



LAERSKOOL WIERDAPARK

POLICY & PROCEDURE

LANGUAGE POLICY

Laerskool Wierdapark

LSWP – B – L- 003(E)

Document Development and Approval

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1. NAME OF THE SCHOOL

Laerskool Wierdapark

2. PREAMBLE

- 2.1. South Africa is a country with a diversity of cultures and languages. In recognition of this, the emphasis of Laerskool Wierdapark's language policy is on the promotion of multilingualism, the development of official languages, and respect for all languages used in the country, including South African Sign Language and the languages referred to in the South African Constitution.
- 2.2. This policy attempts to protect and advance our diverse cultures and languages, uphold the rights of all learners, parents and educators, and promote their acceptance of responsibility in facilitating the underlying principles which are:
 - a. The maintaining of the home language while providing access to and the effective acquisition of additional language(s), in keeping with the Department's position that an additive approach to bilingualism is to be seen as the normal orientation of our language-in-education policy.
 - b. The right to choose the language of learning and teaching is vested in the individual, which right is exercised by parents on behalf of the minors. This right has, however, to be exercised within the overall framework of the obligation of the education system to promote multilingualism.
 - c. No form of racial discrimination may be practised in implementing policy determined under this section.
 - d. A recognised Sign Language has the status of an official language for purposes of learning at a public school.
 - e. The governing body of the school may determine the language policy of the school subject to the Constitution and any applicable provincial law.

3. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

- 3.1. To provide a framework for staff members, management, and the school governing body on language as outlined by the relevant policies and legislation as outlined in this policy.
- 3.2. To promote and develop official languages.
- 3.3. To establish multilingualism as an approach to language in education.
- 3.4. To identify and determine a Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) as well as the approved language/s to be offered to learners at the school.
- 3.5. To identify and determine the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) as well as the approved language/s to be offered as additional subject to learners at the school.
- 3.5. To ensure that no form of discrimination takes place on the basis of language.

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4. FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED IN DETERMINING THE SCHOOL'S LANGUAGE POLICY

- 4.1. The interests of learners.
- 4.2. The interest of the school community.
- 4.3. The interest of the community in which the school is located.
- 4.4. International best practice with regard to class sizes and language in education, with specific reference to the importance of mother tongue education.

5. TERMINOLOGY AND ACRONYMS

5.1. Terminology

Term	Definition
Department	Means the Gauteng Department of Education.
District Office	Means the administrative centre of operation of the department responsible for the administration of education in a particular educational district in which the school is located.
Educator	Means any person, excluding a person who is appointed to exclusively perform extracurricular duties, who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services, at the School.
First Additional Language.	Means a compulsory language subject that a learner has to study at that level.
Governing body/School Governing Body	Means the governing body of the School as contemplated in Section 16(1) of the Schools Act, 1996.
Home Language	Means the language that is spoken most frequently at home by a learner.
Head of the Department	Means the Head of the Gauteng Department of Education.
Language of Learning and Teaching	Means the language medium in which learning and teaching, including assessment takes place at the School

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Term	Definition
Language proficiency	Means the level of competence at which a learner is able to use a language for both basic communication tasks and academic
Learner	Any person registered to receive education at the school.
Member of the Executive Council	Means the Member of the Executive Council to whom the portfolio of education has been allocated in Gauteng Province.
Multilingualism	The ability to use several languages.
Parent	Means: (a) the biological or adoptive parent or legal guardian of a learner. (b) the person legally entitled to custody of a learner; or (c) the person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a
[The] Policy	Means this Language Policy of the School.
Principal	Means an educator appointed or acting as the head of the school.
The Act	Means the South African Schools Act 1996 (Act 84 of 1996) as amended.
The School	Means Laerskool Wierdapark, a public school which enrolls learners in one or more grades from grade 8 to grade 12.
Second Additional Language	Means a non-compulsory language that may be studied (by choice) by learners at that level.

5.2. Acronyms

Acronyms	Explanation
HL	Home Language
HoD	Head of the Gauteng Department of Education
FAL	First Additional Language
GDE	Gauteng Education Department
LOLT (Language of Learning and Teaching)	Refers to the approved language that is used as the medium of instruction in the school and also presented as a subject.
SASA	South African Schools Act of 1996
SGB	School Governing Body

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6. APPLICATION AND SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 6.1. The language policy applies to all learners and educators and covers the Language of Learning and Teaching (“LoLT”) as subject.

7. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- 7.1 Constitution of South Africa 1996 (Act no. 108 of 1996 as amended.).
- 7.2 South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act no. 84 of 1996 as amended).
- 7.3 The National Education Policy Act 1996 (Act 27 of 1996).
- 7.4 Gauteng Schools Education Act, 1995 (Act No. 6 of 1995 as amended.)
- 7.5 School Education Act no. 6 of 1995. Section 18 (1) – 20 (2)
- 7.6 Applicable provincial legislation on school education.
- 7.7 Admission Policy for Ordinary Public Schools published in Government Gazette No 19377, Notice 2432 of 1998, excluding clauses 15 and 21 that was declared unlawful by the court in the Judgment Centre for Child Law v the Minister of Basic Education (Case 2840 of 2017).
- 7.8 The International Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 7.9 The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children.
- 7.10 The guidelines of the Pan South African Language Board.
- 7.11 The Revised National Curriculum Statements of the Department of Basic Education.
- 7.12 The Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act 4 of 2013).

8. RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROVINCIAL CIRCULARS

- 8.1 Language in Education Policy, published in terms of section 3(4)(m) of the National Education Policy Act 1996, (Act 27 of 1996)
- 8.2 Norms and Standards regarding language policy published in terms of section 6(1) of the South African Schools Act, (Act 84 of 1996)
- 8.3 Circular 20 of 2009 – Registration Procedures for Entry to the National Senior Certificate Examinations (Gr. 10 to 12)
- 8.4 School Communication Policy.
- 8.5 School Code of Conduct for Learners of the School.
- 8.6 SACE Code of Ethics for Educators.
- 8.7 Code of Conduct for Parents of the School.

9. POLICY STATEMENTS

- 9.1 **Key considerations in developing the language policy of the school**

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The school recognises the diversity of cultures and languages in our country and considers the following realities to shape the language policy:

- a. The thorough development of a child's language skills is a reliable predictor of future cognitive competence.
- b. Both the Home Language and Language of Learning and Teaching are important because the Home Language plays the primary role in developing literacy and thinking skills and is of importance in enhancing the protection and further development of the indigenous language, while the language of learning is the one in which learners must master educational concepts and provide a platform to participate and engage meaningfully in the information age on a global stage.
- c. The University Language of Instruction in South Africa is predominantly English; however, it is necessary for schools to promote other indigenous languages for the purpose of learner mobility and access where possible such as the LoLT of the school.
- d. The promotion of multilingualism enhances the opportunity for learners to access jobs and participate in the socio-economic development of the country.
- e. The SGB may determine the language policy of the school subject to the Constitution and any applicable provincial law.
- f. No form of unfair discrimination may be practiced in implementing the school's language policy.
- g. The interests of the learners of the school.
- h. The interests of the school community.
- i. The interests of the community in which the school is located.
- j. The capacity of the school.
- k. The resources and staff available to the school.
- l. The LoLT of the school which is Afrikaans.
- m. International best practice regarding the capacity of the school, class sizes and language in education, with specific reference to the importance of mother tongue education.
- n. To provide a framework for educators, the school management and the SGB with regard to the use of language as outlined by the relevant legislation and policies as outlined in this policy.

9.2 Language Of Learning and Teaching (LoLT)

- a. Laerskool Wierdapark is a single medium language school as meant in Section 29(2) of the Constitution.
- b. Based on the choices made by the parent population of the school the language of learning and teaching at the school is Afrikaans from Grade R to Grade 7.
- c. The languages for the management and operation of the school are Afrikaans, keeping in mind the communication needs of the Department and other parties

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where it is beneficial to use English as medium of communication.

9.3 Languages as subjects

- a. The school promotes multilingualism by presenting Afrikaans as a fully-fledged language subject at the school besides the medium/media of instruction in terms of the national education policy.
- b. The undermentioned languages offered as fully fledged subjects in the school for grades R to 7:
 - Afrikaans as LoLT;
 - English as FAL.
- c. Based on the choices made by the parent population, the school shall offer English as a FAL (Gr 1 – 7).
- d. The school does not offer a foreign language.
- e. The languages as LOLT and as FAL of the school shall receive equitable time and resource allocation.
- f. Every educator at the school will endeavour to take reasonable steps to inform learners on the importance of multilingualism, and to promote respect for other languages besides the learner's home language and/or the LoLT medium of instruction at the school.

9.4 Language in Laerskool Wierdapark

In all phases, the school will offer at least two official languages provided that one of the official languages is offered as a Home Language (HL) and another as a First Additional Language (FAL). One of the official languages will be the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT).

a. Foundation Phase (Gr. R – 3):

At Laerskool Wierdapark, for all learners from Grades R to 3, Afrikaans will be offered as the Home Language. English will be offered as a First Additional Language (Grade 1 to 3).

b. Intermediate phase (Gr. 4 – 6):

At Laerskool Wierdapark, for all learners in Grades 4 to 6, Afrikaans will be offered as the Home Language and English will be offered as a First Additional Language.

c. Senior phase (Grade 7):

At Laerskool Wierdapark, for all learners in Grade 7, Afrikaans will be offered as the Home Language and English will be offered as a First Additional Language.

9.5 Language of Communication

- 9.5.1 School reports as well as official written communication issued by the school to the parents will be in Afrikaans and if requested, in English
- 9.5.2 Articles in the school newsletter will be written in Afrikaans.

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- 9.5.3 General parent meetings shall be addressed in Afrikaans, unless where necessary, in the discretion of the SGB, an interpreter may be utilised for English.
- 9.5.4 No learner shall be punished for expressing himself/herself in a language which is not the language of learning and teaching at the school, but with the proviso that the language used must not be in contravention of the school's learner disciplinary code of conduct and rules and may not affect the dignity of another person and must be understandable to an educator of the school.
- 9.5.5 All correspondence to the GDE will be in English.

9.6 Language and Admissions

- 9.6.1 Language competence testing shall not be used as an admission requirement at the school.
- 9.6.2 A parent of a learner will exercise the minor learner's language rights on behalf of the minor learner on application for admission to the school.
- 9.6.3 In cases where the school uses the language of learning and teaching chosen by the parent for the learner and where there is space available for the learner in the grade applied for, the school will admit the learner, subject to the admission and capacity requirements of the school are being met.
- 9.6.4 In cases where the desired language of learning and teaching is not offered by the school, a parent may decide for the learner to be taught in a language medium already offered by the school, provided that the learner and parent do not demand to be taught in another desired LoLT after admissions. On application for admission of the learner, the parents are expected to make the applicable above-mentioned language choice.

10. AMENDMENT OF THE POLICY

This Policy may be amended, supplemented, modified or altered from time to time by the SGB.

11. APPROVAL AND VERIFICATION:

Short Title	Language Policy of Laerskool Wierdapark
Start date	1 July 2024
Validity	27 February 2014

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