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International Classes

# Language Policy

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**Nordic Network**  
OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

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Culture is represented not only in events, texts, buildings, artworks, cuisines, and many other artifacts but also in language itself. Expressions such as “the pursuit of happiness”, “libertè, ègalitè, fraternitè” and “la Raza” connote cultural dimensions that extend well beyond their immediate translation. As recent world events have demonstrated, deep cultural knowledge and linguistic competence are equally necessary if one wishes to understand people and their communities.

Modern Language Association (2007)

## **The school's language profile**

Manglerud International Classes was established in 2016 as the first public school in Oslo to have an IB section in the school for the Primary Years and Middle Years Programme. It is a modern school with the facilities required to meet the needs of modern educational standards. The school has about 900 students including 120 PYP students and 50 MYP students.

The IB programmes are delivered through English. Manglerud skole, being a publicly owned school, recruits students from all socioeconomic backgrounds. The introduction of the Middle Years Programme in 2019 allows the school to assure a language continuum, which has positive consequences on the language aptitude of the students.

Admissions to the IB programmes typically comprises of three groups, each with unique language profiles. The first group have attended Norwegian national curriculum schools, are largely native speakers of Norwegian, have a solid command of English. The second group consists of students who have some connection to Norway (a parent or citizenship) and speak Norwegian and English with varying degrees of proficiency. These students may have an additional mother tongue. The third group are students from various backgrounds who are relatively new to Norway and unsure how long they may stay. The admission policy gives priority to international families who are moving to Oslo for work, studies or research, as well as families who are planning to go abroad. Currently there are 30 nationalities amongst our students, staff and faculty.

Manglerud International Classes have highly qualified and competent staff. All teachers are certified primary or secondary school teachers, and in addition one-year practical pedagogical education. Most teachers are from European countries, Africa and Asia, but the faculty also has teachers who are Norwegian nationals and speakers. All teachers master oral and written English.

## **Role and place of the language and Manglerud International Classes**

The school is aware of the importance of good language skills in the language of instruction to obtain an efficient academic development. All teachers share with the school management the responsibility of the students' language development in the language of instruction. The school will strive to offer students with low proficiency in English extra English courses to enable a better participation and improvement in their subjects.

The school gives the students the opportunity to learn languages, learn through language and learn about language (*Language and learning in IB programmes, 2014, section 4*). The students are offered to study their own mother tongue or their academic language and to learn foreign languages. We think that promotion and learning of foreign languages lead to knowledge of and respect for different cultures as well as to a better knowledge and awareness of their own language and culture. We believe that international competencies and language skills will be necessary for our students planning a professional career and aiming to live in a global world. We believe that these competencies will be acquired in the

language classrooms, but see all teachers in all subject areas and grades as teachers of language.

As a Norwegian publicly owned school Manglerud International Classes is strongly committed to prioritizing the students' access to the Norwegian Language and assures the promotion of the Norwegian Language by following the two principles:

1. Norwegian is the prioritized language acquisition subject in both IB programmes.
2. Norwegian culture is celebrated and advanced through recognition of Norwegian national holidays, study of Norway in units of inquiry, visits by Norwegian experts in various fields of work, and field trips to significant sites of historical, artistic, economic and/or political value.

### **Language offer in the Primary Years Programme**

Many of our PYP students master English and Norwegian at a satisfactory/above average level and will therefore study English and Norwegian in their literacy classes. For Norwegian, the school offers classes both in Norwegian as a first language and learners of Norwegian as an additional language. For learners of Norwegian as an additional language, the students are placed in different phases (emergent-developing-proficient) according to their ability. As the school wishes to promote Norwegian as the host language, the goal is that students should develop through the first phases of learning Norwegian as an additional language and move to Norwegian literacy when they have acquired a good level as proficient users of the language. The PYP language strands are seen in oral language, visual language and written language. These three strands can be described and represented by four continuums; 1) listening and speaking, 2) viewing and presenting; 3) reading; and 4) writing. These continuums are reflected in the students' biannual progress reports.

### **Language offer in the Middle Years Programme**

Most of our MYP students master English and Norwegian at a satisfactory/above average level and will therefore study two A-languages (Language and Literature). All the students study English at an A-language level. For Norwegian, the school offers classes in both Language and Literature (Language A) and Language Acquisition (Language B). In Norwegian Language Acquisition the students are placed in different phases (1-6) according to their ability. As the school wishes to promote Norwegian as the host language, the goal is that the students should develop through the first phases of Language Acquisition and move to Norwegian Language and Literature when they have acquired a good level within Phase 5 of Language Acquisition.

All MYP students are exempt from formal assessment in "Norwegian nynorsk". This exemption is formalized through an individual resolution document established by the school for each student.

All MYP students are encouraged to study a third language. For the majority of the students who study Norwegian and English Language and Literature, the school mandates that they study a third language. For students who take Norwegian Language Acquisition, learning a third language is optional, provided they already master a 3<sup>rd</sup> language. Currently the

students in MYP learn a third language together with students in the Norwegian section of the school as a non-MYP subject. The school offers language classes in French, German and Spanish and as the school grows, we plan to offer these as MYP Language Acquisition classes. Students who do not take on a foreign language class will be offered extra classes in English during this time.

In order to support MYP students in their language learning, the school documents each student's language profile at the point of admission based on previous school record and through conversations with students and parents.

### **Promoting a language learning environment**

The school has an important language learning equipment at its disposal. The school's library is well equipped as well as access to several online encyclopaedias. The school's reliable wireless broadband system enables the whole school community to make use of the internet and all sorts of international digital resources at any time. The library provides books and other media in the various mother tongues of our students. Teachers also celebrate and encourage mother tongue through in-class activities, and parents are encouraged to support the full development of their child's mother tongue. At this time, Manglerud IC is not able to provide for formal mother tongue learning besides English and Norwegian, but can provide parents with contact information of language classes being offered in the city.

The improvement of language skills in the teaching of language is an important part of the IB teacher's professional development. IB Teachers at the school participate regularly in IB workshops given in English. Workshops offered by Nordic IB schools, the Nordic Network of International Schools, and other professional organizations are also offered when appropriate for PYP or MYP.

### **Language Policy Review Cycle**

The policy was drafted by the MYP curriculum coordinator in liaison with the senior leadership team and addressed with faculty in December 2020. It will be reviewed in December 2022.

### **References**

*Making the PYP happen (2009)*

*PYP Language Scope and Sequence (2016)*

*Language and Learning in the IB programmes (2014)*