



HASSERIS GYMNASIUM & SCHOOL



*THE WORLD UNFOLDS*

# **LANGUAGE POLICY**

## **Hasseris Gymnasium & IB World School**

Updated: June 2020  
Next review: Spring 2021

# Language Policy for use in the IB Department

## The Language Philosophy of Hasseris Gymnasium & IB World School

It is the ambition of Hasseris Gymnasium & IB World School to empower both Danish and non-Danish speaking students by encouraging them to express themselves freely in a nuanced, varied, and democratic way.

As our school is situated in Denmark, we strongly encourage interaction with the local population and integration by teaching Danish to as many of our students as possible, either as Danish A, Danish B or as initiated from 2018, Danish *ab initio*.

In the local community students cannot expect to participate in activities by solely using English, although most Danes speak and understand English at a relatively high level. Since the protection of Danish as a small language and host country language is also of great importance to Hasseris Gymnasium & IB World School, we do not translate everything in a whole school context, and we do not always speak English at for instance general morning assemblies. This constitutes a dilemma that we are constantly aware of and must be vigilant about in order to maintain an acceptable balance where all students feel included and welcomed at Hasseris Gymnasium & IB World School. However, English as a language of communication, it is also essential to Hasseris Gymnasium & IB World School's internationally-minded environment of teaching and learning, as we strive to form students who are fully capable of communicating effectively and formulating their ideas in an international context. In PreIB and in the IB Diploma programme the language of instruction is always English, although the languages classes in other languages may primarily use the language taught.

We care about language learning and encourage students to study a language other than English and Danish. We support self-taught first language literature courses by giving the students the literary analysis tools in lesson, so that they can focus on understanding the depth and richness of their first language.

### Language profile

The students in the PreIB and IB Diploma Programme at Hasseris Gymnasium & IB World School join the programme with a wealth of cultural backgrounds and language proficiencies. We see this diversity as a great strength and value the many different language backgrounds which can teach us all that language plays an essential role in acquiring knowledge and highlights the multiple perspectives through which our students understand the world. We strive to maintain a multiplicity of language interest and learning among our students, so they see the importance of being able to communicate in more than one language:

### We do this by

- encouraging self-taught literature courses in group 1 of the IB Diploma to students who we cannot offer a group 1 subject in their first language
- encouraging all non-Danish speakers to choose Danish B or Danish *ab initio*
- encouraging IB-students always to speak English in classes so as to not exclude others from the communication, and Danish-speaking IB-students to translate important information at general assemblies or messages from Danish student to their non- Danish speaking classmates.
- encouraging non-Danish speakers to learn and try to speak Danish outside classes.
- encourage students to incorporate existing knowledge – in their first language – as a tool in developing deeper understanding of concepts and terms.

- developing teaching and learning practices, so students who are learning in another language than their first language will feel supported in activating English as a means of communication in all subjects across the IB Diploma and preIB.

### **We do this because**

- we want to form students who are capable **communicators**, both in terms of speaking and listening, and for them to be able to share their ideas effectively and expediently in an environment that is prepared to listen.
- we want to form students who are intrepid **inquirers** with inquisitive mindsets to enable them to explore and generate new ideas; and for this; advanced language skills are paramount.
- we want to form students who are **open-minded** and able to entertain, then accept or refute ideas based on the merits of the idea rather than on its source or origin.
- we want to form students who are **reflective** when having engaged in rigorous academic activity, and in this regard, a student's language skills will determine the range of the student's reflective abilities. These must be secured in the activities throughout the programme.
- we want to form students who **care** about each other and the people around them. Communication and language skills are indispensable components in being able to acknowledge and respect the reasoning of others.

### **We provide the following language courses at Hasseris Gymnasium & IB World School**

#### **Group 1 languages**

We offer English A, Language and Literature, and Danish A, Literature, both at HL and SL.

We also offer the self-taught language A literature course. The school supports that every student's study of his or her own first language to develop their analytical, receptive and writing skills in this language while still securing their proficiency in English as the language of instruction. The Deputy IB coordinator, who is also a Language A teacher in English, assists these students in organizing their programmes.

As every self-taught student must have a first language tutor, we assist the student in finding suitable tutors, and the Deputy IB Coordinator registers them as tutors and supports these tutors in their work. The particulars of the contract entail the correction and feedback on written work, mock exam papers and on the planning for the oral exam. The scheduling of the coursework will be communicated to the tutors along with a timeline and school deadlines.

Furthermore, the self-taught students' daily work is scheduled as lessons and supported by a Deputy IB Coordinator who will also conduct the oral exams.

We support the teamwork of students with the same first language and encourage them to produce similar booklists, although this is not obligatory. This enables them to cooperate in learning. The school librarian assists the students in finding the books on their reading lists.

#### **Group 2 languages**

We offer Spanish B, Danish B, French B and German B, as well as Danish *ab initio*.

## **University Admission**

One of the requirements for admission to Danish Universities is that applicants have completed at least Danish B at a higher level, or a corresponding exam in Danish to be admitted to a bachelor's programme conducted in Danish. All foreign students are informed about this requirement before making their final subject choices.

## **Language Policy for Teachers**

Continuously securing high-quality studies is of major concern to us. One way of doing this is to make sure that all new teachers have sufficient English qualifications. We value bilingual teachers and strive to let the staff reflect a diversity in languages and cultural backgrounds, also many varieties of English accents and dialects, which we see as part of the IB mission statement in practice. The pedagogics include the acknowledgement of the majority of students learning a language other than their first language and the implementation of strategies that scaffold the learning in the context of Hasseris Gymnasium & IB World School. Our teachers are proficient and secure in using English as a language of instruction, however, as they are often also language learners, they understand the challenges of learning in a language other than their native language.

## **Bibliography**

*Guidelines for developing a school language policy.* International Baccalaureate Organization, 2008

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

## **Review of policy**

This policy will be reviewed every year in June.

*The text of the Language Policy of Hasseris Gymnasium and IB World School follows to some extent the wording and policy of Grenaa Gymnasium on agreement as a shared approach.*