

Caulfield South Primary School

C.S.P.S.

Language Policy

Philosophy

At Caulfield South Primary School we believe that language is the common thread that provides a vehicle for learners to engage with the world and links people with its written, spoken and visual forms. Language supports and enhances our thinking and understanding. The acquisition of language is a dynamic, life-long and social process that permeates all learning. Caulfield South recognises that all teachers are therefore language teachers.

The school, through its practices and resources, recognises the importance of the language of instruction (English), supporting students' mother tongue and learning in an additional language (Italian).

The curriculum at Caulfield South provides students with the opportunity *for learning language, learning through language and learning about language. (Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes, p4)* We acknowledge the need to differentiate language learning to accommodate the diverse range of language skills and understandings that our students possess. This assists students to feel accepted, confident and willing to take risks.

Our library and classroom resources support language learning at Caulfield South P.S. This assists development in English, as well as the various mother tongues and the additional language, Italian.

Language Profile

Approximately 11% of our student population has as their first language, a language other than English. There are eight different mother tongues spoken in our school community. The predominant languages are Russian, Hebrew and a range of Chinese dialects. The language of instruction at the school is English and the additional language is Italian.

Practices and Implementation

English is the language of instruction at Caulfield South P.S. It is the major connecting element across the curriculum. English is the form of communication for all areas of the curriculum and is considered a priority. The fundamental skills of language are taught explicitly at all year levels. Language learning is a developmental process and therefore differentiated to meet students' points of need. Where possible, language is taught through the relevant context of the Units of Inquiry and is the basis of a sustained Literacy session.

As language plays a vital role in the construction of meaning, language skills are learnt about and through the units of inquiry. In Years 3 to 6 there is a component of explicit teaching of language skills and wherever possible authentic links to the units of inquiry. We acknowledge that in the 21st century literacy comes in a variety of mediums. Consequently, at all levels students learn through and about digital literacies, as is age appropriate.

Oral Language

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. Formal and informal opportunities are designed for students to understand the purposes of oral communication with different audiences. Assemblies, share and learn, exhibitions, presentations, classroom performances and school concerts are examples of current practices. Oral language development and phonemic awareness are supported by Cued Articulation and Letterland.

Visual Language

Language learning incorporates understandings about visual language and the messages that visual images can convey. In the close examination of texts students learn about gaining meaning from illustrations. Students learn about the visual cues that are expressed through facial expressions and body language.

Written Language

Written texts are an essential element of communication. Students learn to read in order to read for learning. The school aims to foster an appreciation of the richness of language and a love of literature is nurtured. Students learn the hierarchy of skills needed to gain meaning and understanding from the texts they read. The technical skills of reading are taught through various approaches including guided reading, language experience, modelled reading, shared reading, reciprocal reading and literature circles. Each week, students have at least one session where they are involved in a small group detailed analysis of a teacher selected text with the classroom teacher. During these sessions texts are studied with a particular focus and critically analysed. A number of reading schemes are used to assess students' reading development and provide students with appropriate level reading material gathered from a variety of publishers. It is expected that positive reading habits are supported at home through daily reading.

The mechanics of writing are explicitly taught at all year levels. Daily opportunities to practise these skills occur through stand alone language lessons and the units of inquiry. The skills of spelling, grammar, punctuation and text types are taught through modelled writing, shared writing and independent writing. *'The Seven Steps to Writing Success'* and *'CARS and STARS' Reading Comprehension Program (from Yrs 2- 6)* support learning of these skills. It is during these lessons students learn that authors adapt their writing according to their purpose and audience. Planning the structure and content of a written piece is also taught and applied. Wherever possible, these are taught and practised using meaningful contexts. Editing is an important

part of the writing process and is an opportunity to transfer the skills taught in preparation for publishing. Handwriting skills are modelled by the teacher and reinforced through the use of a handwriting text.

Support for language learning

Students in Year 1 who are yet to master the age appropriate skills of reading and writing are provided with the opportunity to participate the Reading Recovery program. The Reading Recovery program is a daily one-on-one intervention program with a specially trained teacher.

Support is also provided for students who are new arrivals to Australia. These students receive small group instruction in oral, visual and written English to support development of their English.

Mother Tongues

Consistent with current research, Caulfield South PS encourages parents and students to continue to speak in their mother tongue. This has been proven to enrich a child's language development and maintain their cultural identity.

We celebrate our differences and encourage students to be proud of their culture. Our students are encouraged, through the teachings of the Learner Profiles, to be open-minded so they understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories. The use of mother tongue is supported by the school providing books in the diverse languages represented in our community. These books are housed in the school library. Families are also encouraged to contribute to this library collection through donations of books in their mother tongue.

Additional Language (Italian)

Acquisition of more than one language enriches personal growth and helps facilitate international mindedness. Italian is offered at Caulfield South PS in addition to the language of instruction. Students from Year Prep to 6 participate in a weekly 40 minute lesson with a qualified Italian specialist teacher. Learning in the additional language is supported through a range of resources, including books, online activities, digital resources and cultural games. Lessons include both language learning and cross-cultural awareness. The Italian program is further supported through a collection of books, videos and DVD's housed in the library for student use.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed in three years.