

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a blue pen, writing on a lined notebook. The background is slightly blurred, showing the texture of the paper and the lines of the notebook. The overall tone is warm and focused.

PaRK IS Policies

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

PaRK INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL

PaRK IS | Language and Literacy Policy

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1. Our Vision and Mission

At PaRK International School (PaRK IS) we teach children the skills and give them the tools to become bilingual, curious, autonomous and agile learners while achieving their personal best in a fast moving World.

The mission of PaRK IS is to educate and inspire students and provide them the skills to be happy and succeed in their individual chosen path.

We work to:

- Educate our children in an international environment, achieving fluency in reading, writing, comprehension and speaking in both Portuguese and English
- Cultivate an environment in which children/students are happy and acquire a passion for learning; where each student is monitored individually and has the opportunity to create his/her own educational path
- Facilitate a high quality programme appropriate to the age and developmental stage of each child, offering a rigorous but dynamic teaching approach
- Implement innovative and up-to-date academic, artistic, sports and technology programmes
- Safely utilise the latest technology in order to encourage its integration as an educational tool
- Encourage curiosity, creativity, collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving;
- Adapt to a changing world to prepare students to confront challenges and seize opportunities
- Promote "learning to learn" and the art of thinking needed for continuous learning throughout life
- Promote excellence and the capacity of each student to give their best
- Teach students to learn how to properly communicate in various ways
- Build a safe and welcoming environment for students and families
- Cultivate pride in the collective experience of the PaRK IS community
- Promote a good sporting attitude, knowing how to win and lose with dignity and respect while also taken care of health.
- Create persons of integrity, who respect the diversity of others while also having an active role in society
- Encourage autonomy and responsibility in all aspects of the student's life
- Promote collaboration and interactivity between families, peers and between the educational community
- Promote fellowship programmes to involve children in worldwide social problems and have an active role in trying to make ours a better world
- Have partner companies that best serve today's youth

2. The Language of Language Learning

Trans-languaging - the fluid transition between dominant languages in lessons (both spontaneous and planned). García (2009) defines the term translanguaging as the flexible use of linguistic resources that students have in the effort to "make sense" of learning.

Home Language - rather than "native" or "mother tongue" we use the term Home Language to indicate the main language taught at home.

Language Acquisition - PaRK have moved away from the use of "foreign" or "second" language" whenever possible (language IGCSEs still call themselves English/Portuguese Second Language and French/Spanish Foreign Language). We instead use the term **Additional Language** for any part of the curriculum where students are "learning a language" (rather than "learning in a language").

Stage 1 Language Learners - This is the group of language learners who are considered Basic. They are usually at A1 or A2 level on the CEFR scale.

Stage 2 Language Learners - This is the group of language learners who are considered Intermediate. They are usually at B1 and B2 on the CEFR scale. This group often includes Home Speakers of the language that have never had their curriculum delivered in the language.

First Language Learners - This is the group of language learners who are considered fluent or expert. They are usually at C1 or C2 on the CEFR scale, or are Home Language users that have been educated in this language.

3. Our Approach to Language Development at PaRK IS

Our core language values include:

- Students rely on language as a tool for communicating, developing logical thinking, creating and sustaining cultural identity, as well as developing social skills and values.
- A multilingual environment will develop students as global citizens.
- Language acquisition and development play a crucial role in each student's personal development.
- Mastery of a strong home language is crucial, but equally important is mastery of the curriculum language.
- All teachers are language teachers and promote a safe classroom environment that support students' learning.

Although the principle language of instruction varies in different sections of the school, one of the central tenets to our Language Policy is trans-languaging. At PaRK we celebrate the fluid transition between languages during learning and ask our teachers to plan into their lessons opportunities for students to work in both Portuguese and English.

We encourage our students to:

- Discuss topics in more than one language
- Develop an understanding of key words in both Portuguese and English
- Use bilingual dictionaries and keep bilingual glossaries
- Use sources in different languages

Below we outline in a little more detail the language approach in each section:

Early Years and Lower Junior School

At Early Years and Lower Junior level, the school follows a bilingual system. In Early Years, students have two home room teachers - one English and one Portuguese. Collaborative planning allows exposure to both languages in all classroom activities.

In Lower Junior School - Grade 1 to 4 - the bilingual system continues. Each class has a Portuguese and English homeroom teacher. The teachers collaborate and the language of instruction pivots between English and Portuguese for Mathematics and social studies. The rest of the subjects are taught in English - namely PE, ICT, music and art.

Upper Junior School

In Upper Junior School, students follow the International Curriculum, doing all subjects (except Portuguese) in English. This pathway is for students who will feed into PaRK IS Senior School.

Senior School

At Senior School, English is the primary language of instruction and students follow a full international curriculum. As such, PaRK IS focuses on promoting English in all areas of school life and sees the acquisition of English as a top priority. It is thus expected that our students are interacting in English in all classes except Portuguese and Modern Foreign Languages.

In addition to PaRK IS' commitment to English, the school is equally committed to providing students with quality access to Portuguese. Learning, utilizing and promoting the language of our host country is essential. Whether as a first language, or a language of acquisition, all students and staff are involved in learning Portuguese.

Various other languages are available to study through our Modern Foreign Language courses. In doing so, PaRK IS positions itself as a school committed to developing global and language-rich citizens.

4. The English Language Support System

Not all students arrive at PaRK IS with the same level of English. For this reason, the school offers various pathways of support for language development.

All Stage 1 English learners in Grade 5, 6, 7 and 8 are expected to follow the English as a Second Language (ESL) curriculum. Students on this curriculum:

- Work in small groups to perfect their English language skills in the four main domains (writing, reading, speaking, and listening)
- Have separate English lessons that focus on language and communication
- Join the English Language Development group:
 - Grade 5 and 6 : instead of Global Perspectives and MyTime
 - Grade 7 and 8 : instead of an Additional Language
- In Grade 7 and 8: have separate Humanities classes that focus on language in a global and historical context
- In Grade 5 and 6 : have approximately 6.5 hours a week dedicated to developing quality English
- In Grade 7 and 8: have approximately 8.5 hours a week dedicated to developing quality English

This language acquisition course can last for one or two years, or until the student has acquired academic and social competency in English.

If a Grade 7 or 8 student is able to access the curriculum but still requires support in developing English, they are offered English Language Development support (ELD) on a weekly basis. This weekly ELD class lasts 90 minutes and is scheduled to take place during the Additional Language class. With this course, students are given the opportunity to focus on sharpening their English skills rather than taking on a third language.

When it comes to IGCSE, the majority of students will undertake the IGCSE Language and Literature course, with a small number of students undertaking IGCSE English as a Second Language. Language mentoring will be available for those students undertaking the first language course but who still need support with English literacy.

5. English Pathways

English Language Pathways - The Language of the Curriculum from Grade 5 to 12

	Stage 1	Stage 2	First language
Grade 1 - 4	English teacher differentiates English work for students depending on their level of English.		
Grade 5	ESL (instead of English); ELD (instead of Global Perspectives & MyTime) 6.5 hours/wk*		English
Grade 6			
Grade 7	ESL (instead of English); Humanities in Second Language (instead of Geo/Hist); ELD (instead of Additional Language) 8.5 hrs/wk*		English
Grade 8			
Grade 9	English Second Language IGCSE		English Literature and Language IGCSEs
Grade 10			
Grade 11	English B		English A
Grade 12			

* Cost associated

Grade 1 to 4

The English teacher assesses the student's English acquisition level and adapts/differentiates the work as required. The Support English teacher works in small groups (identified by the English teacher), both high level, and lower level, once per week.

Grade 5 and 6 - We use an internally-set language assessment to identify the correct English Pathway

- First Language Pathway - Student does English First Language - following the appropriate Cambridge Curriculum.

- Stage 1 Pathway - Student does English as a Second Language instead of English First Language and takes ELD instead of Global Perspectives and MyTime. Moving across to the First Language after one or two years of ESL on a case by case basis.

Grade 7 to 8 - We use an internally-set language assessment to identify the correct English Pathway

- First Language Pathway - Student does English First Language - following the appropriate Cambridge Curriculum.
- Stage 2 Pathway - Student does English First Language - following the appropriate Cambridge Curriculum. The student does not do a third language, instead undertaking an English Language Development (ELD) course 90 minutes a week.
- Stage 1 Pathway - Student does English as a Second Language instead of English First Language, does the English through Humanities course instead of Geography and History, and takes ELD instead of a third language. Moving across to the First Language after one or two years of ESL on a case by case basis.

Grade 9 and 10 - Pathway dependent on previous learning at Lower School

- First Language Pathway - Student does IGCSE English Language and Literature at both Grade 9 and 10 (and therefore receives both iGCSE qualifications)
- Stage 2 Pathway - Student does IGCSE English Language only (single iGCSE qualification). Students begin by following a curriculum in Grade 9 that covers both language and literature, but then focus on obtaining a single iGCSE in the form of English Language in Grade 10.
- Stage 1 Pathway - Student does IGCSE English as a Second Language.

IB Diploma - Pathway dependent on qualifications at IGCSE

- First Language Pathway - Student does English Language A if they obtain their iGCSE English Language qualification in Grade 10.
- Language Acquisition Pathway - Students coming from Stage 1 Pathway in grade 10 (ESL), will do English Language B.

The aim at PaRK IS is for all students to follow the First Language Pathway. Teachers monitor and assess students, tracking their progress thoroughly throughout Upper Junior and Lower Senior years. This progress tracking ensures effective transitions from Stage 1 and 2 learners into First Language learner. These decisions are made collaboratively, on a case by case basis with all subject teachers involved.

A note on the Language only option at iGCSE: Throughout the Language Only course, students will develop not only their writing skills (for different audiences and purposes), reading skills (comprehension and analysis); but they will also develop their literary analysis skills. Students will have access to extracts of Literature, including a novel. This will benefit all aspects of the IGCSE language course, but also provide students with the skills needed to study IB Language and Literature, later on.

6. The Portuguese Language Support System

Like in English, not all students arrive at PaRK IS with the same level of Portuguese. For this reason, we have a language support system for every type of student.

In Grades 1 to 6, students are assessed at the beginning of the school year and they can follow A1/2 or B1/2 curricula, according to the level of their assessment. At the end of each term, the Portuguese teachers decide who should continue/move to the next level, based on the assessment and the progression done during the term. After the transition to the next level, students should be assessed using the Second Language assessment criteria, during a specific period of time.

All Stage 1 Portuguese learners in Grade 7 and 8 are expected to follow the Portuguese as a Second Language (PSL) curriculum for students at an A1-A2 level. All Stage 2 Portuguese learners also follow a PSL curriculum, but at a B1 and B2 level. Students who whole reach C1 level Portuguese across the four domains (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) transition into the Portuguese First Language group.

If a Grade 8 student does for some reason not take an Additional Language option, or take the ELD course, they are offered Portuguese Language Development support (PLD) on a weekly basis. This weekly PLD class lasts 90 minutes and is scheduled to take place during the Additional Language class. With this course, students are given the opportunity to focus on sharpening their Portuguese skills rather than taking on a third language, and is designed to ensure students are able to take the Portuguese Second Language IGCSE in Grade 9.

When it comes to IGCSE, the majority of students will undertake the IGCSE Portuguese First Language course, with a number of students undertaking either IGCSE Portuguese Second Language or a CAPLE certificate in Portuguese.

Like the English language support system, students can transition between stages and groups across Grade 5 to 8. Midway through Grade 8 is the final moment these transitions can be made as IGCSE decisions are made then by the Portuguese and Language Acquisition departments. Incoming Grade 8 and 9 students from other schools must have sufficient knowledge of Portuguese, or be native Spanish or Italian speakers to enter straight into the Stage 2 group and/or the PSL IGCSE.

A note on the transition to First Language: Some students during the transition to First Language will be assessed using the Second Language assessment criteria.

7. Our Portuguese Pathways

Portuguese Language Pathways - The Domestic language

	Stage 1	Stage 2	First language
Grade 1 - 4	Portuguese Second Language		Portuguese
Grade 5	Portuguese Second Language		Portuguese
Grade 6			
Grade 7	Portuguese Second Language - Stage 1 Group; Portuguese Language Development (Grade 8 only)	Portuguese Second Language - Stage 2 Group	Portuguese
Grade 8			

Grade 9	Poruguese CAPLE Cerificate (A1 or A2)	Portuguese Second Language IGCSE	Portuguese Langaue IGCSE
Grade 10			
Grade 11	Spanish ab Initio; Spanish B	Portuguese B	Portuguese A
Grade 12			

Grade 1 - 4

- First Language Pathway - Student does Portuguese as a First Language.
- Portuguese Second Language - students identified A1/A2 and B1/B2 through a diagnostic test, and Portuguese Support teacher adapts work accordingly within the classroom and 2 times per week the students have extra support sessions in small groups.

Grade 5 and 6

- First Language Pathway - Student does Portuguese as a First Language.
- Portuguese Second Language - Student does Portuguese as a Second Language - leveled groups A1/A2 and B1/B2

Grade 7 and 8

- First Language Pathway - Student does Portuguese as a First Language (Language and Literature).
- Stage 2 Pathway - Student does Portuguese as a Second Language in Group 2 (B1-B2)
- Stage 1 Pathway - Student does Portuguese as a Second Language in Group 1 (A1-A2); students cans choose to also take PLD

Grade 9 and 10

- First Language Pathway - Student does Portuguese Language IGCSE.
- Stage 2 Pathway - Student does Portuguese as a Second Language IGCSE (PSL).
- Stage 1 Pathway - Student does a CAPLE certificate in Portuguese Language.

IB Diploma

- First Language Pathway - Students coming from grade 10 First Language Pathway will do Portuguese Language A.
- Language Acquisition Pathway 1 - Students coming from grade 10 Stage 2 Pathway (PSL), will do Portuguese Language B.
- Language Acquisition Pathway 2 - Students coming from grade 10 Stage 1 Pathway (CAPLE), will do Spanish ab initio or Spanish B (depending on Spanish level)

8. Students whose home language is neither English nor Portuguese

Students that enter PaRK IS in grade 5 to 8 will have both their English and Portuguese assessed, and then entered into the system outlined above. Our priority is to catch up their level of English as soon as possible to allow them to transition into the First Language Pathway and successfully complete at least the English Language IGCSE. They will also aim to complete a course in Portuguese as a Second Language.

If a student enters in Grade 9, the student will sit an IGCSE in English as a Second Language and a Portuguese CAPLE certificate. Entry to IB will depend on the ability of the student to complete a Language A course in their home language when they arrive at Grade 11.

9. Additional Languages

We are privileged to offer our students the opportunity to study an Additional Language. In Grade 7 and 8, students must choose either Spanish or French as their Additional Language option.

If a student is identified as requiring ELD, they do not take an Additional Language until sufficient progress has been made with their English. Students can transition out of ELD into a language option after confirmation from both the ELD and Language Acquisition department - decisions on transitions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Students new to Grade 8 must make their choices based on prior experience. If students are not able to take French or Spanish, they will take PLD to support the development of their Portuguese.

In grade 9 and 10, IGCSE students have the option to choose Spanish as a Second Language or French as a Second Language. To enter either course, students must show an A1 level of the language in the four domains.

IB Diploma students will have different Language Acquisition options dependent on the strengths of our staff. In most years we offer Spanish ab initio and Spanish B.

10. Literacy and Reading Interventions

PaRK International School recognizes the importance of literacy and takes on the responsibility of promoting it within the school community. By literacy we refer to something different to language acquisition, but to the enjoyment and understanding of subject-specific writing.

PaRK IS has put into place a wide range of literacy support mechanisms:

- Our focus on literacy means that teaching staff undertake comprehensive efforts to facilitate not just reading, but also writing, listening and speaking within their subject.
- PaRK has a common set of symbols across the school to edit written work when seeking to correct or enhance use of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Our teachers consistently model standard English and Portuguese in our oral and written communication within the classroom and school environment.

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- All departments encourage and expect reading within and beyond the curriculum in English and Portuguese. Morning and afternoon reading in the library is recommended to students to help promote a culture of reading.
 - It is mandatory for all students to carry a reading book (English) in their school bags. Thus, students will always be ready to read during prescribed reading times or spontaneously on their own accord.
 - At the start of each academic year, a 'library induction' course is given to students. This introduction to the library aims to stimulate interest and increase student knowledge on our library and libraries in general.
 - All English and Portuguese classes start with 10 minutes of reading time.
 - Every tutor group has silent reading on Wednesday morning.
 - All students in Grades 5-7 take part in the Renaissance Reading Programme: this includes Star Reading tests taken four times a year and access to our Accelerated Reader books in the library.
 - Reading age data is used in our centralised data trackers to support our understanding of students' literacy.
 - Our Well-Being team supports students with severely below average reading age through a reading intervention scheme.

11. Public Speaking and Oracy

The building of quality public speaking and oracy skills will come through the delivery of the English, Portuguese, and Drama curriculum.

In English and Drama, students will focus on celebrating the wide-ranging forms of public speaking, including poetry, debate, and presenting to an audience. In Portuguese, students will focus on celebrating the rich Portuguese culture through a range of spoken word performances.

In Grade 9 and 10, oracy is built into our Enrichment programme to ensure all students are making progress in their ability to communicate orally.

Last reviewed: June 2021

Next review date: June 2022