NSS English Language Curriculum

Aims

➢ broaden and deepen the language competencies they have developed through basic education (P1 – S3), so that they are able to use English with increasing proficiency for personal and intellectual development, effective social interaction, further study, vocational training, work and pleasure;

➢ further develop their interest and confidence in using English as their understanding and mastery of the English language grows;

➢ further broaden their knowledge, understanding and experience of various cultures in which English is used;

➢ develop and prepare themselves for further study, vocational training or work; and

➢ further develop learning how to learn skills, and positive values and attitudes conducive to meeting the needs of our rapidly changing knowledge-based society. These include the interpretation, use and production of texts for pleasure, study and work in the English medium.

Curriculum Design

The senior secondary English Language curriculum consists of a Compulsory Part and an Elective Part.

Compulsory Part

In the Compulsory Part, the learning and teaching of the four language skills, grammar, communicative functions, vocabulary and text-types will be covered. Below is a list of modules and units:

➢ Getting along with Others

- Friendship and Dating

- Sharing, Co-operation, Rivalry

➢ Study, School Life and Work

- Study and Related Pleasure/Problems

- Experiments and Projects

- Occupations, Careers and Prospects

- ➤ Cultures of the World

- − Travelling and Visiting

- − Customs, Clothes and Food of Different Places

- ➤ Wonderful Things

- − Successful People and Amazing Deeds

- − Great Stories

- − Precious Things

- ➤ Nature and Environment

- − Protecting the Environment

- − Resources and Energy Conservation

- ➤ The Individual and Society

- − Crime

- − Human Rights (personal rights, civic rights, respect)

- ➤ Communicating

- − The Media and Publications

- − International Network (Internet)

- ➤ Technology

- − Changes Brought about by Technology

- ➤ Leisure and Entertainment

- − The World of Sports

- − 'Showbiz'

Elective Part
The Elective Part includes a range of extension modules which reinforce different

aspects of

English language learning. It serves the purposes of adding variety to the English Language curriculum, broadening students' learning experience and catering for their diverse needs and interests. The proposed modules in the Elective Part are categorised into two groups: Language Arts and Non-Language Arts. Students are required to study three of the modules in the Elective Part during senior secondary with at least one module from each group. Our school offers:

Language Arts
➢ Learning English through Drama
➢ Learning English through Short Stories
Non-Language Arts
➢ Learning English through Social Issues
➢ Learning English through Workplace Communication

Vocabulary
Students are exposed to a wide range of vocabulary items, including phrasal verbs, idioms and fixed expressions to help them to communicate and carry out various learning tasks effectively. In addition, it is essential to develop vocabulary-building strategies, such as:
➢ developing knowledge of word formation;
➢ collocation;
➢ developing knowledge of lexical relations;
➢ guessing and inferencing;
➢ using the dictionary and thesaurus;
➢ recording words; and
➢ retaining words.

(b) Skills and Strategies
In order that students can use English effectively, it is essential that they develop competence in the skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Learners also need to develop Language Development Strategies in order to become motivated, independent and responsible for their own learning.

Listening
Listen for Information, Ideas, Intended Meanings, Views, Attitudes and Feelings in a

Variety

of Spoken Texts

- ➤ understand and interpret spoken texts in a range of situations and for different purposes
- ➤ identify details that support a main idea
- ➤ predict the likely development of ideas
- ➤ understand the use of discourse markers
- ➤ establish and infer meanings from clues
- ➤ distinguish between facts and opinions in spoken texts
- ➤ understand speakers' intentions, views, attitudes or feelings
- ➤ understand both connotative and denotative meanings of words

- ➤ understand speakers with a variety of accents*

Speaking

Present Information, Ideas, Intended Meanings, Views, Attitudes and Feelings Clearly,

Coherently and Appropriately in a Variety of Contexts

- ➤ present feelings, views and arguments coherently and convincingly with suitable reasoning, suggestions and strategies for various contexts and purposes
- ➤ describe details that support a main idea
- ➤ use a variety of vocabulary appropriately
- ➤ use language appropriate to the role or situations of different levels of formality
- ➤ use persuasive devices effectively*

Participate Effectively in an Oral Interaction

- ➤ open and close an interaction appropriately
- ➤ verbalise inability to understand, ask for slower repetition and spelling when needed
- ➤ maintain an interaction by being a good audience and taking turns at the right moment
- ➤ make judgments and suggestions, support and develop the views of others, disagree and offer alternatives, reply, ask relevant questions, explain, give examples and use formulaic expressions where appropriate
- ➤ lead or guide discussion and negotiations, using effective strategies
- ➤ solicit sharing of experiences, views, attitudes and values
- ➤ use appropriate interaction skills and conversational strategies
- ➤ use appropriate register (formal or informal) in conversations*

Reading

Understand, Interpret and Analyse a Variety of Written Texts

➢ use linguistic and contextual clues, knowledge of features of different text-types and knowledge of the world to determine the meaning of the written text

➢ identify main and supporting ideas

➢ relate cause to effect

➢ relate evidence to conclusions

➢ recognise the rhetorical functions performed by sentences in the development of a text

➢ follow and evaluate the development of a point of view or argument

➢ distinguish different points of view and arguments

➢ discriminate between the different degrees of formality

➢ appreciate the stylistic variations between text-types

➢ interpret how linguistic and structural devices achieve certain effects

➢ understand and appreciate the tone, mood and intention of the writer and his/her attitude to the theme or topic*

➢ understand the different types of meaning of words, and the semantic associations that exist among words*

➢ detect faulty or misleading arguments*

➢ evaluate critically views and attitudes*

Writing

Present Information, Ideas, Views, Attitudes and Feelings Clearly, Coherently and Appropriately in a Variety of Written Texts

➢ plan and produce coherent and structured texts

➢ organise and integrate information and ideas, and write texts appropriate to the context, purpose and audience

➢ present different views and arguments clearly and logically

➢ present and elaborate main ideas and supporting details through exemplifications, paraphrases, explanations, etc.

➢ relate events and their causes and effects

➢ adjust the balance of ideas and length of the writing to meet the requirements of a variety of text-types

➢ draft, revise and edit a piece of writing

➢ use appropriate discourse markers to signal the development of ideas

➢ use appropriate linguistic and structural devices, a variety of structures and range

of vocabulary to achieve desired purposes

➢ use the salient features of a range of text-types appropriately

➢ use persuasive devices effectively*

➢ use appropriate style and register (formal or informal) in writing*

Language Development Strategies
➢ Developing thinking skills
— use reasoning skills (e.g. analyse for a particular purpose, make inferences, use induction, deduction, conclusion)
— explore and speculate about possibilities
— analyse data and situations systematically for better understanding or solving problems
— generate criteria and principles for action and judicial thinking
➢ Developing reference skills
— use the library and the Internet regularly to collect information and develop research skills
— identify relationships (grouping/differentiating, cause/effect, priority/sequence/order,
similarities and differences, etc.) between the content of materials, the background and interpretation of ideas and concepts, attitudes, motives, etc.
➢ Developing information skills
— collect, evaluate and store information systematically
— adapt materials, text-types, systems, etc., for supporting and illustrating various topics
— employ graphic forms (e.g. pie/column charts, cartoons and maps) to organize information and aid the presentation of ideas
— make notes from spoken and written sources, using abbreviations as far as possible
— take down the main points and important supporting details
— make precise and concise notes
➢ Developing enquiry skills
— ask for advice and suggestions on how to complete an assignment, and take note of such advice and suggestions
— use appropriate tone and approach when asking for information and explanation
— repeat questions and seek clarification politely and pleasantly
— use appropriate opening remarks and formulaic expressions
— request explanation when there is misunderstanding, or query in a polite and pleasant way

— understand the use of different tones and degrees of formality

— ask follow-up questions appropriate to the occasion

— ask for information and materials, both formally and informally, by writing simple notes or letters

➢ Plan, manage and evaluate own learning

— set meaningful realistic goals and determine what resources are available for improving one's language proficiency

— seek or create opportunities to learn and use English in natural, realistic settings such as making use of community resources and support

— make arrangements for broadening and deepening one's learning (e.g. researching job prospects, and finding out one's opportunities for further education locally and overseas)

— evaluate one's own progress and note one's strengths and weaknesses

— identify ideas and data that support opposite views, weighing pros and cons, advantages and disadvantages

— look for ideas and information by using printed texts, on-line bibliographic databases, CD-ROMs, the Internet and the media

➢ Self-motivation

— identify tangible goals for self-development

— take every opportunity to practise as much as possible and try to look out for or create these opportunities

— develop endurance and tolerance in the face of hardships

— overcome shyness and inertia by deliberately urging oneself to face challenges

➢ Work with others

— communicate to the point (e.g. explain precisely and clearly, give clear and precise description, justification or illustration)

— ask others for help and offer help to others

— employ negotiation skills to solicit support, bargain, reach consensus, compromise or solve problems

— listen to different opinions and respond appropriately

— express views and suggestions, draw conclusions and make decisions

(c) Attitudes

The development of positive attitudes, along with knowledge and skills, is an integral part of the curriculum. The development of some attitudes, such as confidence in using English, is likely to be important to all learning activities. Others, such as awareness of English as an international   language of communication, will only be consciously developed in specific tasks. Opportunities for exploring, developing and

encouraging positive attitudes should be provided in learning tasks.

At senior secondary level, the development of the following attitudes is encouraged, in addition to those developed in KS1, KS2 and KS3:

➢ an open-minded attitude towards different cultures, ideologies and points of view and a willingness to share ideas with different people;
➢ a serious attitude towards language learning with an attempt to improve one's capability;
➢ a critical attitude towards the ideas and values encountered in spoken and written English texts;
➢ an awareness of the value and power of language; and
➢ a cautious and critical attitude towards the use of language to achieve the desired effect.