



Sidcot
Live Adventurously

Policy Name: Language Policy

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1 Introduction

1.1 This policy links to key Quaker values of Equality and Community.

1.2 The culture of the classroom should be collaborative and inclusive, and should provide an environment where students feel able to take risks in their language learning.

2 Language Philosophy

2.1 Language is the keystone to all learning. First, we learn language, then we learn through language and about language. Sidcot recognises this and places language at the centre of all that we do. Within the School Community, many languages and cultures are found side by side and Sidcot values this diversity and encourages the sharing of both language and culture. All teachers at Sidcot are language teachers and aim to provide the social and emotional conditions for learning that value all languages and cultures and affirm the identity of each learner. The medium of instruction is predominantly, but not exclusively, English. The admissions policy at Sidcot recognises that a certain level of competence in the primary language of lesson delivery is necessary. Sidcot aims to develop the level of English in all students, strongly encourage the study of at least one modern foreign language and support development of mother tongue languages. Sidcot believes learning in more than one language is essential to an international education and for enriching intercultural understanding. Social and emotional conditions for learning that value all languages and cultures and affirm the identity of each learner promote self-esteem.

3 Sidcot Language Profile

3.1 We currently have about forty different languages and nationalities amongst our school community other than English. The Sixth Form and IB Year 1 are particularly rich with international languages, which include, Cantonese, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Latvian, Mandarin, Russian, and Swiss.

4 Practice

4.1 Admissions

4.1.1 Sidcot accepts students whose first language is not English into all year groups. The School does maintain a minimum level of English which is acceptable for study. This depends on the entry point of the student and is determined by a combination of factors including some or all of the following: past school reports, Sidcot English entrance test, external English language qualifications (eg IELTS) and interview.

4.1.2 Based on these factors and the student's age, they are placed into a mainstream year group or the Year 11 Pathway Programme – a one-year GCSE based course.

4.1.3 All non-native students are tested again on arrival to Sidcot to determine whether they have been placed in the right group.

4.1.4 Care is taken to ensure that students' language skills are sufficient for them to access the content of all subjects on their timetables, both those delivered in English and other modern foreign languages. This is particularly important for students entering in Year 10, the 11P and Year 12 for A Levels or IB.

5 The EAL Department

5.1 Group lessons

5.1.1 Students in Years 7-9, depending on their assessed needs, either join the Junior Pathway, an intensive EAL provision tailored to individual needs, or receive group EAL lessons in place of one Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) option. Both of these options focus on developing students' all-round English skills through topic-based learning.

5.1.2 Students in Years 10 and 11 receive group lessons working towards IGCSE English as a Second Language. This is one of their 'options' for GCSE and so does not replace any core subjects. Students receive three lessons per week for two years sitting the exam at the end of this period.

5.1.3 Students in Year 12 taking A Levels receive group lessons working towards Academic IELTS. This is the qualification necessary for overseas students to enter a UK university. It is scored from 1 to 9 in Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking and different universities and courses require different scores. Students receive two lessons per week for one year sitting the exam at the end of June. This additional provision, including IELTS preparation and English for Academic Purposes (EAP), carries an additional charge, which is communicated to parents or guardians.

5.1.4 Students in Year 13 taking A Levels who have not yet achieved the IELTS score they need for their university of choice may join Year 12 IELTS classes (chargeable) or receive one 1-2-1 lesson (chargeable) per week working towards first the March exam and then the June exam.

5.2 One-to-one lessons

5.2.1 Students whose first language is not English and who are in mainstream classes (rather than the Pathway Programme) are able to access individual lesson per week until their proficiency in English is sufficient to warrant this unnecessary. It is common for students below Year 10 to attend more than one class per week. Classes carry an additional charge which is billed termly. Lessons are timetabled to take place during free periods, or if necessary at lunch time or after school. Wherever possible, no student will miss any mainstream classes to have their one-to-one lesson.

5.2.2 Students up to and including Year 9 will work towards one of the Cambridge suite of exams, in addition to being supported with language aspects of their coursework. Year 10 and 11 students receive extra support with their IGCSE English as a Second Language. Year 12 and 13 students work with their one-to-teacher to tailor a programme of lessons focussing on their needs as regards IELTS.

5.2.3 Individual lessons are open to both A Level and IB students who have reached a high level of language awareness and competence but want to further develop their language.

5.2.4 The Head of EAL is responsible for timetabling all one-to-one lessons at the start of the autumn term and lessons start during the first full week.

6 The Year 11 Pathway Programme

6.1 Students in 11P follow a one year (I)GCSE programme. The subjects available to an individual student will depend upon their English language level. Lower level

students are given additional English based subjects in order to best prepare them for study in year 12. Where necessary Y11P students can be advised to take one-to-one lessons but this is not a normal part of the course.

7 The Modern Foreign Languages Department

7.1 All Sidcot students learn at least one language other than their mother tongue in Years 7, 8 and 9 which they can then continue up to at least GCSE level. All students begin learning French in Year 7, and then choose an additional language, either German or Spanish in Year 8, though they can choose 2 out of French, German and Spanish. At the end of Year 9, they are strongly encouraged to take at least one foreign language for GCSE. The school offers French, German Spanish at GCSE and at IB, and at A-Level. WE also offer Chinese and Russian at GCSE and A-Level for native speakers, and have a Korean activity for Pass and a Mandarin club. We also offer Italian and German Language A at IB.

7.2 The culture of other countries is explored during modern foreign language lessons.

7.3 Support in their mother tongue is given to all overseas students wherever possible. This can mean the use of external tutors where necessary. Where available overseas students are supported in taking a GCSE and A Level in their mother tongue.

7.4 There is the possibility of offering certain languages alongside English as a second Group 1 language allowing students to attain a bilingual diploma promoting additive bilingualism.

7.5 In the IB programme Ab initio Spanish and Italian are offered broadening students' range of languages.

7.6 The Modern Foreign Languages Department benefits greatly from the use of language assistants in French, German and Spanish. Students have small group, pair or individual sessions for GCSE and one to one for A level and IB.

8 Whole School

8.1 All teachers take responsibility for teaching subject specific vocabulary and supporting non-native English speakers in particular with their acquisition of new vocabulary. As part of our CPD, which is looking at developing the Sidcot Wheel (see appendix 1), we are helping colleagues in all subjects to develop literacy as a component of their lessons. This initiative is led by the English Department.

8.2 All departments and curriculum areas take responsibility in delivering language skills in Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking.

8.3 The maintenance and support for the mother tongue is seen as vitally important. For many students, this will relate to the teaching and use of English at Sidcot. Other opportunities will be made available, such as the provision of reading materials in a variety of languages, in the library.

8.4 The language of the host country is promoted through the medium of instruction and communication but also specifically through the English Department. Students' use of English and other languages is promoted by competitions (in written spoken and dramatic forms) and other cultural events.

8.5 Sidcot is part of a wider community and will consider the needs and interests of parents, friends, client groups and neighbours when formulating language policy decisions.

8.6 Where necessary, and possible, communication with parents, agents and guardians of overseas students takes place in the mother tongue of those students.

8.7 Parents can be actively involved in the language development of Sidcot students in both English and, where relevant, mother tongue languages through communications with parents, agents and guardians by email, phone and face-to-face during consultations. Parents are informed of and involved in the language work being carried out in school. Language development can then continue in a focussed and directed way outside school. Student progress and depth of learning in all languages is broadened and parental engagement with language learning achieved.

8.8 Sidcot believes in and actively supports the premise that almost all education is language education.

8.9 Just as language is dynamic and flexible, so too is the Sidcot Language Policy.

9 Linked Policies

- 6.1 Curriculum Policy
- 3.1 Admissions Policy
- 6.2 Sidcot Assessment Policy
- 6.13 EAL

10 Document Change History

Date of change	Detail significant changes and any new legislation / guidance taken into account
25.05.2017	Policy rewritten.
13.02.2019	Policy reviewed.
06.04.2021	Policy amended by CWS & ELT
18.06.24	Policy amended by CWS and ELT
01.07.25	No Changes made
19.08.26	Changes to 5.1 to reflect new EAL charges in Sixth Form

11 Appendix 1 – The Sidcot Learning Wheel

SIDCOT LEARNING WHEEL

