



Version number V20210224  
Version date 24 February 2021  
Type of document Policy

**Language Policy V20210224**



## RONDEBOSCH BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL

### LANGUAGE POLICY

#### RECORD MANAGEMENT

Document Name: Language Policy 24 Feb 2021

Revision Number	Date Published	Synopsis	Authors	Roles	Retention
V20210224	03 March 2021	As adopted by the Governing Body	Shaun Simpson & Philip Myburgh	Headmaster; SGB Member responsible for legal matters	5 years from adoption



Version number V20210224  
Version date 24 February 2021  
Type of document Policy

**Language Policy V20210224**

## **RONDEBOSCH BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL**

### 1.1.1.

#### 1.1.2. LANGUAGE POLICY

(Acknowledgements: this policy draws on personal experience in several schools in the Eastern and Western Cape, court judgments in SA, national legislation and policies, and the language policy document of the Western Cape Education Department.)

#### **1 Preamble:**

It is primarily by interaction through language that knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of groups and individuals within an institution are developed. The importance of language in the educational process can thus scarcely be over-emphasised. The starting point for any language policy must therefore be the educational process in the broadest sense, ie the learning process which students undertake, the interaction between themselves, their teachers and others who support their learning, and the general organisation and management of the school to support the entire activity. Equally important, though, are socio-political factors in our society and the need to build and maintain sound values and relationships, given the nature of our community.

This language policy has been drafted in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996; the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996; the National Education Policy Act, Act 27 of 1996; applicable provincial legislation on school education; and judgements of the South African courts.

#### **2 Language of Teaching, Learning and Communication in the School:**

While RONDEBOSCH BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL is an institution in which the medium of instruction and language of office is English, it nevertheless enrolls learners with divergent linguistic capacities. To serve this diverse school community equitably, the School's language policy needs to take account not only of the language ability of speakers of English as a mother tongue, but also of speakers of various local dialects and varieties of English, bilingual speakers of English and a number of people for whom English is not their first language. In order to give effect to the above, the following principles were endorsed after the review of the Language Policy by the Governing Body at their meeting of 24 February 2021

#### **3 Medium of Instruction:**

The medium of instruction in the school is English. However, in all its official communications and learning materials, the school and staff will take steps to ensure that, while the standard of English is not compromised, the level of English usage shall not be such that it limits the comprehension of those whose linguistic abilities in English are less developed than those of the average English first language speaker.



Version number V20210224  
Version date 24 February 2021  
Type of document Policy

## Language Policy V20210224

### 4 Languages offered at the School:

- 4.1 English will be offered as a subject at Home Language level only.
- 4.2 Afrikaans Home language will be offered in the Grade 8 and 9 years. Afrikaans will be offered at First Additional Language level in the senior grades (10 -12), and where numbers warrant it, consideration will be given to running a parallel Home Language course.
- 4.3 isiXhosa will be offered at a level appropriate to the language background of the learners opting to do the subject in any particular year, with the proviso that pupils who desire or need it, must have the opportunity to take this language at First Additional Language level where this option is available in respect of other First Additional languages offered by the school.
- 4.4 It may also be taken as an additional subject after hours at the parent's cost. If this is the case it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that the teacher is of the required standard and that the work meets the requirements of the CAPS curriculum. Marks obtained should be supplied to the school for recording purposes.
- 4.5 In all cases, the ability of the school to offer a language at all, or in any particular year group, taking numbers, financing and staffing capacities into account, will be a determining factor in the offering of a language. A viable class will normally be regarded as one with 15 learners or more for the first class in a grade and 37 or more for the second class.
- 4.6 Where languages are offered as a subject they shall enjoy an equitable time allocation in the School's timetable, relative to the other full subjects in that grade.

### 5 Learners with Language Barriers at RBHS:

- 5.1 Learners admitted to the school are expected to be competent in the language of instruction (English). However, there are "English Support Group" classes in the junior grades which cater for boys who are struggling to meet the demands of English Home Language. These support groups are not necessarily restricted to non-mother tongue speakers.
- 5.2 Learners who arrive at the school with another official language as an additional language may be accommodated if there is no possibility of taking up one of the two additional languages offered by the school.
- 5.3 Immigrants who are exempt from passing a second official language are nevertheless required to attend classes in either Afrikaans 1st Additional Language or isiXhosa 1st Additional Language.
- 5.4 Immigrants who wish to take a second language (eg Chinese, Spanish, French etc) must arrange classes outside normal school hours; the learner's family must make the necessary arrangements for classes and external examinations.

### 6 Process for Review:

The School shall review the existing Language Policy whenever a new Governing Body is formed. If the Policy is changed, it will be done in such a way as not to disadvantage learners already at the school who are already following a course in a particular language.

### 7 Language of Assessment:

The Language of Assessment shall be English for all subjects, other than for Languages other than English.



Version number	V20210224
Version date	24 February 2021
Type of document	Policy

**Language Policy V20210224**

## **8 Language of Communication with Parents:**

The Language of communication with parents shall be English, but steps will be taken to ensure that, while the standard of English is not compromised, the level of English usage shall not be such that it denies access to communication and comprehension by those whose linguistic abilities in English may be less developed than those of the average English first language speaker.

## **9 Plans to Develop Multilingualism:**

- 9.1 In the interest of enabling better understanding across cultures in South Africa, all boys in the junior grades will be offered a conversational isiXhosa course. This course will not form part of the official language assessment for these grades.
- 9.2 There are a number of awards at the School's Annual Prize giving which recognise and reward proficiency in the three official languages of the province, and also an award for tri-lingualism.
- 9.3 The school library is incrementally purchasing books to match language learning needs of users of all three official languages in the Province.
- 9.4 The school will incrementally, wherever practicable, arrange extra support classes for learners with poor language skills.

## **10 Plans to enhance the status of all official South African languages at the school:**

- 10.1 The Governing Body shall ensure that sufficient funds are set aside each year for Learning and Teaching Support Materials in all Additional Languages when the School's annual Budget is determined.
- 10.2 The Headmaster (or delegate) shall keep a record of all requests made to accommodate learners in a language which is not offered by the school. This list shall be made available to the WCED upon request.
- 10.3 The Academic Deputy shall monitor the academic progress of the school as a whole to determine if Teaching and Learning are being adversely affected by the school's Language Policy. Should the Grade Twelve External results as a whole show a downward trend over a period of three years, the Academic Deputy will investigate whether the school's Language Policy is a factor in this decline, and institute measures to revise the Language Policy.



Version number	V20210224
Version date	24 February 2021
Type of document	Policy

**Language Policy V20210224**

## **11 Plans to Accommodate Language Learning Needs of Minority Groups:**

11.1 Based on annual enrolment figures the headmaster shall determine the number of staff members required to teach the various languages offered and implement the school's language policy.

11.2 The headmaster shall ensure that the Staff complement is adequate to carry out such policy.

11.3 Staff will be made aware of the linguistic obstacles faced by groups such as the following:

11.3.1 bilingual learners

11.3.2 those learners who speak other varieties of English

11.3.3 those learners whose home language is not English

11.3.4 learners from working class environments and where necessary and feasible, arrangements will be made to develop support services for those who need them.

## **12 Plans to Enhance the Status of all Official South African Languages:**

12.1 It shall be the goal of the school to provide at least conversational/communication lessons in isiXhosa to teachers and learners in the school.

12.2 From time to time special events will be planned which draw attention to the rich cultural heritage of our country and the diverse languages of its people.

*(Updated February 2021)*