



Education in our school for our world

Language Policy

Purpose

The language policy reflects the beliefs and values of Charles Weston School Coombs (CWSC) and its community regarding the importance of language acquisition in English (the language of instruction) and Japanese (the additional language). This policy also outlines how these languages are currently taught within the PYP framework.

Philosophy

At CWSC, we value all languages and guide students to become articulate, literate, and inquiring communicators. Our objective is for every student to develop as a capable and successful communicator. The literacy program is universally designed for learning to ensure that all students can access the curriculum. This commitment reflects the IB Learner Profile and fosters international mindedness by promoting respect for linguistic diversity and encouraging communication across cultures and perspectives.

We provide an inclusive environment that respects and celebrates students' cultural backgrounds, mother tongue languages, and offers opportunities to learn Japanese as an additional language. With more than 60 languages spoken in our community, CWSC values and celebrates linguistic diversity. Our language policy recognises the importance of maintaining and developing home languages while supporting students to become confident communicators in English.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who speak dialects other than English are fully supported through culturally responsive teaching practices and inclusive classroom approaches. These practices ensure that students' language backgrounds are respected and incorporated into their learning experiences. The diverse multicultural community is used to enrich language and cultural learning through inclusive and collaborative practices.

Rationale

At CWSC, language is central to learning, thinking, and connecting with others. It underpins all areas of the curriculum and helps students express themselves and understand different perspectives. We focus on strengthening language comprehension through authentic learning experiences, rich literature, and purposeful communication across oral, written, and visual forms. This inclusive approach supports every learner to engage confidently and thoughtfully in our community.

English language learning

English at CWSC is learner-centred, fostering student self-efficacy and promoting agency in learning. We believe that everyone is both a teacher and a learner of English, and communication occurs in authentic and meaningful contexts. Oral language is recognised as the foundation for reading and writing, and each child's personal language journey is valued.

As a community of learners, students engage in purposeful literacy experiences, with opportunities to express their interests and contribute to the direction of their learning. We aim to cultivate a love of language and literacy through the use of quality literature and a consistent, school-wide, multimodal approach. Instruction includes modelled, shared, guided, and independent learning experiences, with students listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing in authentic contexts.



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The Australian Curriculum guides the development of English, with its three strands—language, literacy, and literature—embedded across transdisciplinary inquiry units. Teachers collaboratively design language programs and learning activities that align with these units, ensuring learning is meaningful and connected.

School leaders provide guidance and support to maintain consistent whole-school language and literacy practices. Teachers engage in evidence-based professional learning, collaborative workshops, and mentoring to continually refine their practice. Parents are invited to actively participate in the learning community, gaining insight into teaching and learning approaches and supporting students' growth in literacy.

Japanese– the school's additional language

The teaching of languages at CWSC is guided by the Australian Curriculum: Languages (Japanese F–10 Scope and Sequence). The program aims to develop students' knowledge, understanding and skills so they can communicate effectively in the target language. It also fosters an appreciation of the culture and the deep relationship between language and cultural identity. Through this learning, students build intercultural understanding and develop greater awareness of themselves as communicators in a global context.

The Japanese specialist team currently teaches students from Year 1 to Year 6, with the aim for all students from Kindergarten to Year 6 to participate in Japanese lessons from 2026. The library has established a collection of Japanese language and mother tongue resources to support a culturally inclusive curriculum. Japanese books and curriculum resources and visual aids support the development of the Japanese language in the school. Bilingual classroom and school signs are being developed to reinforce the importance of Japanese as an additional language. The specialist Japanese teachers report on student achievement and progress to parents in student reports.

Mother Tongue Language Support

At CWSC, the English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) program plays an important role in supporting the development of English language proficiency while valuing and maintaining students' mother tongues. We recognise that language is central to identity, belonging, and learning. The EAL/D team works closely with classroom teachers to ensure multilingual learners can access the curriculum and demonstrate their understanding in meaningful ways.


At CWSC, we value and encourage the use of students' home languages as a bridge to new learning. Students are invited to draw on their mother tongue to think deeply, collaborate meaningfully and express ideas with confidence. This approach strengthens understanding, nurtures identity and celebrates the rich linguistic diversity of our community. Our library continues to expand its multilingual collection, and information about the languages spoken by our families is used to guide planning, teaching and classroom support.

This inclusive, inquiry-based approach ensures that every student's linguistic and cultural background is valued, and that they can participate fully and successfully in the transdisciplinary learning experiences of the PYP

References:

ACT Education Directorate English as a Second Language or Dialect Policy

https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/School-and-Corporate-Policies/access-and-equity/language/english-as-an-additional-language-or-dialect-learner-policy

International Baccalaureate  Language Policy

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