Kids Tairiku Yokohama Nakagawa
Primary Years Program Language Policy

■ Mission Statement

- We are dedicated to developing internationally minded citizens who value politeness, and show understanding and respect to both others and themselves.
- Through sports-based education, we are committed to developing children who can think, understand, and inquire, by themselves.
- We aim to foster an environment that will encourage children to grow into adults that will contribute to the development of the international community, as well as the happiness of mankind.

1. Policy Regarding Language

In order to fulfill the mission statement and for the holistic growth development of the students, everyday language use and language instruction is regarded as one of the most important pedagogical factors. Language is acquired gradually through expressing one's own thoughts, opinions and feelings in relating to others, and through others listening in response to those expressions.

Language is also necessary in the process of students absorbing the knowledge and opinions of others gained through inquiry, and reconstructing their own meanings and thoughts.

At our school, in an environment where students feel safe because of our trust relationship with their teachers, we provide opportunities through our programs and daily inquiry activities for students to acquire expressions and vocabulary that are developmentally appropriate.

This language policy is created by all staff with the pedagogical leadership taking a central role. It is reviewed each year at the end of the school year by all staff in order to create a better policy

2. The Goals of Language Learning

2-1. The thinking behind language learning

To understand the history and culture of a country, it is necessary understand and acquire the native language of the country and use it daily. Furthermore, by understanding the language as well as culture and history of one's own country, one can have a greater understanding of the culture and language of others.

At our school, the first language is Japanese. We aim for students to learn the Japanese language correctly, and we provide a learning environment based in Japanese for students to deepen their understanding of inquiry activities and other learning programs.

All teachers are language teachers. Rather than allocating specific times for learning language (Japanese), all teachers provide language instruction appropriate to the students' development through encouraging language use, providing opportunities for vocabulary increase, correcting pronunciation, and modelling correct use of the language. Further, by reading books and picture-card shows to students, we value students' imagination and the development of the language skills inside their minds, which may often not be verbalized. All staff have a shared understanding that they are responsible for students' language learning in all areas of life at the school.

2-2. Children's mother tongue

We reflect language development, an element in the Five Areas of Education included in Japan's Childcare Guidelines at Nursery Schools, in our daily activities to facilitate improvement in Japanese among children. Japanese is used in our daily activities even for those whose mother tongue is not Japanese. However, we encourage family of such children to use their mother tongue at home. In addition, we aim to foster an environment that will provide children with opportunities to appreciate their mother tongue and culture at school.

Whether the student's mother tongue is Japanese or not, we communicate with parents to support student's language development in the home, such as giving advice on picture books and multimedia resources that are age-appropriate and sharing the student's language development at school.

2-3. Foreign Language

As a school that includes raising students of true international citizens as part of its philosophy, we value the attitude of proactively seeking to communicate people from different countries, races, and cultures.

At school, we provide an environment where all students get one 45 minute lesson a week to communicate in English with a foreign teacher, which whom they have opportunities interact daily. As students interact with the foreign teachers, they develop awareness of similarities and differences between one's own culture and other culture.

2-4. Areas of Common Understanding

All students

- Try to understand the meanings that words carry, and use polite and correct language while being mindful of the other person's feelings
- Enjoy conversations as they express their feelings through daily interactions
- Value both "speaking" and "listening, as they convey their own thoughts, ask questions and try to understand the opinions of others, and have discussions among friends
- Appreciate picture books and fiction books, and try and understand stories
- Will be honest in letting others know how they feel, what they want to tell, what they want done to them, and what they have experienced
- Will be confident in their own opinions and attempt to present in front of others
- Show interest in writing and communicate by writing simply sentences
- Grow in their imagination through an abundance of experience, and will use language to express that
- Understanding the meaning of greetings, and take the initiative in greeting each other daily

3. Areas of Language Learning

Language stands at the center of the many interdependent cognitive, affective, and social factors that shape learning.
David Corson, Language Policy in Schools: A Resource for Teachers and Administrators (1999)

3-1. Language strands in the PYP

The PYP has identified three strands—oral language, visual language, written language.
- Oral language (listening and speaking)
- Visual language (viewing and presenting)
- Written language (reading and writing)

Each strand has been considered from both the receptive aspect, which is receiving and constructing meaning, and expressive aspect, which is creating and sharing meaning.

Following item shows examples of language learning of children through inquiry learning. It is classified according to age, but all teachers understand that language ability of each student does not always accord it.

3-2. Scope and Sequence of Language Learning

Strand	Approx. 3 years old	Approx. 4 years old	Approx. 5 years old
Oral language (listening and speaking)	- Can respond to daily greetings, and begin to greet themselves - Can remember their own names, names of other people, and names of things around them and use those in interactions - Can listen to short stories, understand the content, and share their feelings in simple language - Can remember phrases from poems	- Can exchange greetings in daily activities according to the situation - Can mix words and gestures to communicate their thoughts - Understand the content of stories and can give simple explanations - Can remember phrases from poems and stories and enjoy reciting them - Can enjoy conversa-	- Can hear others' opinions, understand them and respond with own opinion - Can make sentences that include purpose and opinion - Can listen to stories and connect them to personal experiences and make further connections - Can understand the content of stories and conversations and can explain

	and stories and repeat them - Can share their own experiences and feelings, listen to those of others and empathize. - Understand simple questions can give an answer or respond in action - Can listen to staff's instruction and act accordingly	tions as they share their experiences and feelings among each other. - Understand the meaning of instructions and can act while predicting what will happen next - Can have a simple conversation in a small group around a certain topic	them to others - Understand others and show empathy through conversation and build relationships - Can construct a simple sequence to tell their own experiences or imagination - Can have discussions in a small group around a topic to find an answer
Visual language (viewing and presenting)	- Know basic colors, shapes and symbols and can use them in daily life - Can communicate using body language - Can look at pictures/ photos and make connections between people and things they know - Can grasp the content of picture books by looking at the pictures and photos	- Can identify similarities between different pictures, photos and symbols and can use them - Can use body language for smoother communication such as pointing a finger or showing largeness with the hand - Can explain their feelings and experiences while looking at pictures and photos	- Can understand frequently seen signs and symbols and can act accordingly - Can present their feelings and experiences through pictures, photos and diagrams - Can decipher visual messages of posters, inserts and ads and can compare them with their own feelings and experiences - Can match appropriate words to pictures, photos and symbols

| Written language (reading and writing) | - Enjoy listening to stories
- Understand how picture books work as they listen to stories being read to them repeatedly
- Show interest in letters and know the shape and how to read them
- Begin to notice own names and names of things around them and match them to the letters
- Show interest in the shape of letters and notice similarities and differences
- Attempt to write their own names by copying the shape of the letters | - Show interest in the letters in picture books and try to read the letters they recognize
- Understand that writing letters is a form of communication and gradually learn how to write.
- Memorize letters by connecting its shape and how it is read
- Show interest in letters and texts, asking questions about them and incorporating them into play
- Recognize the differences between letters/prose and pictures, photos, symbols and diagrams
- Understand the correct shape and form of letters and learn how to write them
- Write their own names | - Notice that meaning is created as letters combine, and read with understanding
- Express feelings and experiences in simple sentences
- Can add simple explanations to pictures and diagrams
- Can read wall displays around the facility and understand the meaning
- Can read simple sentences, understand the meaning and explain it to others
- Can understand and follow writing conventions as they construct sentences
- Realize that writings that contain feelings and meaning can convey a message to another person |

3-3. Assessment of Language

Assessment of language is done by all teachers with the classroom teacher taking responsibility. The teachers daily assess students during inquiry activities, assessment activities (formative, summative, self, and peer assessment), school events, conferences, and presentations. They record student voices in notes, photos and videos and collect student sample work and learning records. These are shared with parents and the student through

portfolios, school repots, and during conferences.

4 . Bibliography

The language policies of the following schools were used, referred to and adapted to create
this document.
- Sunnyside International School
- Machida Kobato Kindergarten

The following documents were consulted to create this document.
- Making the PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education, 2016
- Making the PYP Happen: A Curriculum Framework for International Primary Education. Cardiff: International Baccalaureate, Dec. 2009. PDF.