

Language Policy

Updated: June 2025

Contents:

1. Purpose
2. School Philosophy
3. School Profile
4. English; Language of Instruction
 - a. Support for Language of Instruction: ELL learners
 - b. Support for Language of Instruction: Other learners
 - c. Resources to support Language of Instruction (for staff)
5. Additional Language Learning
 - a. Te Reo Māori
 - b. Other languages
6. Resources used to support this policy
7. References

1. Purpose:

This policy serves as a guiding document, outlining Takapuna Normal Intermediate School's approach to language learning. This policy encompasses our philosophy, details the process for language acquisition (including both the language of instruction and additional language learning), and outlines the rights and responsibilities of community stakeholders. By adhering to these guidelines, we aim to foster an environment that empowers learners to engage confidently and competently with the world.

2. Philosophy:

Language is all around us. It is our means of communication (both spoken and written communication). Our need to communicate is vital to our emotional, social and physical survival. Language development is a fundamental need for all learners and lies at the heart of effective teaching and learning.

Language permeates every aspect of our lives, serving as the cornerstone of communication, whether verbal or written. It is essential for emotional, social, and physical well-being. Understanding the pivotal role language plays, Takapuna Normal Intermediate School (TNIS) integrates language learning into our comprehensive teaching and learning framework. Every educator assumes the role of a language teacher, fostering linguistic proficiency through a holistic, transdisciplinary approach grounded in real-world contexts.

Recognising our duty as a school and educators, we are committed to nurturing and facilitating language development. We aim to equip learners with the necessary linguistic skills to actively participate in academic, social, cultural, and physical pursuits, empowering them to flourish as learners and globally aware citizens.

Aligned with the principles of the International Baccalaureate (IB) and meeting the requirements of the New Zealand Curriculum, our Language Policy encompasses both the language of instruction (English) and additional language acquisition. At Takapuna Normal Intermediate School, we are dedicated to fostering linguistic competence in our students, ensuring they are well-prepared to thrive in our multicultural and interconnected world.

3. Language profile of TNIS:

TNIS is a culturally diverse community with more than 35 self-identified ethnicities, making us a truly international community.

New Zealand recognises three official languages: English, Te Reo Māori, and New Zealand Sign Language. Our medium of instruction is English. We cater to a significant population of multilingual learners, constituting approximately 39 % of our student body.

Languages spoken by our learners include but are not limited to Afrikaans, Arabic, Cantonese, Egyptian, Farsi, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Malayalam, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Samoan, Sinhalese, Spanish, Te Reo Māori, Thai, Tongan, Turkish, Urdu and Vietnamese.

4. Language of instruction: English

We provide a strong, challenging and differentiated English curriculum that reflects the principles of the PYP framework. Our curriculum is structured around four fundamental elements essential to language acquisition: written language encompassing reading and writing, oral language focusing on listening and speaking, and visual language involving viewing and presenting.

We believe in integrating language learning within the context of our ‘Units of Inquiry’, whenever feasible and appropriate. Our English Scope and Sequence delineates authentic opportunities for language development, spanning reading, writing, visual language and oral language throughout our Programme of Inquiry (POI).

Recognising that language acquisition is a highly individualised process, we employ collaborative planning and differentiated approaches to cater to the diverse needs of our students. Through tailored tasks, resources, tools, and assessments, our teachers craft teaching and learning programs that address the unique requirements of each learner in their class.

Our English instruction adheres to guidelines established by the New Zealand Ministry of Education, which stipulate a minimum of 60 minutes of dedicated reading and writing instruction per day, ensuring comprehensive language development for all students.

The table below outlines supporting documents teachers use when informing their teaching and learning programmes for English.

	Written Language: Reading	Written Language: Writing	Oral Language: Listening and Speaking	Visual Language: Viewing and presenting
Supporting documents	Reading Curriculum Overview for 2024 Reading Matrix (Level 3, 4 and 5 curriculum objectives) <i>Our approach to reading instruction is aligned with the guidelines from Ministry of Education (link)</i>	Writing Curriculum Overview for 2024 Writing Matrix (Level 3, 4 and 5 curriculum objectives) Spelling Programme: Structured Spelling - Scope and Sequence (even years) Daily Review (odd years) <i>Our approach to writing instruction is aligned with the guidelines from Ministry of Education (link)</i>	Approaches to Learning: Communication Skills Integrated through contextual experiences related to Units of Inquiry. Example: Formal speech presentations take place during Term 2 or 3 annually.	Approaches to Learning: Communication Skills Integrated through contextual experiences related to Units of Inquiry. Example: <i>Learners present their Exhibition inquiry to the community during Term 4 of Year 8.</i>

Learning experiences:	Learning experiences: include a variety of individual, pair and group tasks. Scaffolding tools (that support all learners in accessing the learning): question frames, discussion frames, visible thinking routines, graphic organisers, planning templates, and sentence starters.
Assessment: Please refer to our Assessment Policy for information on how we assess ‘Language’.	

4a. Support for the language of instruction: ELL (English Language Learners)

At Takapuna Normal Intermediate School (TNIS), we are committed to supporting English Language Learners (ELLs) through a structured and responsive ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) programme. This programme is led by a fully certified ESOL teacher who collaborates closely with teacher assistants to deliver effective, targeted support. The team is further supported by the International Student Director, who brings valuable multilingual skills—speaking Japanese, Korean, and Chinese—to ensure clear and accessible communication with students and their families.

Our multi-lingual programmes, strategies, and tools are designed to help ELLs fully participate in school life. These programmes are government-funded for domestic students (citizens and New Zealand residents). Please note that international (fee-paying) students are not eligible for this funding.

I. Individualised Learning Pathways:

Each ESOL-funded learner at TNIS has a personalised English Language Learning Progressions (ELLP) Pathway, created by their classroom teacher. This pathway is used to monitor, track, and support the student’s ongoing English language development, ensuring a goal-oriented and individualised approach.

Our ESOL programme is designed to help multilingual learners develop proficiency in English through differentiated, small-group instruction. Students receive targeted language support tailored to their specific needs. The programme includes rich input through reading and listening activities, explicit instruction in writing skills, and a supportive environment for developing speaking confidence.

In addition to language development, we promote multiculturalism and actively encourage translanguaging, fostering strong relationships between learners and teachers to support identity, belonging, and academic success.

II. Support Levels

At TNIS, English Language Learners receive varying levels of support based on their English language proficiency:

- **Foundation Stage Learners:** Receive intensive daily withdrawal support through the ESOL programme, except during Specialisation classes.
- **Stage 1 Learners:** Withdrawn from class twice a week for targeted language instruction.
- **Strong Stage 1 and Stage 2 Learners:** Receive weekly withdrawal support to reinforce ongoing language development.
- **Handwriting Support:** TNIS also offers handwriting support groups for students identified as needing help with fine motor skills and writing fluency. For English language learners, developing confident, legible handwriting helps reduce barriers to written expression, supporting clearer communication and stronger written language acquisition

III. Focus Areas

Instruction within the ESOL Programme is tailored to meet the developmental and linguistic needs of learners:

- Foundation Stage learners focus primarily on developing oral language skills, building vocabulary, and understanding basic sentence structure. Age-appropriate texts are used to support both reading and speaking proficiency in an engaging and accessible way.
- A range of effective language acquisition resources—such as Talk About and Quick 60—are integrated into withdrawal sessions. These resources feature high-interest, non-fiction texts that support language development within meaningful and authentic contexts.

IV. Within-class support:

- While in the classroom, English Language Learners (ELLs) are supported through differentiated planning, targeted resources, and ongoing assessment. Teachers receive professional development to implement effective ESOL strategies and to accurately track learner progress using the English Language Learning Progressions (ELLP) assessments.
- Students are encouraged to use their first language as a valuable tool to support second language acquisition. This approach fosters deeper understanding and affirms the importance of their linguistic and cultural identities.
- We prioritise the intentional integration of oral language tasks across all areas of the curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to move beyond traditional methods such as brainstorming or class discussions, and instead, plan a variety of purposeful oral language activities that meet the specific needs of their learners. These tasks are selected for their impact on language development and student engagement. In addition, teachers

are expected to explicitly teach and reinforce new vocabulary on a daily basis, ensuring this essential component of language learning is consistently embedded in classroom practice.

V. Other resources ELL learners can use for support:

- Our library has a variety of texts in ‘Mother Tongue’ languages.
- Multi-lingual staff are used to support with translations, when necessary.
- Differentiated tasks for curriculum areas planned in teams or differentiated by Curriculum Leaders
- Access to additional support programmes including but not limited to: Education Perfect (ESOL section), Language Nut, Freckle, Epic, Read Theory
- Buddy system to help with translations and transitions to a new curriculum

For further details on the support provided for ELL students, please refer to the [Multilingual Support Policy document](#)

4b. Support for Language of Instruction: Other learners

Some learners may benefit from additional support in English language learning. We employ a range of strategies, tools, and resources to assist these students in making accelerated progress in their English language proficiency.

At the beginning of each year, we undertake comprehensive testing, including assessments such as progress and achievement (PAT) and e-asTTle for reading comprehension, and e-asTTle for writing, to identify students who may require extra support. Prompt implementation of support systems ensures that these learners receive the assistance they need to thrive academically.

From here, classroom teachers employ a variety of tools to support these learners including but not limited to:

- Further diagnostic testing can be undertaken to screen for potential barriers to language acquisition (including RTLB referral)
- Differentiation in lesson planning and resourcing
- Access to assistive technology
- Differentiation in assessing (including the use of digital tools, reader-writer)
- Learning experiences that are relevant and engaging
- Use of visual/oral aids
- One-to-one workshops with teacher or teacher assistant
- Access to online resources

We also provide opportunities to extend those students who are working beyond Level 4 of the curriculum. These opportunities include Kids Lit Quiz, Toi Toi writing competition, Future Problem Solving - Scenario Writing, Debate Club

4c. Resources available for staff to support the language of instruction:

- Professional development opportunities for staff to ensure they are responding appropriately and with purpose to identified needs
- Curriculum overviews for English Language learning with links to the current Unit of Inquiry to ensure relevant and authentic learning opportunities
- Online Resources: ARB tasks, Language Nut, Education Perfect, Epic, TNIS Wheelers, Library
- Teacher Resource Room: A variety of levelled journals, novels and other texts
- Opportunities for collaboration within and across teams
- Curriculum Leader for English Language Learning
- Curriculum Leader for English

5a. Additional language learning and promotion throughout our community: Te Reo Māori

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is one of Aotearoa New Zealand's founding documents and represents the binding contract between Māori and the Crown. Takapuna Normal Intermediate School recognises our role and responsibility to honour and give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We work from the principles of partnership, protection, and participation to meet our obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. These principles reflect the three articles of Te Tiriti.

Te Reo Māori is one of three official languages of New Zealand. Learners build their understanding, knowledge and spoken language skills of Te Reo Māori throughout the year through both implicit and explicit learning opportunities. Through these opportunities, both stand-alone and integrated within our Units of Inquiry, we provide opportunities for learners to appreciate and understand the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Reo Māori. We **assess** learners' understanding and knowledge of Te Reo Māori through progress and achievement (PAT) tests in Terms 1 and 4.

Throughout the year there are opportunities for learners to enhance their Te Reo Māori including:

- Joining the Kapa Haka
- Joining the Te Reo extension class
- Contributing to Language Week activities
- Classroom signage and kaiako (teacher) instructions are given in English and Te Reo Māori
- Explicit teaching of Te Reo Māori related to learner needs/gaps (based on assessment data)

Resources to support this instruction include but are not limited to:

- Curriculum Leader in charge of Te Reo Māori
- Within School Leader in charge of Mātauranga Māori who works to ensure our plans, policies, and local curriculum reflect local Tikanga Māori, mātauranga Māori, and te ao Māori
- Access to Te Reo club online
- Games, books and online resources such as EP, Languagenut etc to support teaching and learning
- Weekly reo shared at staff meetings for kaiako to use/display in the classroom

5b. Other languages

Every learner is exposed to additional language learning with a focus on understanding the language structure and cultural practices associated with the language. We aim to provide opportunities for learners to develop an enjoyment of language learning and gain an internationally minded perspective.

- I. **Term 2:** In 2025, we will build on the success of our Korean language programme by continuing our partnership with the Korean Education Centre (KEC) in Aotearoa. Our Term 2 focus is on Korean language, culture, and traditions, offering students an enriching and immersive experience. Lessons are designed to deepen linguistic knowledge while also exploring Korea's vibrant cultural practices, rich history, and modern society. This integrated approach supports the development of intercultural competence and encourages empathy and respect for diverse perspectives.

Classroom teachers are supported with high-quality resources and professional development, ensuring strong links to the PYP Learner Profile. Students are given opportunities to reflect on their learning journey, set goals, and celebrate their progress, reinforcing the value of sustained and meaningful language acquisition.

- II. To extend learning beyond the classroom, we offer a range of extracurricular activities connected to Korean language learning. These include the APPA Korean Speech Competition, the KEC Speech Competition for non-Korean speakers, and a Korean Trivia Challenge in collaboration with Rangitoto College. The Ethnic STEAM Competition also returns, providing students with the chance to explore the intersection of language, culture, and innovation.

In-school connections with Korean students are fostered that build an inclusive environment where language and culture are celebrated and shared. These authentic experiences help learners gain confidence in using their new language skills while forming meaningful cross-cultural relationships.

- III. Our celebration of NZ Sign Language Week and International Languages Week in Term 2 remains a highlight of the year. A variety of activities and learning opportunities are shared with teachers to implement in classrooms or at home, ensuring a rich and inclusive experience for all learners. These events help students appreciate the value of multilingualism and promote respect for all languages spoken within our school and wider community.
- IV. TNIS Cultural Fortnight is a key part of our language and culture programme. Building on the success of its introduction in 2024, this event offers students the opportunity to engage with a wide range of cultures through workshops, performances, cuisine, storytelling, and hands-on experiences. Each day celebrates a different aspect of cultural identity, allowing students to learn directly from peers, whānau, and community members.

Cultural Fortnight connects directly with the values of the IB Primary Years Programme by fostering international mindedness and promoting attributes of the Learner Profile, such as being open-minded, caring, and knowledgeable. Students learn to see the world through multiple lenses, deepening their understanding of identity and belonging while also recognising the interconnectedness of people and perspectives across the globe.

By embedding Cultural Fortnight, we provide a rich, school-wide opportunity for learners to explore and celebrate diversity in meaningful and joyful ways, strengthening our commitment to inclusive, future-focused education.

V. **Term 3 and 4: Opportunities**

- The focus on Korean language learning continues. It is enriched with extracurricular activities such as Taekwondo and K-Pop Dance Classes, providing students with dynamic and engaging ways to connect with Korean culture. These activities deepen their cultural understanding and appreciation.
- A TNIS International Fortnight takes place. All cultures within our school community are acknowledged and celebrated. Community and whānau members can share their skills and talents. Learners have the opportunity to become teachers. They can run workshops that educate others on their language, culture, and traditions.
- Confucius Institute Cluster collaboration. This links New Zealand and China through education and culture, providing students with valuable insights into the Chinese language and traditions.
- Geoff Wood (Rosmini College, Over The Back Fence Project). This initiative connects over 1,000 students across various classrooms in New Zealand and overseas through weekly video meetings. This partnership will provide regular opportunities for international communication and cultural exchange.

- Pacific Language Weeks (including Cook Island, Tongan, Niuean, and Tokelaun languages) are celebrated through a combination of in-class learning experiences and home learning activities. These initiatives are designed to enhance students' understanding and awareness of both the culture and the associated languages, fostering a deeper appreciation for the diverse Pacific heritage.

VI. **Units of Inquiry:** Our teachers are committed to ensuring that every learner is exposed to additional language learning with a focus on understanding the language structure and cultural practices associated with the language. By tying this into our Units of Inquiry, we aim to provide opportunities for learners to develop an enjoyment of language learning and gain an internationally minded perspective. Integrating language learning into the PYP framework allows students to explore global issues and cultures through language, fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding of the world around them. This approach enhances their linguistic skills and encourages them to become open-minded, reflective, and culturally aware global citizens.

This [working document](#) provides an overview of how 'Languages' integrates into our Units of Inquiry.

Celebration of the languages of our community:

We strongly believe that it is important to celebrate the language diversity in our community. We promote and encourage multilingualism in various ways:

- Opportunities to learn other languages (including Asian and European languages)
- Opportunities to join cultural language groups, including Kapa Haka and Pasifika groups
- Assemblies to recognise and celebrate the cultures in our community
- International Fortnight of Activities. This is a week of cultural activities run by learners to celebrate the cultures and languages of our community
- Opportunities to connect with members of different language communities, including but not limited to: Fono (Pasifika evening), Hui (Māori evening), Asian parent morning teas, Matariki morning
- Where translation is necessary for communication purposes, important documents are translated into common languages spoken by our community
- Opportunities to compete in cultural competitions including Korean and Chinese speech competitions
- Language Nut membership. This resource provides students with additional opportunities to practice and enhance their language skills

6. Resources used to support the writing of this policy:

1. https://www.bbi.school.nz/_files/ugd/2fda2f_45679d820d844d5994b887b7f8f17116.pdf

7. References:

1. Tāhurāngi - New Zealand Curriculum: One hour a day - Resources for teachers (2024). Retrieved from:
<https://newzealandcurriculum.tahurangi.education.govt.nz/one-hour-a-day---resources-for-teachers/5637207696.p>