LEON ŠTUKELJ INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL MARIBOR

Klinetova ulica 18, 2000 Maribor

LANGUAGE POLICY

All Leon Štukelj International School community members should exhibit the attributes of the Learner Profile, which are linked with the Assessment policy: to inquire, research, communicate honestly and within socially established procedures.

MISSION STATEMENT

'We are a stepping stone to lifelong learning.'

Living in a rapidly evolving world and a complex society requires a unique set of skills. At Leon Štukelj International School Maribor, we believe that it is our responsibility to empower the students for the future.

Our mission is to provide inquiry-based education where the inquisitive minds of our students gain values, embrace diversity, cultivate the spirit of international-mindedness, and evolve into responsible global citizens. By creating a holistic and inclusive environment, fostering trust among the student-parent-teacher community, and cultivating skills and positive values we strive towards growth with integrity, transparency and a desire to contribute positively to our world.

Updated July 2026.
Language Policy is to be reviewed in June 2028.

Based on IB Publications: “Guidelines for School Self-reflection on its Language Policy”, “Guidelines for developing a school language policy”, “MYP: From principles into practice”, “Language acquisition guide”, “Language and Literature guide

LANGUAGE POLICY STEERING COMMITTEE

Leon Štukelj International School Language Policy steering committee consists of members of our community: all teachers, teacher assistants, English language assistants – native English speakers, librarians, administrators, PYP/MYP coordinators, a PTA parent representative and Student Council students' representative.

Responsibility for Implementation and Regular Revision

All teachers are responsible for implementation of the school Language Policy. The Head of the International department and Programme coordinators are responsible for the supervision of the implementation and regular (every two years) revision of the policy according to the students' and school's needs.
The school clearly describes in its policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and what constitutes good practice within the school context.
The school implements and reviews a language policy that is aligned with IB language policy guidelines and other language guides ("PYP: From principles into practice", "MYP: From principles into practice", "Language acquisition guide", "Language and Literature guide").

Implementation of language policy

The Head, the Coordinators and English native speakers of the International department prepare various materials on teaching methods and activities for teachers on a monthly basis and for teacher newcomers more often, if needed.

At staff meetings all school routines and policies are analysed, and strategic plans for improvements are made.

Intercultural understanding and multilingualism

The language policy helps to foster intercultural understanding through communicating in a variety of ways in more than one language. The school recognizes multilingualism as a fact, a right and a resource for learning. Our school is committed to multilingualism as a means of affirming cultural identity and developing international-mindedness.

LANGUAGE PHILOSOPHY

All teachers are language teachers because language learning is present throughout the whole curriculum. We believe the following about language learning and development:

- Through language students acquire the ability to think and to learn, to develop social skills and values and to acquire knowledge
- Students are encouraged to develop cultural awareness and respect
- Language learning encourages the developmental of intercultural awareness and international mindedness

Language learning includes the development of the home and family languages, the languages of the school, additional languages and the development of literacy. This is integral to exploring and sustaining cognitive and personal development and cultural identity. Language learning and teaching are social acts, dependent on relationships with the self and others, with context, with the

environment and with the world. Our beliefs and values about language are embedded implicitly throughout the Learner profile and explicitly through the attribute of "Communicator", as well as in the IB's approaches to learning.

SCHOOL LANGUAGE PROFILES

➢ THE DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGE NEEDS FOR STUDENTS

LEARNING

Through language, students:

- express identity (all students have a unique language profile shaped by relationships and interactions within their own family, culture and the wider world. The continued development of home and family languages is crucial for cognitive growth and in nourishing cultural identity).
- Develop international-mindedness (multilingualism is significant in building international-mindedness, as it gives students insight into the thinking and perspectives of the self and others. Language enables students to gather and compare points of view, and to show empathy, compassion and respect. Shared understandings of language are constructed and contribute to an ongoing exploration into what it means to be internationally minded).
- Become literate (literacy invites the student into new ways of making meaning and exploring the world through language. Language students make meaning from written, viewed or oral text and apply their developing understandings of symbolic cues).
- Become effective inquirers (language is intrinsic to learning. It underpins the capacity to think critically and creatively, to inquire and collaborate, and it is the means to reflect on ideas, knowledge and experiences).
- Communicate (through language, students communicate their ideas and understandings to the local and wider learning community using multiple modes of expression).

a. <u>The languages of teaching and learning at International School Leon Štukelj</u>

Teaching and learning is given in the following languages: English as the language of instruction, Slovenian as the host country language and German as additional language offered from grade 5 onward.
The English, Slovenian and German languages are taught by the core subject teachers and by language teacher specialists in the PYP. In the MYP, English, Slovenian, and German are taught by their respective language teacher specialists.
All teachers in both programmes are considered language teachers. They must develop language skills in their subjects, work on subject specific vocabulary and on paraphrasing resource texts in order that students understand them and will be able to use them.
All teachers attend English lessons for pedagogical staff each week and have a course on the correct use of the Slovenian language at school conferences on a monthly basis.

Language of Instruction

English / Language and Literature is taught to all students – the PYP level has five lessons per week, and the MYP level has four lessons per week.

An EAL/ESL programme is organised for students who have limited competence in English and experience difficulties in coping with mainstream lessons in English. These are small groups of students, so their individual needs are met appropriately through targeted language training. The school's EAL/ESL programme begins in grade 1 and is provided through a combination of withdrawal (small group instruction with a specialist teacher taking place in parallel to regular classes during core English lessons) and inclusion (additional support in the mainstream class, differentiation based on knowledge, interest, learning styles).

Because our student population is diverse, we provide education to children of many different nationalities whose level of English proficiency varies greatly. Some possess no or very little English when they arrive.

The school's main objective is to provide EAL/ESL instruction to students who need to bring their knowledge and use of English up to a certain standard, which enables them to integrate successfully into all mainstream classes with their peers as soon as possible.

Identifying EAL/ESL students

Upon enrolment, parents complete a student language profile form (in order to monitor the progress of language learners in our department we keep records of students' progress in language development for EAL/ESL students), which gives school basic information used for student placement. Additionally, new students are monitored in the first weeks after arrival to further determine their level of proficiency in English. Homeroom teachers in the PYP, Language and Literature English teachers in the MYP and EAL teachers work collaboratively to assess each student's level of active and passive knowledge as well as anticipating possible problems in other non-linguistic subjects. Monitoring of their progress in EAL lessons is carried out regularly. The EAL teacher cooperates with homeroom and subject teachers to both help the student to progress at their level of English as well as to learn subject-specific terminology and concepts. If the progress is rapid in these areas, but the student still needs support, they are transferred to EAL lessons at the intermediate level. These are offered once or twice a week before or after lessons.

<u>Primary Years Programme (grades 1–5)</u>

EAL/ESL is taught in small groups. In the primary years, EAL/ESL is offered at the beginner level two times a week during core English lessons (can be provided through a combination of withdrawal in small group instruction with a specialist teacher taking place in parallel to regular classes during core English lessons) and inclusion (additional support in the mainstream class, differentiation based on knowledge, interest, learning styles). Students are considered integrated into their class once they have acquired a sufficient level of English to be able to function socially. If necessary, they can have an additional 2 hours of English intermediate EAL/ESL per week before/after school.

<u>Middle Years Programme (grades 6 – 8)</u>

EAL/ESL is taught individually or in small groups. Beginner students join EAL/ESL lessons instead of mainstream English lessons (four lessons per week) until they reach the intermediate level according to subject criteria. Intermediate students are integrated into mainstream English lessons and have 1 to 2 English intermediate lessons each week, either after or before school.

Other Languages Taught/Language Acquisition Programme

• <u>Language Acquisition:</u> Students choose an additional language – German. If students' home language is German, they can be assessed according to Language and Literature Criteria and also differentiated in a programme in Phase 5, or 6. German is provided in different groups according to the phases as a mainstream subject from grade 5 onward (phase 1). Students are placed into phases according to the previous report card comments and grades/achievement levels, information from the application form, initial teacher observation and oral interview. In this process, language acquisition

continuums and the MYP language acquisition global proficiency table are used. Students may progress between phases during the school year.

• The language of the host country: Slovenian Language / Slovenian Language Acquisition is organised twice a week in different groups according to the placement of students in the appropriate phases (six phases) in the PYP twice per week and in the MYP three times per week.

PYP: In the first phase there are students from grade 1 to grade 5 who are beginners of the Slovenian language (newcomers). In the second phase there are students from grade 1 to grade 5 who know some simple vocabulary and have been in the school for at least one year. In the third phase there are students form grades 1 to 5 who are considered as an intermediate group of learners. They are able to use simple sentences and express themselves in simple written and spoken form. In the fourth phase there are students from grades 1 to 5 who are either native speakers of the Slovenian language or fluent in speaking, reading and writing. In the fifth phase there are students from grades 4 and 5 who are considered as an intermediate group of learners. They are able to use simple sentences and express themselves in simple written and spoken form. In the sixth phase (last phase) there are students from grades 4 and 5 who are either native speakers of the Slovenian language or fluent in speaking, reading and writing.

MYP: Placement is informed by knowledge of the student's language profile. This helps language teachers and all teachers know and understand their language background, language experience and the language needs of the student.
The language acquisition continuums, the MYP language acquisition global proficiency table and the assessment criteria rubrics are essential tools for teachers to use when determining placement into phases, marking progression and establishing language learning pathways for their students.

Phases	**Description of difficulty**	**Description of students**
Emergent/ Capable/Proficient	Three distinct levels: from emergent to capable to proficient.	Students can join either phase in grades 6, 7 or 8. In Slovenian lessons, students with a Slavic background usually go through the phases more quickly. Upon their arrival they are usually placed in capable/proficient.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Phase 6
• understand and respond to simple authentic multimodal texts in predictable contexts. • identify some explicit information (messages, facts, opinions, feelings and ideas) some implicit information (supporting details) and can interpret some basic conventions and connections presented in these texts to draw conclusions. • demonstrate their comprehension in simple oral and written phrases using some simple modes. • engage in simple rehearsed and some unrehearsed exchanges to convey basic information on everyday personal and in some social topics in a very limited range of familiar interpersonal situations. • communicate some required information, in recognizable formats, with some sense of audience and purpose to suit the context.	• understand and respond to a variety of simple authentic multimodal texts in predictable contexts. • identify some explicit and implicit information and can interpret and analyse some conventions and connections presented in these texts to draw conclusions. • demonstrate their comprehension in simple short oral and written language using simple modes. • engage in simple rehearsed and unrehearsed exchanges to communicate their understanding and opinions on everyday personal and social topics in range of familiar and some unfamiliar situations in interpersonal and cultural contexts. • communicate all required information, organized in appropriate formats, with a clear sense of audience and purpose to suit the context.	• understand and respond to a variety of simple and some complex authentic multimodal texts. • identify explicit and implicit information and can interpret and analyse some conventions and connections presented in these texts to draw conclusions. • demonstrate their comprehension by producing a range of simple and some complex spoken and written language using simple and some complex modes. • engage in some authentic and spontaneous conversations to communicate their understanding and opinions on everyday personal, social, and in some topics of global significance in range of familiar and unfamiliar situations in interpersonal and cultural contexts. • communicate some required information, organized into a recognizable format, with some sense of audience and purpose to suit the context.	• understand and respond to a wide variety of simple and some complex authentic multimodal texts. • identify explicit and implicit information and can interpret and analyse conventions and connections in these texts to draw conclusions. • demonstrate their comprehension by producing a range of simple and complex spoken and written language using simple and complex modes. • engage in authentic and spontaneous conversation to communicate their understanding and opinions on topics of everyday personal, social, and global significance in a range of familiar and unfamiliar interpersonal and in cultural contexts. • communicate all the required information organized in an appropriate format with a clear sense of audience and purpose to suit the context.	• analyse specific information, ideas, opinions and attitudes presented in a variety of complex authentic multimodal texts. • identify explicit and implicit information and can interpret and analyse conventions and connections effectively in these texts to draw conclusions. • demonstrate their comprehension by producing a range of complex spoken and written language using complex modes. • engage in authentic and spontaneous conversation to communicate their understanding, opinions and perspectives on topics of personal, academic and global significance in a wide range of interpersonal and cultural contexts. • communicate all required information, organized in an appropriate format with a sense of audience and purpose, to suit the context.	• analyse and evaluate the important information, details and ideas presented in a wide variety of complex authentic multimodal texts. • identify explicit and implicit information and can analyse and evaluate conventions and connections in these texts to draw conclusions. • demonstrate their comprehension by producing a range of complex spoken and written language using complex modes. • engage in authentic and spontaneous conversation to communicate their understanding, opinions and perspectives on topics of personal, academic and global significance in a wide range of interpersonal and cultural contexts. • communicate all required information organized effectively in an appropriate format with a discerning sense of register, audience, and for a variety of purposes to suit the context.

MYP language acquisition global proficiency table (From Language acquisition guide, 2020)

The programme represents a unique opportunity for students to learn Slovenian and learn about Slovenia from the native Slovenian speaking teachers. The school is committed to enabling students to achieve bilingual and bi-literate competency in Slovenian. Teachers from both departments (international and national) plan activities at least three times a year when students work and communicate with each other (sports days, cultural days, extracurricular activities, Shrove Tuesday, school events, performances and fund raising for students) and seek ways to collaborate in subject areas that they have in common.

ENVIRONMENT

b. The language of communication used in the school and outside the classroom

Language is the major connecting element across the curriculum. Its application through oral, written and visual communication strands is seen and learnt across the subject areas and throughout the transdisciplinary/interdisciplinary programme of inquiry.
In order to communicate effectively and to establish and maintain relationships, students have many opportunities to listen, speak, read and write in their classrooms.

The school identifies a variety of physical and virtual resources used to facilitate language development.
Learning language has a close connection with the school library. The homeroom teacher and subject teachers plan the units of inquiry in collaboration with a school librarian.
The primary objective of classroom libraries and media centres is to provide materials that support the curriculum, taking into consideration the interests and requests of students, as well as the professional needs of teachers and staff.
The library media specialist selects the materials and equipment in collaboration with other teachers and staff, with attention paid to maintaining a variety of appropriate formats, appropriate reading levels and the presentation of a variety of viewpoints. At the same time, the existing collection is continuously evaluated by the library staff. The homeroom teachers and subject teacher also plan the units of inquiry in collaboration with the library media specialist, focusing on implementing the transdisciplinary/ATL skills.

Learning language is also connected to broader world technology – global electronic networks – in order to access a vast range of multimedia resources. Every PYP and MYP classroom has at least one computer and Internet connection, and for whole class research the school offers a computer lab with 25 computers connected to the internet and tablets for smaller groups or station work. The number of electronic devices changes according to the needs of programme.

Students are also encouraged to research subjects in their home language, thus accelerating their acquisition of knowledge and increasing their subject specific vocabulary. In school, the students are only allowed to use school devices (and special tools like translators) under teacher supervision. Students are responsible for informing teachers about work using special tools (e.g. translators).

The objectives of the Language Programme:

- Use language to communicate effectively, accurately and appropriately.
- Explore language in meaningful contexts.
- Understand and utilise language in listening, speaking, reading and writing activities.
- Develop the confidence to take risks in all language experiences.
- Discover that language learning is a continuous process based on previous experiences.
- Develop an awareness of literary tradition, its value, its position, its complexity and its relationship to culture.
- Learn the reading and writing process simultaneously.
- Learn the correct use of language in spoken and written language.

- Focus on how to express ideas, information, opinions or present facts (functional language).

The school's primary focus is on providing students with a sufficient level of English to acquire and demonstrate skills and understanding that have developed during the units of inquiry. As such, the school programmes encompass listening, reading, writing, speaking and media skills that provide:

- fundamental knowledge of the English language and usage
- rapid acquisition of unit based vocabulary.

CULTURE

c. Range and types of home language and other languages in the school community

Opportunities the school provides for the students to actively use their home language

The school encourages parents to get involved in home language programmes at PTA meetings, joint class meetings and in the school newsletter. The school also encourages parents to keep up home language development at home (reading, writing, speaking, audio-visual). Students are also encouraged to research subjects in their home language, thus accelerating their acquisition of knowledge and increasing their subject specific vocabulary.

Resources the school provides for the students' home language

The school library also features multilingual resources.

Ways of encouraging parents to help children develop language skills at home

Parents are informed about our Language Policy through Parent Agenda, Newsletters, at Portfolio Nights and Parent-Teacher meetings. We encourage parents to help their children to develop their home language. We provide rooms and can help them find teachers. We also encourage and help parents to promote and practise reading with their children at home, asking them to:

- Read aloud to their children on a regular basis (fiction and/or non-fiction texts).
- Read for the Reading Badge.
- Have a variety of books and other reading resources at home.
- Use public libraries (especially during holidays, when students have to prepare their research papers).
- Encourage students to participate in extracurricular activities and competitions (debate competitions).
- Set an example for habitual reading.
- Improve their own language and reading skills.
- Eliminate other great consumers of children's time (TV, video games).
- Participate in extracurricular activities as volunteers (Reading Nights, Reading Clubs, Tea Parties – Poetry Evenings etc.).

- **PRACTICES RELATING TO LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Provisions made for staff and professional development to ensure best practices in language teaching

All PYP core subject teachers (homeroom teachers), language and subject teachers are qualified elementary/subject teachers with at least a university or master's (new Bologna programmes) teaching degree.

All MYP teachers (homeroom teachers) and assistants are qualified subject teachers with at least a university or master's (new Bologna programmes) teaching degree.

Teachers attend international meetings – the IBO conferences and workshops (face-to-face and online), all teachers also attend seminars and workshops organised in Slovenia and English language courses organised internally.

In the International department workshops teachers develop teaching techniques and methods that promote the development of language and communication skills and differentiation to answer various students' readiness levels and teaching styles. Workshops are organised by the Head of the international department and Programme coordinators using English as the language of workshops.

Teachers have access to individual consultations and courses with native speaker language assistants who are employed by the school. The English as an Additional language teachers assist Homeroom teachers and English teachers during the units of inquiry.

The school buys different books for professional development and educational magazines on a regular basis. During the school year, the teachers of each programme (PYP and MYP) usually meet twice per month to discuss programmes, procedures and issues, and to plan collaboratively. The Head of the department organises several workshops in English covering various pedagogical development.

All classes have regular visits from the school's native English speaking language assistants for individual and team-teaching lessons to develop students' oral skills within their units of inquiry.

Processes that are used to identify suitable and adequate resources for language learning

Every school year, teachers and librarians prepare the lists of needed resources. Similarly, the Head and the Coordinators conduct classroom performance observations, which are focused on the structure of the lesson, teacher's teaching techniques, students' work and resources and other materials used. After this observation, an individual meeting with the teacher observed is organised to give feedback on the observations. The teachers also receive a written report on the classroom performance observation, which is combined with two tools: the checklist and anecdotal notes. When all classroom performance observations have been completed, the Head of the international department holds a meeting with the staff to give an evaluation report on the teaching progress in the classes, during which the selection of current and future resources are also discussed, and recommendations made.

a. <u>Practices relating to the choice and planning the language courses for learners</u>

- **Learning environment**

We have created a supportive environment, classrooms and school routines that help develop students' language skills and interest.

- **Sustained silent reading**

Students may be involved in 10-minute silent reading at the beginning of each double language lesson. They can choose their own preferred reading material; however, the teacher checks their material for the level of language and variety of topics in the target language.

- **Taking part in various literature and language contests**

Students are encouraged (and mentored) to take part in various literature contests offered by different local organisations and institutions. They can submit their works in English as well as in their home language.

- **Library programme / reading programme in the library**

Students are involved in library lessons connected to their units of inquiry, depending on the needs of the curriculum. Teachers and librarians plan these lessons collaboratively. The lessons cover the objectives of informational literacy as well as subject specific ones.
The library supports the reading programme in all languages taught in our school (plus students' home language), which is why students visit the library each week at an appointed time to borrow books.

- **Theatre programme and performances**

Theatre is closely connected to Language and Literature. The subject content and the performances rely heavily on different genres and registers of language and literature, thus enhancing the use of language, fluency and facilitating language transformation through learning scripts and adapting words to the students' abilities, as well as employing improvisational skills in language use.

- **Extra language skills activities**

Extra spelling exercise lessons and extra handwriting technique lessons have also been introduced for students whose spelling and handwriting techniques are not up to standard; these are led by our teachers in the PYP programme.

- **Reading Badge Programmes**

English: PYP and MYP students are invited and encouraged to read more than just the prescribed literature for lessons. Librarians and language teachers prepare a list of recommended age-appropriate books for the reading badge, which students read and report about to their mentor(s). If they read 5 books per year in the PYP and MYP they are awarded with a bronze reading badge, 8 books yields a silver, and 10 books for a golden reading badge (MYP: at least 5 of them need to be from the reading list).
Slovenian: The Slovenian organization Zveza prijateljev mladine and library association organize the Slovenian reading badge competition. Students read a different number of books and report about the book and poem they read to their Slovenian language teacher. The lists are available in classrooms, the library and on the school's website.

Grade 1	2 books
Grade 2	3 books + 1 poem
Grades 3 and 4	4 books + 1 poem
Grades 5 and 6	5 books + 2 poems
Grades 7 and 8	6 books + 2 poems
Grades 9 and 10	7 books + 2 poems

German: The DZS organization and publishing company organizes the German reading badge competition. Students read up to 2 books (the titles depend on the level) and take part in a competition in March.

- **Literacy Backpack (PYP)**

The purpose of the Literacy Backpack is to provide families with quality books and activities to support and share students' interest in reading and enhancement of students' reading skills. Every Friday, a student from the class brings home a backpack filled with books differentiated according to the age of the student, interests, etc., to share with the whole family. The Literacy Backpack is made up of books loved by children and parents, alike. It also includes a journal, and students are asked to write their reflection on this experience together with their parents. They are also very welcome to glue in a

photo, write a story, a poem or to draw something. The Backpack is returned on a Friday. Students and teachers are asked to use the checklist to check if everything is inside. Students share their reflection at the library lesson, homeroom or during English lessons. This should be a fun experience for students and parents. If students and parents would like to borrow more books later, they are always welcome to come to the library.

Arrangements for differentiation to support language learning within the classroom

Differentiation is guided by three characteristics:

Differentiation by readiness where the teachers follow the main principles: concrete to abstract, simple to complex, slow to fast, structured to open-ended, dependent to independent, simple-faceted to multi-faceted. Our teachers use different strategies that support readiness differentiation: varied texts by reading level, varied supplementary materials by reading level, varied scaffolding, tiered tasks, products and assessment, small- group instruction, homework options, mentorship, negotiated criteria for quality and varied graphic organisers.

- *Differentiation by interest* where teachers follow the main principles: develop efficient ways of sharing interest-based findings, create open invitations for student interest, keep an open eye and open mind for students with a serious passion and link interest-based exploration with key components of the curriculum. Our teachers use different strategies that support interest differentiation: Orbitals, Design-A-Day, group investigation, web quests, jigsaw, literature circles…
- *Differentiation by learning profile* principles remind us that some, but not all, students share learning preferences, which helps students to reflect on their own preferences and uses both teacher-structured and student-choice avenues to the learning-profile differentiation. The teachers are aware of learning-style, intelligence, culture-influenced and gender based preference factors. Teachers use different strategies that support learning-profile differentiation: entry points, key words and varied approaches to organising ideas.

Teachers also differentiate content and resources, processes and products.

b. Spelling protocols

Leon Štukelj International School has adopted an open approach to British and American spelling. Both are acceptable, but we use one or the other consistently.

Teachers use the approach where they underline the misspelled words, and the students need to correct them on their own using dictionaries or other resources. High frequency words and words that are used in the units of inquiry are placed in the word banks in the classrooms, where students also connect the words to synonyms.

c. Referencing and bibliography protocols

Examples from the student agenda

***Unless otherwise noted, use MLA v.8**

Paper based sources:

"Flash Gordon." The World Encyclopaedia of Comics. Vol. 2. New York: Chelsea, Ed. Maurice Horn. 1976. 35-36.

James, Nancy E. "Two Sides of Paradise: The Eden Myth According to Kirk and Spock." Spectrum of the Fantastic. Ed. Donald Palumbo. Westport: Greenwood, 1988. 219-223.

Okuda, Michael, and Denise Okuda. Star Trek Chronology: The History of the Future. New York: Pocket, 1993.

Wilcox, Rhonda V. "Shifting Roles and Synthetic Women in Star Trek: The Next Generation." Studies in Popular Culture 13.2 (1991): 53-65.

Other sources:
1. McGovern, George. Interview. Charlie Rose. PBS. WNET, New York. 1 Feb. 2001.

Electronic sources:"Bike Safety". 14 May 2010. kidshealth.org/kid/watch/out/bike_safety.html "Teaching your child to ride a bicycle". 14 May 2010. www.bhsi.org/kidteach.htm

1. ASSESSMENT

Tools and strategies that are used throughout the school to assess language learning and provide evidence of development.

International School Leon Štukelj Maribor is committed to providing equitable access to assessment for every learner. Assessment practices are designed according to the principles of **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**, ensuring that learning and assessment are accessible from the outset rather than relying solely on individual accommodations.

Universal Design for Learning recognises learner variability and promotes flexible assessment design through:

- multiple means of engagement;
- multiple means of representation;
- multiple means of action and expression.

Teachers design assessment tasks that minimise unnecessary barriers while maintaining the same learning objectives and academic expectations for all students. Students are encouraged to demonstrate their understanding using a variety of appropriate methods whenever possible.

Assessment planning reflects the principles outlined in the school's Inclusion Policy and supports learners with differing backgrounds, languages, abilities and learning profiles.

Where required, reasonable assessment adjustments are provided through Individual Learning Support Plans (ILSPs). These adjustments maintain the integrity of the intended learning outcomes while removing barriers that may disadvantage students.

Assessment is carried out according to the IBO guidelines and the school's assessment policy.
In the PYP and MYP Programmes, the most frequently used strategy to assess language learning is observation, followed by open-ended tasks, performance assessment, selected responses, peer and self-assessment and the teachers' immediate feedback. Teachers use anecdotal notes, check lists, rubrics, scales, scores, benchmarks and continuums for assessment. Each teacher provides their own assessment tools and strategies according to the given tasks and what is to be assessed.

Teachers follow student development with holistic assessment strategies and tools and identify, discuss and decide on procedures and extra help for students at case conferences and other meetings (whole department, PYP, MYP, class/language teachers). Students might get individual help and be included in extra help lessons or various language skills activities. We have introduced a peer reading programme as part of the MYP community service – MYP students read to the PYP students or listen to them reading. Extra spelling and handwriting lessons have also been introduced as extracurricular activities for students whose spelling and handwriting are not up to standard, and are led by our teachers.

PURPOSE

Language Strategies

Learning language:
With regard to spoken language, instructional programmes emphasise opportunities to comprehend a variety of genres, from directions to narratives and to experiment with modes of expression.

With regard to written language, classrooms for young children provide opportunities to learn alphabetic symbols, grapho-phonemic relationships (letter-sound relationships), basic sight vocabulary and comprehension strategies; they also feature readings of stories designed for young children. Students have opportunities to learn how to express themselves through written language, including opportunities to form letters, words, sentences and text structures, and opportunities to learn how to put together a written story.

Curriculum planning includes time for read-aloud and silent reading every day, opportunities for readers' theatre, choral/poetry reading/writing and buddy reading/writing. There is time for a free choice of books to read, topics to write about and explorations into multiple communication systems.

Learn through language:
As communicators and collaborators, students engage with language at school in multiple contexts and multiple modes. They listen, read, speak, perform, write and view text in order to make meaning and to explore and share new understandings and knowledge. Learning is embedded within language and is underpinned by relationships as a reciprocal meaning-making process.
Teachers scaffold language within learning in order to facilitate successful access to the resources and ideas students need in the pursuit of their inquiries. They use language to provoke thought, spark interest and promote independent, motivated learners. Teachers are aware of barriers to learning that language might create, and they personalize support for students when necessary. Understanding that language is important in accessing knowledge, ideas and ways of thinking in subject areas; teachers ensure that students have the appropriate linguistic tools with which to learn.

Planning includes partner, whole class and small group discussions, their scaffolding and feedback or response. Multiple strategies are used in order to read for meaning, to make connections and find tensions in issues. They are also used for discussions and responses to issues that cause tension in literature circles, sustained dialogue, debating, genre studies, author studies, theme studies, reflective journals and sharing time.

Learn about language: Teachers model strategies, teaching children to use them when they are needed. Teachers focus on strategies rather than isolated skills. Reading and writing skills and strategies are taught through guided reading, genre studies in reading/writing and inquiry, as well as writing styles, author studies and specific subject matter. Skills and strategies are directly taught in spelling, vocabulary and word study. Read Aloud texts/Literacy are chosen to go beyond the reading level of the class with challenging issues addressed and discussed.

Language Assessment

Learning language:
Evidence: Children show a sustained interest in reading/writing/speaking and listening. Teachers record the increased experimentation and enthusiasm for expression in language that students' use. Student work exhibits personal development and vocabulary development, as well as appropriate use of conventions in new situations. Reading/writing records show increased diversity of choice, and/or sustained interest. Children share their work formally and informally with classmates, willingly interacting with them. The library aims to increase its collection to further encourage students to read and write in their home language.

Tools: Reading/writing interviews, observational records, photographs/reflections, student reading record, portfolio, learning journals.

Learning through language:
Evidence: Students read, discuss, make connections, seek out issues and ask questions. Students discuss their understandings, present their thinking to others using multiple communication systems and reflect on their learning. Students are able to apply learnt strategies to new situations and describe what they have done. Students are able to challenge ideas, seek further information, explain and justify their understanding, and to reflect critically on their learning. Parents assist their children in understanding concepts and ideas through dialogue in their native tongue.

Tools: Video/audio tapes/transcripts of discussions, response journals in reading, writing, mathematics, art, music, drama, movement, presentations, student portfolios, self-reflections.

Learn About language:
Evidence: Teachers/students identify and use subject specific language in their work/presentations. Students use learnt skills in authentic contexts. Students are able to apply learnt strategies and skills in their investigations, presentations and in new contexts. There is improved proficiency in all forms of language. The school literature explicitly encourages home language development.

Tools: Student portfolios, oral/written reflections, teacher check lists/graphs, on-going observations, pre-assessments, displays/room environment.

The Language Policy is linked to other school policies.

The Language Policy is to be reviewed in June 2028.