

# I Liceum Ogólnokształcące im. Adama Mickiewicza w Olsztynie, Poland



## Language Policy

***“To learn a language is to have one more window from which to look at the world”- Chinese proverb***

### **Purpose and general principles**

The purpose and general principles of our language policy are the same as the official statement by the International Baccalaureate Organization:

*“The International Baccalaureate is committed to supporting multilingualism as fundamental to increasing intercultural understanding and international mindedness and is equally committed to extending access to an IB education for students from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. With these aims in mind, the IB has instituted its language policy to provide a framework that will ensure that the IB’s values and aims in relation to multilingualism and access are reflected in the organization’s activities.” (February, 2014)*

At I LO in Olsztyn students come from different cultural, linguistic and social backgrounds. We help them to learn and experience success in a second language. Our programme provides a foundation for the lifelong process of language acquisition:

- fosters respect for other cultures,
- fosters multilingualism-promotes the learning and use of multiple languages, reflecting the IB;s commitments to international-mindedness
- prepares students to become productive members of a global society,
- allows students to communicate easily with people from different countries, develops students’ ability to communicate effectively in a global context
- promotes awareness of one’s own language and culture, recognises the importance of students’ mother tongues,
- promotes awareness of different languages and cultures. Recognises the importance of other languages, encouraging respect for linguistic diversity
- encourages inquiry and critical thinking, uses language learning as a tool for inquiry, research and critical thinking
- balances language and cultural language, ensures that language learning is not about linguistic proficiency, but also about understanding cultural contexts

At each stage of their IB DP education, students will broaden their knowledge within a given subject while mastering subject-specific English vocabulary. While studying, students will

acquire new skills and information in the context of a particular subject, which will largely facilitate their language learning process. Due to constant exposure to foreign languages, not only English, students will develop international-mindedness and cultural diversity will be widely promoted.

### **IB learner profile**

The IB learner profile underpins the goals of our school language policy, ensuring that language learning contributes to the development of internationally-minded, thoughtful, and well-rounded individuals.

IB learners strive to be:

**Inquirers:** Cultivating curiosity and developing skills for inquiry and research. A strong language policy fosters inquiry by promoting multilingualism, which helps students explore diverse perspectives.

**Knowledgeable:** Building a deep understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines. Language learning broadens students' access to knowledge across cultures and disciplines.

**Thinkers:** Encouraging students to use critical and creative thinking skills to analyze and take responsible action. Multilingualism enhances cognitive abilities and enables students to approach problems from multiple perspectives.

**Communicators:** Ensuring that students express themselves confidently and creatively in more than one language. A robust language policy supports the development of communication skills in multiple languages, enhancing students' ability to collaborate and express ideas globally.

**Principled:** Acting with integrity, honesty, and a strong sense of fairness and justice. A language policy that values all languages fosters a sense of fairness and respect for linguistic diversity.

**Open-minded:** Understanding and appreciating their own cultures and personal histories, and being open to the perspectives, values, and traditions of other individuals and communities. A strong language policy promotes open-mindedness by exposing students to multiple languages and cultures.

**Caring:** Showing empathy, compassion, and respect. Encouraging the learning of multiple languages nurtures empathy and understanding across cultures.

**Risk-takers :** Approaching uncertainty with forethought and determination; working independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas. Learning a new language requires students to take risks, make mistakes, and learn from them in a supportive environment.

**Balanced:** Understanding the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional. A balanced language policy supports the development of the whole student by encouraging linguistic, cognitive, and cultural balance.

**Reflective:** Thoughtfully considering the world and their own ideas and experiences. A reflective approach to language learning helps students recognize the power of language and its role in shaping their identity and understanding of the world.

### **Diversity**

Most students speak Polish as their first language. Students may speak their first language outside of class unless they are in a group of students where some do not understand the language. We never use language to exclude others and we, therefore, encourage students to also speak English outside the classroom.

### **Working Language**

The language of instruction is English, with the exception of other language classes where instruction is delivered in the target language. Since it is a primary goal of I LO in Olsztyn to educate students to become highly competent and fluent speakers, readers and writers of English, particularly in preparation for the IB Diploma Programme, students in the pre-diploma years are offered additional EAL lessons. Classes of other subjects in the pre-diploma years are conducted in English at a level which should allow the students to both acquire the knowledge and to develop vocabulary required in their further education – various appropriate scaffolding strategies will be used, e.g. the use of mother tongue, visual aids, demonstrations, collaborative groups. In Diploma years the main focus will be on knowledge and skills connected to academic language development. Teachers will ensure that students understand academic language and exam language instructions.

Students themselves are required to take responsibility for engaging fully with their learning and use of the English language. Therefore, they are encouraged to work hard both at school and at home, taking responsibility for their own language development.

### **Languages Offered**

#### Language A

I LO in Olsztyn offers:

- Polish A: Literature at Standard or Higher Level.

#### Language B

I LO in Olsztyn offers:

- English B at Higher Level,
- Spanish ab initio at Standard Level,
- Spanish B at Standard Level, or Higher Level
- German B at Standard.

The vast majority of I LO in Olsztyn students will be of Polish origin., with Polish being their mother tongue. Due to this fact, Polish will be taught as Language A Literature, both at Standard and Higher Levels. Students will therefore develop their acquisition of language skills and their knowledge of Polish, learn to produce various types of texts, together with becoming familiar with the world literature of different genres. As a state school, it will require Polish citizens to take Polish as their Language A. All foreign students will be able to choose a school supported self-taught option (SSST) of learning their mother tongue.

### **Mother Tongue Support and Language A Support**

I LO in Olsztyn encourages students to continue to use their mother tongue language skills as it allows them to enhance their personal identity, highlights their cultural heritage, and increases their overall ability to learn.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

I LO in Olsztyn actively participates in Model United Nations events in Poland and abroad, arranges trips abroad and in Poland, organises school celebrations and lectures, invites speakers to give lectures and conduct workshops, enables students to learn and use languages confidently in variety of contexts

### **Library**

Books at our school library are available in English, Polish, French, German and Spanish. We continue to buy books in different languages. Our school offers access to different online resources, available on the school website.

### **Communication Outside the Classroom**

The working language in the IB Programme is English, both for teachers and students. That means that written communication in the form of emails, reports, comments should be conducted in English by both students and teachers. The school, however, recommends that notices in our school be issued both in English and Polish version to facilitate comprehension for other interested parties, e.g. parents, authorities. Parents will be encouraged to take an active part in planning their children's language profile and development. Regular meeting with parents will be held to maximize their role in educating their children and to offer feedback on their performance.

### **Professional Development**

As teachers in Diploma Programme are responsible for the language development of the students they will receive on-going professional development. EAL teachers will offer regular professional development for all teachers in order to help the support student-learning in a language other than their mother tongue. They will also offer support with planning and implementation of strategies.

### **Review process**

At our school there is a box into which everyone can put their questions, thoughts, assessment connected with our school language policy. At the beginning of each school year our team takes into consideration their suggestions during the review process.

### **Communicating the policy**

Students and parents are informed about our language policy during the meeting with the head of I LO, IB DB coordinator and IB DP teachers.

### **Links to other school policies**

1. Admissions Policy
2. Assessment Policy
3. Inclusion policy
4. Academic Honesty Policy
5. Complaints Policy

## **References**

IB publications:

- *Guidelines for developing a school language policy (April 2008)*
- *Language and Learning in the IB programmes (September 2011)*
- *Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes (April 2008)*
- *Language policy - Information on the International Baccalaureate's support for languages, language courses and languages of instruction (February 2014)*

*Language Policy was revised in August, 2024 by:*

*Wojciech Boryszewski – head of I LO in Olsztyn*

*Justyna Sobeczek – IB DP coordinator*

*And IB DP teachers at I LO in Olsztyn*