

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 Year Program (PYP) (KG - Grade 5); MYP (MYP) (Grades 6-10); and Diploma Program (DP) (Grades 11-12).
2. Define the official languages of communication at the school.

1. Language of Ramallah Friends School IB Programs

At the Ramallah Friends School (RFS), we believe that language is at the core of the learning process and is an integral means of communication, which crosses curricular boundaries to enable students to express their understandings. 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 in fostering international understanding, cultural empathy, and developing balanced, open-minded, inquisitive 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 the use of language and language cannot be acquired without learning.

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

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 in every aspect of the curriculum, producing internationally-minded learners with great respect and tolerance for other cultures and knowledge systems.

1.1 Ramallah Friends Lower Campus (PYP)

The Lower Campus uses Arabic Language as the primary language of instruction. By mastering the mother tongue language, students develop skills to learn and master other languages, which in turn facilitates their exposure to other cultures and teaches them acceptance and broaden their minds and 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 time includes other language-learning skills. To support this, the school provides students

with as many resources, in both languages, as possible, such as books, local curriculum, educational stories and language-supporting computer programs.

Our curriculum has been created according to standards of both the Arabic language curriculum and the English language IB PYP curriculum. Students' development is monitored and skills and knowledge are evaluated at each grade level. These standards are also used to ensure the application of a clear methodology to monitor the student's language growth and development throughout the different grade levels, and to specify the required assessment processes.

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

1.2 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 acknowledges 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.

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

DP: In the DP, the language of instruction in all subjects is English with the exception of Arabic language courses (offered as both Language A and B) as well as in Islamic and Christian Religion courses offered as per Ministry of Education requirements. Support in English language is offered for students who still require extra help to improve their reading and writing skills in order 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 given to students at the end of MYP year 5 (Grade 10) guide students in their language study choices in the DP.

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

2.3 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

MYP Year/Grade Level	Language of Instruction	Percent use of English
Department: 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: Arabic		
Year 1-5/Grades 6-10	Arabic	0%
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: Science		
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)		
Year 1-Year 5	Arabic/English	Varies with teacher
Department: Design		
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		
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		
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 School – DP

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

2.4 Assessment

Teachers regularly use formative and summative assessments to assist them in the teaching of languages. 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 diagnosed regularly through both summative and informative assessments.

2. Language of Communication

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

3. Professional development

Administrators, teachers, librarians and other school staff will be provided with ongoing professional development in the fields of language learning and teaching to facilitate language development.

Developed by: Academic Committee (2020/2019)

Approved on: 9 September 2020

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