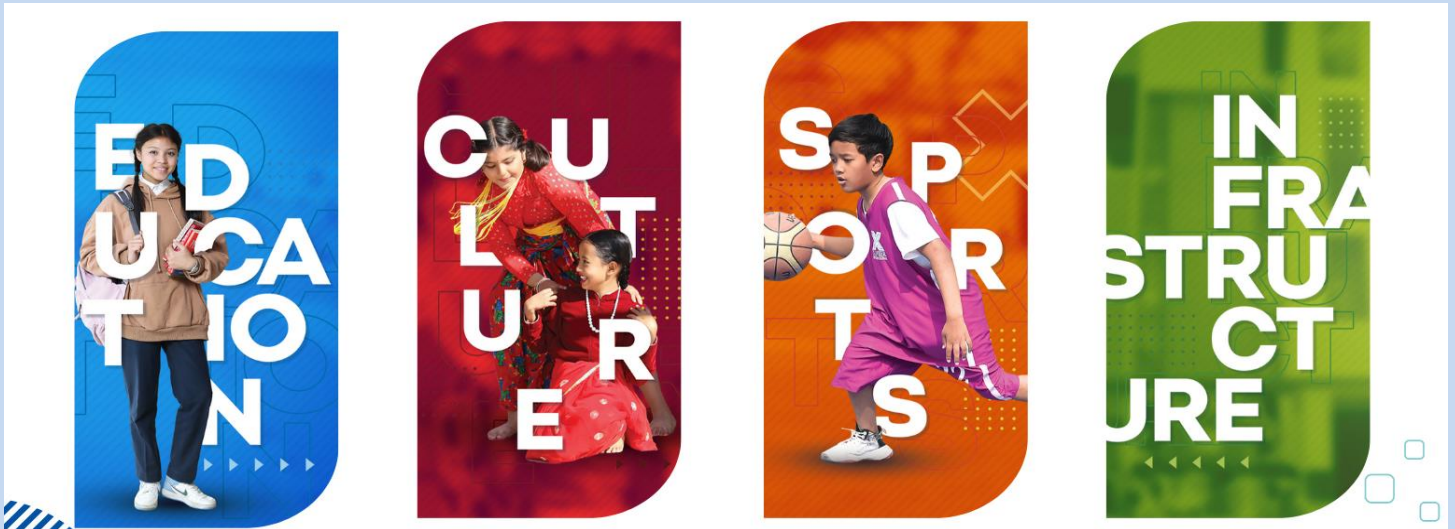## XIS LANGUAGE POLICY 2024

XIS MISSION STATEMENT

Xavier International School aims to foster knowledgeable, caring and inquisitive individuals who positively contribute to the global community through intercultural understanding and empathy. We provide a high academic standard, holistic development, and incorporate problem solving skills seamlessly into our curriculum, guiding students to become responsible lifelong learners and peace makers of the world.

The XIS mission statement is the foundation for our language policy. As language forms the basis for all learning, this policy is critical for helping the school to achieve its mission. The language policy aspires to fulfill each aspect of the mission statement as follows:

Excellence in academics, character, leadership

The language policy recognizes the transfer of cognitive skills from the mother tongue to English and vice versa and the acquisition of additional languages. This process encourages the acquisition of higher order thinking skills and development of multiple perspectives. The policy also recognizes the importance of all teachers differentiating instruction for students at different levels of language acquisition.

Global Citizenship

While English is the language of instruction, the language policy allows for students to inquire in the mother tongue and aspires to multilingualism. The school is committed to providing as much diversity of effective language instruction as possible.

Be internationally minded, empathetic, responsible and lifelong learners

The language policy validates the equal status of all languages. It endorses an awareness of the host country's culture and language by teaching Nepali at all acquisition levels throughout the school. The mother tongue programme in each section of the school reinforces literacy and cultural identity and reflects the multilingual society we live in. The modern foreign languages programme develops understanding and respect for other cultures.

PURPOSE OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY

This language policy is a working document developed by staff and administration from each school programme (IB PYP & Middle School). The policy is consistent with the stipulated principles and practices of the IB. This document outlines our school's linguistic and academic goals and defines the programme designed to help our students attain these goals. This policy is intended to provide an overview and guiding principles for language learning at XIS which permeates the entire school curriculum through authentic contexts in a culturally rich and diverse

environment. Our policy is a statement of agreement—one to which the staff and the XIS community are asked to commit to so our school can achieve its mission.

PHILOSOPHY

Language is a crucial connecting factor across the curriculum at Xavier International School. Language is vital to all learning, communicating, and being an active member of a global community. It is a social construct that is influenced by the type, nature, and frequency of one's social interactions in the community. Language is acquired, not learned, according to Xavier International School. We believe that language is acquired through first listening to and comprehending it, then speaking it, reading it, and lastly writing it. All three are inextricably linked. One helps the other. They are ineffective on their own. Interaction, not action, is how children learn to communicate. They learn to communicate by conversing with someone who responds. Language plays a vital role in the construction of meaning. Integration of knowledge, skills and strategies of the language enables students to solve problems and think critically and creatively. Xavier International School ensures that all students are provided with the environment and the necessary language support to enable them to participate fully in the academic program and in the social life of the school.

Language study can also help people become more aware of and comprehend other cultures. As a result, all children have the opportunity to study more than one language in a setting that values and celebrates cultural variety. Throughout the program, the language of teaching (English) and Nepal's national language (Nepali) are merged and nurtured.

We believe that a language-rich environment, which includes books, environmental print, internet resources, teachers, and students, is the greatest way to facilitate language acquisition. Teachers serve as role models for students in terms of language use and learning, and they promote a good attitude toward language and literature.

Formal and informal assessments are required for all languages taught at XIS. These tests are used to measure students' development and to plan effective instruction.

Background information of language population in XIS

XIS students, teachers and families are predominantly Nepali citizens (99%) who use Nepali as lingua-franca. Although Nepali is the national language and the society's lingua-franca is Nepali, English is widely used by the general public resulting in code switching between the two languages. One percent of the international body also uses English as an official language of communication. However, we recognize that there are a number of ethnic groups in Nepal which have their own mother tongue apart from Nepali and English.

Language of instruction/second language:

English is the language of instruction at Xavier International School. It is the major connecting element across the curriculum, as the language provides a vehicle for inquiry. The POI provides an authentic context for learners to develop and use language. The English language is introduced at kindergarten and carries on up to high school. The scope of the English language is guided by the National curriculum requirements of Nepal and the IB PYP and Middle School language scope and sequence document.

There is a need to develop student's use of language, appreciation of language, awareness of the nature of language, of the many influences on language, and of the variety in and between languages and dialects. Children use English language within and across subject areas and are encouraged to converse in English language, both inside and outside the classroom. Using language in formal as well as informal settings provides children with ample opportunities to learn the language, learn about the language and learn through the language.

Literature is an integral part of the curriculum. Books are carefully selected to reinforce the units of inquiry and the development of language skills, as well as to appreciate the richness of language and develop love for literature. Books allow students to learn how to understand, interpret and respond to ideas, attitudes and feelings expressed in various texts; to think critically about what they read; and to be able to make predictions and inferences based on the information that is both explicit and implicit in the text.

Language learning extends beyond the classroom. The teachers and students both use the media center and the library to enrich their language learning as well as learning in other subject areas.

The learning process simultaneously involves learning language as learners listen to and use language with others in their everyday lives; learning about language as learners grow in their understanding of how language works; and learning through language as learners use language as a tool to listen, think, discuss and reflect on information, ideas and issues. These three aspects are best thought of as linked processes.

Additionally, teachers provide hands-on experiences such as skits, songs, presentations, debates, storytelling and listening, group discussions, workshops and opportunities to communicate with each other to develop oral language. Developing written language is enhanced through involving students in writing activities across all subjects. Students will produce written products for a variety of purposes. These products can be informative, persuasive, poetic, reflective, or in the form of story or dialogue.

Additional/national language:

The national curriculum mandates all Nepali schools to teach the national language, Nepali. Nepali is understood and spoken by all the Nepali citizens. Nepali language classes are conducted every day to ensure that the students have a deep understanding of the language. Nepali language program supports and extends the IB units.

Mother tongue:

The students of Xavier International School predominantly speak in Nepali and English at home. Less than one percent of the student population has a mother tongue other than Nepali or English. Mother tongue development is necessary for cultural identity. Therefore, Xavier International School will support and facilitate parent initiation of mother tongue projects for the school parent community, who want to promote their ethnic language or mother tongue of students whose first language is not English or Nepali.

Language involves learning, in both the affective and effective domains. Through language, students understand feelings and thoughts of people from contexts very different from theirs and learn to express their own emotions in various creative forms. They learn to communicate their ideas effectively. Language provides a vehicle for inquiry. Teachers and students enjoy using language, appreciating it both functionally and aesthetically.

Objective of the mother tongue program:
To avoid monolingual attitude amongst students
To create a comfort zone for students to communicate
To build the ability to vocalize and the ability to translate
To help students obtain/maintain fluency in their native language
To support development of literacy in a student's mother tongue
To celebrate and value student's socio-cultural significance
To help students grow as responsible citizens and confident individual

Support for Language development and language learners:

Students requiring additional support for language development will be provided support within the student's general education classroom. The library period may be used to provide extra support depending on the needs of the student. Students who need additional support despite providing extra time and support during school hours may be asked to stay back after school for one-on-one support by the teacher.

The librarian collaborates regularly with the teachers to support the students 'needs. Students have access to a large collection of books such as leveled books, hi-lo books including others to help develop literacy. Activities such as battle of the books, guided reading, reading in pairs, reading with teacher help increase reading fluency, comprehension and confidence.

According to Standards and Practices

Teaching and learning addresses the diversity of student language needs, including those for students learning a language(s) other than their mother tongue (IB Standard C3, Practice 7).

Differentiation in language lessons is based on best practice according to the standards and practices of the IB. All teachers respond to students' needs and may therefore provide individualized instruction guided in some cases by specific learning goals and Identifying Individual Learning Need (IILNs)-**APPENDIX A**. Teaching strategies may include working in small groups, using different resources with different levels of language complexity, as well as changing the level of questioning and tasks for individual students. Students may also have choices so they can follow their own interests or use a preferred learning style. In addition to this, the School provides a range of specialist support including profiling, individual support, speech and language specialists, etc., which is outlined in the Language Support Document (LSD) - **APPENDIX B and** Language Continuum – **APPENDIX C**. All students' language needs are determined through initial and ongoing assessments throughout the year. Teachers differentiate for the range of students' needs in different ways. In the Primary School, students might for example be placed in flexible ability groups. In homerooms, students may be grouped by ability for reading groups, but work in mixed ability groups for other tasks. The Primary School also offers an 'initiation to English' program for students in need of extra support.

 In the Secondary School, students are placed in classes according to the IB's continuum of language learning phases. The School has a flexible placement policy that allows student movement throughout the school year in relation to students' progression along this continuum. In grades 6 to 9, beginners in English join an after school support program for further English language classes. These students may also leave an additional subject so that they can focus on acquiring the language necessary for success in Secondary School.

XIS focuses on the transdisciplinary nature of language learning by recognizing and modeling the role of language in each subject as well as in the language of instruction, host country language and in other languages, and by developing an understanding of the IB objectives and pedagogical language of the programmes.

1.   The basic skills for all types of communication - oral, written and visual - are explicitly planned for using our scope and sequence. When students are acquiring a language, our teaching is informed by incorporating four concepts: context, culture, reflection and fluency.

2.   Students are encouraged to think for themselves, recognize patterns, develop theories and construct meaning as they investigate language. As students progress, teachers enable them to see

language as a means of self-expression, exploration of self and others, as context driven, having multiple meanings, and involving at all levels of discourse a personal stance, from simple communication to the core of academic language.

3.   Throughout the School there is an expectation that in order to foster an enjoyment and love of reading, students will be encouraged to read at home – from packaging and emails to quality literature – and will read a wide range of genres in school to understand their features. In the Primary School students will be read to, read with or read every day at home. This may be done in a student's mother tongue. A variety of reading strategies will be introduced to support students in the mechanics of reading and comprehending the meaning of what they read. These include phonemic awareness, recognizing patterns in text, decoding, making inferences, recognizing a bank of sight words and etymological understanding. Teachers also make use of guided reading and literature circles to develop students' reading skills.

4.   The writing process of drafting, revising and finalizing will be modeled and explored in all languages. The use of literature, games, role-play and multimedia will support students' understanding of different genres as well as developing their vocabulary, sentence construction, use of tense and punctuation. Using the text as a model, students and teachers can begin to analyze the features of different genres before jointly and individually constructing written or presented pieces. During the revision process, students will be encouraged to develop their knowledge of grammatical and spelling conventions by self-corrections. Finalizing writing may involve students sharing writing with others, keeping it for themselves or publishing it for a chosen audience.

5.   In order to enable students to develop accurate language use and self-correct errors, they will be introduced to different strategies to investigate words and groups of words. These include spelling strategies such as syllabification, saying the word as it looks and mnemonics, to a deeper understanding of language in context, such as collocation. Teachers encourage students to make connections between words in different languages.

The Language Support Teacher/Librarian and the languages teamwork to:

• collaborate on vocabulary and concepts across the curriculum,

• spread use of a common language about language

• teach the conventions of referencing, citing and the principles of academic honesty XIS is committed to promoting the idea that all teachers are teachers of language through professional development opportunities. This includes outside speakers, in-school advanced skills workshops and training workshops based on the literacy for learning professional development programmes. Training on using the IB criteria, creating assessment tasks, developing unit questions and writing

task specific criteria is provided to external tutors when they begin working at the Secondary School and throughout the school year.

Assessment at the school aligns with the requirements of the programme(s) (IB Standard C4, Practice 1).

Assessment is integral to teaching and learning at XIS. Using a range of tools and strategies, teachers are able to determine students' knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes towards language. At the School, teachers use pre-assessment to determine what students already know, can do and understand. Formative assessment is used to check in and to give constructive feedback or praise on learning. Summative assessments are used to gather evidence about a student's learning at the end of a unit. Various forms of both formative and summative assessment may be used. Along with teacher assessment, students are often asked to peer or self-assess as well. Assessments are reported to parents in different ways.

Students receive written report cards about their language learning. Parents are also invited to attend parent-teacher, three-way and student-led conferences. At the Primary School, students are regularly assessed using the expectations from the School's language scope and sequence. Achievement of different learning outcomes will be recorded and passed on throughout their schooling at XIS to facilitate each student's learning. At the beginning of tasks, criteria is shared or created by the students so that learning goals are clear. In addition, XIS uses age appropriate modified criteria using the interim objectives set out by the IB for grades 6-8 and using the end of program objectives for grades 9-10. In some circumstances, Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) are developed for individual students depending on their individual learning needs.

In the Secondary School, this may include modified assessment criteria for the student. Any such cases will be discussed with the student, parents, respective IB program coordinator and the well-being team.

Language learning at Xavier International School plays a vital role in the construction of meaning. It provides a framework to support conceptual development and critical thinking. Fragmenting teaching language into isolated skill sets can create difficulties for learners. Their needs are best served when they have opportunities to engage in learning within meaningful and authentic contexts using English as the language of communication apart from the other language classes.

Xavier International School recognizes that a majority of our learners use English and Nepali in which we are playing a pivotal role in providing an enriching environment and support for language development so that all learners are empowered to participate fully in the school's academic programs, social life as well as to develop as individuals. The school believes that

building a caring language community with participation from parents, students, teachers and the wider society will go a long way in developing confident language learners.

Through Xavier International School language programmes, we aim to develop confident, curious, highly proficient and enthusiastic readers, writers, viewers, presenters, speakers and listeners. Language is always taught meaningfully and in context. These contexts vary, but often involve the use of real-life scenarios, native speakers, the local area and a wide variety of text types. We advocate the learning of language through inquiry, allowing students to make connections with context, to explore and investigate. The learning of any language is developmental by nature, building constructively on what each individual student knows to help move them forward.

English and Nepali learners program is another program which aims at helping students who are new to Nepali or English language or both. Such students are identified during the time of admission and are provided with special language support from school.

The English Learning Intensive Program in Middle School

The English Learning Intensive Program replaces English grade level classes from Grades 6 through 10, and provides intensive instruction in English to those whose levels of English proficiency do not allow them to perform successfully in mainstream subject classes. The objective is to enhance social, academic, and cultural growth in students.

Chinese Language (co-curricular activity)

Chinese language and culture class is provided as a part of the co-curricular activity.

Plan for Implementation and Review

The pedagogical leadership team, the IB Head and the PYP & Middle School Coordinator accept the responsibility to ensure the language policy is put into implementation. Teachers and administrators will communicate this policy to the parents. The Information Technology Coordinator will ensure electronic posting on the school website. The Leadership team will regularly evaluate implementation of language policy as evidenced by observations and documentations. This policy will go into effect August, 2024. This document will be reviewed every two years or as earlier as needed by the PYP/ Middle School committee and the pedagogical leadership team.

Published Date: 17th June, 2024
References:

Guidelines for developing a school language policy, IBO

Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programs

Language Scope and Sequence, IBO

Appendix A: Identifying Individual Learning Need (IILNs)

The learner may have intellectual impairment if showing some of these warning signs repeatedly:	The learner may have specific learning difficulties/learning difficulties if showing some of these signs repeatedly:	Learners with physical impairment may have:	Emotional, Social and Behavioral Difficulties may show:
• unable to answer simple questions • repeats the same question or answer • rocks body and flaps hands • unable to follow simple instructions • unable to dress themselves or feed themselves • unable to go to the toilet unattended • unable to remember very basic information (if older than 10 years) e.g. how old they are, which grade, date of birth, name, days of the week • cannot write or copy • wanders around aimlessly • spends a lot of time looking at one little thing • unable to play with other children • unable to compare (if older than 10 years) e.g. full/empty; big/small; heavy/light	• takes longer to learn to read, write and do simple math • reads only two letter words, e.g. at, on • read without understanding • finds it hard to be creative • shows poor organization skills, often misplaces things • generally makes slow progress • has severe short- and long-term memory problems • can only learn with plenty of repetition • shows limited understanding of shapes, color, numbers and words • has difficulty copying shapes and patterns such as circles and wave patterns • has difficulty sequencing letters and words • cannot repeat 5 numbers or words in the correct order	• difficulty with mobility, balance and motor skills • poor muscle tone, e.g. may appear to be clumsy or cannot sit upright • difficulty controlling their fine muscles, e.g. they may have a shaky handwriting or struggle to hold a pencil • difficulty doing activities with both hands, e.g. holding a paper and cutting with scissors • difficulty partaking in physical activities, e.g. ball games • perceptual difficulties: unable to draw what they see, e.g. a square or an X	• become isolated or shy • be unable to make and keep friends • be short tempered/get angry quickly • be unable to share or play games with others • be attention seeking, e.g. calling out in class • be disorganized • be disruptive • be a bully/be bullied • be indifferent • be unhappy • be aggressive • be unable to sit still • lose equipment and belongings • be hungry • break things deliberately • be destructive • be quarrelsome • fight/be aggressive • tend to tell lies • sleep in class • look neglected

	• thinking is concrete (counting on fingers) • is disorganized		