

Ramallah Friends School Language Policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Define the standards of language for all three International Baccalaureate (IB) programs: Primary Years Program (PYP) (KG - Grade 5); MYP (Grades 6-10); and Diploma Program (DP) (Grades 11-12).
2. Define the official languages of communication at the school.
3. Keep students and parents informed about the guidelines of language acquisition at RFS.

Language of Ramallah Friends School IB Programs

At the Ramallah Friends School (RFS), we believe that language is at the core of learning and an integral means of communication that spans curricular boundaries, enabling students to express their understanding. We also believe that language is the fundamental tool that bridges people regardless of their religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. We believe that knowledge and command of languages are critical for fostering international understanding and cultural empathy, as well as for developing balanced, open-minded, inquisitive, and caring individuals. Students at RFS acquire language holistically, as we believe that every teacher should be a language teacher. We believe that language and thinking/learning are inseparable, as learning cannot occur without language, and language cannot be acquired without learning.

Since its establishment in 1869, RFS has sought to offer English to its students, in addition to Arabic. When possible, RFS will work to offer more languages in line with IBO's philosophy. Such language skills open opportunities for students to enroll in top-ranking international universities and, later, to contribute their expertise to Palestine's development.

Our mission is to:

- prepare students to become fluent in English and Arabic.
- encourage students to pursue competency in multiple languages; and
- integrate language and its cultural significance into every aspect of the curriculum, producing internationally minded learners with great respect and tolerance for other cultures and knowledge systems.

To support this commitment, RFS offers Spanish as an additional language acquisition pathway in the MYP

Ramallah Friends Lower Campus (PYP)

The Lower Campus uses the Arabic Language as the primary language of instruction. By mastering their mother tongue, students develop skills to learn and master other languages, which in turn facilitate their exposure to other cultures, teach them acceptance, broaden their minds, and increase their opportunities to communicate with other citizens of the world.

The Lower Campus allocates approximately 24-27% of teaching time to the English language; about 50% of this time is devoted to other language-learning skills. To support this, the school provides students with as many resources as possible, in both languages, such as books, local curriculum, educational stories, and language-supporting computer programs.

Our curriculum has been created in accordance with the standards of both the Arabic and English language IB PYP curricula. Students' development is monitored, and skills and knowledge are assessed throughout each semester with formative and summative tools at each grade level. These standards are also used to ensure the application of a clear methodology for monitoring the student's language growth and development across grade levels and to specify the required assessment processes.

For more details on the percentage of English use in each subject and grade, see RFS's Language Instruction Guidelines section below.

Ramallah Friends Upper Campus (MYP and DP)

The Upper Campus offers two languages – Arabic and English in both A and B levels. Language Level A is defined as the student's mother tongue. Level B is defined as a student's second language.

Teaching in a mother tongue (Language A) has the following effects:

- enables students to be connected with their culture
- enriches awareness and understanding of other cultures
- stimulates cognitive development

The Upper Campus confirms that the Language B curriculum is:

- the fundamental frame of the MYP concepts of holistic learning and intercultural awareness
- the student's tool to enrich their awareness of learning styles, strategies, and study skills
- the means to develop communication skills to prepare students to be global citizens.

The upper campus aligns its curriculum with the Ministry of Education guidelines and other international standards, like the Common Core, when applicable.

MYP: In the MYP, the Upper Campus provides a comprehensive, rigorous, engaging curriculum aligned with all strands of the IBO standards and practices, as well as subject-specific objectives. In the MYP, Arabic is identified as Language A and English as Language B.

In addition, Spanish is offered as an additional Language Acquisition option for students in MYP Years 1–3 (Grades 6–8). Students develop communicative competence and intercultural understanding through the study of Spanish and continue their language acquisition journey through the remaining MYP language requirements. This provision supports the school's commitment to multilingualism, international-mindedness, and the development of globally engaged learners.

Most Upper Campus students speak Arabic as their mother tongue (Language A). However, some students are bilingual and may identify English as their mother tongue, even though it is not their native language. In the MYP, these students receive extra support outside the classroom, in full coordination with the classroom teacher. Most students in the MYP are conversationally fluent in English (Language B); however, they need considerable work to develop academic writing and comprehensive English skills in preparation for the DP. Classes are also differentiated to meet the needs of students with higher English proficiency than their peers.

DP: In the DP, the language of instruction in all subjects is English, except for Arabic language courses (offered as both Language A and B) and Islamic and Christian Religion courses, offered as per Ministry of Education requirements. Support in English is offered to students who still require extra help to improve their reading and writing skills to succeed in the program. Within the DP, students may choose to study English as language A or B in both the standard and high levels. Course selection guidelines are given to students at the end of MYP Year 5 (Grade 10) to guide their language study choices in the DP.

For more details on the percentage of English use per subject per grade, see the RFS Language Instruction Guidelines section below.

Ramallah Friends School Language Instruction Guidelines

Lower Campus – PYP

Grade	Language of Instruction	Percent use of English
LKG	Arabic	30 - 35%
UKG	Arabic	30%-35%
1	Arabic	23%
2	Arabic	23%
3	Arabic	23%
4	Arabic	23%
5	Arabic	23 - 25%

Upper Campus–MYP

Department: English		
MYP Year/Grade Level	Language of Instruction	Percent use of English
Year 1/Grade 6	English	70%
Year 2/Grade 7	English	80%
Year 3/Grade 8	English	90%
Year 4/Grade 9	English	100%
Year 5/Grade 10	English	100%
Department: Math		
Year 1/Grade 6	Arabic/English	60%
Year 2/Grade 7	Arabic/English	70%
Year 3/Grade 8	Arabic/English	80%
Year 4/Grade 9	English	100%
Year 5/Grade 10	English	100%

Department: Arabic		
MYP Year/Grade Level	Language of Instruction	Percent use of English
Year 1-5/Grades 6-10	Arabic	0%
Department: Science		
MYP Year/Grade Level	Language of Instruction	Percent use of English
Year 1/Grade 6	Arabic/English	60%
Year 2/Grade 7	Arabic/English	70%
Year 3/Grade 8	Arabic/English	80%
Year 4/Grade 9	English	100%
Year 5/Grade 10	English	100%
Department: Individual and Societies (Religion, Social Studies, Ethics)		
MYP Year/Grade Level	Language of Instruction	Percent use of English
Year 1-Year 5	Arabic/English	Varies with the teacher
Department: Design		
MYP Year/Grade Level	Language of Instruction	Percent use of English
Year 1/Grade 6	Arabic/English	60%
Year 2/Grade 7	Arabic/English	70%
Year 3/Grade 8	Arabic/English	80%
Year 4/Grade 9	English	100%
Year 5/Grade 10	English	100%

Department: Art		
MYP Year/Grade Level	Language of Instruction	Percent use of English
Year 1/Grade 6	Arabic/English	60%
Year 2/Grade 7	Arabic/English	70%
Year 3/Grade 8	Arabic/English	80%
Year 4/Grade 9	English	100%
Year 5/Grade 10	English	100%
Department: Physical and Health Education		
MYP Year/Grade Level	Language of Instruction	Percent use of English
Year 1/Grade 6	Arabic/English	60%
Year 2/Grade 7	Arabic/English	70%
Year 3/Grade 8	Arabic/English	80%
Year 4/Grade 9	English	100%
Year 5/Grade 10	English	100%

Upper Campus–DP

Subject	Language of Instruction	Percent use of English
All subjects except:	English	100%
Arabic	Arabic	0%
Religion	Arabic	0%

Assessment

Teachers regularly use formative and summative assessments in language courses. Students and parents are continuously informed of student progress through informal meetings, daily grade records, formal conferences, and report cards (as relevant to grade level).

Students in KG-Grade 5 are assessed using standards aligned with the PYP. Students in Grades 6-10 are assessed using standards aligned with the MYP subject-specific criteria and Upper School guidelines. In the DP, students are assessed regularly through both summative and formative assessments.

Language of Communication

RFS's official languages of communication are both Arabic and English. However, the school communicates with each stakeholder and partner in the appropriate language.

Professional development

Administrators, teachers, librarians, and other school staff receive ongoing professional development in language learning and teaching to facilitate language development.

Language Policy Editions

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