



**INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOL  
OF PIRAEUS**



## Language Policy

## Learner Profiles

### The student is showing that he/she is:

<i>Inquirer</i>	Asks relevant questions, is naturally curious, uses skills to conduct research persistently, works independently and uses findings in her/his life.
<i>Communicator</i>	Expresses feelings and thoughts in words across the curriculum, communicates in different languages and symbol systems, communicates verbally and non- verbally.
<i>Thinker</i>	Uses what she/he already knows, builds on own ideas critically and creatively and responds to the ideas of others in the same way.
<i>Risk-taker</i>	Willing to make mistakes, prepared to try something new and to explore new ideas with courage and confidence.
<i>Knowledgeable</i>	Has reached objectives of the programme and acquired relevant knowledge for his/her level by exploring themes which have global relevance and importance.
<i>Principled</i>	Is capable of moral reasoning by communicating integrity, honesty, fairness and justice.
<i>Caring</i>	Is sensitive towards the needs and feelings of others. Shows empathy and thoughtfulness. Has a sense of personal commitment in helping others.
<i>Open-minded</i>	Listens, respects and considers other people's thoughts, ideas, and cultures. Accepts that we are different and have different points of view.
<i>Well-balanced</i>	Cares about personal well-being and is emotionally and physically balanced. Is well organized.
<i>Reflective</i>	Considers own behavior, actions, communications and learning and is able to analyze own personal strengths and weaknesses in a constructive manner.

## Parents Letter

Dear ISP Parents,

At International School of Piraeus, we provide the best education for your child with an ever-evolving International Baccalaureate curriculum in combination with the National curriculum, as well as support from our teachers and staff to help your child reach their potential and fulfil their dreams.

At ISP, our school policies are rooted in the IB philosophies, standards and practices. We aim to model the principles of the IB learner profile and the IB mission in each of our policies. Our policies have been developed through discussions with teachers, parents and students.

These are the policies aligned with the IB guidelines:

1. Admissions
2. Inclusion
3. Language
4. Assessment
5. Academic Integrity
6. Complaints
7. English Language – Phases Program

The whole ISP community shows mutual respect for students of all identities, social situations, learning skills and language backgrounds and our goal is to meet their specific needs.

By enrolling your child(ren) in ISP, you agree to respect and promote our school policies. In each of our policy documents you will find our philosophy, the rights and responsibilities of each member, the community's commitments and a description of how each policy supports the ISP student profile.

We look forward to working collaboratively to ensure that our students receive a high-quality education that reflects the Standards and Practices of the International Baccalaureate Organization.

Thank you for your trust and cooperation.

Warmest regards,

Marika Valsamidou  
Head of School &  
Head of Primary

Mary – Jane Alexandridis  
Head of Early Years

Antonia Daponti  
PYP Program Coordinator

## Our Principles

### **IB Mission**

The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

### **ISP Vision**

Our vision is **BELIEVE TO ACHIEVE**. We foster a respectful and inclusive environment where all individuals develop their skills, believe in their potential and reach their personal goals in order to become active members of the society, based on universal values.

### **ISP Mission Statement**

Our mission is to provide high quality education in a stimulating and supportive learning environment that helps our students achieve their goals, reach their full potential and connect their school experiences to real life through their actions. With a holistic, student-centered and inquiry-based approach, our students learn to respect diversity, be thinkers and caring in order to become active and responsible members of both local and international community.

### **ISP PHILOSOPHY**

The International School of Piraeus offers the International Baccalaureate programme, The Primary Years Programme, a high-quality education that stimulates lifelong learning, develops skills and globally relevant concepts, generates good learning habits and promotes positive attitudes.

Within the programme we offer a comprehensive, inquiry-based and student-centered approach to teaching and learning. We focus on the total growth of the developing child – intellectual, physical, emotional and social, which we monitor and scaffold with rigorous and holistic assessment.

Beyond intellectual rigour and high academic standards, strong emphasis is placed on the ideas of **intercultural understanding and respect, responsible communication** and **citizenship**. We cooperate with schools and institutions both in Greece and abroad in order to create a better and more peaceful world.

*Language wraps itself around, in, through and between everything that we teachers and learners do in the classroom.*  
(Ritchhart 2002: 141)

## **Our Language Philosophy**

### **Leadership Team**

- Oversees the development, implementation, and review of the school 's language policy.
- Provides opportunities for the school community to develop and demonstrate international mindedness.
- Organizes events and activities that promote intercultural appreciation.
- Involves and includes parents / legal guardians and students in multilingual events.
- Observes the process of identification and assessment procedures.
- Ensures the necessary systems are in place and students receive the necessary language learning support.
- Provides professional development, guidance and advice to staff in relation to teaching strategies and resources.
- Provides physical and/or virtual resources to facilitate language development.
- Encourages teachers to increase their knowledge in GAL / EAL learning support.
- Ensures resources and facilities for GAL (Greek as Additional Language)/EAL (English as Additional Language) activities.
- Conducts regular meetings with the EAL Coordinator to be informed.
- Ensures that all teachers are informed about teaching strategies for inclusion.
- Ensures that multicultural perspectives are incorporated in the curriculum.
- Informs parents/legal guardians and students about individualized learning language plans.

### **Head of English Department / EAL Coordinator**

- Meets regularly with the teachers and the PYP Coordinator to discuss, plan, assess and reflect on the implementation of the programme in order to cater for the needs of language learning.
- Consults with the SEN Coordinator regarding the language development of the students with IDPs (Individual Development Plans).
- Provides resources for teachers in the areas of language acquisition, EAL teaching methodology, classroom organization, and selection of suitable texts and resources for EAL learners
- Informs teachers for professional learning opportunities
- Plans and implements an inclusive EAL program based on students' needs and requirements.
- Consults with language teachers and the PYP Coordinator in the assessment of language skills and placement into the relevant classes
- Identifies language needs and implements intervention programs according to students' needs.

## **Teachers (Homeroom and subject)**

- Consider the language learning needs of all students when planning activities across all areas of the curriculum.
- Support GAL/EAL students in their learning.
- Use various assessment strategies and tools that allow all students to express the understandings across the curriculum.
- Co-construct learning goals with students.
- Keep assessment records that indicate the growth of understandings and skills of all students.
- Inform parents of students progress in all learning areas.
- Ensure that multicultural perspectives are incorporated in all aspects of the school's life.
- Attend professional development workshops relevant to support students' language development.
- Collaborate with the PYP C. and the members of the leadership team to organize international day events and give the opportunity to foreign students to practice their mother-tongues.
- Use physical and/or virtual resources to facilitate language development.
- Teach students to be open – minded and tolerant in diversity.
- Provide ongoing opportunities to discuss about diversity.
- Implement a variety of differentiation strategies and adjust the programme in line with Individual Development Plans (IDPs) by actively planning lessons based on the students' interests, backgrounds, prior knowledge and social-emotional skills to cover their individual needs.
- Differentiate teaching and learning for gifted and talented students who are performing significantly above grade level expectations in academic skills.
- Inform parents of concerns regarding their child, indicate the school policies and practices and maintain regular contact with them.
- Offer individualized support to students during their lesson in collaboration with assistant teachers (in-class support).
- Collaborate with the learning support teachers (assistants) to plan and deliver all the lessons to all students.
- Provide help and support to foreign students who don't speak any of the school languages.
- Attend all meetings with parents, language support teachers, PYP Coordinator and the EAL Coordinator.

## **Language Support Teachers**

- Develop and implement individualized learning plans in collaboration with subject and homeroom teachers.
- Monitor students' progress.
- The GAL / Language Support Specialist offers targeted support in a one-on-one or small group setting with an emphasis on each student's individual learning goals (pull-out support). Students work systematically on basic skills for numeracy and literacy including organization and self-management skills. Students receive support lessons instead of a second language lessons (French/ German/Spanish).

## Students

- Show interest in learning and participate.
- Show everyone mutual respect, including those who speak a different language, come from a different country or have a different learning need or belief.
- Provide help and support to students from other countries who don't speak any of the school languages.
- Take ownership of their learning and seek help if needed.
- Co-construct learning goals with teachers.
- Provide feedback and reflection on language learning.
- Attend additional language classes if required by the EAL Coordinator and/or the SEN Coordinator during their admission process.
- Exit language support programs when sufficient proficiency has been demonstrated through their work, performance and assessments.
- Have the option to choose among three foreign languages (French – German - Spanish) at the age of 8 (Grade 3).

## Parents / Legal guardians

- Provide school with accurate information about the child's needs, learning support requirements and history.
- Provide any medical assessment reports on their child's disabilities or learning support requirements.
- Communicate with the teachers regarding their child's language development and needs.
- Collaborate responsibly with the class teachers and the Leadership team on a regular basis to support their child's optimal development.
- Follow the recommendations and guidance of specialists and scaffold their child's development with the required activities and support at home.
- Communicate with the coordinators regarding their child's language learning and needs.
- Accept the additional costs required for additional support for their child's language support.

## Language Teaching and Learning in and out of the classroom

Languages are taught by the classroom and single-subject teachers in the PYP. All teachers are considered language teachers and develop language skills in all subject areas in order to facilitate the communication of the whole community. They work on subject specific vocabulary and on paraphrasing resource texts in order that students understand them and be able to use them.

## The objectives of the Language Programme

- Use language to communicate effectively, accurately and appropriately.
- Explore language in meaningful contexts.
- Understand and utilise language in listening, speaking, reading and writing activities.
- Develop the confidence to take risks in all language experiences.
- Discover that language learning is a continuous process based on previous experiences.
- Develop an awareness of the literary tradition, its value, its position, its complexity, and its relationship to culture.

- Learn the reading and writing process simultaneously.
- Use library and media resources.
- Develop and maintain mother- tongue languages.
- Address the needs of those learning in a language other than their mother – tongue.
- Differentiate the teaching and learning process for learners with specific language learning needs (Individual Learning Paths / ILPs).

### Language Programmes Offered and Multilingualism

**All ISP students are offered one additional language from the age of 2 years old.**

**Greek Language** is a language of instruction and is taught to all students as most of our students are native Greeks or with Greek origins.

**English Language** is taught from the age of 3 (KG1) until the age of 12 (Grade 6). In Primary each Grade has 7 hours of English Language during the week, where they work on the development of the following Language Skills, based on the IB Scope and Sequence: *Listening and Speaking, Writing, Reading, Viewing and Presenting*.

Furthermore, twice a week, P.E., Visual Art and Music lessons are also taught in English Language, which enhances the students' exposure to language.

From Nursery to Kindergarten there are two teachers in each grade (a Greek and an English one who teaches the same number of hours per day scaffolding the language development). All English teachers are experienced speakers, who use only English throughout their daily encounters with the children and encourage them to try to respond in English as much as possible.

**French/ German/Spanish Language** is a requirement to all students from Grade 3-6 and taught three times a week.

### Language support programmes

- **Phases English Language Programme**

One of the most important components of every language is Grammar structure, seeing as it is the basis of understanding and communicating. Bearing in mind that each student is unique in their methods of learning, and following the IB philosophy, our school aims to cater to each individual's needs.

We therefore implement the **Phases Programme**, where students develop their grammar skills and are grouped not according to their age but their language profile, skills and their assessment results from the previous year. **Twice a week**, there are two hours provided for focused Grammar attention. Each Phase group has specific goals and outcomes which are reassessed at the end of each school year. The material which is given is created by the teachers specifically for their group and there are Quizzes and activities throughout the year for the better assessment of the students.

The PYP Coordinator and the teachers of English Language department conduct regular meetings and they are responsible for the students' placement in Phases class.



- **EAL / GAL**

It is organised for **Greek students** who have specific language learning needs, have limited competence in Greek or English (**English as additional language / EAL**) and experience difficulties in coping with mainstream lessons. Thus, we make sure that their individual needs are appropriately met. These lessons are offered during Greek or English lessons (one-to-one support / pull- out). The material given by the educators is designed especially for the child, and the duration of support depends on the child's progress and needs.

Also, foreign students who face difficulties in learning Greek or English Language as their mother – tongue is different, they have EAL or GAL (**Greek as additional language / GAL**) lessons according to their needs. Their program depends on their needs and their personal progress. At the beginning of their learning, they have 5-8 hours per week extra Greek and/or English lessons.

### **Other Activities That Support Language Development**

- ***Learning environment***

We have created a suitable environment, classrooms and school routines that help develop students' language skills and interests.

- ***Library programme / Literacy***

All students attend lessons in the library. There is a sufficient number of books (8.000 titles) in Greek, English and other languages in the library that students are able to borrow every day during school breaks. Also, each classroom has a library and in Primary every student borrows a Greek or an English book every week according to their language needs (Reading Log program). The foreign students can borrow books in their mother – tongue.

- ***Drama programme and performance***

There is a drama performance every year either in Greek, English or French/German Language where students practise the language and develop their speaking, presentation and communication skills.

### **Integration of language learning into the programme**

Language is the major connecting element across the curriculum. Its application through oral, written and visual communication strands is seen and learned across the subject areas and throughout the transdisciplinary programme of inquiry.

In order to communicate effectively and to establish and maintain relationships, students have many opportunities to listen, speak, read and write in their classrooms.

The primary objective of classroom libraries, I-pads and the media centre are to provide materials supporting the curriculum, taking into consideration the interests and requests of students, as well as the professional needs of teachers and staff.

The librarian and the teachers select the materials and equipment in collaboration with other teachers and staff, with consideration to maintaining a variety of appropriate formats, appropriate reading levels and the presentation of a variety of viewpoints.

Learning language is also connected to the broader world technology – global electronic networks, in order to access a vast range of multimedia resources. Every PYP classroom has a

computer and internet access and the school offers a computer lab with 18 computers and 25 iPads connected to the internet and installed applications.

### **Language support in – class that is provided to enable all students to participate in the programme of inquiry/ interdisciplinary units**

Our student population is mostly Greeks whereas there is a number of International students who possess no, or very little Greek when they arrive.

The school's main objective is to assist students, whose primary language is not Greek, to acquire the social and academic language needed to integrate successfully into all mainstream classes and school life with their peers as soon as possible.

The school's support programme begins in Grade 1 and its support is provided through a combination of withdrawal (small group instruction with a specialist teacher taking place in parallel to regular classes during core Greek lessons) and inclusion (additional support in the mainstream class, differentiation based on knowledge, interest, learning styles).

Students are also encouraged to research subjects in their mother tongue, so accelerating their acquisition of knowledge and increasing their subject specific vocabulary.

When a student has been identified with additional learning needs including language difficulties or gifted and talented abilities, intervention and support are provided through the learning support programme.

### **Decision-making process the school used to identify the language needs of each student**

In order to best assess students' language abilities and ensure the appropriate language support, language placement interviews are organised for students at the application process. Students are assessed on entry by the SEN Coordinator and then on an on-going basis by the classroom teacher and the GAL or/and the EAL teachers.

Then, the teachers and the PYP Coordinator decide about the language program that meets best the needs of the student and they have regular meetings during the school year concerning the personal and social development of the student.

### **Ways of encouraging parents to help children develop language skills at home**

ISP encourages parents to help their children develop language skills at home by suggesting a list of books and reading or writing techniques as well. Parents are asked on regular basis to read aloud to their children, have a variety of books and other reading resources at home (parents are also able to borrow books from the school library), use public libraries (especially during holidays) and encourage students to participate in extra curriculum activities.

Book bazaars take place during the school year where parents are encouraged to purchase Greek/ English books for their children. Also, a Book Week takes place once a year and the students have the chance to develop their language skills through a variety of activities.

## Provisions made for staffing and professional development to ensure best language-teaching practices

All PYP core subject teachers, language and subject teachers are qualified elementary/subject teachers with a university teaching degree.

Every year teachers attend seminars and workshops organised in Greece or abroad by the IBO, the Greek Ministry of Education, Foreign language Publishers, Organisations and courses run by the British Council.

The school buys various books for professional development and educational magazines on a regular basis.

During the school year the teachers meet regularly to discuss and plan relevant and engaging units, themes and events.

## Processes that are used to identify suitable and adequate resources for language learning

Every school year teachers and the librarian prepare the lists of needed resources.

Every school year the Head of Primary and the PYP Coordinator perform classroom observations, which are focused on the structure of the lesson, teacher's teaching strategies, students' work and resources and other materials used.

After the observation, an individual meeting with the teacher observed is organised to give feedback. The teachers also get a written report on the classroom performance observation.

## Proficiency levels are the students expected to achieve

The school's primary focus is on providing students with a sufficient level of Greek and English to acquire and demonstrate skills and understanding that have developed during the Units of Inquiry. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade students have the opportunity to take A1 and A2 exams in French/German/Spanish and English Language accordingly to certify their level of knowledge.

## Language Strategies

**Learn Language:** With regard to spoken language, instructional programmes emphasise the opportunities to comprehend a variety of genres, from directions to narratives and opportunities to experiment with modes of expression.

With regard to written language, classrooms for young children (KG1-Grade 1) provide opportunities to learn alphabetic symbols, grapho-phonemic relationships (letter-sound relationships), basic sight vocabulary, and comprehension strategies; and also feature the reading of stories designed for young children. Students have opportunities to learn how to express themselves through written language, including opportunities to form letters, words, sentences, and text structures, and opportunities to learn how to put together a written story.

**Learn About Language:** Teachers model strategies, teaching children to use them when they are needed. Teachers focus on strategies rather than isolated skills.

Reading and writing skills and strategies are taught through guided reading, genre studies in reading/writing and inquiry, as well as writing styles, author studies and specific subject matter. Skills and strategies are directly taught in spelling, vocabulary and word study. Read-aloud texts

are chosen to go beyond the reading level of the class with challenging issues addressed and discussed.

**Learn Through Language:** Planning includes partner, whole class and small group discussions, their scaffolding and feedback or response. This use of multiple strategies is used in order to read for meaning, make connections and find tensions in issues. Multiple strategies are used for discussions and responses to issues that cause sustained dialogue, debating, genre studies, author studies, theme studies and reflective journals.

### **Language Assessment**

#### **Learn Language:**

*Evidence:* Children show a sustained interest in reading/writing/speaking and listening/viewing and presenting. Teachers record the increased experimentation and enthusiasm for expression in language that students' use. Student work exhibits personal development, vocabulary development, as well as appropriate use of conventions in new situations. Reading/writing records show increased diversity of choice, and/or sustained interest. Children share their work formally and informally with classmates, willingly interacting with their classmates. The library increases its collection for increased encouragement of students to read and write in their mother tongue.

*Tools:* Reading/writing interviews, observational records, photographs/reflections, student reading record and portfolio.

#### **Learn About Language:**

*Evidence:* Teachers/students identify and use subject specific language in work/presentation. Students use learned skills in authentic contexts. Students are able to apply learned strategies and skills in their investigations, presentations, and new contexts. There is improved proficiency in all forms of language. The school literature explicitly encourages mother tongue development.

*Tools:* Student portfolios, oral/written reflections, teacher check lists/graphs, on-going observations, pre-assessments, displays/room environment.

#### **Learning through Language:**

*Evidence:* Students read, discuss, make connections, seek out issues, and ask questions. Students discuss their understandings, present their thinking to others using multiple communication systems, and reflect on their learning. Students are able to apply learned strategies to new situations and describe what they have done. Students are able to challenge ideas, seek further information, explain and justify their understandings, and reflect critically on their learning. Parents assist their children in understanding concepts and ideas through dialogue in their native tongue.

*Tools:* Video/audio tapes/transcripts of discussions, response journals in reading, writing, mathematics, art, music, drama, movement, presentations, student portfolios, self-reflections.

## **Opportunities and Resources provided for students' mother tongues practice**

The school organises many events providing students to use their mother tongue. Every year on International Mother tongue day children are welcomed to greet the school community in the school assembly using their mother tongue. Also, on the Bake off day (charity event / every year) students and their parents sell traditional handmade products promoting their cultural background and tradition.

The school purchases books in foreign languages and welcomes parents to donate books in their mother tongue in order to enrich the library and cover the students' literacy needs.

## **Implementation of Language Policy**

All teachers participate at various regular workshops (once a month) at which they develop teaching strategies that promote development of language and communication skills and differentiation to answer various students' readiness levels and learning styles. Workshops are organised and lead by the leadership team.

At classroom observation, the indicators of successful implementation of language policy are observed and recommendations stated in the reports if necessary.

Once a year, at staff meetings all school routines and policies are analysed and reviewed and strategic plans for improvements made.

## **Language and the Learner Profile**

All members of our school community should exhibit the attributes of the Learner Profile which are linked with the language policy principles.

In order to monitor the progress of language learners we keep records of students' progress in language development across all languages.

## **Responsibility for Implementation and Regular Revision**

All teachers are responsible for implementation of the school Language Policy. The leadership team, the programme coordinator and the teachers are responsible for the supervision of the implementation and regular (every two years) revision of the policy according to the students' and school's needs.

## **Connections to other IB Policies**

### **Language and Admissions**

Students who admit in the middle of the school year must take assessment tests in Greek and English language before their entry.

Also, the English Language test is used as a language placement test to ensure accurate phase placement. Together with the academic records, language background information and language profile form, the student is admitted and placed into the relevant language phase.

Students with identified learning difficulties are granted inclusive access arrangements (e.g. additional time, assistive technology, etc.) for the placement test.

### **Language and Inclusion**

All teachers are language teachers and try to include a student's home language, language profile and background in the learning process. Therefore, it is aimed that students also develop and keep up with their home language and the school's languages of instruction.

As for students whose primary language is not Greek or English, all teachers work together with the EAL and GAL department in the inclusive design and delivery of the curriculum. Through strong collaboration with teachers, family and the student, the EAL/GAL department closely follows the language development of the child through observations, data collection and assessments.

### **Language and Academic Integrity**

During the assessment process the teachers take into consideration the language profile of each student. Also, if a student attends one or more support language programs (GAL or/and EAL) is being assessed by the inclusion specialist language teacher. The school offers a choice of second Language to select from the age of 8 (Grade 3).

### **Language and Assessment**

On application to ISP, a student's language profile is assessed by our school's Child Developmental Specialist / SEN Coordinator through a screening/assessment process. A foundation in the child's mother tongue is essential for success. In order to be admitted, students should demonstrate age-appropriate literacy and proficiency in a language.

The nature of the assessment varies for different year groups and may require a meeting with a member of the academic staff except from the SEN Coordinator. The assessment process is designed to ensure that the placement of all children will best meet their educational and personal requirements. The assessment is also designed to help ascertain whether a child would require individualized support.

For mid-year admissions, students must take assessment tests in Greek and English language before their entry. The English test is also used as a language placement test to ensure accurate phase placement. Students with identified learning difficulties are granted inclusive access arrangements (eg. additional time, assistive technology, etc.) for the placement test.

## IB Standards and Practices for Language

Our Language Policy has been aligned with the new IB Standards and Practices, which became effective October 2020.

Please note the related standards below.

***Culture 4: The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews a language policy that helps to foster intercultural understanding through communicating in a variety of ways in more than one language (0301-04)***

**Culture 4.1:** The school implements and reviews a language policy that is aligned with IB language policy guidelines. (0301-04-0100)

**Culture 4.2:** The school describes in its language policy the way that the school recognizes multilingualism as a fact, a right, and a resource for learning. (0301-04-0200)

**Culture 4.3:** The school identifies in its language policy a variety of physical and virtual resources used to facilitate language development. (0301-04-0300)

**Culture 4.4:** The school clearly describes in its language policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and what constitutes good practice within the school context. (0301-04-0400)

***Culture 6: The school implements, communicates, and regularly reviews its IB mandated policies to ensure they are cohesive and reflect IB philosophy. (0301-06)***

**Culture 6.1:** The school implements processes with consideration of the relationship between its IB mandated policies. (0301-06-0100)

**Culture 6.2:** The school documents its IB-mandated policies and communicates them to the school community. (0301-06-0200)

**Culture 6.3:** The school considers physical and virtual spaces in all of its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0300)

**Culture 6.4:** The school articulates a planned integration of human, natural, built, or virtual resources in all of its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0400)

**Culture 6.5:** The school considers the learner profile in all of its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0500)

**Culture 6.6:** The school considers international-mindedness in all of its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0600)

**Culture 6.7:** The pedagogical leadership team uses the school's IB-mandated policies in decision-making and curriculum development. (0301-06-0700)