

Language Policy

IB World School 000703

33 Liceum im. M. Kopernika, Warszawa

33 Liceum im. M. Kopernika is a bilingual high school in which all classes, alongside Polish, are taught in English. Apart from Polish curriculum we offer IB MYP (since 2017) and IB DP (since 1993) programmes. Between 2017 and September 2019 we taught MYP programme years 3, 4 and 5 as a part of our middle school programme (apart from Polish curriculum). Since September 2019, due to educational reform, we offer MYP years 4 and 5, followed by DP programme solely in high school.

33 Liceum im.M.Kopernika teaching staff believe that language is an important device which facilitates learning process. We understand that learning a language is no longer an aim in itself but more of an instrument of skill acquisition. A language is necessary tool by means of which we are able to acquire knowledge, skills, develop ourselves, better understand other people and culture.

We realize that majority of our school students will be of Polish origin and Polish will be their mother tongue, however, there might be students of other nationalities joining our IB MYP and DP cohort. Due to the requirements of Polish national curriculum, Polish will be obligatory to all students and offered as Language and Literature. In IB DP Polish will be offered as Language A: Literature Higher and Standard Level in our school. However, all foreign students will be able to choose a self-taught option of learning their own mother-tongue. Thanks to Language A: Literature lessons, students will continue their acquisition of language skills, develop their knowledge of Polish as well as the world literature, learn to produce various types of texts and become familiar with various genres of literature.

The main guiding principle in the selection of set texts in IB MYP apart from the requirements of national curriculum is their presentation of issues of global importance, as well as their presentation of unique values on a national and local scale. In IB DP it is their presentation of issues of global importance, as well as their presentation of unique values on a national and local scale. Thanks to this, students, by learning about various literary achievements, shape their attitudes towards matters closest to them and at the same time are prepared to discuss global phenomena.

In IB DP, as a state school, we require Polish citizens to take Polish as their Language A: Literature, with other possibilities for foreign students (self-taught native languages included). For foreign citizens or Polish ex-pat students additional Polish course is offered.

The IB MYP language of instruction is Polish and English in most subjects. English is offered as English B: Language Acquisition. However, due to school requirement that in order to be admitted to IB MYP programme students must display sufficient level of English (B1 – Common European Framework) we are currently offering English A: Language and Literature (HL and SL) and English B: Language Acquisition (HL only). All other subjects from the six subject groups (Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History, Geography) are taught both in Polish and English.

The IB DP language of instruction is English, which will be the only language through which all the subjects will be taught and delivered (except Polish Language A, which by definition must be a native language of the majority of students, and Languages B). The school admissions regulations specify the requirements which all students have to fulfil during the recruitment.

Sufficient level of English (B1 – Common European Framework) is essential for a student to be able to access DP curriculum. IB DP students are required to take English B at Higher Level as their Group 2 subject or English A: Language and Literature course HL, SL. Apart from English courses, students will also have a choice of other foreign languages such as German B (HL, SL), French B (HL, SL) and Spanish B (HL, SL or Ab initio) to choose instead of the Group 6 subject.

We endorse the statement quoted in an IBO document: “Almost all education is language education” (Postman 1996 - taken from *Learning in a Language other than Mother Tongue*, p.4). We believe that most things we learn are perceived and learnt through and thanks to language. The fact that almost all subjects will be taught in a language which is not students’ mother tongue will prove this theory even stronger. At each stage of their IB MYP and DP courses, the students will be taught new theories and practice new skills within a given subject while mastering English vocabulary specific to a particular subject. The learning process will always be taking place simultaneously at these two and sometimes three levels. At 33 Liceum im. M. Kopernika we fully agree with Michael Halliday (also quoted in *Learning in a Language other than Mother Tongue*, p.4) who talks about “learning language, learning through language and learning about language”. In order to ensure that these three processes are followed and to enable school self-reflection, lessons will be periodically monitored by the head teacher and both students and teachers will be surveyed.

All the school teachers should be considered language teachers since through their teaching they communicate information from a wide range of subjects and fields of knowledge. As IBO states in *Guidelines to Developing School Language Policy* (page 1): “all teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication”. We fully support this view.

During their educational process students will come across various linguistic genres. “Examples of some common genres used in school are recount, narrative, report, explanation, argument and discussion. As learners in schools build knowledge in and across disciplines, they move along a continuum of language and learning that includes an ability to use and understand a range of academic linguistic genres” (*Learning in a Language other than Mother Tongue*, p.4). Therefore, each teacher’s role is to guide a student through the intricacies and complexities of their branch of study. While studying, students will acquire new skills and information in the context of a particular subject, which will greatly facilitate their language learning process. Also, they will acquire or improve their ability to understand and sympathize with other ways of thinking, codes of conduct and cultural codes. Through their constant exposure to a foreign language (both English and other foreign languages), students become participants of global education in which international mindedness and cultural diversity are widely and frequently promoted.

We recommend all formal announcements and notices to be issued and displayed in both English and Polish version (for the sake for all other interested parties e.g. parents, authorities). Also, all written communication in the forms of e-mails, reports, comments, notices, etc., should be conducted in English or Polish by both students and teachers. The library and multimedia centre resources should also be labelled in 2 languages (English and Polish so that both IB students and other members of school community could have an easy access to them).

Our school ensures that all students are able to develop their language skills outside classroom environment. We encourage our students to participate in Oxford Debates Club meetings, MUN conferences, moot court simulations, international student exchange programmes (Erasmus +), English Language Olympiads. Some students offer English language one to one

tutoring or participate in production and staging of English language plays within their CAS activities.

All school policies are approved, regularly reviewed and, if necessary, adjusted by the School Council.

All the relevant regulations are included in The School Statute and published on our website.

References:

Guidelines to Developing School Language Policy, 2008, International Baccalaureate

Learning in a Language other than Mother Tongue, 2008, International Baccalaureate

The School Statute available on webpage www.kopernik.edu.pl

MYP: From Principles into Practice, 2014, International Baccalaureate

Last update date 19.04.2024