

How languages can boost your child's brainpower

The Victorian Government's Vision for Languages Education

Learning another language is an exciting experience for young children. While they have fun discovering new and unusual ways of expressing themselves, they also exercise and strengthen their brains. That is why the Victorian Government is putting young children first in its plan to revitalise languages education.

The best time to start learning a language is early in life, so from 2015, all government schools will provide languages education for Prep students. By 2025, languages education will be universal from Prep to Year 10.

No matter what your child's ability, research shows that learning another language can:

Stimulate brain development

Learning another language helps develop essential areas of children's brains. It also helps them to think more creatively, connect ideas and solve problems more easily.

Significantly enhance English literacy skills

Learning another language means more than just memorising lists of words. Languages all use different *systems*. Children automatically compare and contrast the system of the new language they are learning with English. This gives them an insight to how English works, which accelerates their ability to read and write.

Improve memory, concentration and numeracy skills

Learning another language strengthens children's memory for sequences and their ability to concentrate and build connections.

Improve overall performance at school

Learning another language is associated with excellent, long-term academic results. Studies show that in the world's highest-performing school systems, all students in all year levels learn one or more languages.

Encourage respect and understanding of other cultures

Learning another language sparks children's curiosity for other cultures. It opens their minds to different ways of living and promotes harmony and respect in the schoolyard and beyond.

From 2015 children starting Prep will be able to learn a language throughout their schooling.

This commitment, made in *The Victorian Government's Vision for Languages Education*, recognises that learning another language is crucial to preparing children for our increasingly globalised and multilingual jobs market.

Remember, learning *any* language – whether it's Italian or Indonesian, Punjabi or Portuguese – helps children to become better thinkers, better communicators and better global citizens.

Starting early will put your child on-track to proficiency in another language, ready to seize the world of opportunities that this brings.

