



«SHIRAKATSY LYCEUM» INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC-EDUCATIONAL COMPLEX»

Primary School

LANGUAGE POLICY

This document describes philosophy, essential agreements, as well as practices for teaching and learning languages.

## 1. Language Philosophy and Practice

The language philosophy and practices at the Lyceum emphasize the following:

- 1.1. Language learning promotes tolerance, respect for identities and cultural diversity through communication in multilingual environment.
- 1.2. Language is seen as a thinking and cognition tool, which enables written and oral self-expression, communication and collaboration among adults, children, and peers.
- 1.3. Learning process simultaneously involves **learning a language**—as learners listen to and use a language to communicate with others in their everyday lives; **learning about a language**—when learners grow in their understanding of how language works; and **learning through a language**— when learners use language as a tool to listen, think, discuss, and reflect on information, ideas, and issues (Halliday 1980).
- 1.4. Every teacher is a language teacher and takes responsibility for the learners' linguistic abilities and their attitude towards a language.
- 1.5. Language learning helps teachers to better understand each student's needs and enhance their learning.
- 1.6. Language learning is a life-long task.

## 2. Essential Agreements on the Teaching of Languages

- 2.1. Language teaching in primary school is organized through, as well as out of units of inquiry, which gives the opportunity to consider students' progression and ensures the continuity of the process.
- 2.2. Syllabuses and materials of Russian and English (French or German) as well as other languages taught are developed in relation to one another.

- 2.3. The school develops the syllabus considering the requirements of Armenian national curriculum standards, the national educational programs/curricula, and the IB PYP document of "Language Scope and Sequence " taking into consideration the principles of horizontal and vertical planning.
- 2.4. Planning of language learning is a collaborative process, which involves teachers, students, and parents.
- 2.5. Planning of language syllabus includes:
  - defining expectations/visions, particularly regarding the connection among the kindergarten, the primary and middle schools;
  - setting objectives in accordance with Armenian national curriculum standards, educational programs, and the IB PYP program requirements, which are based on students' individual needs;
  - provision of interdisciplinary connections as well as the development of approaches to learning which are inquiry based and concept driven;
  - developing assessment criteria, with a focus on positive achievements rather than negative deficiencies.
- 2.6. It also includes planning of self-directed learning, including:
  - raising the learner's awareness of his or her present state of knowledge;
  - self-setting of feasible and worthwhile goals;
  - selection of materials;
  - self-assessment;
  - self -driven development of language skills
- 2.7. Students individual needs as well as learning styles are taken into consideration; differentiation approach is used to teach a language.
- 2.8. Learners have equal opportunities to learn languages.
- 2.9. Language teaching is carried out through various teaching methods and tools: individual and group work, usage of different sources, differentiated reading, listening activities, graphs and tables, media, and information technologies, etc.
- 2.10. In the context of learners' identity li individual needs, teachers create learner's language profiles in order to contribute to language development based on their interests li strengths.
- 2.11. Learners get written and oral feedback from their teachers and friends on their linguistic performance, achievements and future plans.
- 2.12. Language abilities and skills of students are assessed in accordance with the **Assessment Policy** document through report cards, portfolios, etc.

Overall, language learning and teaching

- has a transdisciplinary nature
- is incorporated in the programme of inquiry
- develops the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and media literacy
- interrelates the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and media literacy
- provides opportunities to teach additional languages.

### **3. Mother Tongue Instruction/ provision**

- 3.1. The language of instruction is Armenian. We are sure that mastering mother tongue helps to acquire other languages successfully, helps to understand the differences and similarities in lexical and structural patterns. Those communication skills, that learners get through the acquisition of their mother tongue, helps the learners in studying and practicing other languages.

### **4. Foreign students' mother tongue provision**

- 4.1. Foreign students (whose native language is not Armenian) have the opportunity to acquire their mother tongue through individual and group work.
- 4.2. The school is ready to cooperate with embassies, various educational institutions, freelance specialists to teach the mother tongue of those students whose native language is not Armenian.
- 4.3. Individual programme is implemented to teach Armenian to foreign students.
- 4.4. The school makes sure that the library is regularly updated with books and recordings in various languages. All these materials will help foreign students learn their mother tongue and be closely related to their national culture.

### **5. Additional Languages**

- 5.1. Other languages to study are: Russian and either English or French (compulsory), and Italian and German(optional). On students' and their parents' request, other languages can be taught as well.
- 5.2. Russian and Foreign language teachers cooperate with homeroom and other single-subject teachers to plan and reflect upon their work.
- 5.3. Language teachers support to develop students' language skills, instil the IB Learner profile attributes, as well as the essential elements of the IB PYP in them.
- 5.4. All the languages taught at school are integrated into the study of the Units of Inquiry. Students have great opportunities to use/study the resources, literature in these languages.

### **6. Special Needs and Support**

- 6.1. Speech therapists work with students to reveal problems in written or oral speech.

- 6.2. In case a student has special needs, he/she works individually with a speech therapist until the existing problems are eliminated. This individual work is planned with parents' consent and with the knowledge of the homeroom teacher.
- 6.3. During the work with the speech therapist, the student's language skills are not assessed, or the skills are assessed partially (assessment of a student is tailored to his/her need(s)). Such students' language skills may also be assessed together with the speech therapist if it is necessary.
- 6.4. During the period when speech therapists works with students, they closely cooperate with student's homeroom teacher, psychologist, and subject teachers.

## **7. The role of librarian**

- 7.1. The librarian works closely with teachers, students and pedagogical leadership to ensure the availability of curricular and support materials for the development of languages.
- 7.2. The library has print and digital books, CDs, posters and recordings in different languages.
- 7.3. Resources are available for learners, teachers and parents.
- 7.4. All groups have timetabled access to the library.

## **8. Organizational work**

- The "Language Policy" document is posted on the school/Lyceum web site and is available to the entire community.
- The school administration, the IB PYP coordinator, and teachers are responsible for the implementation of the language policy.
- The "Language Policy" document is reviewed every two years and as needed by the school community.

## **Sources**

- Guidelines for developing a school language policy, IBO, 2006.
- Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes.
- PYP Language Scope and Sequence, IBO, Feb., 2009.
- PYP Coordinator Handbook 07/08, IBO, 2011-12.
- From Principles to Practice, IBO, 2018.
- RA Law on languages, 2011.
- State standards on Armenian language and literature, 2011.
- State standards on general education of Armenia, 2011
- The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, Council of Europe, [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework\\_EN.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf)