

German Immersion and Extension Program



Education for Life

KENMORE STATE HIGH SCHOOL

WHAT IS THE GERMAN IMMERSION AND EXTENSION PROGRAM?

German Immersion and Extension Program (GIEP) is a program of academic excellence offering students in our broad school community a unique opportunity to become highly proficient in German. It is designed for students with little or no previous background in German. It involves teaching a number of subjects (Maths, Science, History, Geography, HPE) using German as the medium which is the next best thing to spending time in a German speaking country. Students can also choose to combine German Immersion and Music Extension.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Challenge and motivate students,
- Enable students to develop proficiency in German by the end of Year 10 and to extend this competency by the end of Year 12,
- Prepare students for a place in a global society,
- Create a centre of academic excellence in languages at Kenmore State High School to serve the wider community.

OVER 30 YEARS AND THRIVING

The idea of teaching languages by immersion began in Canada in 1965 where English speaking children were taught in French. The concept gathered phenomenal momentum with over 200,000 Canadian students being enrolled by the end of the 1980s.

The German Immersion Program at Kenmore State High School commenced in 1992 with one class and two teachers. It has now grown to two classes at each year level, and 11 teachers. Our school was the first one in Australia to become a partner school of the international PASCH network in 2009.



BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

Immersion programs in many different locations have been studied in great detail. Research consistently reports these three findings:

- Immersion students acquire a great deal of the second language.
- They achieve higher skills in English language than students educated entirely in English.
- They outperform students who are educated in English in a variety of subject matter.



HOW DOES IT WORK?

German Immersion in Year 7 to 10 — A selection process takes place before students enter the program at the beginning of Year 7. The students study German and are taught the core subjects in the German language: Maths, Science, Health and Physical Education and Social Science. The remaining subjects are studied in English. Students joining the program are expected to make a four-year commitment. From Year 7 onwards, they stay together as a group until the end of Year 10.

German Extension in Year 11 & 12 — After Year 10, Immersion students join regular Year 11 classes with subjects of their choice. In Year 11, they complete the Senior German course started in Year 10. Students then study the two-semester German Extension in Year 12. Year 12 results have shown graduates of the program consistently achieve well above the school and state averages.

EXCHANGE PROGRAM

In Year 10, German Immersion students have the opportunity to apply to participate in our exchange with the Engelsburg Gymnasium in Kassel, Germany. Selected students spend several weeks in Germany where they experience life at a German school and in a hosting family. They put into practice their language skills and develop a deeper understanding of another culture. This exchange also provides them with an opportunity to grow personally. Kenmore families host Engelsburg students the following year.

STAFF

The Department of Education has made a commitment to support Kenmore State High School in order to implement this program and make it work successfully. All teachers are native speakers of German or Australian teachers with a significant background in German. They all successfully teach immersion subjects in Years 7 to 12.

PARENT GROUP

A very active German Immersion and Extension Support Group (GIESG) takes a keen interest in the German Immersion curriculum as well as organising social activities for the families and students of the program. The group plays an important coordination role in the exchange with Engelsburg Gymnasium. Participation in the many and varied activities of the group is welcomed.

A STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

“I believe that being a part of the GIEP program has made my high-school experience so much more fulfilling. Immersion posed a substantial challenge which I believe prepared me better for the level of work in my senior years. Apart from this, the friendships I have made through the program have been amazing. Completing the exchange in Kassel brought us all very close together and was by far the most exciting and memorable experience of my life. I will always be grateful that I was able to participate in this great program and believe that I have become a more capable and tolerant person because of it.” A Year 12 student

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