

Primary Years Programme



Language Policy

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ISE Mission - who we are and what we do

- develop inquirers, communicators, risk-takers and leaders;
- provide an environment of creativity, innovation and care;
- foster intercultural understanding and respect;
- empower students to implement positive change in the face of future challenges

Our Core Values - the qualities that must be in place and actively followed in order for ISE to accomplish its Mission. In all that we do, we value -

- care and compassion - We believe that we have an obligation to listen thoughtfully to others, to consider their points of view and to treat them with kindness and empathy;
- the pursuit of high quality - We set high but realistic standards for everything at ISE. We regularly assess how we are progressing towards those standards and constantly seek to improve. We encourage asking, “How can we do that better the next time?”;
- inquiry-based learning - “Why?” is our favorite question. We see ourselves as life-long learners, and developing a joy of learning is essential to what we do;
- taking action - We are committed to making a difference. Therefore we work hard to connect learning to service. We look beyond ourselves and seek to make genuine, positive changes in the world around us.

Our Vision - ISE is internationally recognized as a school that develops and empowers future innovators and leaders.

The core of the International Baccalaureate programs is the **IB Learner Profile** and the International School of Estonia (ISE) celebrates the promotion of these student attributes:

- Inquirer - Acquires skills for purposeful, constructive research;
- Thinker - Applies thinking skills critically and creatively to solve complex problems;
- Communicator - Receives and expresses ideas in more than one language including the language of mathematical symbols;
- Risk-taker - Approaches unfamiliar situations with confidence;
- Principled - Displays integrity, honesty and a sense of fairness and justice;
- Caring - Develops a sense of personal commitment to action and service;
- Open-minded - Respects the views, values and traditions of other individuals and cultures and is accustomed to seeking and considering a range of points of view;
- Balanced - Understands physical, mental and personal well-being;
- Reflective - Analyzes own strength and weaknesses.

ISE, in support of the IB Learner Profile and our IB curriculum, also champions the aims and goals of the International Baccalaureate Mission.

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

English is the official language of ISE. Acknowledging that language is central to thinking and to inquiry, ISE commits to the whole-language approach to teaching where all teachers are language teachers. We aim to develop the language competence of all students in all subject groups through various activities which form interdisciplinary communication: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students will develop the ability to read, understand, and respond to all types of texts and terminology.

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 and be assessed utilizing the PYP assessment rubrics including projects, written assignments, presentations, creative writing, literary discussions, textual analysis, critical listening and e-portfolios.

Through participation in the academic programs at ISE, students will be able to:

- further their understanding of the studied language and to explore and enjoy a variety of literature, informational text 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 PYP subject groups;
- develop skills in using technology in such a way as to enhance communication skills.

Teaching languages in the PYP

[IBO states](#) that from at least the age of 7, all students in the International Baccalaureate® (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) have the opportunity to learn more than one language. With this in mind, ISE ensures that students have access to the host country language (Estonian), their mother tongue, and one other foreign language at the school, which is French.

Learning of the Host Country or Regional Language and Culture.

ISE seeks ways to increase Estonian language and cultural learning opportunities. To this end, Estonian Language course is offered to native Estonian speakers from grades 2 to 5. The course is offered twice per week. Estonian culture class, which is not a language class is offered to all PYP students once every other week.

Support for Mother Tongues

ISE is an English medium school, but 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

ISE supports mother tongue language study for all students. When the school receives a parental request for a mother tongue course:

- 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;
- continue to improve and increase mother tongue resources in the library.

Foreign Language

Aside from the host country language, French is also offered at ISE. In PYP, it is taught three times per week to students from grades 1 to 5.

Support for Students Who Are Not yet Proficient in the Language of Instruction

The English Language Learner program (ELL) assists students from PYP Grades 1 to 5 whose first language is not English. This takes the form of a 'pull-out' approach where students come to ELL class three times per week instead of attending French or Estonian. Parents and teachers can also request that the ELL teacher support ELL students in class when needed. The overarching role of the ELL teacher is to act as a mentor and liaison between teachers, parents, and the student.

The aim of ELL is to provide positive support to students so that they can develop the language skills necessary to thrive in the school setting. Instead of attending another language class, ELL teachers facilitate students as they acclimate themselves academically, socially, and personally. It is a non-graded course where students are supported in what they are doing in their mainstream classes.

Sources

"Language Learning in the PYP." International Baccalaureate. International Baccalaureate Organization, 2015. Web. 15 September 2016.

<<http://www.ibo.org/programmes/primary-years-programme/what-is-the-pyp/learning-a-language/>>