

# Language Policy

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Our school is located in a diverse region, and our municipality is multilingual. While Norwegian is the dominant language, we also have students who are Sami and Finnish native speakers. Russian forms the biggest part of the minority languages. As an IB World School we recognize these linguistic and cultural differences among our students and use our language teaching as a tool to create intercultural respect among both students and staff.

This language policy is a statement of our language philosophy, and a guideline for how to overcome language barriers. It aims to create open-mindedness, intercultural respect and a sense of school community among students and staff.

## **Communication**

We embrace language as a communicative tool in all subjects and aim to create a safe and friendly atmosphere to make students use different languages when they interact with other students and staff. In the DP program, we require students to use English in subjects others than Norwegian, and encourage them to use English outside the classroom to ensure language is not used to exclude others. All our teachers are language teachers with the responsibility to facilitate communication.

## **Mother tongue**

We offer different solutions for students to ensure development and maintenance of the mother tongue. When it comes to the national program, we have Norwegian, Finnish and Sami as taught subjects. As for the DP program, we offer Norwegian A Literature and English A Language and Literature, and Norwegian B for non-native speakers. We also have the possibility to supervise students in several self-taught subjects. The choice of language courses is important in determining where students can attend university.

## **English used within the school**

English is compulsory for all students. The language of instruction is English in the DP and all discussions, student presentations, group work etc. take place in English. We use English as a working language among staff in the IB DP.

## **Norwegian used within the school**

Norwegian is the official language of the school and all information will be given in Norwegian and English. The working language among staff outside the DP program is Norwegian, and we require all our students to learn Norwegian to be able to participate more actively in the local community. Living in Norway requires a certain understanding of both the language and the culture. CAS is an important subject for all students that provides a possibility for them to know the local community in a better way. All DP students are required to participate in local CAS activities, which help them to gain Norwegian skills. It is possible for the Norwegian students to gain CAS points for helping foreign students with translations or by tutoring other students in Norwegian after school.

**Language policy as a working document**

By using our language philosophy of language as a tool to communicate and to make our own identity, we encourage all members of staff and all students to be active language teachers and learners. We constantly learn from each other and therefore we have to consider this language policy as a working document. It is our common responsibility to ensure that people from all different countries and with different cultural backgrounds feel welcome in our school, and using language as a tool to create a sense of school community is one way we work toward that goal.