



Mother Tongue Policy

Recent research into additional language learning clearly indicates that support of a child's mother tongue is crucial in ensuring the development of sound skills in spoken and written language in both the mother tongue and in additional languages (Krashen, Cummins, Collier and Thomas).

Research also tells us that skills learnt in one language can be transferred to other languages. It is therefore neither necessary nor desirable to try to explicitly teach all skills in each of the languages. Students need to be allowed opportunities to problem solve in language contexts by synthesising and applying their learning. (Krashen, Cummins; Halliday)

Definition

At ISA we define 'mother tongue' as follows:

a language, other than German, which is the main language spoken in the home or is the child's strongest language. (It should be noted that all German students receive mother tongue support on a daily basis and are therefore not eligible for additional mother tongue support).

Purpose

The purpose of mother tongue instruction at ISA is the following:

1. To ensure that, while learning about their current Unit of Inquiry, students continue to develop their skills in their first language.
2. To allow students continued rich and stimulating exposure to their first language.
3. To provide opportunities to explore and discuss the concepts of the ISA curriculum through their first language.
4. To foster in our students a sense of pride in their culture(s) and language(s) thus promoting a sense of identity.
5. To enrich and strengthen our multi-cultural learning environment.

It is not the purpose of mother tongue instruction to follow the national curriculum of the child's home country. However, the school considers the Mother Tongue Programme yet another chance to create opportunities for our international families to share and celebrate their languages.

Time

There will be one 45 minute lesson per week.

Teachers

Mother tongue lessons will only be taught by qualified native speakers of the language.

Eligibility for mother tongue lessons

The decision as to whether a student is eligible for mother tongue instruction will be made by the Section Coordinator and Mother Tongue Coordinator.