



**LANGUGE POLICY AT  
SÚKROMNÉ GYMNÁZIUM  
ČESKÁ, 2022-2023**

## Contents

School language profile.....	3
School Mission Statement .....	3
School’s language philosophy .....	4
Our Guiding Principles.....	4
Language and the Learner Profile.....	5
Connections to other IB Policies.....	5
Language and Admissions.....	5
Language and Inclusion.....	6
Language and Academic Integrity .....	6
Language and Assessment.....	7
Contribution of all teachers to the language development of students.....	7
Mother Tongue .....	8
Host Country Language – Slovak.....	9
Other World Languages Pathways.....	9
Language A.....	9
Language B.....	10
German Language Aquisition.....	10
Diploma Programme Self-Taught Languages .....	11
Eligibility.....	11
Requirements. ....	11
Tutor. ....	12
Bilingual Diploma.....	12
The role of library and media resouces in language teaching and learning.....	12
IB Standards and Practices for Language.....	13
Additional Readings.....	13
Cycle of Review.....	13
Policy Steering Committee (2022-2023).....	14
References .....	14

## **School language profile**

IBDP is based on the bilingual curriculum, as our school is a school with two languages of instruction: Slovak and English. We also run a primary school (ages 6-13) with the Extended Foreign Language (EFL) program from which most children move to our bilingual high school with a five-year education.

We are trying to prepare our students in the lower grades as best we can, using the CLIL method in general education courses and the intensive English language course.

These include a large grant for English language lessons (5 lessons/ 45 min per week), reading of fiction literature in English, native speakers' classes, English language circles, and study tours since the age of 11 to English-speaking countries (England, Ireland, Malta) with weekly language courses.

Entrance examinations to the bilingual department for both our students and students from outside the school are held in three subjects: Slovak, English, and mathematics. The school accepts students with B1 level of English.

These policy guidelines are intended to provide an overview of principles for language learning at SGČ, all of which permeate the entire school curriculum through authentic contexts in a culturally rich and diverse environment. Our policy is a statement of agreement - one to which all members of SGČ community are asked to commit so our school can achieve its mission.

## **School Mission Statement**

*Our school strives to consistently deliver highly educated young citizens to our ever-changing multi-cultural society prepared to proactively play their parts in a promising new world.*

*We carefully balance a positive atmosphere with challenging goals, an international curriculum and assessment thereby inspiring the student to create a brighter future through diligence and lifelong learning.*

### **School's language philosophy**

We strive for our students to become better people, with the qualities described in the IB Learner Profile: knowledgeable, balanced, reflective, principled, openminded, caring, communicators, inquirers and risk-takers.

We believe that language, multilingualism and multiculturalism are essential to the success of the students and SGČ in general.

For SGČ, multilingualism and the development of critical literacy are considered important factors in fostering international-mindedness through the promotion of cultural identity, intercultural awareness and global citizenship.

Equally important to the school is the belief that each student should have the opportunity to maintain and develop their mother tongue(s). The acquisition of additional languages allows students to further reflect upon and explore different cultural perspectives.

### **Our Guiding Principles**

We are committed to the following Practices:

- The school places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, host country language and other languages (IB Standard A, Practice 7).
- Teaching and learning addresses the diversity of student language needs, including those for students learning a language(s) other than their mother tongue (IB Standard C3, Practice 7).
- Teaching and learning demonstrates that all teachers are responsible for language development of students (IB Standard C3, Practice 8).
- Assessment at the school aligns with the requirements of the programme(s). (IB Standard C4, Practice 1).
- Collaborative planning and reflection recognizes that all teachers are responsible for language development of students (IB Standard C1, Practice 8).
- The school utilizes the resources and expertise of the community to enhance learning within the programmes (IB Standard B2, Practice 11).

## **Language and the Learner Profile**

**Communicators:** We understand that communication is at the heart of education, that communication in more than one language is key to intercultural understanding. We help our students to become strong communicators.

**Risk Takers:** We recognize that language learning involves risk taking. We encourage our students to be independent, brave and articulate.

**Thinkers:** We believe in fostering critical thinking skills and creativity to help students use language to approach complex problems.

**Reflective:** We believe that reflection helps both students and teachers assess and understand the strengths and limitations of language use. Through reflection, language learning and personal development are considered.

## **Connections to other IB Policies**

### **Language and Admissions**

SGČ embraces learner diversity; however, it will only enroll students whose educational needs can be met by the School. Therefore, upon admission, students must meet the English language requirements to ensure academic success.

Students wishing to be admitted to DP must take an English admissions test before entry.

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

Individualised Education Program.

Since we are a bilingual school and the second language of instruction is English, our students have a good command of English. In addition, English proficiency at the B2 level is a condition for admission to the IB DP Program. If a student fails to speak English confidently, has gaps in spoken or written English that could be overcome with some extra

efforts, but is successful in other subjects, the school will develop a program to help a student reach the required level of language skills. Imperfect knowledge of English, which could be improved, is not a barrier to entering the programme.

Only students with B2 (CEFR) are guaranteed admission to English B level classes.

Only students with Phase 3 (A2) and above are accepted to Language B level classes.

### **Language and Inclusion**

Differentiation in language lessons is based on best practice according to the standards and practices of the IB. All teachers respond to students' needs and may therefore provide individualised instruction guided in some cases by specific learning goals and Individual Learning Plans (ILPs). Teaching strategies may include working in small groups, using different resources with different levels of language complexity, as well as changing the level of questioning and tasks for individual students. Students may also have choices so they can follow their own interests or use a preferred learning style.

As a component to teaching the whole student in all subjects, teachers will promote understanding of students' cultural identities and backgrounds.

### **Language and Academic Integrity**

The SGČ Academic Integrity document includes clear definitions, practices and consequences of academic dishonesty. Through their language learning, students are expected to be principled learners in furthering their language development.

Though academic dishonesty is defined and explained in the Academic Integrity document, it may look different in language classes and in the use of English or other languages provided at SGČ.

At SGČ, the following practices are considered dishonest with regards to language learning:

- If a student claims ownership of another student's, group's or pair's work

- If a student uses online translation tools or websites to translate a phrase or a text, whether it be from the text in his/her home language or from any other published source unless approved by the teacher.
- During reading comprehension assessments, if the student translates the original text to his own home language to demonstrate understanding and comprehension in English or the target language
- If the student receives support from another student, parent, teacher or tutor without the approval of the teacher
- During the writing assessments in the target languages offered at SGČ, if the student writes the text in his/her mother language and claims to express it as his/her own writing

### **Language and Assessment**

At SGČ, assessment of language learning is an on-going process throughout the school year in both formal assessments (formative and summative) and informal situations (learning experiences and inquiry). All four skill areas (reading, writing, listening, speaking), as well as the students' knowledge of grammatical structures and their ability to use these correctly, are assessed regularly at levels appropriate to the students' language phase and abilities. A range of formative and summative assessment measures are used.

The World Languages Department keeps track of feeding the logs receiving feedback from all subject teachers, report cards, observations, and student work. The information is shared with all the teachers included so that it can be used to inform differentiation and inclusion of the child.

### **Contribution of all teachers to the language development of students**

Teaching and learning demonstrates that all teachers are responsible for language development of students (IB Standard C3, Practice 8).

At SGČ we strongly believe in the ideal that all teachers are language teachers and should promote the concept of communication in its variety of forms throughout the school community.

The School Leadership provides opportunities for staff professional development to ensure that there is an awareness in the school community of the implications of second

language acquisition for learning and teaching, and so that teachers can access the latest information about EAL( English as an Additional Language) methodology and resources.

The school invests in qualified, professional language teachers for the language of instruction, host language and other languages.

### **Mother Tongue**

The term ‘mother tongue’ may denote the language learned first and/or the language identified with as a “native” speaker. For the purpose of the DP, “mother tongue” includes both these definitions and describes the language that the student uses at home and/or outside the classroom environment. Those students whose mother tongue is not the language of instruction may study their mother tongue as their third language option. This course of study supports students to develop their mother tongue, sustain cognitive and academic development and maintain their cultural identity.

At SGČ, we acknowledge the importance of a secure grounding in a student’s mother tongue, and value our students’ multilingual backgrounds. Proficiency in one’s mother tongue is recognized as an essential factor for language and cognitive development and the maintenance of cultural identity. Our goal is for our students to become academically and socially bilingual or multilingual, and to develop their additional languages in ways that will enhance the linguistic skills that they already possess. We believe that parents and community play a vital role in the development of a student’s mother tongue and encourage cultural and linguistic exchanges between various stakeholders at SGČ.

Most of our students are Slovaks. It is our goal that students expand their linguistic repertoires without detracting from the language acumen they already possess.

The final exams in the IB Diploma programme have been declared equivalent to the Slovak maturita exams by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic provided that students choose the Slovak language from the subject group Language A. This enables IBDP graduates to apply to both Slovak and Czech universities in the same way as ordinary high-school graduates do.

### **Host Country Language – Slovak**

SGČ believes in supporting all language learning, with a special interest in that of the host country. In addition to our curricular programs, where possible, the school will provide resources for its students to develop Slovak language and cultural knowledge.

Foreign students can also attend Slovak language courses at several state and private language schools. They offer group classes or individual courses tailored to the students' individual needs.

### **Other World Languages Pathways**

Language is divided into studies in language and literature and literature (Language A) and language acquisition courses (Language B). The student is required to take at least two languages. One of these has to be a language and literature course. SGČ students have the opportunity to study up to three languages. These courses are offered according to the student's level in the language of instruction, English, the host country language, Slovak, and language acquisition courses are also offered in German, (French, Spanish and Russian). Priority will be given to languages with high demand (class size) and those that provide continuity of learning in IB DP.

All that means that Language Learning in the IBDP makes provision for Language A, Language B, and ab initio language study.

### **Language A**

What is the difference between IB language and literature and literature?

The difference between the courses will be in the works studied as Language & Literature students will use both literary and non-literary works in their assessments but Literature students will only draw on literary works.

Language A: literature course introduces students to the analysis of literary texts. It is the course through which the IB's policy of mother-tongue entitlement is delivered.

Students study 13 works at higher level and 9 works at standard level from a representative selection of literary forms, periods and places

## Language B

Students may choose from the following languages: English, French, German, Russian, Spanish. Selection of language courses should be made to further develop the student's command of a language (not an easy top grade because the student is already proficient)

## German Language Aquisition

We will support students in primarily choosing the German language as a substitute for the sixth group of subjects since German is traditionally popular in our region.

As a rule, most students want to continue with German in upper secondary school. It is the second studied language in the Slovak education system after English. Schools are obliged to provide learning of German or any other foreign language as the second foreign language from the 7th grade. We begin with German as a compulsory subject in the third grade of the Primary School, and we also have a circle of German in the first and second grades. Students in the IB DP program may take a new language to study or continue learning a language.

There is a variety of language options or pathways available to students, depending on their proficiencies, interests, and future plans.

### Would-be pathways include:

1. Literature (Slovak) + Language Acquisition (English)
2. STL (Self-Taught-Language) e.g. English A + Language Acquisition (German – instead of Arts)
3. Literature (Slovak) + Language Acquisition (English)+ Language Acquisition (German –instead of Arts)
4. Literature (Slovak) + Language Acquisition (English) + Language ab initio (French, Spanish, Russian–instead of Arts))
5. Language and Literature (English A) + Language Acquisition (German)
6. Language and Literature (English A) + Language Acquisition (French, Spanish, Russian)
7. Language and Literature (English A) + Language ab initio (French, Spanish, Russian)

## **Diploma Programme Self-Taught Languages**

If the school does not provide the student's mother tongue or strongest language (Language A) in its regular program, then the school strongly recommends that parents opt to have this language (Externally-Taught Language) be taught as an IB course through external, private tuition with the assistance of the DP Coordinator.

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.

Self-taught or native level language learning may be supported in Grades 11 and 12 and administered according to regulations established by the International Baccalaureate Organization.

In the Diploma, self-taught Language A Literature SL is a demanding and rigorous course comparable to Language A Literature SL. Over two years, students are expected to read 10 works selected from the IB prescribed authors list (PLA). They will take the Literature A, SL DP exams during their second year. The course is a part of Group 1 and follows the same protocols as the other DP courses.

### **Eligibility.**

- The student's eligibility is based on the entrance interview with the DP coordinator and previous academic records.
- The student should have native-level command of both written and oral literacy in the target language.
- The student should have experience studying literature in the target language.

### **Requirements.**

Self-management skills: The subject is designed as a self-taught course. Therefore, students must be able to study independently.

Independent studying involves:

- Acquiring and reading the required texts
- Creating and maintaining a Learner Portfolio (binder, notebook, folder), which

is evidence of their work and progress.

- Adding reflections and work to their learner portfolios
- Reviewing the Literature A DP guide and Self-Taught Student Guide
- Preparing for the assessments
- Taking mock exams

### **Tutor.**

- SGČ expects students to find a tutor who will support them.
- The tutor is not hired by the school, but paid for by the student.
- Students decide on the frequency of the meetings and form they take (virtual or in-person).
- Students are welcome to use the school's premises to arrange the meetings and use the school's resources.
- Each semester SGČ will ask the tutors to grade a mock exam according to the IB rubric.

### **Bilingual Diploma**

A bilingual diploma is awarded to candidates who complete and receive a grade 3 or higher in two languages selected from the DP course studies in language and literature, or in studies in language and literature and an individuals and societies or science subject, completed in a different language.

### **The role of library and media resources in language teaching and learning**

The term 'Multiliteracies' refers to two major aspects of language use today.

The first is the variability of meaning making in different cultural, social or domain-specific contexts.

The second aspect of language use today arises in part from the characteristics of the new information and communications media. Meaning is made in ways that are increasingly

multimodal—in which written-linguistic modes of meaning interface with oral, visual, audio, gestural, tactile and spatial patterns of meaning.<sup>1</sup>

Multiliteracies can be seen as the combination of multilingualism (using more than one language) and multimodality (using a number of modes of communication).

Libraries contain and manage collections of media that serve as the basis for learning and teaching multiliteracies. IB learners are not only expected to explore multiple languages, but also multiple modes of communication.

Some learners' personal and functional languages and dialects are the same as their languages of instruction, but any combination or number of languages and dialects can make up a learner's language profile.

Librarians are key in curating content and creating services that support diverse language profiles, and should be actively involved in respecting and supporting languages and dialects used throughout the school.

The librarian must be fully engaged with the community to develop collections and activities that sensibly support language development.<sup>2</sup>

## **IB Standards and Practices for Language**

### **Additional Readings**

The language philosophy should be informed through reading, among other publications, the relevant IB documents such as, Programme Standards & Practices, IB learner profile booklet, Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes.

### **Cycle of Review**

Following a full review by teachers, students, parents, the Pedagogical Leadership Team and the Board of the school, this policy has been published in April 2022 and applies until May 2024. Policies will be reviewed and updated each year.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://newlearningonline.com/multiliteracies>

<sup>2</sup> IBO, Ideal libraries: A guide for schools, 2018, p.6-7

### **Policy Steering Committee (2022-2023)**

1. Svetlana Veselová, DP Coordinator –Committee leader
2. Katarina Nagy, IB Head of School/ IB English B teacher
3. Jana Šišmišová, Languages Department Chair IB /EnglishB&History teacher
4. Vanda Cvrkalová, IB German B Teacher
5. Alexandra Birošová, IB Language A Teacher

### **References**

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2018). *Ideal libraries: A guide for schools*.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2014, 2016). *Programme Standards & Practices*.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2013). *IB learner profile*.

Thomson, N. (2008). *Learning in a Language other than Mother Tongue in IB Programmes*.  
International Baccalaureate Organization.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2012). *Guidelines for school self-reflection on its language policy*.

Education Department, Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR): Learning, Teaching, and Assessment*.

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/learning-teaching-assessment>