who have had two or more years of experience with the language): Students learn to communicate effectively in a number of situations, from everyday exchanges to literary texts. In this way, they develop mastery of language skills.

DP Language ab initio SL (for a beginner who has little or no experience of the language): Students gain a basic level of communication based on everyday exchanges and prescribed situations.

## References

International Baccalaureate Organization (2022). *Access and inclusion policy*. Cardiff: International Baccalaureate Organization.

## Reviewing the Language Policy

*RGS Vietnam recognises that it is important to remain abreast with best international learning practices. With this in mind, the RGS Vietnam Language policy will be reviewed on a regular basis.*

*PYP section Accepted within IB Verification 2020*

*Reviewed October 2016 and January 2017 to include the development of the Secondary School and IB Diploma Sections of the Language Policy.*

*Updated February 2017 – Secondary School*

*Reviewed February 2020 - Whole School*

*Reviewed February 2023 - in preparation for the IB DP 5 Year Evaluation*