



Sandnes International School

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# Language Policy

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## 1. Purpose

This language policy is a statement of purposes that outlines the goals for language teaching and learning.

It aims to:

- Describe how the development of mother tongue for all students is to be supported
- Ensure that the practices are in place to provide the inclusion and equality of access to IB programmes
- Describe the practices and resources to be used in developing the student's language

## 2. Language philosophy

At SdIS, we believe that language learning in a multilingual environment promotes international-mindedness, intercultural understanding and language proficiency for global citizenship. Learning about language and learning through language are central to the curriculum

We believe that strong competence in one language (mother tongue) supports acquisition of additional languages. Communication and language learning is natural and acquired through social interactions.

- Language learning includes the development of home and family languages, languages of the school, additional languages and literacy.
- Language is a means of affirming and expressing cultural identity and developing international-mindedness.
- Multilingualism benefits the learning community in a variety of ways.
- Schools provide students with multiple, authentic opportunities to learn language, learn about language and learn through language.
- The student language portrait is a tool that captures a learner's complex language profile.

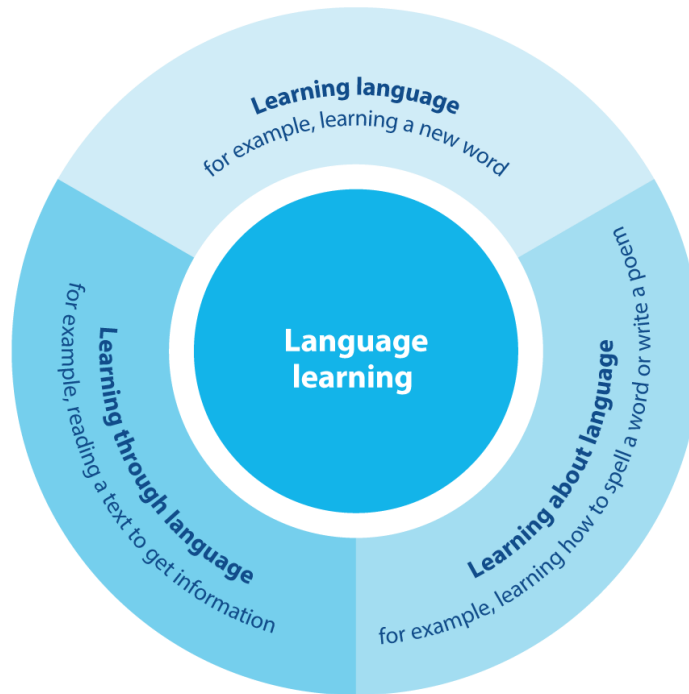
- *PYP: From Principles into Practice, 2018*

## 3. Beliefs and values

We believe that:

- All teachers are language teachers and all learning takes place through language
- Learning and teaching has a strong focus on language development in the early years
- The aspects of language learning: learning language, learning through language, learning about language are key to understanding how language is learned and used to make meaning
- Mother tongue language development supports all learning and affirms identity
- Language learning is a complex developmental process

- Language learning is built upon and extends prior knowledge, enhancing the application of conceptual understandings in language
- The school has a crucial role in helping students appreciate diverse perspectives and to develop international-mindedness and intercultural awareness through the use of language



#### 4. The school's language profile

Enrollment, 2019-20: 40 students

Nationalities: 12 countries

Predominant population: 62% Indian

English as an Additional Language students: 100%

Norwegian speakers: 15%

## **5. Language learning needs in the local context - Norwegian, our host country's language**

Norwegian is considered central and integral to the identity and experiences. As an independent school/Friskole that is 85% funded by The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, SdIS complies with many legislations as in Norwegian public schools, such as Norwegian Education Act, and relevant regulations.

Norwegian is taught to all students for 4 lessons of 45 minutes. Teachers with specialized knowledge of Norwegian play a vital role in the language and conceptual development of all students.

## **6. English language learning**

English is the language of instruction of the school. Students are actively encouraged to speak English in class as they are learning through English as well as about English..

Through a planned immersion environment, they are subject to differentiated instruction at an age appropriate academic standard. Many aspects of the environment, including classroom walls and teaching resources, are intended to provide a rich, varied, and stimulating English language environment.

Students with limited English are supported and their instruction is scaffolded as they work towards becoming independent in an English language environment.

For those students who qualify, intense English Language Instruction will be given for 30 min per day, for a short period of time, in order to raise their level of English to a point where they can access the classroom instruction and curriculum through differentiation.

## **7. Transdisciplinary approach to language learning**

### **Pedagogy:**

We adapt the following practices in language teaching and learning.

Language is taught through authentic learning experiences, with a focus on building meaning and teaching the processes of communication. Language aspects (such as phonics, spelling, grammar and punctuation) we believe, should be taught separately to build skills but can also be reinforced through reading and writing.

We emphasize the following approaches:

- integrating literacy into all areas of the curriculum

- focusing on creating meaning in reading and expressing meaning in writing
- emphasising students' interpretations of text and free expression of ideas in writing as the most effective way for students to build knowledge
- incorporating the writing process, which focuses on individual students' language needs
- reading and writing for authentic purposes
- emphasis on high-quality and culturally-diverse literature
- frequent reading: with students in small guided reading groups; to students with read-aloud; by students independently
- emphasising how phonics, grammar, spelling, punctuation and sentence structures are essential in building meaning
- teach phonics and spelling to early learners and English as Additional Language learners to build skills to support reading and writing, listening and speaking

The Primary Years Programme:

- Promotes inquiry-based authentic language learning
- Focuses on how students best learn and uses a variety of strategies
- Integrates the teaching and learning of language into the programme of inquiry
- Development of language has a strong focus on teaching and learning in the early years
- Provides appropriate feedback to support language learning especially for English as an Additional Language learners

In MYP,

- Students must have Language and Literature and Language Acquisition.
- All students attend the Language and Literature Norwegian classes. Students who are not proficient in Norwegian are withdrawn from one class a week to attend a Norwegian as an Additional Language course.

## 8. Language assessment

While language acquisition follows distinct stages, students' rate of acquisition varies greatly from individual to individual. Therefore, language teachers assess all language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) regularly.

Teachers differentiate through scaffolding or task extension as required. Formative and summative assessments in the classroom provide information on language growth, and are modified and differentiated as appropriate.

Students who are identified as requiring additional support in English to access the curriculum will be referred to the learning support department or additional help (Refer to the **Inclusion Policy** ).

In MYP, students are assessed using the appropriate criteria in Language and Literature and Language Acquisition.

## 9. Home Language Learning

“A **home language** is a language (or the variety of a language) that is most commonly spoken by the members of a family for everyday interactions at home. Also called the family language or the language of the home.”

*Nordquist, Richard. "Home Language." ThoughtCo, Feb. 12, 2020, [thoughtco.com/what-is-home-language-1690930](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-home-language-1690930).*

The development of the students' home language is the best medium for acquiring knowledge; it is a key factor in fostering balanced, self-confident multilingual students. We are developing the resources for home language support.

SdIS recommends that parents support their children in maintaining their home language to an age appropriate level. Parents should not privilege English over their home language. This would impact negatively on the social and emotional balance of their child, as well as their academic development. Parents must be patient and trust in their child, since children need the time to transition and adjust.

We help parents strengthen their children's home language by:

- Educating parents about the importance of home language and share with parents the benefits of maintaining one's home language.
- Helping families make initial contact with families from their home country or who share the same mother tongue,
- Encouraging community members to offer after school clubs with a focus on maintaining and developing mother tongues,
- Providing access to the resources to support mother tongues.

## 10. Roles and responsibilities

<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Staff</b>
English language (Language of instruction)	Teachers and support staff
Norwegian (Host country) language	Norwegian teacher
Language learning support	Special needs coordinator and support staff
Additional language in MYP	Teacher
Development of home language provisions	PYP coordinator, MYP coordinator, Principal
Review of schoolwide language policy	All staff

## 11. Implementation and Evaluation

The policy will be implemented and revised collaboratively upon reflection annually by all teachers and staff.

## 12. References

- Making the PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education IBO (2009)
- MYP From Principles into practice, IBO (2014)
- Guidelines for school self-reflection on its language policy IBO (2012)
- Language and learning in the IB programmes IBO (2012)
- Guidelines for developing a school language policy, IBO (2008)
- Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes IBO (2008)
- PYP: From Principles into Practice, Learning and Teaching, Language (2018)
- Nordquist, Richard. "Home Language." ThoughtCo, Feb. 12, 2020, [thoughtco.com/what-is-home-language-1690930](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-home-language-1690930).