PREMJERS
international school

LANGUAGE POLICY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL PREMJERS MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES 2

IB MISSION STATEMENT 3

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY 4

SCOPE AND RELATED POLICIES 6

LANGUAGE LEARNING OPTIONS AT INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL PREMJERS 7

Language and Literature 7

Language Acquisition 8

PLACEMENT IN LANGUAGE COURSES 9

SUPPORT FOR MOTHER TONGUES 10

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS 12

LEARNING OF THE HOST COUNTRY OR REGIONAL 14

POLICY ALIGNMENT 16

REFERENCES 18

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL PREMJERS MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES

MISSION STATEMENT

At International School Premjers we are committed to providing a comprehensive and rigorous 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 make 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 and appreciation.

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.

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 the development of an open-minded and critically thinking individual due to increased availability of educational sources.

Although English is the official language of International School Premjers, all languages are respected and may be used in communication between students, teachers and school staff. Students are expected to develop their mother tongue (Russian and others), to become proficient in the language of the home country (Latvian); the acquisition of another language (French, German, Spanish) is offered as an option in the MYP and the Spanish language is offered in the Diploma Programme. The ability to communicate in a variety of modes in more than one language is essential to the concept of the international education that promotes intercultural understanding.

Language is central to thinking and inquiry. International School Premjers commits to the whole-language approach to teaching. We aim to develop the language competence of all students in all MYP subject groups through various activities, which form interdisciplinary communication: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students will develop the ability to read, enjoy, understand, and respond to all types of subject specific texts and terminology. Subsequently, in the DP, students will enhance their language proficiency or extend their knowledge of a language being engaged in the courses in literature comprehension and analysis.

Through a process-based approach, students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning of language. Students will communicate in a variety of forms for a range of purposes. In the Middle Years Programme students are assessed in a variety of ways utilizing the MYP assessment rubrics, including projects, essays, presentations, creative writing, literary discussions, textual analysis, critical listening and portfolios. DP language assessment follows the requirements of the relevant course and level, including oral assessment, written examinations and, where applicable, listening comprehension and HL coursework.

Through participation in the academic programmes at International School Premjers, students will be able to:

- further their understanding of the studied language and to explore and enjoy a variety of literature, informational texts and culture;
- communicate with clarity, accuracy and imagination;
- develop a capacity to express themselves and respond in a variety of speaking, writing and listening activities, matching style and response to audience and purpose in all MYP subject groups;
- deepen their knowledge of language in the DP;
- develop digital literacy in such a way as to enhance communication skills.

SCOPE AND RELATED POLICIES

This policy applies to all students and staff in the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and Diploma Programme (DP). It establishes common expectations for language development, language acquisition and multilingual learning. All teachers share responsibility for developing students' academic literacy and their ability to communicate effectively across subjects and contexts.
Teaching values students' linguistic backgrounds and reduces language-related barriers to learning and participation through:

- Support for the continued development of students' home languages.
- Support for students who are not yet proficient in English, the language of instruction.
- Learning of the host country's language and culture.

This policy is implemented alongside the school's Admissions, Inclusion, Assessment and Academic Integrity policies. Where an IB rule or subject guide specifies a language requirement for IB assessment, that requirement takes precedence.

Published: November 2021
Updated: August 2024, August 2026
Approved by: SIA International School Premjers Governing Body
Next full review: August 2029

LANGUAGE LEARNING OPTIONS AT INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL PREMJERS

Recognizing the diverse student body with diverse needs and that differentiation within our classes is crucial for success for all students, International School Premjers language learning options include the following:

- MYP Language and literature course (English, Russian);
- MYP Language acquisition course (French, German, Spanish);
- DP Studies in Language and Literature course (English A: Language and Literature, Russian A: Language and Literature);
- DP Language Acquisition course (English B, Spanish B, Spanish ab initio);
- Host country Language acquisition course (Latvian);
- English Language Learner (ELL) Programme (for students who are not yet proficient in the language of instruction) ;
- Support for mother tongues.

Language and Literature

All MYP students at International School Premjers are required to study the course of English Language and Literature. MYP students whose mother tongue is Russian are required to take the course of Russian Language and Literature.

DP students choose freely whether to take English A or Russian A Language and Literature course ("A" stands for the highest level of proficiency, in comparison to "B" and "ab initio" courses in the Language Acquisition group outlined below). Additionally, in the DP students have a choice of studying the language at Standard level (150 hours over two years of the DP) or Higher level (240 hours over two years of the DP). Students must account for IB regulations for course selection when choosing between Standard level and Higher level.

Language Acquisition

MYP students at International School Premjers can choose an option of taking French, German or Spanish as their language acquisition course. Language acquisition course in Latvian is compulsory for all students as Host country language. The school provides all Language acquisition courses at three possible levels:

1. Emergent level students - phases 1 and 2

2. Capable level students - phases 3 and 4

3. Proficient level students - phases 5 and 6

DP students can choose an option of taking either English B at Higher level, Spanish B at Standard level or Spanish ab initio course at Standard level. Language B courses are meant for students who have had some previous experience of learning the language and can be taught at Higher or Standard level. Language ab initio courses are meant for beginners, students who have little or no previous experience of learning the language and can be taught only at Standard level.

PLACEMENT IN LANGUAGE COURSES

Student placement in MYP Language acquisition courses is based upon the levels achieved in their placement tests and teacher recommendations. For students new to International School Premjers, a placement test will be given by the language teacher to ensure the student studies their additional language at a level that will lead to success.

The placement test takes into consideration the MYP Language Acquisition continuum and global proficiency table as prescribed in the MYP Language Acquisition Guide.

All students at International School Premjers will take the placement test, respectively called, END OF PHASE – 1/2/3/4/5 Test, to determine their progression between the phases. The placement test will be taken at the end of the academic year.

In the DP, students take an entry test in English as a language of instruction. It is aimed to ensure the applicants' communicative skills in English are sufficient for enrolling in the DP. The sufficient level corresponds to the B2 level of proficiency. Language-course placement takes account of students' preferences, previous learning, proficiency and IB placement requirements. If a student cannot be accepted to the DP because of insufficient language proficiency, the school can provide an intensive language training programme prior to the start of the DP year 1.

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 in the MYP whose mother tongue is Russian is rather high, the school offers an additional Language and Literature course in Russian in the Language and Literature subject group, along with the Language and Literature course in English.

When the school receives a request for a mother tongue course in the MYP, which is different from Russian, the Principal will manage the following process:

- the school will commit to assist 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.

In the Diploma Programme, when the school receives a request for a mother tongue course, which is different from Russian or English, the school will commit to provide a student with the opportunity to avail themselves of the school-supported self-taught (SSST) Language A course in order to maintain their best language or mother tongue. In this case, the school takes responsibility to manage the course by ensuring that the student is supported, that the course is delivered

accurately and that the intellectual honesty is guaranteed. A supervisor for the school-supported self-taught (SSST) Language A courses will be appointed and the supervision will be ensured in compliance with the IB document 'Guidance for the support of mother tongue in the DP'. The school-supported self-taught option is available at Standard Level.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

WHO ARE NOT YET PROFICIENT IN THE LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

The MYP students who are not yet proficient in English as the language of instruction are provided support. The English Language Learner (ELL) programme ensures that students entering International School Premjers with a limited ability in English skills are given the opportunity to work in small groups of similar skill level. The overall aim of the ELL support programme is to offer the student additional help in building language skills to develop confidence in English. This takes the form of a 'pull-out' approach: depending on their abilities, students will spend as much time in the ELL programme as needed until they have reached a level of proficiency that allows them to participate in the mainstream classes.

The programme aims:

- to develop the student's ability to communicate effectively in English in social situations and to succeed in the MYP at International School Premjers;
- to develop the student's skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing in English in all subject groups;
- to build on the student's linguistic and cultural identity to motivate their learning and raise self-esteem;
- advance student’s language proficiency to meet the necessary level for enrolling into the DP.

The ELL programme facilitates MYP students’ entrance into the mainstream in many ways.

English Language Learners are excused from their language acquisition course in French, German or Spanish. However, no students are excused from Latvian language acquisition. Instead of going to French/German/Spanish classes, the students attend ELL, a class with no marks or assignments. With no demands, students can relax and be themselves, thus facilitating their language acquisition. Attending ELL classes, students get direct instructions from the ELL teacher that works in collaboration with mainstream teachers to modify assignments.

More to be taken into consideration is that for many, it is not just a new school but also a new country, culture, academic setting and approach. For ELL students who are used to being high flyers, they now find themselves struggling to keep up with the easiest assignments.

Having an ELL teacher affords calm, safe environment to ask questions and get direct feedback. Thus, the ELL teacher acts as a mentor and liaison between teachers, parents and the students.

To summarize, the "pull-out" programme gives ELL students more time, more attention and one less mainstream class. The end result is a smoother transition to the mainstream.

In order to enroll MYP students in the ELL programme we:

- identify ELL students as soon as they come to the school;
- assess the students to understand their level of proficiency;
- gather background information about the ELL students by meeting the parents and filling in the student language form;
- work in collaboration with the class teacher, addressing students' language needs and providing social and emotional support, especially during the first months of school.

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. International School Premjers seeks ways to provide a coherent opportunity for every student in the MYP and the DP to implement this course into their curriculum. To this end, Latvian Studies Course is offered to all students.

In the MYP, Latvian language is a subject offered in the Language Acquisition subject group, hence, students are expected to learn Latvian in a group that corresponds to their language level and learning phase. At the end of the course students have an opportunity to take either national middle school final examination in Latvian (the option applies to students from Latvia and fulfils Ministry of Education requirements), or to take Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) proficiency examination in Latvian (the option applies to students from other countries).

Latvian language courses align with the IB MYP language acquisition subject guide. The courses are based upon the belief that learning another language provides a powerful mode of communication through which students can explore their own culture while learning about that of another country and develop an understanding of the world around them.

Latvian is a host country language and learning it through the cultural aspect helps to 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.

In the DP, Latvian language is not a part of the Diploma curriculum. To this end, students in the DP must take the deliberately designed Latvian Studies course of informative character that will not be a part of the Diploma Programme. The course aims to provide an insight into various aspects of Latvian life and foster appreciation of Latvian language, history, geography, nature and culture among students.

As stated in section 7 of this document, International School Premjers aims to offer a school-supported self-taught course in the following years. Latvian A: Language and Literature will be a potential choice for local students.

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

The mission’s commitment to nurturing "inquiring, knowledgeable, and compassionate young people" who "embrace intercultural understanding" and "respect diverse perspectives" is directly addressed by our policy's foundation in plurilingualism. By requiring the sustained study of at least two languages, we move beyond simple communication to foster a deep inquiry into the connections between language and culture. This process is fundamental to developing an appreciation for diverse ways of "living, behaving and viewing the world," thereby cultivating the Open-Minded and Caring attributes essential for a humane global community.

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL PREMJERS ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

International School Premjers academic integrity 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 their 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 students enroll in a language acquisition course in the MYP unless they are part of ELL programme or their Individual Education Plan (ELP) specifies otherwise. Upon the exit from the ELL programme the student enrolls at an emergent level in a language acquisition course.

REFERENCES

International Baccalaureate Organization (2008b) *Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes*. The Hague: International Baccalaureate Organization. Available at: https://ibo.my.site.com/ibportal/

International Baccalaureate Organization (2009) *Guidance for the support of mother tongue in the Diploma Programme*. The Hague: International Baccalaureate Organization. Available at: https://ibo.my.site.com/ibportal/

International Baccalaureate Organization (2014) *Language and learning in the IB programmes*. The Hague: International Baccalaureate Organization. Available at: https://ibo.my.site.com/ibportal/

International Baccalaureate Organization (2014) *Language and literature guide*. The Hague: International Baccalaureate Organization. Available at: https://ibo.my.site.com/ibportal/

International Baccalaureate Organization (2021) *Language ab initio guide*. Cardiff: International Baccalaureate Organization (UK) Ltd. Available at: https://ibo.my.site.com/ibportal/

International Baccalaureate Organization (2021) *Language B guide*. Cardiff: International Baccalaureate Organization (UK) Ltd. Available at: https://ibo.my.site.com/ibportal/

International Baccalaureate Organization (2019a) *Language A: language and literature guide*. The Hague: International Baccalaureate Organization. Available at: https://ibo.my.site.com/ibportal/

International Baccalaureate Organization (2025) *Language A: literature school supported self-taught student guide*. The Hague: International Baccalaureate Organization. Available at: https://ibo.my.site.com/ibportal/

International Baccalaureate Organization (2020) *Language acquisition guide*. Cardiff: International Baccalaureate Organization (UK) Ltd. Available at: https://ibo.my.site.com/ibportal/

International Baccalaureate Organization (2021) *DP language courses: overview and placement guidance*. Cardiff: International Baccalaureate Organization. Available at: https://ibo.my.site.com/ibportal/