



Sokrates International High School

Language Policy

1. School language philosophy

Our school motto is Knowledge Enlightens.

We strive to prepare our students to meet the complex demands of the multicultural contemporary world and to be well-adapted to cultural and linguistic diversity. Sokrates International High School students come from different cultural, linguistic and social backgrounds. We help them to learn and experience success in both their native and their second language. Our program provides a foundation for the lifelong process of language acquisition:

- fosters respect for other cultures,
- prepares students to become productive members of a global society,
- allows students to communicate easily with people from different countries,
- promotes awareness of one's own language and culture,
- promotes awareness of different languages and cultures.

2. School language profile

IB DP students at Sokrates speak many different languages. Although most students use and speak Polish as their first language, we have also students whose first language is English, Italian, Russian, Ukrainian, German, Romanian, Greek, Turkish, Slovenian to name a few. So far we have had students from more than 32 countries. Most 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 always encourage students to speak English also outside of the classroom.

The language of instruction is English with the exception of other language classes where instruction is delivered in the given language. All teachers are language teachers and are responsible for language development of our students. The working language in the IB DP is English, both for teachers and students, which means that written and oral feedback from the school staff to students is usually in English.

3. Languages offered

Language A:

Sokrates International School offers:

- English A Language and Literature on Standard or Higher Level
- Polish A Literature on Standard or Higher Level

Language B:

Sokrates International High School offers:

- English B on Standard or Higher Level
- Spanish ab initio on Standard Level
- Spanish B on Standard Level or Higher Level

4. Support for mother tongues

Sokrates International High School encourages students to use their mother tongue and master their native language skills as it allows them to enhance their personal identity, highlights their cultural background and increases their overall linguistic ability to learn. We do our best to provide students with a language teacher allocated to the Language A Literature – school supported self-taught course. If we are able to find a teacher we encourage students to keep learning in their mother tongue whilst following the regular curriculum and developing their competency in English. The benefit to students is being able to learn and be assessed in both languages. This also helps students prepare to earn a bilingual Diploma when they enter the IB Diploma Programme in Grades 11 and 12. In such a case, each student has an individual programme with their mother tongue teacher who works in partnership with the student, parents and regular IB teacher.

5. Strategies to support all teachers in their contribution to the language development of students.

Sokrates International High School regularly evaluates the language needs of students who attend the DP in the school. All our teachers are responsible for language development of students they are given appropriate support. The school provides a variety of collected sources, constantly updated subscriptions, various IB textbooks as well as other online resources and databases which are made available to subject teachers. Books in our school library are available mainly in Polish and English but there are also books available in French, German and Spanish. We continue to buy books in different languages. Resources are also available in the 2 local universities libraries with which we cooperate and our students have access to.

6. Support for students who are not proficient in the language of instruction

Our school prepares students for the IB DP by offering pre-DP classes during which students develop their linguistic abilities across all subjects. National and international students whose language skills are particularly in need of improvement are provided with extra English lessons which enable them to

prepare for the DP. We provide students with additional materials to facilitate the understanding of sources in the language of instruction throughout the programme. If need be, the teachers provide vocabulary banks to the students to facilitate their understanding of the chosen subjects.

ESL support

To allow success for all, we also offer a comprehensive and intensive programme of English as a Second Language (ESL) to ensure students are challenged appropriately according to their English ability. We can organise intensive English for students with little spoken English or we can offer an appropriate level of assistance according to the student individual needs to prepare them for a smooth transition into the regular English class and the whole programme. All students who take part in additional ESL courses are continuously monitored and assessed throughout the school year to ensure that each child will study at an appropriate level for their ability.

7. Learning the host country language and culture

The school encourages both international and all Polish students to experience Polish language and culture. Sokrates organizes various events during which Polish and international students familiarize themselves with the culture and traditions of the country and region they live in, as well as enhance their linguistic abilities. Students are also involved in preparation of various artistic and academic activities, school trips connected with Polish culture and traditions, theatre performances as part of the school theatre, discovering of local history and culture, getting to know the work of local poets. The students are encouraged to take part in different cultural meetings organized at school.

8. Learning the languages and cultures of international students

International students share information about their languages and cultures during subject lessons. We also organize Language & International Day - an annual event during which international students have a chance to present their languages and cultures. All the international families usually cook and encourage the rest of the school to try their national dishes.

The following publications have been used in the construction of this document:

1. International Baccalaureate Organization, From principles into practice—“Language options and language support” section in the “Language learning” chapter.
2. International Baccalaureate Organization, Guidelines for developing a school language Policy.
3. International Baccalaureate Organization, Language and learning in IB programmes.
4. International Baccalaureate Organization, Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes.

Language Policy links to SEN Policy and Admission Policy.

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