



Geelong Lutheran College is committed to providing a safe environment for all our students when they are in the care of the College.

Definitions

The College: Geelong Lutheran College St John's Newtown and Armstrong Creek

Parents: Parents, Guardians, Caregivers

Rationale

The vision of Geelong Lutheran College (GLC) is to be a leading, innovative, Christ-centred learning community that inspires students to be caring, confident and creative citizens.

This policy outlines the philosophical underpinnings and principles that guide College practices in understanding and supporting language development across the Primary years of the College. As an International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) Candidate School, we aim to develop "inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect," and we recognise the role of language as foundational to this aim.

Philosophy and Principles of Language Learning

At Geelong Lutheran College we acknowledge that:

- The development of language is fundamental to the 'instinctive human need to communicate' (IBO, 2025a).
- Language (specifically English in the Australian context) is 'central to the lives, learning and development of all young Australians' (ACARA, 2025a).
- Language is foundational for our learning community as it is essential for building relationships and community and understanding and appreciating others.
- Language is integral to learning and permeates learning across the curriculum. As such, all teachers are language teachers, and supporting literacy development is a goal for teachers in *all* learning areas.
- Language is central to identity, as an expression and connection to cultural identity and as a means of expressing and understanding own and others' identity. GLC welcomes and affirms students' home languages as expressions of their unique identity.
- Language is a means through which learners grow as internationally minded people, expressed implicitly through the IB Learner Profile and explicitly through the attribute of 'Communicator' and the IB approaches to Learning such as Social Skills, Research Skills and Communication Skills. 'Learning to communicate in a variety of ways in more than one language is fundamental to the development of intercultural understanding in the IB' (IBO, 2005b).
- Language learning at GLC involves the complementary processes of
 - learning language
 - learning through language and
 - learning about language
- Language development at GLC includes
 - development of language and literacy in English (our language of instruction),
 - recognition and support of students' home languages,
 - instruction in an additional language (German, French) and
 - support for students with language learning needs.

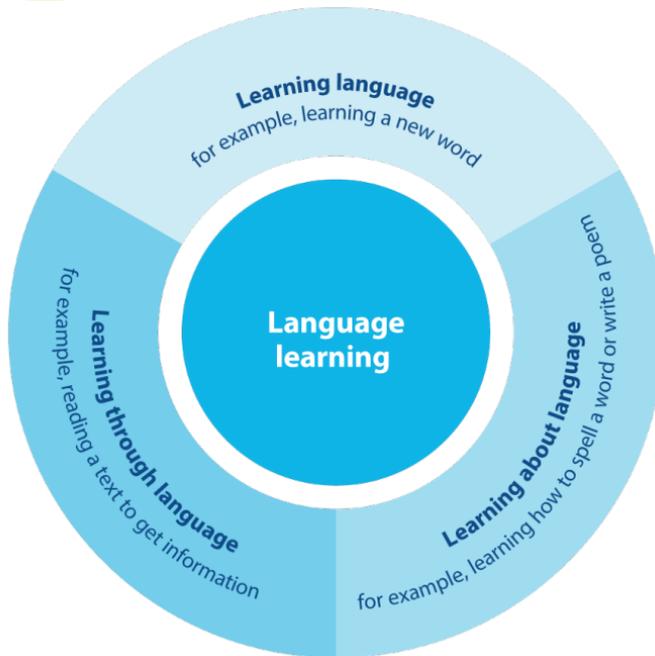


Figure 1 IBO (2025) Adapted from Halliday, 1985

Terms

This Language Policy addresses the development of language in terms of:

The language of instruction	At Geelong Lutheran College this is Standard Australian English. Language learning programs are developed from the Australian Curriculum English (ACARA, Version 9), addressing the strands of language, literature and literacy.
Home language/s	Many students use or are exposed to languages other than English at home. For some students the additional language/s are their first language (and most frequently spoken at home) while for others the additional language is the main language of parents, guardians or caregivers within the home. In some homes more than one language is used regularly.
Additional Language	Students throughout the primary years undertake learning in French (St John's Newtown campus) or German (Armstrong Creek campus) as part of their regular learning program. In the secondary years, students may choose either French or German.
Language learning	Language learning occurs in oral (speaking and listening), visual (viewing and presenting) and written (reading and writing) forms. This learning incorporates the interrelated aspects of language learning, learning <i>through</i> language and learning <i>about</i> language (see graphic below).
Literacy and becoming literate	Literacy is the foundational knowledge, and skills students need to listen, read, view, speak, write and create various texts, using and modifying languages for different purposes in various contexts. (ACARA, 2025b). As such, the process of becoming literate is supported and taught in all learning areas by all teachers.



Context and Language Profile

Geelong Lutheran College is a co-educational Christian school which is part of a network of Lutheran schools across Australia. GLC educates approximately 1340 Prep to Year 12 students each year across our two campuses:

- GLC St John's Newtown: 3-year-old Kindergarten – Year 6
- GLC Armstrong Creek: Prep – Year 12

Geelong Lutheran College is an IB PYP Candidate School with the PYP being implemented across Prep-Year 6 at both campuses. While our campuses are united in culture, purpose and approach, our communities have distinctive histories and contexts:

- GLC St John's Newtown opened in 1962, servicing a community connected to Geelong's centre. It is co-located with St John's Lutheran Kindergarten (separately administered) which provides a major entry point into the school community.
- GLC Armstrong Creek opened in 2009, in the developing Armstrong Creek growth corridor. As such, growth of the school has been steady, with many families coming from other parts of Geelong, Victoria and the world.

While English is the language spoken at home for most of our families, both of our communities have considerable cultural and language diversity, reflecting the increasingly multicultural nature of the area. We are proud of our community's cultural diversity and work to build and maintain a culture of safety, harmony and mutual respect. The following is an indicator of the cultural diversity of our communities:

<i>June 2025 data</i>	% students Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	% students who have a language other than English spoken at home	% students born overseas	Languages spoken within GLC homes
GLC St John's Newtown	1%	14%	6%	Africans, Arabic, Cantonese, Chinese, Croatian, French, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Ilokano, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Māori, Macedonian, Malayalam, Mandarin, Nuer, Persian, Punjabi, Sinhalese, Spanish, Thai, Vietnamese
GLC Armstrong Creek	1%	19%	11%	Africans, Arabic, Amharic, Armenian, Bengali, Bisaya, Cantonese, Croatian, Chinese, Dutch, Fijian, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Indonesian, Iranic, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Kannada, Korean, Māori, Macedonian, Malayalam, Mandarin, Marathi, Netherlandic/ Danish, Norwegian, Portuguese, Punjabi, Shona, Sinhalese, Spanish, Tagalog, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, Urdu, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Yoruba

Further, GLC has a staff of 185, including teaching support and general administration staff. The staff population is majority Australian with some diversity in cultural backgrounds including First Nations Australian, South African, Croatian, Scottish, Indian, Brazilian, and Israeli.



The language first spoken on the land on which our College (campuses) sits is Wadawurrung. Some buildings at the Armstrong Creek campus bear Wadawurrung language names (Djilang, Babaab, Meernook, Nyaal and Ngarrwa) continuing a connection to this ancient and ongoing language in this place.

The language of instruction at GLC is English, with French (P-6 at St John's Newtown and Year 7-12 Armstrong Creek) and German (P-12 at Armstrong Creek) taught as an additional language.

Language Practices

Teaching the language of instruction – English and Literacy

At GLC, a structured sequential program of learning of English is developed based on the Australian Curriculum. Our program supports students to purposefully and proficiently read, view, listen to, speak, write, create and reflect on increasingly complex and varied texts. This includes the learning of:

- Language – developing knowledge of the English language and how it works enabling interactions and relationships, expressing and sharing information, opinions and feelings. It includes developing knowledge of and skills in structuring language and texts purposefully and meaningfully and using vocabulary, sentence structures and text structures to comprehend and create texts purposefully and meaningfully.
- Literature – exploring, analysing and appreciating texts for their aesthetic qualities and ways of communicating significant ideas, values, perspectives and issues, as well as creating various literary texts.
- Literacy – developing the knowledge and skills for using language accurately and effectively in its written and spoken forms.

Oral Language, specifically speaking and listening is the foundation for all English and Literacy learning. Students engage in a wide range of opportunities to develop their oral language skills through formal and informal interactions, school routines, events and celebrations, and academic learning across the curriculum. Interactions and discussions provide opportunities to build oral skills in relation to vocabulary, grammar and expression.

Written Language, specifically reading and writing, builds from oral language, enabling students to make meaning from and through texts. Reading and writing skills are sequentially developed through explicit teaching of:

- phonics and spelling
- grammar and punctuation
- handwriting
- reading fluency and comprehension
- sentence and text structures and types
- analysis and response to text.

Visual Language, viewing and presenting, students are provided opportunities to analyse, discuss and create a variety of multimodal texts to build understanding of the ways in which visual and verbal elements work together to convey meaning, shape audience response, and achieve specific purposes.

Language and Literacy across the Curriculum

Language is a major connecting element across the curriculum at GLC. Language and literacy embedded in all areas of learning, and as such all teachers are teachers of language and literacy. In all subjects' students are explicitly taught and supported to:



- engage in oral discussion
- listen to and interpret instructions
- comprehend, analyse and evaluate a range of written, spoken and multi-modal texts
- use general and subject-specific vocabulary and terminology
- express their understandings, ideas and opinions in oral, written and multi-modal forms.

When planning for learning across the curriculum, teachers identify the language requirements of their programs and develop strategies to support learners' language use, including for those students with language learning needs or who have English as an additional language.

Learning of Additional Languages

Primary: All students from Prep-Year 6 undertake learning of a language other than English, provided through specialist teaching, 45 minutes per week. At GLC St John's Newtown, the language is French, and at GLC Armstrong Creek the language is German. Language teachers develop learning programs from the Australian Curriculum, engaging students in a range of language activities including listening and speaking, viewing and reading, games, hands on activities and online practice.

Language teachers seek opportunities to integrate with the broader educational program, particularly the Program of Inquiry to further make connections between language, culture and other learning. Further, opportunities to promote and practice the additional language in other areas of school life are actively sought and embraced (e.g. cultural celebrations, classroom displays in both languages, learning of songs in French or German, assemblies).

Secondary: In the secondary school, students may elect to study French or German in Year 7, 8 and 9 (3 x 45 min per week) following the Australian Curriculum. From Year 10 additional languages become elective.

Home Language

GLC values the diversity and gift of the various language backgrounds of our students. We believe that home language development is crucial for maintaining cultural identity. Acceptance and recognition of home languages is important for student belonging and wellbeing at school. Multilingualism provides students with an enlarged perspective and skills to engage in a global society.

GLC recognises the role of parents as a child's first teacher of language, and that strength in home language development is an asset for subsequent language learning, including the language of instruction at school. As partners in supporting learning and development, GLC seeks to work alongside parents whose dominant language is not English by taking an open stance to learning from parents, providing interpretation services for important communications, gathering information about a student's language learning background, and creating and communicating plans to support students' English language development.

At school, we seek opportunities to acknowledge students' language backgrounds and provide opportunities to speak and share, in order to enrich the experience of the whole community. Beginning a collection of library resources in languages other than English is one such strategy, and one in which we partner with families.



Support for Learners with Language Delays

Students with additional language needs are supported through the development of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). This plan uses information from formal diagnoses and allied health recommendations, in-school assessments (e.g. PAT, NAPLAN, DIBELS) and observations and input from families to develop relevant goals to support the student's language (and other) needs. Students are supported within the classroom through adjustments targeted towards these goals. This may include strategies such as:

- small group or individual support for tasks
- learning materials that adjust the language requirements of the task (e.g. simplified language in a text)
- alternative communication or learning demonstration methods (e.g. use of talk-to-text technology or demonstrating learning through drawings and oral language rather than a written form)
- additional opportunities to develop and demonstrate key language skills – teaching and/or practice
- working with external specialists to implement specific targeted strategies

Students may also undertake Tier 2 small group intervention (such as Minilit) or individual support.

Support for Learners with English as an Additional Language

As an IB PYP Candidate School, GLC is committed to growing our support for students who speak and learn English as an additional language and recognise the value of our multilingual learning community. While our current EAL student population is relatively small we have a larger proportion of students whose parents are English language learners - these students can present with extra English learning needs. At GLC, learning is accessed through English, and achievement is demonstrated through English.

Support for EAL students may include:

- identification of language backgrounds and English language competency at enrolment
- setting and maintaining high expectations for EAL learners, and respect for cultural and linguistic diversity
- identification of language learning goals and monitoring the progress towards these
- a focus on oral language – modelled language, structured discussion
- visual prompts for instructions and activities, hands-on activities, demonstrations, modelling
- use of visuals, sentence starters, graphic organisers, and word banks
- pre-teaching key vocabulary before lessons (especially subject-specific terms)
- explicit teaching of spelling, grammar and text types
- in-class support and check-ins to ensure that students have understood instructions and content.
- in the Primary years: structured, explicit English literacy teaching
- in Primary, explicit teaching of vocabulary – including Tier 1 (everyday spoken words) as required; Tier 2 (words commonly encountered in written text and academic contexts) and Tier 3 words (low frequency, content-specific words)
- in Secondary, providing bilingual glossaries or translated instructions utilising technology
- in Secondary, translating task instructions into first language so students can access the learning.

Partnership with Families

GLC recognises parents and families as our students' first language teachers. We partner with parents to support holistic language development for all our students through:

- enrolment processes that seek information about students' language capabilities and background experiences



- sharing information about language learning programs and processes, such as through Early Literacy Parent Information sessions, Seesaw sharing and learning celebrations
- communicating language learning through formal and informal reporting, parent meetings and interviews
- events and initiatives that promote and celebrate the language diversity of our community, encouraging parent involvement as appropriate.

References:

IBO (2025) From Principles to Practice – Language in the PYP

https://resources.ibo.org/pyp/works/pyp_11162-51465?root=1.6.2.14.5.3

IBO (2025b) PYP Language Subject Overview

https://resources.ibo.org/pyp/works/pyp_11162-430911?lang=en&root=1.6.2.6.5.3

ACARA (2025a) Australian Curriculum v9 English

<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/curriculum-information/understand-this-learning-area/english>

ACARA (2025b) Understand this General Capability - Literacy

<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/curriculum-information/understand-this-general-capability/literacy>

Evaluation

This Policy will be reviewed as part of the College's two-year review cycle.

Policy Administration

Responsible Person/s	Approver	Date Approved	Next Review
Executive Principal	Executive Team	October 2025	October 2027