Indonesian Lessons During Class Time

Although languages are not mandated by the Board of Studies Teaching & Educational Standards (BOSTES) for primary schools, I believe that it is very important for children to have the opportunity to learn about other cultures and their spoken language if possible. OLGC has been able to provide Indonesian lessons from Year 2 with the aim to develop the program through to Year 6. We have two highly qualified and experienced teachers, Mrs Deb Reed and Mrs Michaela Joseph on staff to lead the learning in this area. The Asian Education Foundation (AEF) has recently produced some work for parents on the benefits of learning an Asian language;

All parents want schools to equip their child for a fulfilling and prosperous future. The growing influence of China, India and many other Asian nations, both globally and in Australia, is a major change in the world that impacts on the future of all young Australians.

China and India will be the top global economies by the time 5-year-olds who start school in Australia this year enter the workforce. Australia’s engagement with Asia in trade, investment, immigration, tourism and education is growing at a much faster rate than our engagement with the rest of the world combined.

Young people who are familiar with Asia and speak Asian languages will be equipped with a competitive edge in today’s world and contribute to building a prosperous and cohesive Australia.

Parents play a vital role in supporting students to learn an Asian language and to gain knowledge and understanding of Asia through History, Geography, The Arts and English from Foundation to Year 12.

AEF provides parents with:

- information about Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia – with a focus on future workforce needs
- illustrations of leading schools working to ensure their students are Asia capable
- information on the Australian Curriculum’s cross-curriculum priority of Asia & Australia’s engagement with Asia and general capability of intercultural understanding.
Parents and the learning of Asian languages in schools
Parents and the learning of Asian languages in schools explores 'what works' for schools to empower parents to support their children’s Asian language learning. It comprises eight school illustrations, viewed through a parental engagement lens, and a review of research literature on the positive effects of parental engagement on student learning. The focus on language learning and parental engagement supports two priorities from the Australian Government’s Students First policy.

Analysis has identified five key approaches that can strengthen parental support for the learning of Asian languages in schools:

- build and formalise leadership commitment to parental engagement
- foster parents’ awareness and positive views of Asian languages and cultures
- build and sustain parent demand for Asian language learning beyond compulsory years
- keep parents in the loop about the language programme and their child’s progress
- provide parents with practical tools to support their child’s language learning.

Asia skills: Australian stories
Asia skills enable Australians to live and work effectively in Asia and with people from the Asia region. Asia skills encompass three broad areas:

**Background knowledge**
- Knowledge about another culture is fundamental to operating successfully in that country such as the environment, history, culture and customs and practical living requirements.

**Intercultural competence**
- To benefit from cross-cultural understanding, several key attributes are required such as sensitivity and willingness to learn, self-awareness and analytical and communication skills.
Skills in using the local language

- Relevant verbal and written communication skills open a new range of possibilities for interaction, and for learning, understanding and appreciation of different cultures.

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Acknowledgements

Images: AEF; Asialink