

St. Boniface Catholic Elementary School
IB World & Fine Arts Focus
Language Policy



Language Philosophy

We believe:

- language is at the heart of all learning, as we learn in and through language
- all students are language learners and every teacher at St. Boniface is a language teacher
- both teachers and parents play a significant role in the language development and learning of each child
- a language-enriching environment is crucial to the foundation of literacy skills and is best achieved in a transdisciplinary manner
- recognizing, respecting, and supporting our students' mother tongue languages is essential to student development
- an inquiry-based approach to learning provides the authentic, relevant, and meaningful context for learners to develop and use languages

All students are encouraged to express themselves and develop communication skills through the visual arts, music, dance, drama, and technology – by listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and representing. At St. Boniface, we are committed to providing a learning environment that promotes and supports effective communication skills and language development.

Language Profile

In Kindergarten through Grade 6, English is the primary language of instruction; French as a Second Language instruction takes place in Grades 2-6. Language instruction is provided within the units of inquiry, wherever possible, adhering to the outcomes of Alberta Education's English Language Arts Program of Studies, as well as the PYP scope and sequence.

St. Boniface is represented by a variety of cultures and languages. Approximately 25% of our students (Kindergarten through Grade 6) are registered as English Language Learners. This means that a language other than English is spoken at home. We recognize the challenges associated with supporting our students' mother tongue languages.

Mother Tongue Support

We understand that a strong foundation in one's first language is paramount to the development of a second language and that speaking in one's first language does not affect one's ability to learn a second language. At St. Boniface, we provide many opportunities for the maintenance and support of mother tongue languages. We have a designated ELL consultant provided to us by the Division who provides supports and professional development.

Students who are newcomers to the country are provided with a robust model of support at the Division level. Those students have access to learning resources and are connected to community support through One World ... One Centre (our Division program for families newly arrived in Canada). At the school level, students are monitored by an in-school ELL designate, as well as a Division ELL consultant. The ELL designate provides necessary support and guidance, as well as monitoring language learning proficiency through ELL benchmarks. The [benchmarks](#) were created by Alberta Education; the benchmarks report student proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. This allows for differentiation in instruction and assessment. Depending on their levels of proficiency, students may access targeted support (individualized or small group) with a learning specialist. All staff members are well-versed in these language proficiency benchmarks and use them for goal-setting.

Learning a Language in Addition to Mother Tongue

English Language Scope and Sequence

The St. Boniface scope and sequence for English Language Arts and French as a Second Language is mandated by the Alberta Government. In the [Alberta Program of Studies](#), the English Language Arts curriculum follows six strands – listening and speaking; reading and writing; viewing and representing. St. Boniface students are provided with learning engagements which allow them to become confident language learners and communicators – through formal and informal inquiry, exploration, and discovery. Through our programme of inquiry, students are provided with authentic experiences during which they develop their language skills. Wherever possible, language is taught through the relevant and real-world content of the students' current units of inquiry.

French Language Learners

The goal of French as a Second Language (FSL) learning at St. Boniface is to develop an understanding in the four areas of language acquisition – listening, speaking, reading, and writing. We also strive to develop an attitude of appreciation for multilingualism. Alberta Education states, “Being able to understand and use French is an important aspect of being Canadian and a global citizen. The learning of a second language involves risk-taking and tolerating the unknown. As a result, second language learners tend to be more flexible and adaptable to new situations, which is an asset in an ever-changing world. Further, the learning of French naturally implies the learning of a culture and, therefore, allows students to recognize, understand and respect cultural diversity in our society and others.” (Alberta Learning, 2004: French as a Second Language Nine-year Program of Studies. p. 3). At St. Boniface, an introduction to FSL in Grades 2 and 3 is taught in a contextual manner, with a focus on listening and speaking skills. It is taught by the classroom teacher in alignment with their daily activities and units of inquiry. Students in Grades 4 through 6 follow the Alberta Program of Studies for French as a Second Language.

Language Resources

We constantly review and monitor our media resources. There is an annual budget that is used to enhance our collection of books that support research, inquiry, first language, and dual languages. We have a library of levelled books in English that all teachers access to use in their classrooms. The books support our grade level planners and provide diversity for language programming. Staff work together to select resources that support student language development in their classrooms.

Professional Development

Opportunities for professional development for integrated language instruction are provided throughout the year. We are committed to delivering embedded professional development for language learning across the curriculum. Our learning coach and PYP coordinator ensure that staff members receive information on professional development opportunities; provide support within the classroom regarding language learning best practices; and monitor the successful implementation of strategies.

French as a Second Language Alberta Education Curriculum (Grades 4-6)

Alberta Education mandates that students in Grades 4-6 follow the [French as a Second Language curriculum](#), so there is no school-based scope and sequence for those grades. Classroom timetables in Grades 4-6 include 150 minutes of French as a Second Language instruction each week. FSL is taught either by the classroom teacher or another teacher with French language proficiency. Wherever possible, attempts are made to incorporate meaningful French instruction into the units of inquiry, as well as through daily classroom activities and conversations.

French as a Second Language Scope and Sequence (Grades 2-3)

Although there is no government-mandated curriculum for FSL instruction in Kindergarten through Grade 3, at St. Boniface, an introduction to French begins in Grade 2. A scope and sequence has been created for teachers to support FSL implementation and integration. In Grades 2 and 3, the focus of FSL instruction is on the development of listening and speaking skills. It is taught by the classroom teacher and aligns with their daily activities and units of inquiry. Much of the FSL instruction in Grades 2 and 3 involves music and kinesthetic learning.

GRADE 2	GRADE 3
Introduce basic vocabulary	Review, reinforce, and extend vocabulary from Grade 2
Greetings – les salutations Bonjour. Au revoir. Je m'appelle. Comment t'appelles-tu? Comment ça va? Ça va bien/mal/comme ci, comme ça.	Rooms and objects at school – les pièces et les objets à l'école Où est ...? Voici le/la/les Je vais à la/au
Colours – les couleurs J'aime Je n'aime pas Voici C'est	Emotions and feelings – les émotions et les sentiments Bien; mal; comme ci, comme ça
Calendar concepts and numbers to 31 – concepts du calendrier et les nombres à 31 Days of the week – les jours de la semaine Months of the year – les mois de l'année J'ai ... ans. Mon anniversaire/ma fête est le trois décembre.	Terms for family – les mots pour la famille Ma famille; ta famille
	Animals – les animaux Les animaux à la ferme, les animaux sauvages, les animaux au zoo
Action Words <i>Incidental throughout Grades 2 and 3, incorporated into daily activities/routines (e.g. physical education classes)</i> sauter, danser, manger, boire, courir, marcher, chanter	
IB learner profile – le profil de l'apprenant Inquirers – chercheurs Knowledgeable – informés Thinkers – sensés Communicators – communicatifs Principled – intègres Open-minded – ouverts d'esprit Caring – altruistes Risk-takers – audacieux Balanced – équilibrés Reflective – réfléchis	

Practices for Language Instruction & Learning

- Use of balanced literacy program approach
- Blocks of uninterrupted time for language instruction/learning
- Language-rich classroom environments, where teacher and student writing is prominently displayed and frequently accessed
- IB Learning Commons with access to many different forms of print materials, including mother tongue books
- One-to-one devices for all students (iPads for Kindergarten and Grade 1; laptops/Chromebooks for Grades 2-6)
- Weekly visits to the IB Learning Commons during which students may borrow books for inquiry and/or based on their personal interests
- Well-stocked classroom libraries
- Reading and writing experiences that are authentic and connected to the current units of inquiry
- Reading buddies – pairing younger students with older mentor students, to support literacy development and an appreciation for reading together
- Use of authentic texts and literature (both paper and digital) to support student research and inquiry
- Student communication of their learning to their families via communication journals, portfolios, class websites, Google Classrooms – allowing for sharing of successes and reflection on learning
- Use of rich fiction and nonfiction texts in read-alouds, guided reading, literature circles, readers’ theatre, and home reading programs
- Classroom conversations and discussions set up in different ways (small group, whole group, one-on-one)
- Teacher modeling for reading/writing strategies and demonstrating skills in listening, viewing, and presenting
- Literacy groups with a focus on specific, targeted language/literacy goals for each student

Language Policy Guidelines

All new staff members are provided with a copy of our language policy at the beginning of the school year. Since our language policy is a living document, we review it at least once every year and make any required modifications. Our language policy is shared with all stakeholders and is available on our school website.

