

# LANGUAGE POLICY

Gymnázium FOSTRA International

IB Diploma Programme

Effective: September 2025

Next Review: August 2026

## 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.*

## Fostra Mission Statement

Fostra's mission is to cultivate students' personal growth, equip them with 21st-century competencies, and instill a sense of social responsibility, thereby preparing them for a fulfilling and successful future.

## IB Learner Profile

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities. IB learners strive to be:

**Inquirers** - We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

**Knowledgeable** - We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

**Thinkers** - We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

**Communicators** - We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

**Principled** - We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

**Open-minded** - We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

**Caring** - We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

**Risk-takers** - We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenge and change.

**Balanced** - We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives - intellectual, physical and emotional - to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognise our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

**Reflective** - We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

## 1. Introduction

At Gymnazium Fostra International we recognize that language is central to learning and integral to the development of international mindedness. Our language policy is designed to support students in becoming proficient in multiple languages, fostering intercultural understanding, and ensuring equitable access to the curriculum. This policy aligns with the International Baccalaureate (IB) standards and practices, particularly those outlined in the Programme Standards and Practices (2020), and the guidelines for developing a school language policy.

This Language Policy works in conjunction with Fostra's Assessment, Inclusion, and Academic Integrity Policies to ensure equitable access and consistent support for all learners in the IB Diploma Programme.

## 2. Language Philosophy

We view language as a bridge between our Czech heritage and international education, fostering both local rootedness and global engagement.

Our language philosophy is grounded in the belief that:

- **Language as a tool for learning:** Language is integral to the acquisition of knowledge and the development of intellectual skills across all subjects.
- **Multilingualism and diversity:** We encourage students to become proficient in multiple languages, recognizing the cognitive and cultural benefits of multilingualism. In our Czech context, multilingualism also connects students with both their national identity and an international mindset. We believe maintaining strong Czech language proficiency enhances

students' sense of belonging while English serves as a bridge to global academic and professional opportunities.

- **Mother tongue preservation:** Students' mother tongues are supported and celebrated, as they are essential to their identity, academic success, and emotional well-being.
- **Inclusive learning environment:** Language support is offered to students at various stages of language acquisition, ensuring all students can access the curriculum.
- **Language across the curriculum:** At Gymnazium Fostra International, all teachers are considered language teachers. Every subject area contributes to students' language development by modelling academic language, explicitly teaching subject-specific vocabulary, and supporting students in expressing their ideas effectively in spoken and written forms.

### 3. Language of Instruction

At Gymnazium Fostra International, the official language of the school is Czech, but the language of instruction for the IB Diploma Programme (IB DP) is English. This bilingual approach ensures that students benefit from a globally recognized education while maintaining their connection to the local culture.

- **Primary Language for IB DP:** The language of instruction for all IB Diploma Programme courses is English. This includes all IB-specific subjects such as Mathematics, Sciences, Humanities, and Languages. The IB DP is conducted in English, aligning with the global standards and practices set by the International Baccalaureate.
- **Official Language of the School:** While the IB DP is taught in English, Czech remains the official language of the school for administrative purposes, communication with families, and for the teaching of certain local subjects (in accordance with national regulations).
- **Language Support for Non-Native English Speakers:** For students whose first language is not English, the school provides appropriate language support to ensure they can successfully engage with the IB curriculum in English. This support may include language development programs, tutoring, and additional resources to help students navigate the linguistic demands of the English-language IB curriculum.
- **Students transitioning from the Czech curriculum to the IB Diploma Programme** receive targeted support in academic English to ensure smooth progression from national to international education.
- All official communication with Czech authorities is conducted in Czech, while internal communication with the IB and international partners is in English.

### 4. Language Acquisition and Support

We are committed to offering robust language support across all phases of students' education, ensuring access to a well-rounded language program:

- **Language A (Literature/Language and Literature):** Students are required to study one Language A subject. This may be English, or another language based on the student's first language. The available Language A options are Czech Literature and English Language and Literature.
- **Language B (Second Language):** Students must study a second language. The Language B offerings are English B SL/HL, Spanish B SL/HL, or Spanish ab initio.

- **Mother Tongue Support:** We recognize the importance of maintaining students' first languages, particularly their mother tongue, as it plays a crucial role in their identity, emotional development, and academic success. In line with Czech law, Czech language study is mandatory for all students. The school ensures that students can continue to develop their Czech language skills, both within the curriculum and through external programs or resources, as required by national regulations.
- Students whose mother tongue is not Czech or English will be supported through the IB's School-Supported Self-Taught (SSST) option in their Language A studies, whenever feasible. In addition, targeted English language acquisition support will be provided to ensure equitable access to the IB Diploma Programme curriculum. This may include small-group instruction, scaffolding in subject classrooms, and access to additional resources. Students are also encouraged to maintain and develop their mother tongue through collaboration with families, community resources, and external tutors, recognizing that strong proficiency in the first language enhances overall cognitive and academic development.

## 5. Assessment and Evaluation

Language proficiency is evaluated in accordance with IB guidelines, ensuring fair and equitable assessments for all students. Formative assessments and ongoing feedback are used throughout the year to monitor students' language progress and to guide individualized support.

- **Language A:** The assessment for Language A subjects includes internal assessments (e.g., oral presentations, essays) and external examinations. These assessments evaluate students' ability to analyze and interpret texts and communicate effectively.
- **Language B:** Language B assessments include written exams, oral exams, and coursework designed to assess students' ability to communicate in a second language. The evaluation focuses on practical language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- **Support for Students with Non-Native Languages:** Where applicable, support is provided to students studying in a non-native language of instruction to ensure they can successfully meet the academic requirements.

Assessment in all languages follows the principles outlined in the school's Assessment Policy, ensuring fairness, consistency, and alignment with IB criteria.

## 6. Teacher Professional Development

To ensure high-quality language education, we provide continuous professional development for our teachers, with a focus on language instruction:

- **Ongoing Training:** Teachers attend workshops and training sessions on best practices for teaching language across the curriculum and supporting multilingual students.
- **IB-Specific Development:** Teachers participate in IB-organized workshops and professional development to align their teaching methods with IB standards.

- All teachers receive training in strategies for supporting language learners within their subject areas, reinforcing the principle that language development is a shared responsibility across the faculty.
- Collaboration: Teachers collaborate regularly to share strategies, resources, and best practices for supporting language development in the IB DP.

## 7. Community and Parental Involvement

Language development is supported through a strong partnership between the school and the wider community, including parents:

- Parent Engagement: Parents are regularly informed about their child's language development, and they are encouraged to support their children's language learning at home.
- Cultural Activities: The school organizes events that celebrate linguistic diversity and cultural exchange, such as language weeks or international days.
- Mother Tongue Resources: Students are encouraged to maintain their mother tongue through access to resources in the local community, such as language schools or external language tutors.

## 8. Review and Revision

This policy is available on the school website and is distributed to all students and parents at the beginning of the IBDP programme.

This document needs to be reviewed regularly at the beginning of each school year, and it is vital that all stakeholders are informed after every review.

Any revisions to the policy are communicated promptly via email newsletters, the school's online portal, and in-person briefings for relevant stakeholders.

This document was developed collaboratively by the school leadership team, the IB Coordinator, and the School Counselling Centre. The IB Coordinator leads the annual review in consultation with teachers, students, and parents.

Sources:

Programme Standards and practices. <https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/new-structure/become-an-ib-school/pdfs/programme-standards-and-practices-2020-en.pdf>

Rules for IB World Schools: Diploma Programme.

<https://ibo.org/contentassets/4217cb074d5f4a77947207a4a0993c8f/rules-for-ib-world-schools-dp-en-2018.pdf>