



LITTLE EM'S
THẾ GIỚI MẶT TRỜI
With Reggio Children

LANGUAGE POLICY

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I. Introduction

Introduction

At Little Em's Preschool, we are committed to providing a language-rich environment that nurtures holistic development and meaningful communication among our students. We also embrace the authentic Reggio Emilia Approach®, recognizing children's "hundred languages" as metaphorical expressions of their extraordinary potential, diverse perspectives, and unique ways of constructing knowledge and understanding the world. Our Language Policy aims to integrate the principles of both Reggio Emilia Approach® and IB PYP to create an immersive, inclusive, and culturally enriching language learning experience for our students in Vietnam.

Little Em's Mission Statement

OUR MISSION is to inspire each student to discover their unique potential, bringing their knowledgeable mind and caring heart to be the best version of themselves and contribute to creating the best version of the world.

OUR PURPOSE is to support young people in the journey to discover who they are, what they care deeply about, and how to successfully navigate their way through life in a rapidly changing world.

Our **COMPASS of PURPOSE** is epitomized by the four cardinal points:

RESPECT

- Developing a thoughtful and caring generation who treat themselves, others, and everything around them with empathy, compassion, and respect.

INTEGRITY

- Developing principled and reflective thinkers and doers who strive for honesty and justice.

UNDERSTANDING

- Developing open-minded and knowledgeable inquirers who always have the space to be curious and strive to cultivate locally rooted global competence.

RESPONSIBILITY

- Developing responsible young people who hold themselves accountable for their actions, who commit to service, and who act to create positive differences in the world that we live in.

With these CORE VALUES, by which we live our vision, our students will discover their true purpose and become future Ambassadors for Life.

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

II. Language Philosophy

At Little Em's, we firmly believe in the transformative power of language to shape young minds and empower them to become lifelong learners and effective communicators. Our guiding philosophy centers on the "180 degrees west, 180 degrees east" concept, highlighting the significance of understanding local identity and cultural roots as a foundation for embracing global perspectives. Providing Language Immersion and Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programs enable children to develop bilingual proficiency and become culturally sensitive individuals.

We believe in children as human beings, born with "a hundred languages": a hundred ways of thinking, expressing, understanding, approaching, or doing. We recognize that the hundred languages represent the extraordinary potentials of children, their unique processes, and ways of building knowledge and constructing their own lives. With Reggio Emilia Approach®, we embrace the concept of "100 languages" as a metaphor for the diverse and limitless forms of communication and expression inherent in every child. As a preschool, teachers, and learning community, it is our responsibility to make all verbal and non-verbal languages visible equally.

III. Goals

Multilingual Proficiency

Our primary goal is to encourage the development of multilingual proficiency in both English and Vietnamese. We believe that being bilingual offers numerous cognitive, social, and cultural advantages, promoting an open-minded and empathetic worldview, and enabling our students to confidently engage in a multicultural and multilingual society.

Cultural Appreciation

By promoting Vietnamese and international cultures, we seek to foster cultural awareness and appreciation by valuing and integrating local identity and diverse global perspectives into our language and learning programs.

Expression and Inquiry

We aim to create a learning environment where children communicate meaningfully, expressing themselves through various verbal and non-verbal languages. We believe in the power of expressive languages to fuel inquiry and stimulate curiosity. Through various expressive modes, children can explore, question, and investigate the world around them.

Holistic development

We acknowledge and celebrate the multitude of ways in which children express themselves. Our goal is to provide a nurturing environment that fosters critical thinking and inquiry-based learning and supports the development of a child's intellectual, emotional, physical, and creative capacities through their "hundred languages."

Inclusion and Support

Our approach is centered on the child. We recognize that every child is unique, and we aim to honor and amplify their voices and ways of knowing through the diverse languages they possess. Therefore, we are committed to providing a language-rich environment that supports each child's individual needs, including those with different linguistic backgrounds and abilities. See the Inclusion and Diversity Policy for further details.

Development and Maintenance of Home/Personal Language(s)

At Little Em's Preschool, we prioritize nurturing each learner's home or personal language(s) to honor their identity. Strategies include:

- encouraging language use in both informal and structured activities;
- providing resources in literature, media, and cultural materials in their home languages;
- collaborating with families to understand and incorporate their language preferences into individualized learning plans;
- offering language support services for students who require additional assistance;
- facilitating cross-cultural exchanges to celebrate linguistic diversity within our community and
- providing professional development for educators to support language development in diverse learners effectively.

Through these efforts, we aim to create an inclusive environment where every child can communicate, express themselves, and succeed academically.

IV. Language Approach

Reggio Emilia Approach®

We value the Reggio Emilia Approach®'s emphasis on child-led learning and the role of language in expressing ideas and interests. Teachers will observe and listen to children to design language-rich learning experiences that build upon their curiosities and discoveries. At Little Em's, we value verbal and non-verbal languages equally, recognizing children's "hundred languages." We provide children with multiple avenues to communicate and share their ideas and feelings through art, music, movement, drama, storytelling, and other expressive forms.

Transdisciplinary, Play-based, and Project-based learning

Our educational program integrates the "100 languages" concept in a transdisciplinary manner. In each classroom, English-speaking and Vietnamese-speaking teachers collaborate in a project-based learning environment, providing opportunities for children to communicate and learn in diverse linguistic and cultural settings.

Language Immersion Method

Our preschool follows a language immersion method where English and Vietnamese languages are integrated into the daily routines, activities, and interactions. This method exposes children to language in a natural and authentic context, providing meaningful interactions and experiences to support their language acquisition and cultural understanding.

Systematic Synthetic Phonics Program Read Write Inc.

We supplement project-based learning with a systematic synthetic phonics program from Read Write Inc., ensuring students have a solid foundation for their future language development and supporting their transition to the primary years. Read Write Inc. Phonics is a DfE-validated systematic synthetic phonics program with a whole-school approach to teaching early reading and writing, designed to ensure progress for every child.

V. Practices and Implementation

Teachers as language facilitators

To attain our goals, it is essential that teachers at Little Em's preschool also value bilingualism and multiculturalism. Our teachers will act as language facilitators, encouraging and supporting children in using their "hundred languages" to communicate, inquire, and explore. Teachers will embrace their role in nurturing and amplifying children's expressions. At the same time, teachers demonstrate high levels of knowledge, skills, abilities, and commitment to teaching their students to become effective communicators who will use verbal, written, artistic, and technological forms of communication to give, send, receive, and interpret information in two

languages.

Our teachers will also receive ongoing professional development to enhance their language teaching skills, cultural competence, and understanding of the Reggio Emilia Approach® and the Read Write Inc. Phonics program.

Collaborative and immersive teaching structure

In our language immersion-focused preschool classroom, we have established a dynamic and collaborative teaching structure that fosters bilingual proficiency and cultural awareness. Our Vietnamese-speaking and English-speaking teachers work seamlessly together, co-designing an enriching curriculum that offers children an immersive language experience. This approach ensures that students are exposed to both languages in a natural and meaningful context. Our teachers create an environment where language acquisition occurs organically through carefully planned activities, projects, and interactions. By blending their expertise, our teachers provide a balanced and holistic learning experience that celebrates both local identity and global perspectives. This collaborative model enhances language development and nurtures cross-cultural understanding, equipping our young learners with the skills and mindset to thrive in an interconnected world.

Learning spaces as “the third teacher”

Our learning spaces are considered “the third teacher” besides the other two teachers in the classroom. With academic and thoughtful considerations, the spaces will be designed to be flexible, promoting a child-friendly atmosphere that encourages creativity and freedom of expression in different languages.

Learning spaces also provide precious resources for learning. We achieve this by having a well-stocked library and classroom libraries with access to digital resources that contain reading schemes, including audio and video tapes, games, and pictures. Our classrooms will be designed to create a rich bilingual learning environment with labels, posters, books, and resources available in both English and Vietnamese.

The language curriculum is embedded in the whole school curriculum

The IB PYP language scope and sequence standards are integrated into transdisciplinary and play-based learning experiences, connecting language learning with other subject areas and promoting inquiry-based approaches. In practice, this means that our teaching is generated from the units of inquiry. The teaching of elements of language, such as text structure, grammar, spelling, and vocabulary, is taught in context to the curriculum.

Recognition and Celebration of “hundred languages”

Our teachers actively recognize and celebrate children's "hundred languages" by documenting and showcasing their diverse expressions and reflections in both verbal and non-verbal forms. Students' diverse ways of thinking, understanding, and approaching tasks are honored and valued.

An atelier and atelierista are present at Little Em's as an integral part of the Reggio Emilia Approach®, in continuous dialogue with the other spaces and professional profiles in the schools. Ateliers are environments promoting knowledge and creativity, suggesting questions, and generating evocations; they are the beauty that produces knowledge and, vice-versa, the places where “a hundred languages” are enacted.

Enrichment Program

Little Em's enrichment program is designed to provide children with additional offerings to support and extend beyond the curriculum to explore other subject areas and interests. We partner up with various academies:

- SMPAA (Soul Music and Performing Arts Academy),
- Kindermusik (Research-based music and movement curricula),
- Yoga Planet (Story-telling yoga for children),
- Ready Steady Go Kids (10 coordinated sports and life skills training for preschool children), to mention a few.

The program provides specialized classes for students who want to develop their talents in the arts or sports. The language employed in the Enrichment classes is also aligned with the linguistic competencies of the specialized teachers to ensure the quality of language used in teaching and learning with students.

Parental Involvement

We will encourage parents to participate in language learning activities, cultural celebrations, and language-sharing sessions to strengthen the home-school connection and reinforce language development at home.

Respect and Promotion of the language(s) of the wider community

At Little Em's Preschool, we prioritize honoring and promoting the languages of our wider community, recognizing their significance in fostering cultural identity and understanding. Our strategies include:

- Offering opportunities for students to engage with local languages through guest speakers, cultural events, and partnerships.
- Integrating local language and cultural aspects into our curriculum to foster appreciation and understanding.
- Encouraging students to interact with community members in their native languages, promoting mutual respect and empathy.
- Creating an inclusive environment where students feel comfortable expressing themselves in their preferred languages.

- Seeking feedback from community members to ensure our language policies reflect community needs and values.
- Providing service-learning opportunities involving language-related activities to support community engagement and language revitalization efforts.

Through these efforts, we aim to nurture cultural pride and competence among our students while contributing to the preservation of local linguistic traditions.

VI. Assessment (*)

Authentic Assessment through Pedagogical Documentation

Assessment of children's progress will go beyond traditional methods. Authentic assessment involves observation and documentation techniques that consider each child's diverse forms of communication and expression. By doing this, we strive to capture and assess children's works, expressions, and processes, showcasing the richness of their "hundred languages" in the learning environment. This documentation will serve as a reflection of children's learning journeys, supporting continuous improvement in language teaching practices, and will be shared with parents and the community.

Individualized Written Reports

Children's progress will be shared with parents regularly through documentation and written reports, highlighting each child's language, holistic development milestones, and areas for continued support.

(*) See the Assessment Policy for further details.

VII. Review and Revision

By embracing the IB PYP language principles, incorporating the Reggio Emilia Approach®, and adopting the 180-degree west, 180-degree east educational framework, Little Em's is committed to creating an enriching and inclusive language learning environment that nurtures curious, empathetic, and multilingual learners prepared for a globally interconnected world.

Our Language Policy will be reviewed annually in August and revised to ensure its alignment with our values, philosophy, pedagogical approach, evolving needs of our students, and the best practices in language education. Feedback from teachers, parents, and the learning community will be sought to enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of our language learning program.