1. Language Philosophy

At McKinnon Primary School, we believe that language is the common thread that links all people in its written, spoken and visual forms. Language enables us to access information, enhance intellectual growth, foster communication, develop social skills, as well as reflect and maintain culture and examine who we are.

Language is crucial in nurturing the development of each learner, cultivating the values of diversity, international mindedness and intercultural awareness. Ultimately, language empowers us to express ideas and opinions, allowing learners to function effectively in society, engage with and relate to other people, as well as take responsibility for helping to create a better and more peaceful world.

The acquisition of language is a dynamic, life-long and social process that permeates all learning. McKinnon PS recognises that all teachers are therefore language teachers.

2. Language Profile

Over 28% of our current student population has as their first language (as gathered from CASES21), a language other than English. There are thirty-four different mother tongues spoken in our school community. The predominant mother-tongue languages at McKinnon PS are: Mandarin, Hindi, Chinese (not further defined), Korean, Russian, Telugu, Gujarati, Vietnamese, Hebrew and Tamil. The language of instruction at the school is English and the additional language is Mandarin.

3. Purpose

3.1. The study of language is central to the learning and development of all young Australians. It helps create confident communicators, imaginative thinkers and informed citizens. Our aim is to provide students with a rich, challenging, and transdisciplinary inquiry based language program that transcends all areas of the curriculum. It is through the study of language that individuals learn to:

3.1.1. Listen read, view, speak, write, create and reflect upon texts across a growing range of contexts with accuracy, fluency and purpose.

3.1.2. Analyse, understand, communicate and build relationships with others and with the world around them.

3.1.3. Develop the knowledge and skills needed for education, training and the workplace.

3.1.4. Explore language and construct meaning in authentic, challenging, relevant and transdisciplinary contexts that empowers and enriches their daily lives.

3.1.5. Share personal stories in order to develop intercultural understanding and respect multiple perspectives.

3.1.6. Learn a Language Other Than English (LOTE), enabling students to foster an appreciation and enjoyment for language and gain valuable insight into culture.

3.1.7. Develop international-mindedness by exploring world languages, including mother-tongue and indigenous languages. Mother-tongue languages will be valued and respected in our community. They will assist in deepening understanding of personal and cultural identity.

3.1.8. Become ethical, thoughtful, informed and active members of society and plays an important part in developing the understanding, attitudes and capabilities of those who will take responsibility for Australia's future.

4. Guidelines

4.1. The language learning process simultaneously involves learning language, learning about language and learning through language. However, these three aspects are so inextricably linked, they are best not thought of as discrete processes, but as major connecting elements across all curriculum domains.

4.2. The acquisition of language is promoted as a partnership between all members of our community including parents, students, teachers and support staff.

4.3. Teachers will provide a balanced and sequential Language program based on the Victorian Curriculum and PYP standards and practices and the incorporating the PYP Language Scope and Sequence.

4.4. Language will be incorporated authentically into each of the six PYP transdisciplinary units of inquiry each year.

4.5. Teachers' knowledge and skills in the teaching of language will be enhanced through regular professional development, collaborative planning, professional reading and peer coaching experiences.

4.6. The Language Program will differentiate and personalise learning to ensure students are working within their zone of proximal development whilst considering and valuing their interests and their cultural and linguistic background.

5. **Implementation**
   ### 5.1. Language of Instruction – English
   5.1.1. The Language Program incorporates the teaching of reading, writing and speaking and listening from Foundation to Year Six on a daily basis. As it is a communication skill for all areas of the curriculum it is considered a priority in all subject areas.
   5.1.2. The fundamental skills of language are taught explicitly at all year levels. All learning is a developmental process and our language program is therefore differentiated to meet students' points of need.
   5.1.3. From Foundation to Year 2 this explicit teaching occurs in a two-hour uninterrupted English block consisting of one hour of reading and one of writing with listening and speaking interwoven throughout. In Years 3-6 10 hours of explicit English teaching occurs throughout each week.
   5.1.4. As language plays a vital role in the construction of meaning, core language skills are developed through our transdisciplinary program of inquiry.
   5.1.5. We acknowledge that in the 21st century, literacy comes in a variety of mediums and consequently at all levels, students enhance language skills learn through digital literacies, as age appropriate.
   5.1.6. Students are assessed at regular intervals, as per the McKinnon Primary School Assessment Schedule. Student achievement levels are recorded and stored electronically. This data helps the school to track all students individually so that appropriate learning strategies can be put in place.
   5.1.7. Written texts are an essential element of communication. Students learn to read in order to read to learn. The school fosters an appreciation of the richness of language and a love of literature.
   5.1.8. Opportunities for learning about and learning through oral language occur in all domains of the curriculum. Oral language allows students to express their thinking and understandings.
   5.1.9. Formal and informal opportunities are designed for students to understand the purposes of oral communication to different audiences. Celebration of Learning Assemblies, share and learn, inquiry presentations and three-way and student led conferences.
   5.1.10. The development of the transdisciplinary skill of listening is explicitly taught in all areas of the curriculum, through circle time, note-taking, collaboration, peer assessment and learning community essential agreements with emphasis on active listening routines.
   5.1.11. Language learning incorporates understandings about visual language and the messages that visual images can convey. In the close examination of texts students learn how to gain meaning from illustrations and diagrams.

   ### 5.2. Languages Other Than English (LOTE) - Mandarin
   Requiring students to study a language other than the language of instruction enables those students to develop a deeper understanding of language, culture, and many of the attributes in the Learner Profile that contribute to international-mindedness. Acquisition of more than one language enriches personal growth and strengthens international-mindedness. Learning a language other than English (LOTE) gives a child a window into another way of life that can begin a lifelong journey of the study of other cultures. Mandarin is offered at McKinnon Primary School in addition to the language of instruction.
   5.2.1. Students from Foundation to Year Six participate in weekly lessons with a qualified Mandarin specialist teacher.
   5.2.2. Learning in Mandarin is supported through a range of resources, including books, online activities, digital resources, musical instruments and cultural games and follows and inquiry based approach to learning. This is an active process in which learners construct new ideas (around Chinese language and Chinese culture) based upon their current and prior knowledge.
   5.2.3. In order to construct their own understanding, students are provided with a purposeful sequence of guided experiences that allow them to explore beyond the information given. Students then develop strategies to find answers to their questions. The supportive Mandarin specialist classroom environment is a centre for this guided

inquiry, where students are actively engaged in, and are encouraged to take responsibility for, their own learning.

5.2.4. Mandarin lessons include both language learning and cross-cultural awareness. When planning, the Mandarin curriculum is related to the Programme of Inquiry units wherever possible to strengthen the transdisciplinary nature of language learning. Stand-alone curriculum content and skills are taught and organised through meaningful concepts and themes.

5.3. Extra Support for Language Learning

5.3.1. We acknowledge the need to differentiate language learning to accommodate the diverse range of language skills and understandings that our students possess to become effective learners in their own communities and society in general.

5.3.2. Providing support for the language of instruction is necessary to ensure equal access to academic and social opportunities.

5.3.3. Students who are yet to master the age appropriate skills of reading and writing are provided with an individual learning program.

5.3.4. Some students may be offered the opportunity to attend a one-on-one intervention program with a specially trained intervention aide.

5.4. Mother-Tongue Languages

5.4.1. Honouring each student's mother tongue is a necessary component of respecting and learning about each student's culture.

5.4.2. We promote the importance of developing our students' mother-tongue language to the school community to strengthen each child's language development as well as strengthening ties to culture and identity.

5.4.3. We celebrate our differences and encourage students to be proud of their culture. The use of mother-tongue is supported by providing reading material in the diverse languages represented in our community. Families are also encouraged to contribute to this library collection through donations of books in their mother tongue.

5.4.4. Students are encouraged to use their mother-tongue language when sharing aspects of culture, Celebration of Learning assemblies, Share and Learn, guest reading opportunities and when accessing and sharing prior knowledge.

5.4.5. Students' mother-tongue development is further supported through:
  5.4.5.1. displaying promotional material for local language schools
  5.4.5.2. language displays and posters located in prominent positions around school
  5.4.5.3. bilingual reading materials such as well-known stories and dictionaries
  5.4.5.4. providing an inclusive environment that celebrates international mindedness and diversity.
  5.4.5.5. encouraging children to bring in a wide range of cultural artefacts
  5.4.5.6. arranging parents and community members to visit classrooms and the library to read stories in different languages and share experiences
  5.4.5.7. supporting families to access language classes

5.4.6. Continued development of mother tongue languages is essential in the development of language and is crucial in maintaining identity, cultural understanding and empathy. Language connections between home and school are vital as are connections between classrooms, the library and the wider community.

5.5. English as an additional Language (EAL)

McKinnon Primary School recognises that it is the responsibility of all teachers to be teachers of English.

5.5.1. At McKinnon Primary School we believe that in supporting our EAL students we should:
  5.5.1.1. Support students to integrate into the school's academic and social programs
  5.5.1.2. Build on what students already know
  5.5.1.3. Support the use mother-tongue language to access prior knowledge to support student learning and understanding of curriculum content
  5.5.1.4. Help maintain communication between home and school through translation services

5.5.2. When EAL students enrol at the school, there is discussion held with the parents about whether the student may benefit from the support of the Noble Park Language School (Stonington-Glen Eira Campus). Parents will be advised of their options in regards to their child attending this facility.

5.5.3. McKinnon PS staff have been supported to use the EAL Developmental Continuum for planning, advice, assessment and teaching and learning strategies to be support EAL learners.

5.5.4. EAL professional learning for staff is supported through the EAL Outreach Officer who attends the school regularly to provide extra assessment support to EAL students.

6. Evaluation

6.1. Language Profile (section 2) to be updated annually.

6.2. This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.
Review Date: October 2019

This policy was last ratified by School Council in: October 2016