

# Language Acquisition Policy

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## Vision statement of Language Acquisition

Language is central to children’s social, emotional and cognitive development. We are a Dutch International Primary School in the Netherlands and are fortunate to have a multilingual environment. We believe that all students are language students; all teachers are language teachers.

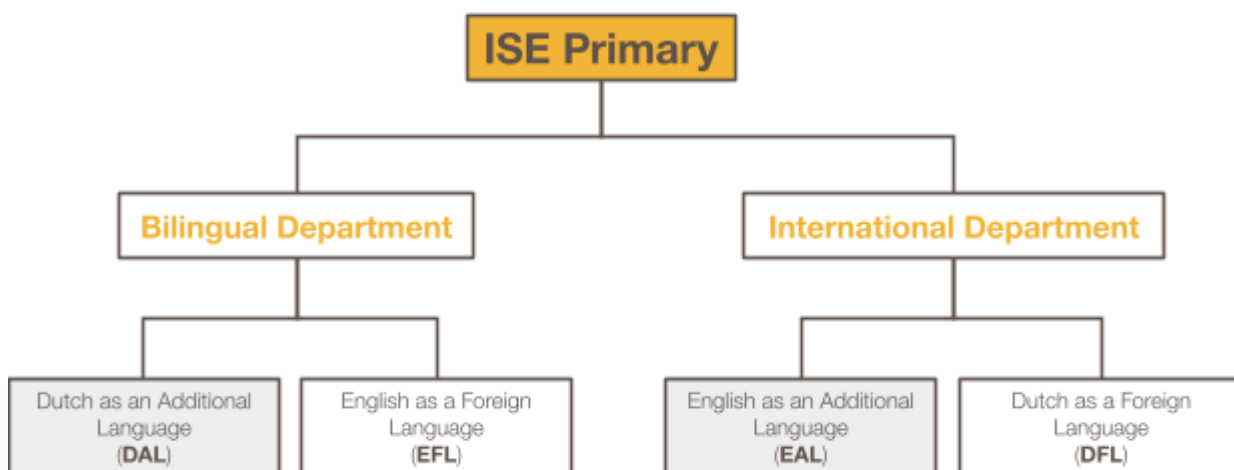
Within our school, we seek to ensure that students of every background feel respected and that their cultural identity is affirmed. At the same time, students are encouraged to acquire new languages. By embracing home languages and simultaneously offering language support, we create a safe learning environment to stimulate linguistic development.

The acquisition of more than one language enriches personal growth and helps facilitate international-mindedness. In our classrooms, we foster a love of all languages and language learning, utilizing opportunities to translanguage and validate cultural identity, whenever possible.

## The Organisation of our school

At the International School Eindhoven, there are two departments on one campus: the International Department, with primary instruction given in English and the Bilingual Department, with primary instruction given in Dutch. Both departments provide language support for the primary language of instruction, particularly for students who are new to the language of instruction.

In addition, Dutch lessons are given within the International Department, and English lessons are given within the Bilingual Department for all students. Within the International Department, the Dutch as a Foreign Language lessons (DFL) include both language learning and cultural awareness. Participating in DFL lessons enables students to feel welcome in the Netherlands and assists them in their integration into the Dutch community. In the Bilingual department, English language learning will allow students to be able to communicate effectively with people from our international community and the rest of the world. This is a first big step to global citizenship. See graphic below.



## The different language areas

The ISE is a Dutch International School teaching children from all over the world, including the Netherlands.

From the age of 4, parents can register their children for the Upper Foundation group. There is a collaboration with the Lower Foundation group (3 year olds) of Kinderstad. Both Foundation groups offer bilingual teaching in Dutch and English. In this rich language environment, children get used to the multilingualism of our school at an early age.

There are two departments in our Primary School: The Bilingual Department and the International Department.

In the Bilingual Department, we offer TPO (bilingual primary education), which is a national bilingual project. This means that 70% of the education is given in Dutch and 30% in English. The language of instruction in the International Department is English.

In both departments, students new to the language of instruction are offered a strong Additional Language support program. The language support programs work alongside the curriculum in order to prepare our students to work more independently in the classroom and to be confident, happy and enthusiastic students.

In addition to this, Foreign Language Lessons (EFL for the Bilingual Department and DFL for the International Department) are taught so that all students have the opportunity to become multilingual and to feel safe and connected to the Dutch and international communities.

All the different language acquisition areas focus on using language as a way to communicate. The strategies used are interactive and use language in a meaningful way. Students are involved in practical learning experiences that are connected to what the children are learning in class or related to their lives in the Netherlands. We believe that when these activities are fun and active our students are involved and enjoy learning thus acquiring new languages. The use of their home language in our lessons gives the students confidence, strengthens their understanding, and aids them in acquiring an additional language.

## Home Language

We at the ISE encourage the use of home languages in our school as well as at home.

Research has shown that the students' home language plays a continuing and significant role in their identity, their learning and the acquisition of additional languages. Students are encouraged to use their entire language repertoire in the classroom as this improves their skills in the language used in the classroom and their understanding of the concepts being taught. By fostering the use of home languages in the classroom, students feel that their cultural identity is valued.

It is very important that students continue to develop and maintain their home language. The student's home language provides the foundation to learn additional languages. Research also shows that continuing to use home languages alongside their new language acquisition will provide students with numerous cognitive and social-emotional benefits to make the process of learning additional languages faster and easier. In addition, encouraging students to use their mother tongue will enable them to transfer academic knowledge previously learned.

Our school library has a large number of books available in various languages.

We organize a number of after school home language clubs and are working on extending the current variety we offer. These language classes are run by native speaking home language teachers and are offered at an additional cost.

## First Language French Programme

An agreement was made in 2014 with the director of the ISE and the European Air transport Commander to provide a first language French programme for French students who have a parent that works for EATC. These students are only at the ISE for a few years and are required to have a high level of French in order to transition back into the French education system. French lessons are provided 3 times per week during the Dutch as a foreign language lesson time. Parents pay an additional cost for this service. Costs vary depending on the number of students who participate in the course.

## Policies of different language areas

Please find the DAL Policy [here](#)

Please find the DFL Policy [here](#)

Please find the EAL Policy [here](#)

Please find the EFL Policy [here](#)

## Inclusion

All our students come from different backgrounds and have individual needs. We seek to ensure that these needs are met and effective support is given, tailored to the individual. In collaboration with the Student Needs Coordinator we take into account specific educational targets set for the student to support their learning.

EAL and DAL students participate in the regular literacy lessons (with the exception of a 6-8 week period for absolute beginners). The EAL or DAL teacher supports the EAL/DAL students - in small groups outside and inside the classroom - to access the curriculum.

All our students participate in the Foreign Language lessons - DFL lessons in the International Department and EFL lessons in the Bilingual Department. Differentiation in those lessons ensures that individual educational needs are met in order for all students to develop their skills in the foreign language at their own level and pace.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The students' language development is monitored through observations and assessments by their language acquisition teacher (DAL, DFL, EAL or EFL) and the class teacher. (For more details please consult the individual policies of each language acquisition area and the whole school literacy policy.)

In our school we have a Language Acquisition Curriculum Leader as well as an English as an Additional Language Curriculum Leader and a TPO (Bilingual Education) Curriculum Leader. They regularly meet with class teachers, language teachers and management to monitor and develop the curriculum, teaching and learning of their respective curriculum areas.