



مدرسة عمان الوطنية
Amman National School

ANS Language Policy



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Language Policy

"I am my language ... from my language I was born" Mahmoud Darwish, 1995.

Amman National School recognizes the fundamental role of language in developing identity and understanding and preserving culture. At ANS, we focus on language as a tool for thinking, learning, socializing, communicating, and reflecting. ANS also acknowledges that mastering a second language is essential for connecting with a diverse population and participating in our technologically advanced global community.

ANS is committed to using and promoting the Arabic language in its teaching and learning, thus eliciting more authentic and grounded experiences that deepen the students' understanding of themselves, their local community, and the world around them.

The COVID era of quarantines, social distancing, and online schooling accentuated the role of the media and Euro-centered pop culture in the lives of even our youngest students. This has affected the students' connection with, and mastery of, the Arabic Language. Although this posed a new challenge, it renewed our commitment and granted our entire staff an opportunity to reflect on how to best adapt our teaching and curricula to meet the needs of the students.

Language learning is based on the following beliefs:

- Mother tongue language is crucial to support students in their cognitive development.
- Through mastering languages, students are able to clearly and confidently express their thoughts and knowledge orally and in written forms and to apply them appropriately.

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- Students should be supported in being able to understand and express ideas confidently in more than one language.
 - All teachers must consider themselves as language teachers regardless of their academic specialty.
 - All members of the school community have a role in developing language learning.
 - Schools must offer support for second language learners and students with language difficulties to enhance language learning.

Language Profile of the School Community

Students

- The majority of our students are Jordanians and Arabs, whose parents' native language is Arabic. English is usually their second language.
- The student body also includes students from bilingual backgrounds; their native languages are both Arabic and another language.
- Few students speak English as their first language.
- Very few younger students speak a native language other than English and Arabic, such as German or Russian.

Staff

- Almost all staff use Arabic as their first language. The majority of teachers speak English as a second language.
- Teachers and staff of the IBMYP (Years 4 and 5) and IBDP are proficient in English.

Language of Communication

- Arabic language is the language the school uses to communicate with its community members, and in which it issues all circulars, messages, instructions, and formal reports needed for the implementation of the school's educational programs.
- Arabic language is the language used for the school's publications such as brochures, yearbooks, etc.
- English language is used for all official communication with the universities and international organizations, including the IBO.
- For recruitment, either Arabic or English is used, depending on the needs of the position.
- Professional development is offered in both English and Arabic, depending on the availability and the audience.

Language Instruction and Curriculum

Kindergarten 1- 2

In kindergarten, the focus is on exposing the children to Arabic and English simultaneously with an emphasis on classical Arabic acquisition. An Arabic teacher and an English teacher are present with the children in class at all times. Children sing songs, recite poems, listen to stories, participate in developmentally appropriate language activities, and use language in an authentic way to express their ideas orally and in writing.

Grades 1-4

Instruction of all "core" subjects is in Arabic. In addition, a rigorous English curriculum is offered daily. Classroom teachers and specialists work together to integrate language into all subjects. Our language programs, in both languages, are literature based and include structured phonics and guided reading program.

Children participate in reading and writing workshops where we strive to make the experience personalized and meaningful. Each classroom is equipped with an extensive Arabic and English library with books selected from a variety of genres, interests, and reading levels. Children also engage in authentic language experiences such as shared reading and writing, science research, performances and presentations.

Grades 5-8

Arabic continues to be the main language of instruction in most subjects. Language and literature classes are offered daily in English and Arabic.

The English program is based on the Units of Study in Reading and Writing from Teachers' College at Columbia University, New York. This program provides a balanced and responsive approach, taking into consideration individual levels and interests. Mentor texts and a carefully curated library for each genre are available for the teacher and students to use in their units of study.

The Arabic program draws from a myriad of resources including the Ministry of Education's Arabic language texts.

Students take sciences, visual art, music, and digital and product design in both English and Arabic, depending on the unit of study.

Grades 9-12

Students choose between two programs:

- **National Jordanian Program (Tawjihi)**

ANS's national program follows the Ministry of Education's benchmarks within an enriched curriculum that uses a variety of resources including quality literature. Arabic is the main language of instruction, along with a daily English language program.

In grades 9 and 10, Arabic and English classes are similar to the MYP Arabic LL and English LL with more emphasis on grammar and syntax.

In grades 11 and 12, English and Arabic classes adhere more closely to the curriculum provided by the Ministry of Education while supplementing with additional related resources as necessary.

- **International Baccalaureate Programs (Grades 9 to 12)**

English is the main language of teaching and learning. Students study one Arabic language course a year. Special Arabic language classes are offered for non-Arabic speaking students.

IBMYP Years 4 and 5

The English program continues to be based on the Units of Study in Reading and Writing from TC at Columbia University, in which students are exposed to different kinds of literature, such as classical and contemporary literature in addition to units focusing on journalism and narrative nonfiction. Students write a variety of genres such as essays, blogs, research papers, and scripts. During these two years, the program focuses on developing different skills to prepare students for the IBDP. The skills include critical and analytical thinking and research through various

media. Furthermore, the writing skills are focused on to enable students to write various types of papers using academic language.

IBDP

The Following IBDP Language courses are offered:

- Arabic A Language and Literature (Higher/ Standard Levels)
- Arabic B (Higher/ Standard Levels)
- Arabic *ab initio* (Arabic as a foreign language)
- English A Language and Literature (Higher/ Standard Levels)
- English B (Higher/ Standard Levels)

The school guides students in choosing appropriate language courses, depending on their individual needs and aspirations, taking into consideration the national requirements for the Jordanian equivalency certificate for those who wish to obtain one.

Students in the DP can either take two Language A courses, or one Language A and one Language B courses. Decisions on course choice are made jointly with the student and the family. Factors include the student's university choices and locations, achievement levels in previous language courses, as well as other considerations.

Arabic *ab initio* is offered to non-native Arabic speakers.

Special arrangements can be made for students whose mother tongue is not Arabic or English, or who want to study other languages than the ones offered. In these cases, independent study can be considered as an option.

Additional Language Support

ANS has a special education needs department to support students' learning process. This department offers:

- ASL, ESL classes for students lacking language skills in English or Arabic. Classes are offered in Arabic or English to develop language skills to the appropriate level in order to integrate into the mainstream program if possible.
- In-class support with the presence of a teacher inside the classroom is provided to assist students with learning difficulties in languages.

Admission

- All new students applying to ANS for grades 2-12 undergo an age appropriate admission evaluation for Arabic and English. Accordingly, the school decides whether the student is able to take courses at their grade level or benefit from a supportive language program.
- Language placement tests for incoming high school and upper middle school students are a (non-exclusive) factor when deciding whether the student will enroll in the Jordanian National Program or the IBDP.

Teachers' Language Development

- The school supports teachers' language development.
- Language teachers are encouraged to help other teachers in developing their oral and writing skills.
- The school encourages teachers to develop their own language skills.
- Subject coordinators support teachers in ensuring correct language usage.

Resources

ANS provides a variety of resources for language at all grade and age levels. The school's Information Center plays a crucial role in the language programs offered. Teachers and students use it as an integral part of the curriculum. The Information Centre aims to help students become analytical, critical, and independent readers. It includes Arabic and English literary and non-literary texts, both hard, audio visual and electronic. The collection aims to support all offered subjects at school. The Information Centre also helps teachers and staff in supporting their language needs by providing all needed resources.