

## Policy Statement

### Aim

Our overarching aim for reading at SISD is to promote high standards of literacy by equipping students with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. This supports the Dubai vision set out by H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum who said, 'Our goal is to make reading a daily habit that is deeply ingrained... It is the duty of relevant institutions to make this law a reality'.

### School Mission Statement

In this context, reading is a fundamental skill with which our students must be equipped. We aim to foster, nurture and instill a desire and passion to read, make inference and draw conclusions through curiosity, enjoyment and seeking out further knowledge. We aim to enable our students to become skilled and articulate readers across all subject areas through effective learning of reading strategies. Aligned to our IB school philosophy, by embedding the Approaches to Learning throughout all that we do, we strive to nurture and develop learners who read critically and for comprehension and who are confident and knowledgeable communicators.

Reading literacy is an essential factor in the success of our students in relation to internal, national (UAE National Agenda) and international (GL, PISA) assessment and benchmarking. The UAE National Agenda PISA and TIMSS results highlight the importance of reading literacy and student performance in international assessment across the curriculum, including Mathematics and Science. In order to achieve this vision, SISD will aim to ensure that:

- Learning to read and reading to learn strategies are aligned with the school's values, particularly Bilingualism, as well the UAE's National Agenda Parameter for reading and the International Baccalaureate Approaches to Learning
- All students experience reading daily
- Reading is valued, promoted and celebrated
- Students' higher order reading skills, including inference, interpretation and integration of information are learned and developed explicitly
- Students are enabled to become confident and competent decoders
- An emphasis is placed on inference and deduction
- Students are equipped with the skills to explore meaning, characterisation and settings
- Digital literacy skills are developed, enabling students to know how to research effectively and read critically
- Students are exposed to a wide range of engaging texts that are rich in language and culture
- Confidence is built in the students so that they have agency with regard to reading material

## Assessment

- Assessment in reading at SISD is data driven and collected based on a range of tools
- Reading programmes identify gaps and strengths in student reading
- Reading across the school is personalized based on data collected from reading programs appropriate to students' age groups and subjects
- Reading is considered a key element of Home Learning and encouraged as a means of supporting students in their academic progress

## Home Reading

We collaborate with parents to continue to develop a love for reading across all languages, including mother tongue. By providing reading workshops we aim to hone the development of reading skills through strategies and continued practice at home and in school. In Early Years and Primary, the use of reading logs between home and school actively promotes parental support. Home reading is an expectation for all students every week, with students expected to read for 20 minutes a day.

## Learning and Teaching

- Teachers use a range of approaches and strategies to develop and enhance reading skills across all areas of the curriculum. This includes: schoolwide reading strategies in all languages of instruction, used by **all teachers and across the curriculum**
- the use of command terms in Grade 4 and 5 as well as in Secondary
- developing the skills of understanding, application and reflection on written texts

developing knowledge and understanding, summarizing, evaluating and questioning

- ensuring that students can make connections between languages and formulate conclusions
- developing and challenging students in the skill of reading to support our philosophy of transdisciplinary learning
- developing the skills of inference, interpretation and integration of information
- creating stimulating and interactive reading walls
- celebrating reading literacy and reading for pleasure through rewards and recognition (e.g. Arabic Week Reading Activities, Literacy Week, etc.)

We ensure that targeted teaching and learning resources are available to teachers and students across all phases, and regular training and development is supported and promoted.

## Monitoring and Review

The monitoring and review of reading will be supported by:

- monitoring planning and assessment records
- focussing on and tracking of reading skills in lesson observations
- action planning and rigorous tracking following analysis of external assessment results in all languages.
- rigorous tracking of point-to-point Progress Test Data in English
- use of library data (individual, grade, cohort)

## READING IN THE EARLY YEARS

In Early Years, reading is promoted across the curriculum. Children are encouraged to read through continuous access and exposure to books in dedicated reading areas, both indoors and outdoors. Wherever possible, books are displayed as a stimulus for learning and discovery in continuous provision. In lesson planning, texts are frequently used as a focus for learning, both fiction and non-fiction.

Reading in Early Years is focused on developing learners who love and value reading and are confident to take risks to read in multiple languages for a variety of purposes. Phonemic awareness and phonics are developed starting from Pre-K using the Letters and Sounds approach for English, ABC der Tiere/ Sofatutor and ANTON for German and La Planète des Alphas for French. In all three languages, this is taught in an interactive, multi-sensory, personalized and systematic approach and is complemented by real life reading experiences across learning areas, both at school and at home.

Daily exposure to reading is essential in the early years classroom and opportunities are provided in a multitude of ways both students led, and teacher led:

**Shared reading:**  
This is an interactive reading experience that occurs when students join in or share the reading of a book or other text while guided and supported by a teacher. The teacher explicitly models the skills of proficient readers, including reading with fluency and expression. The shared reading model often uses oversized books (referred to as big books) with enlarged print and illustrations, projected books from Reading A-Z, and language experience charts.

**Guided reading:**

Guided reading is an instructional approach that involves a teacher working with a small group of students who demonstrate similar reading behaviours and can read similar levels of texts. Levelled text are used to meet the needs of the students. The reader is accessible for students to read with the teacher's skillful support; it offers challenges and opportunities for problem solving but is suitable enough for students to demonstrate reading with growing fluency.

**Story Time:**

A key part of promoting a love of reading and student readiness to read is providing ample time for children to listen to reading being modelled. Teachers read stories for pleasure to students during the day.

**Student led reading:**

Students are encouraged to develop natural reading habits. Each classroom has a reading corner which is a comfortable space for children to read alone or with a friend. Students are encouraged to read to a friend and to actively listen to the reading of others. A variety of resources are provided.

to stimulate engagement with books such as reading buddies, voice recording devices, listening centres, puppets and theatres.

Books are included in other corners of the classroom to stimulate discussion and used as a provocation for learning or an opportunity for research. Teachers take note of student interest and enhance reading areas with books that are relevant for student learning and interest.

### **Reading skills:**

As well as the promotion of vocabulary and listening skills, guided and shared reading sessions are an important teachable moment for the development of key reading skills:

#### Decoding

- Sound out the word
- Use picture cues
- Make the first sound
- Skip and come back
- Reread the word/sentence

#### Comprehension

- Questioning
- Clarifying
- Preview the book
- Predicting
- Summarising

#### Fluency

- Responding to punctuation
- Reading with expression
- Pitch and tone

#### Home Reading

A reading log provides ongoing feedback between teachers, students and parents about students' strengths and next steps in regard to strategies, phonemic awareness and comprehension skills. The reading log contains tricky word list and phonic list of words the child is working on. It is also an opportunity for vocabulary development with English/French/German vocabulary list attached. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers about their child's reading via the reading record book. Teachers also provide comments and tips for reading in the reading record book, which is personalised for the child.

## READING IN THE PRIMARY YEARS

Students are exposed to a wide range of literary content to support decoding, fluency and comprehension for optimum development. Moreover, unit texts are consistently used to promote research and knowledge. Levelled readers such as Oxford reading tree books and the online programme Reading A-Z are used for English and developed further through home reading. Carefully selected mentor texts are used to develop targeted skills and strategies to reading as suited to each student and their learning journey. In French, Escalire is used in the lower Primary grades; RAZ Kids is used for homework in the upper grades. Lesebaum and Lesestart mit Eberhardt are used in German. The Reading Platform “Asafeer” is used for Arabic classes.

Student agency is an essential element of reading and promoting reading for enjoyment. Learning in reading and library sessions develop a love for reading which further enhances students' reading strategies. Such strategies are developed in all subjects and are modelled and referenced repeatedly to increase readers' independence.

**ENGLISH:** In the primary school, Reading A-Z running records as well as formative assessments are used to track student reading achievement. Reading A-Z provides teachers with a reading age band and lexile score which is then analysed to inform next steps in reading. Reading A-Z running records are administered by teachers and are completed 3 times a year and are moderated against internal data. The school has been using Reading A-Z since 2015. In recent years, data has been collated and analysed at middle and senior management level to inform student interventions and departmental action plans.

**FRENCH:** In the primary school, OURA (G1) and Fluence (G2-5) are used to track student reading achievement. OURA is used as a baseline assessment at the beginning of G1. Fluence running records are administered by teachers and are completed 3 times a year (units 1, 3 et 5). The results of the Fluence assessments provide teachers with a reading age band and a percentile which is then analysed to inform Fluence starting point. Fluence assessments are ongoing during the whole school year, allowing an exact tracking of the students' reading progress.

**GERMAN:** In the primary school ‘Lesebaum’ and ‘Lesestart mit Eberhardt’ are used as levelled readers and are registered through reading logs by teachers and parents. The reading ‘Kompetenzraster’ is used to track decoding, fluency and expression. Class libraries offer a range of books of different genres, which invite student choice during reading time. Additional Library books are chosen biweekly for enjoyment or to aid unit research.

## READING IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

The MYP and DP Language and Literature courses develop skills in six areas, including reading. The study of Language and Literature in the Diploma programme engages students with a range of texts, in a variety of media and forms, from different periods, styles and cultures. Students develop skills in interpretation, analysis and evaluation with the key aim of the programme and the delivery being to foster a lifelong interest in and enjoyment of language and literature and reading.

Inquiry is at the heart of MYP language learning and aims to support students' understanding by providing them with opportunities to independently and collaboratively investigate, take action and reflect on their learning. Reading is an essential skill that enables our students to do so, and at SISD we believe that that tackling the literacy demands in all our subjects will increase the students' chance of success. Students develop their critical thinking, which is essential for cultivating intercultural understanding and integration into local, national and global communities. Reading is an integral skill used to explore and sustain personal development and cultural identity. It is used as a tool to provide an intellectual framework that supports the construction of conceptual understanding. Strategies that support Secondary school students are given authentic reading materials from their culture and from others to support this development.

- Prioritising subject specific command terms across the curriculum
- Provide targeted vocabulary instruction in every subject
- Develop students' ability to read complex academic texts
- Break down complex writing tasks
- Provide opportunities for structured talk
- Provide high quality literacy interventions for struggling students

The Secondary School library is used as a language learning centre in which reading through physical and online materials are used as a bibliographic resource and source.

All Secondary students benefit from additional timetabled daily reading time of fifteen minutes. During this time, students have the freedom to choose reading material in any language.

In the Diploma Programme, reading is at the core of developing students' research and communication skills. Students are guided to analyse critically and to evaluate theories, concepts and arguments about the nature and activities of the individual and society.

## Wider reading opportunities

MYP and DP Students are regularly encouraged to engage with wider reading, perspectives and theories from a variety of sources. This could include engaging with historical material to inform their understanding of a class text in Language and Literature or engaging with theoretical material in History to understand key principles in Individuals and Society. In the Diploma Programme, students are given reading lists and independent study tasks. We see it as important that students make connections between what they are learning in English, French and German to their other subjects across the curriculum.

## ROLE OF THE LIBRARY

The school libraries play a key role in creating literate environments and promoting literacy by offering relevant and attractive reading material for all ages and all literacy levels. The school libraries assist in finding, using and interpreting appropriate information that opens up opportunities for lifelong learning, literacy enhancement, informed citizenship, recreation, creative imagination, individual research, critical thinking, and ultimately, empowerment in an increasingly complex world. This library is crucial not just as a community learning centres but a dedicated literate environments that supports wider-reading opporunites.

Students across the school go to the library and have shared story time in classes several times a week and support with academic writing in the older grades. Reading fluency and comprehension is supported through individual reading with the teacher and Learning Assistant and questioning is used during this time to consolidate and extend children's comprehension in the EYs and PYs. Throughout the year, online activities and apps, are shared with parents to support and encourage reading and literacy skills.