



## Language Policy

### IB World School 000703

#### 33 Liceum im. M. Kopernika, Warszawa

33 Liceum im. M. Kopernika is a bilingual high school offering Polish national curriculum bilingually - with Polish and English as a language of instruction as well as IB education. 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 2, 3, 4 and 5 as a part of our middle school. 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 a necessary tool by means of which students are able to acquire knowledge, skills, develop themselves, better understand other people and cultures.

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, but also to honour Polish national cultural heritage, 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 SSST option of learning their own mother-tongue/ home language. 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. Non-Polish native speakers are eligible to request additional lessons of Polish as a foreign language.

The main guiding principle in the selection of set texts both in IB MYP and DP, 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.

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.

The IB MYP language of instruction is Polish and English in most subjects with the exception of Polish, Information Technology, Language B (French, German, Spanish), Religion/Ethics which are taught in accordance with the Polish curriculum. In MYP, we currently offer English B: Language Acquisition to all students. All other subjects from the six subject groups are taught both in Polish and English.

In IB DP, as a state school, we require Polish citizens to take Polish as their Language A: Literature, with SSST possibility for foreign students.. For foreign citizens or Polish ex-pat students additional Polish course is offered. In IB DP English is offered as English A: Language and Literature or as English B: Language Acquisition.

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 is a native language of the majority of students, and Languages B). The school admissions regulations specify the requirements which all students have to fulfill 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) to choose instead of the Group 6 subject. MYP students are required to choose one additional foreign language as it is also a part of Polish curriculum. Before admission parents (legal guardians) and students are informed via the webpage, parents' meetings and printed materials about the wide language offer of the school. On admission students can freely decide which second foreign language they want to start or continue at our school. The school is open to conversations with students and their parents concerning the choices to meet students' educational goals. Students are required to take a placement test and are assigned to a language group corresponding to their level of fluency. Even after having decided, the change of the language group is possible according to the student's language profile development.

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.

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 and French/German/Spanish 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. By many in school initiatives (Language Day, Juvenes Translatores European Competition) we strongly support the students' multilingualism.

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 the school community could have an easy access to them).

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References:

*Language Policy, 2014*, International Baccalaureate

*DP language courses: overview and placement guidance, 2021*, International Baccalaureate

*MYP: From Principles into Practice, 2020*, International Baccalaureate