

Chinese Immersion Overview

CHINESE IMMERSION PROGRAM

Extended Chinese Immersion is an intensive language program to prepare students for entry into the traditional Chinese Immersion Program following in Years 8, 9 and 10 where students will receive 50-60% of their schooling in Chinese. In the intensive language program, students will complete 60 minutes per day of Chinese language learning in Years 6 and 7.

The program will enable students to:

- Gain basic knowledge of Chinese language and culture
- Understand simple communicative, interactive and problem solving activities
- Word process in Chinese
- Understand and speak words derived from 600 characters
- Read and recognise words derived from 500 of these characters
- Write words derived from 400 of these characters

The Extended Immersion model is appropriate for studying Chinese because of the:

- specificities of the scripted language,
- tonal nature of the spoken language,
- lack of cognates with English.

Why is the Chinese Immersion Program beneficial for students?
Immersion programs develop:

- A very high level of language proficiency, linguistic skills and intercultural understanding,
- personal and educational enrichment and challenge,

- enhanced listening and thinking skills,
- improved study skills, self-discipline and motivation,
- more flexible and creative problem-solving skills,
- an increased understanding of how languages work, including an improved understanding of the English language,
- greater sensitivity in communication,
- increased confidence in approaching different tasks,
- improved career and travel opportunities both in Australia and overseas because of increased language proficiency,
- good teacher/student relationships because of the amount and level of contact,
- a positive group atmosphere leading to improved relationships amongst students,
- greater openness towards people of different cultures.

Who teaches in the Extended Chinese Immersion Program?

Chinese Teacher Information

Ms Lily Chen delivers the intensive language program to students in Years 6 and 7. Ms Chen comes from Taiwan originally. She completed her schooling in Brisbane. She is multi-lingual, also being qualified to teach Japanese. Ms Chen encourages students to utilise their Chinese skills as often as possible.

Classroom Teacher Information

The role of the classroom teacher is very important for the successful implementation of the program at Varsity College. The teacher is required to develop a quality program that caters for the learning needs and experiences of the students to enable them to complete the regular curriculum at a faster rate than the remainder of the Year Level.

What personal characteristics make a successful Immersion learner?

Experience from many established Language Immersion programs has shown that students gain greatest success from the program if they exhibit the following personal characteristics:

- Self-confident

- Well organised
- High level of perseverance
- Able to be flexible
- Enjoyment of a challenge
- Enthusiastic participants and learners
- Motivated to achieve
- Self-disciplined
- Demonstrated ability in literacy and numeracy

How can my child become involved in this program?

Important Considerations

When thinking of enrolling your child in an immersion program, the following are important considerations:

- Students themselves should volunteer to enrol, not solely be volunteered by their enthusiastic parents.
- Due to the demands of the immersion learning process, the selection process will only consider average to above average ability students.
- Motivated students who have some interest and experience in studying Chinese (or another second language) will usually achieve well in Immersion classes.
- Both students and parents need commitment and enthusiasm towards the Immersion program.
- Parents need a willingness to take an active interest in their child's education.
- The expectation is that students who apply to take part in the Chinese Immersion Program are making a five year commitment to involvement in the program.
- Other Junior School teachers will be consulted through the Immersion selection process.

Selection Process For Existing Varsity College Students

Information Sessions

Year 5 Students Chinese Immersion Information Sessions:

- classes will visit the Chinese Immersion Classroom in term three

Year 5 Parents Chinese Immersion Information Sessions

- Two information sessions will be held during September. It is very important for interested families to attend one of the two sessions. It is hoped that students will accompany their parents to the information session.

- Students will apply to take part in the Chinese Immersion Program by completing an Expression of Interest selection form. These forms will be handed out to parents at each of the Parent Information Sessions. Please contact Mr Michael Roberts (Principal) if you did not receive a form.

Deadline for the return of Expression of Interest selection forms is Friday October 12.

Selection Interviews

Students who submit an Expression of Interest selection form will be interviewed individually by Mr Michael Roberts (Principal). Year 5 teachers will also be consulted as to the suitability of applicants for the program. Selection interviews will take place during October.

Notification of Selected Students

Students selected for the Extended Chinese Immersion class will be notified by the end of November.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What impact does the five hours per week for Chinese language have on the learning of students in the remainder of the curriculum?

A. Students are still expected to complete the same curriculum content as all Year 6 students.

Classes in previous years have demonstrated that with self-discipline and a well organised program, students have been able to achieve to the same level as (and in many cases, better than) the remainder of the Year 6 cohort.

Q. Can my child try the program and drop out if they don't like it?

A. The expectation is that students are making a five year commitment if they accept the offer to take part in the Chinese Immersion program.

It is important that informed decisions are made prior to completing the Expression of Interest form, by attending available information sessions. You will have the opportunity to ask questions of teachers, parents and students involved in the Extended Chinese Immersion class at the parent information sessions.

