



PREMJERS
international school

LANGUAGE POLICY

Primary Years Programme (IB PYP)

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INTRODUCTION

International School Premjers is an IB World School authorized to offer the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) and the IB Diploma Programme (DP), and is a candidate school for the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP). The addition of the IB PYP to our educational offer allows for a coherent and successive educational experience for our students by providing a seamless transition from primary to secondary education, fostering continuity in learning, and ensuring the development of well-rounded, globally-minded individuals who are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to excel in the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) and beyond.

IB MISSION STATEMENT

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.

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL PREMJERS MISSION STATEMENT

At International School Premjers, we are committed to providing a comprehensive and rigorous secondary education that nurtures inquiring, knowledgeable, and compassionate young people.

Our mission is to help our students grow into lifelong learners who embrace intercultural understanding, reflect on themselves, and strive to create a more just and inclusive world.

Through academic excellence and personal development, we empower them to overcome challenges, respect diverse perspectives, and actively contribute to a humane and equitable global community.

VISION

We are able to contribute to the diversity and peace in the world as responsible global citizens equipped with good knowledge, showing care and compassion, promoting innovative ideas and committed to making a difference.

CORE VALUES

To envision and to accomplish the mission of our school, we have our core values:

- open-mindedness
- collaboration
- respect
- taking action
- appreciation

Statement of philosophy

At International School Premjers we believe that multilingualism opens the world for students, exposing them to opportunities and relationships beyond what one language can provide. We believe that knowledge of languages constitutes an essential part of developing an open-minded and critically thinking individual due to the increased availability of educational sources. Although English is the official language of International School Premjers, all languages are respected and are accepted to use in communication between students, teachers and school staff. Students are expected to develop their mother tongue (Russian and others) and to become proficient in the language of the host country (Latvian). The ability to communicate in a variety of modes in more than one language is essential to the concept of international education that promotes intercultural understanding.

Language is central to thinking and inquiry, forming the foundation for meaningful learning in the IB PYP. At International School Premjers, we are committed to a holistic, whole-language approach to teaching. We aim to nurture the language development of all students across transdisciplinary themes, integrating skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as viewing and presenting. Through engaging and inquiry-driven activities, students will develop the ability to read, enjoy, understand, and respond to a variety of texts and subject-specific terminology. This approach supports their capacity to communicate effectively and think critically within diverse contexts, fostering their growth as confident and reflective learners.

Language Profile

At International School Premjers, in the IB PYP programme:

- English is the language of instruction.
- English, Russian, and Latvian are offered as independent language courses, allowing students to develop proficiency in these languages.
- Units of Inquiry (encompassing Science and Social Studies), Mathematics, Music, Arts and Crafts, and Physical Education are taught in English, promoting consistent use of the language of instruction across disciplines.
- Language is always taught meaningfully and in context, taking into consideration the developmental phases specified in the IB PYP Language Scope and Sequence, in which students build on what they already know to help them move forward.
- Additionally, as EAL (English as an Additional Language) learning support the students are offered extra classes in Guided Reading, Project Time and Creative Play.
- All teachers are language teachers. They work collaboratively to reinforce essential vocabulary and develop necessary communication skills.

- All teachers are bilingual and actively support students in developing their language skills, providing guidance and assistance as needed throughout their classes.

Language of Instruction

English is the language of instruction within the school; therefore, students' success in the programme depends on their level of competency in this language. In the IB PYP, our focus is to provide students with the necessary rudiments of language learning, setting a strong skill base on which to build future learning. By the time students complete the fifth grade, they will be able to communicate their feelings and needs clearly to others, using the appropriate tone when speaking to different people in different contexts. Also, by the time students move to the IB MYP, they will be able to read and understand different types of texts with increasing sophistication and write for different purposes.

Support for mother tongues

Although the language of instruction at International School Premjers is English, our students speak a wide range of languages. Obviously, it is not possible to offer classes in all these languages. However, because educational research makes clear that those students who maintain their mother tongue will have better access to learning when working in a second or third language, it is important that we strive to provide the opportunity for students to access their first, or mother-tongue, languages.

Creating a mother-tongue class

International School Premjers promotes mother-tongue languages study for all students. Since the percentage of our students whose mother tongue is Russian is rather high, the school offers the Russian language course as a native language.

When the school receives a request for a mother tongue course in the PYP, which is different from Russian, the Head of School will manage the following process:

- the school will commit to assisting in identifying a tutor and will provide that tutor with the necessary space to deliver a suitable course. If the timetable permits, lessons will be scheduled during the regular school day;
- the parent(s) will commit to paying the tutor for his/her services. This is a private arrangement between the tutor and the families for which the school has no responsibility;
- aid families to find appropriate material;
- continue to improve and increase mother tongue resources in the library.

Learning of the host country or regional language and culture

In line with the country's requirements, every international school must offer at least three hours of classes per week in the Latvian language, history, geography, nature, and culture of Latvia. Latvian Studies Course is successfully integrated into the Programme of Inquiry and is offered to all students.

Latvian is a host country language and learning it through the cultural aspect helps better understand the country and surrounding community where the students live. Language is integral to exploring and sustaining personal development and cultural identity and provides an intellectual framework that supports the construction of conceptual understanding.

Aims of the course:

- To gain proficiency in an additional language while supporting maintenance of mother tongue and cultural heritage;
- To develop a respect for, and understanding of, diverse linguistic and cultural heritages;
- To develop the student's communication skills necessary for further language learning, and for study, work and leisure in a range of authentic contexts and for a variety of audiences and purposes;
- To extend knowledge of local students and acquaint international students with Latvian culture.

EAL learning support

Although English is the language of instruction in the School, students without complete fluency in English may be admitted to the Primary Years Programme. To support students whose first language is not English the school offers six extra classes a week as EAL (English as an additional language) learning support. The goal of EAL learning support is to have the support primarily conducted in class. This is to enable students the maximum opportunities to use the language in meaningful contexts, particularly in their interactions with fellow students and to ensure that EAL students are not excluded from valuable lessons. Extra EAL classes are held during the extended day group outside of school hours, are additional to the main curriculum and are not mandatory for attendance. Students do not receive home assignments and are not assessed. These extra EAL classes focus on enhancing students' conversational skills, expanding their vocabulary, and improving their overall confidence in using English. The classes provide a supportive environment for EAL students to practice language skills at their own pace, free from the pressures of formal assessment. The School recognizes the importance of students' well-being, creating a low-stress, encouraging atmosphere that prioritizes language acquisition and fosters a sense of belonging within the wider school community.

EAL classes description

Guided Reading is provided alongside the five mandatory English language lessons each week. This subject emphasizes phonics, storytelling, and the exploration of both fiction and non-fiction texts. It aims to enhance vocabulary, improve comprehension, and develop reading fluency, fostering a well-rounded approach to literacy. Guided reading sessions connect with units of inquiry, using texts that align with the central idea or key concepts of units of inquiry. The subject allows for differentiated instruction and addresses individual learning styles and abilities.

Creative Play is designed as a subject within the PSPE (Personal, Social, and Physical Education) subject area that focuses on promoting students' well-being and development of creative abilities. During Creative Play sessions, students revisit and reinforce vocabulary introduced in their English Language, Social Studies, Physical Education, and Arts and Crafts lessons. These sessions provide a dynamic environment where students engage in activities that inspire imagination, collaboration, and personal expression. Activities include role-playing, storytelling, collaborative games, and hands-on creative projects, all designed to integrate learning across subjects while fostering communication and critical thinking skills. This approach not only enhances language development but also supports students in building social connections, improving fine motor skills, and cultivating a sense of confidence and innovation.

Project Time is a subject that focuses on developing students' computer and digital literacy skills. Twice a week, students attend the computer lab to explore various digital platforms and apply knowledge gained in other subjects. Through hands-on activities, they become proficient in tools like Padlet, PowerPoint, and Paint, which they use to create projects that consolidate vocabulary and concepts learned during units of inquiry. Additionally, students have access to interactive digital books specifically designed for their grade levels through the website <https://www.expressdigibooks.com/>. These resources provide an engaging way to review and expand their vocabulary. Project Time also supports transdisciplinary learning by reinforcing Science related vocabulary and mathematical concepts such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, place value, skip counting, and others. Platforms like www.education.com, <https://www.roomrecess.com/> and <https://logiclike.com/> are frequently used to make math practice interactive and enjoyable. Through Project Time, students enhance their language skills, develop critical thinking and digital competencies. This subject empowers students to become confident and creative users of technology, preparing them for future academic and real-world challenges.

Inclusion support for students with SEN

In keeping with the mission statement, International School Premjers has adopted an inclusive model of learning support. This means that students with individual needs are supported within mainstream classes and all students are given full access to the curriculum. Teachers respond to the diverse learning needs and styles of the students in their care through using a variety of differentiation strategies to deliver the programme. These strategies may include the use of learning technologies, simplifying texts, supplementing information, providing checklists, using alternative forms of assessment and making assessment arrangements. In cases where students' barriers to learning preclude the development of age-appropriate literacy skills and additional support is required, parents or legal guardians become informed about extra English tutoring, the use of additional staff or physical resources that will be provided at an additional cost. It is expected that the School and parents work in partnership to help develop students' literacy skills.

POLICY ALIGNMENT

International School Premjers language philosophy and policy align with our school values and other policies as outlined below. In all of these policies and procedures, the student is central.

IB Learner profile

International School Premjers language policy reflects the learner profile of a communicator and open-minded as the students learn another language(s) in addition to their mother tongue thereby broadening their opportunities for communication. Our language policy honours and supports the linguistic background and knowledge of our students and community. In addition, our language policy supports the philosophy of international education as it advances the idea of working across boundaries, cultural and national, to gain understanding of alternative perspectives through being open-minded individuals.

International School Premjers mission statement

Our mission statement emphasizes "nurturing inquiring, knowledgeable, and compassionate young people", which aligns with the IB PYP's commitment to language as a tool for inquiry and understanding. It also highlights the importance of "embracing intercultural understanding," which is fundamental as the PYP encourages multilingualism and the appreciation of different languages and cultures, helping students develop international-mindedness. The school's goal of fostering "lifelong learners" aligns with the IB PYP's view that language learning is a continuous process. The language policy

supports this by encouraging students to develop literacy and communication skills that will serve them beyond school. The mission's focus on "respecting diverse perspectives" is directly connected to the PYP's approach to language learning, which promotes inclusion and the recognition of students' mother tongues as part of their identity. Language plays a crucial role in fostering empathy and inclusivity, which are also emphasized in the school's mission. The PYP language policy encourages students to use language to connect with others, advocate for social justice, and contribute to an equitable global community. All in all, the school's mission and the IB PYP language policy are well aligned, as both emphasize inquiry, intercultural understanding, lifelong learning, respect for diversity, and communication skills.

International School Premjers Academic Honesty Policy

International School Premjers academic honesty policy supports students, where possible, in learning through their mother tongue; this flexibility decreases the pressure students might otherwise feel to copy and paste information from English language sources when conducting research. Instead, students can choose (where possible and appropriate) to work from multilingual sources. We also provide support for our English language learners in this regard as there may be differences in cultural understanding of academic honesty that need to be bridged.

International School Premjers admissions procedures

We welcome students from diverse backgrounds with diverse needs. We aim to support students' language learning regardless of their linguistic backgrounds.

International School Premjers Assessment Policy

Our language policy aligns with our assessment policy because the latter is directly applicable to all of our learners – regardless of their linguistic background. Flexibility is built into our assessment policy to recognize and allow for when students' lack of vocabulary hinders the communication of their understanding. Formative assessment tasks can be used to learn and practice language, as formative work helps a student meet the established criteria for the summative task.

International School Premjers SEN- Inclusion Policy

All PYP students have equal opportunities to attend EAL learning support classes and receive individual support from the Teaching Assistant during the extended day group unless their Individual Learning Plan (ILP) specifies otherwise.

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