



## Language Policy

“Everything you need to know about planning your child’s success in languages at the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO.”

### Philosophical Overview

Learning multiple languages plays an essential role in achieving many of our aims at the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO.

Firstly, as an international school, our most fundamental aim continues to be accommodating the educational needs of students from any nationality, cultural background or ethnicity. More than 20 different languages have been spoken by students and teachers at the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO.

Next, we strive for all our students to achieve their full potential in all facets of their lives. We strive to create a social and emotional environment where all languages and cultures are valued and can peacefully co-exist. In this way, we hope that all of our students feel a sense of belonging, that their identities are affirmed and that consequently their self-esteem will grow. Our school is committed to **additive bilingualism** (where another language and culture does not replace that of the mother tongue - subtractive bilingualism). Although the language of instruction at the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO is primarily English, we pay special attention to the maintenance, development and celebration of all our students’ mother-tongues.

Additive bilingualism and the maintenance of the mother-tongue have proven benefits in the student’s cognitive and linguistic development as he or she becomes a more adaptable, flexible and versatile thinker.

We aim to enable students to enter the mainstream classes (where English is the language of instruction) as soon as possible. We have in place a range of strategies to integrate students who join our school with a lower than expected level of English as seamlessly and as efficiently as possible. One of the most important strategies is the professional development of all staff based on our recognition that all subject teachers have a role to play in the students’ learning of the English language.

At the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO, we also place special emphasis on the importance of all students learning the language of their host country - čeština. The level to which we expect a foreigner to learn the Czech language depends upon the student’s age and the length of time he or she will spend in the Czech Republic.

Ultimately, we also believe in a wider vision of a better and more peaceful world achieved by educating our students to understand, compare, appreciate and respect other cultures. Language is deeply connected to identity, which in turn determines how a person feels about the world and how they will behave. Through learning multiple languages, we encourage our students to inquire into and reflect upon not only the differences but also the similarities among cultures. Clearly, learning languages plays an essential role in achieving our aim of developing students who are effective communicators, knowledgeable about the world and open-minded.

The 1<sup>st</sup> ISO Language Policy is intended to be a “working document” meaning that it is likely to develop and be modified as circumstances in the school and the wider society change over time. Therefore, the Language Policy will be reviewed once a year in order to maintain its relevance and accuracy. Any member of the school community - student, teacher or parent - is invited to give his or her input and feedback on the Language Policy.

For comments, suggestions or more information please contact the IB Coordinator, Phil Corkill, who will be happy to assist you.

## **Mother tongue maintenance and development:**

There are many reasons why parents should support their children in maintaining and developing their mother tongue. You may expect your child to:

- re-join the school system in the home country
- go to university in the home country
- be able to speak to her or his grandparents and other family members in the mother tongue

Furthermore, all students are usually required to study her or his first language or mother-tongue in the IB Diploma Programme. Therefore, it is important for all students to continue to maintain their mother tongue in Grades 6 - 11.

Note: Talented bilingual foreign students may study English A instead of their mother-tongue in Group 1 if their level of English meets the entry requirements to this course.

Maintaining and developing all aspects of the mother tongue also have the following benefits:

- It ensures continuous cognitive development while students learn the new language.
- Linguistic and cognitive development in the home language and an understanding of how languages work transfers well to the learning of a second language and promotes its development.
- It conserves the diversity of cultures in an increasingly globalised world.

It is important and recommended that your child continues her or his development of the mother-tongue to a high level in all the skills of language: speaking, listening and understanding, reading and writing.

Parents can ensure the maintenance and development of your child's home language by:

- using your mother tongue with your children to discuss all family events, items in the news and to share ideas about books, TV and films etc.
- giving your children rich and enjoyable language experiences in their mother tongue. (Social activities with their own age group ensure that your child will want to continue using the mother tongue.)
- finding mother-tongue materials that cover the same material as they are learning in English in school (This is a very effective method of helping your child to understand the vocabulary and concepts related to the subjects they are studying in school. It also helps your child to learn the same content in her or his mother tongue.)
- arranging formal reading and writing lessons in your mother tongue (Formal lessons in some languages may be arranged at the school - see below.) Formal lessons are necessary in order for your child to learn to read and write at the same level as students of the same age in your home country.
- encouraging your child to keep in touch with grandparents and other family members or by carrying out an e-mail correspondence with friends who speak the same language.

Below is a list of the ways in which the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO can assist in the maintenance and development of mother-tongues:

- Czech and English native speakers can have their study of their mother-tongue accommodated in the mainstream in all grades (6-13).
- French, German, or Spanish native speakers can have their study of their mother-tongue supported in the mainstream Foreign Language II classes in Grades 8 - 13.
- For other languages, the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO strongly encourages the parents to arrange privately taught mother-tongue lessons on the weekends or after school for their children. The 1<sup>st</sup> ISO will gladly assist foreign parents in finding the most suitable teacher for their child through its contacts in the wider school community, local language teaching agencies, embassies and regional cultural centres.
- Co-operation between a student's private mother tongue teacher and her/his mainstream teachers is strongly encouraged. Mainstream teachers are encouraged to contact the mother tongue teacher if a student would benefit from extra work on a particular matter in the mother tongue.
- Mainstream teachers are encouraged to recognize and celebrate all students' mother tongues and home cultures in lessons and school life.

- The 1<sup>st</sup> ISO is committed to maintaining and developing its library resources for all the major languages represented in the school community for all age groups and subjects.
- The diversity of European languages spoken in the school is celebrated in special activities organised on each year on *European Day of Languages* - September 26<sup>th</sup>
- The diversity of languages from around the world spoken in the school is celebrated each year in special activities organised on *International Mother-Tongue Day* - February 21<sup>st</sup>

### Use of Mother Tongues Inside and Outside the Classroom:

English is the official language of the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO and it is the usual language of instruction and therefore every effort should be made to speak English at all times by staff and students (with the exception of other language classes). However, there may be times when it is more convenient and acceptable for students to communicate in their mother-tongue. For example, in group work or private individual conversations where the students speak the same language and the level of the students' English is not yet B1 (typically Grades 6, 7 and 10).

Once a student has achieved the B1 level of English, it is expected that the student consistently uses English for all communication inside the classroom. The use of English outside the classroom is also strongly encouraged as it significantly helps to further the student's level of English. It is also polite and common sense not to exclude others from conversations and discussions.

### Český jazyk a literatura (Czech Language and Literature):

Students whose mother tongue is Czech must follow the standard programme of study of this language. For more information about the content and expected outcomes of this programme, please refer to the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO School Education Programme (ŠVP) which was created in accordance with the requirements of the Czech Ministry of Education's Framework Education Programme (RVP).

#### **8 Year Secondary Programme**

Grade	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Lessons per week	5	4	4	4	3	4	5 (+2)	4 (+2)

#### **4 Year Secondary Programme**

Grade	10	11	12	13
Lessons per week	4	4	4	4

### Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment

The CEFR was developed by the Council of Europe and is a guideline used to describe the level of language ability of learners of foreign languages across Europe. The six reference levels (see below) are widely accepted as the European standard for assessing a student's proficiency in a particular language.

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference	Approx. number of lessons *
A1 - Waystage (elementary)	250 - 450
A2 - Breakthrough (pre-intermediate)	450 - 600
B1 - Threshold (intermediate)	600 - 750
B2 - Vantage (upper-intermediate)	750 - 1000
C1 - Effective Operational Proficiency (advanced)	1000 - 1500
C2 - Mastery (proficient)	1500 +
NB: One lesson = 45 minutes	

- Note: The number of lessons of study to reach a particular level is only an estimation. Variations may occur because of an individual's talent for learning a language, time spent in a country where the target language is spoken, class size, teaching quality in primary and/or middle school or the number of other lessons taught in the target language.

		250		450		650		850		1050		1250		1450		1650	
		A1															
				A2													
						B1											
									B2								
												C1					
														C2 +			

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE I: English Language Development - 8 Year IB DP Secondary Programme:**

Grade	Number of lessons per week	Number of lessons per year (30 weeks)	IB DP English A SL	
			Cumulative total	End of year
3-5	3	90	270 (3 yrs)	A1-
6	5 (+2)	150 (+60)	420 (480)	A1
7	4 (+2)	120 (+60)	540 (660)	A2+
8	3 (+2)	90 (+60)	630 (810)	B1
9	3 (+2)	90 (+60)	720 (960)	B1 (B2)
10	3 (+2)	90 (+60)	810 (1110)	B2 (C1-)
11	3 (+2)	90 (+60)	900 (1260)	B2 (C1)
12	5	150	1050 (1260)	C1
13	4	120	1170 (1260)	C1

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE I: English Language Development - 8 Year IB DP Secondary Programme:**

Note: This option is for students enrolling in the 8-Year Secondary School at the Grade 10 level.

Grade	Number of lessons per week	Number of lessons per year (30 weeks)	IB DP English B HL	
			Cumulative total	End of year
1-9			450	A1
10	3 (+2)	90 (+60)	540 (600)	A2
11	3 (+2)	90 (+60)	630 (750)	B1
12	5 (+2)	150 (+60)	780 (960)	B2
13	4 (+2)	120 (+60)	900 (1140)	B2 (C1)

### Expected level of English for enrolment in Grade 6 (8 Year Secondary Programme):

It is expected that students wishing to enrol in our 8 year programme in Grade 6 have at least reached the lowest level of A1 in English. This is usually achieved in primary school when a student has had 3 lessons of English per week in Grades 3 to 5.

Grades 6 and 7 at our school are regarded as transition years as the students typically are progressing through the A1 and A2 levels of English. Consequently, the students' level of English may impede her or his ability to study other subjects. However, there are a number of strategies we employ to enable the Grade 6 and 7 students to access the curriculum taught in English (see the section below entitled "Student Access to the Curriculum"). By the time the students begin Grade 8, they have typically have reached the B1 level and can understand, communicate and learn in English without major difficulty.

### Expected level of English for enrolment in Grades 6 - 9 (8 Year Secondary Programme):

- To begin Grade 6: A1-
- To begin Grade 7: A1+
- To begin Grade 8: A2/B1-
- To begin Grade 9: B1

### Expected level of English for enrolment in Grade 10 + (8 Year IB Diploma Programme):

For students enrolling in Grade 10, the main consideration is if their level of English will sufficient to ensure success in the final IB examinations which are offered only in English. For success in the IB, a candidate must have a B2 level of English by the start of Grade 12. Looking back, this means a new student enrolling in Grade 10 should have completed at least **450 lessons** of English. These 450 lessons of English are usually achieved in primary and middle school where a student typically studies English for 7 years (Grade 3 - 9) for two lessons per week.

- To begin Grade 10: A2-
- To begin Grade 11: B1-
- To begin Grade 12: B2-

Clearly new students enrolling in Grade 10 even with A2 will have difficulty accessing the curriculum in Grade 10 and part of Grade 11 as the general minimum required to access the curriculum is consider to be at least B1. The strategies we use to help these students are outlined below. (Refer to the section entitled "Student Access to the Curriculum").

Any student who wishes to transfer to the 8 year Secondary School in Grade 10 or 11 with less than the expected level must take extra private courses and is strongly recommended to enrol in the *Developing Reading and Writing Skills* courses in order to succeed in either the Maturita programme or the Diploma Programme.

Note: Because the IB DP is a two-year course, we can only accept transfer students into Grade 13 (IBDP2) from another IBDP school.

### FOREIGN LANGUAGE I: English Language Development - 4 Year Czech Maturita Secondary Programme:

4 Year Secondary Programme	Number of lessons per week	Number of lessons per year (30 weeks)	Cumulative total	End of year
Grades 1-9			450	A1
Grade 10	6	180	630	A2
Grade 11	6	180	810	B1
Grade 12	5	150	960	B2
Grade 13	4	120	1080	B2 (C1)

## **Student Access to the Curriculum when English is the Language of Instruction:**

Prior to enrolment, the prospective student's level of English will be determined by means of a standard placement test (grammar and vocabulary), a writing task, and an interview. Special consideration will be given to students who demonstrate a strong motivation to learn. Prospective students with a level of English below the standard expected may still enrol at the school but the school strongly recommends the parents enrol the student in extra ESL lessons at a private language agency after school or on weekends or hire an English tutor. (Depending on availability, some extra ESL lessons may be offered directly at the school.) The school can assist the prospective parents in finding an appropriate course for their son or daughter. The aim of these extra lessons is to accelerate the student's learning of English so that he/she reaches the standard expected as quickly as possible. Parents and students may also be counselled to consider the possibility of enrolling the student in the grade below their age level.

The following strategies are available at the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO to enable students with a lower-than-expected level of English to integrate into mainstream classes:

- Co-operation between a student's private English teacher/tutor and her/his mainstream teachers is strongly encouraged. Mainstream teachers are encouraged to contact the private English teacher if the student would benefit from extra work on a particular matter.
- English teachers and subject teachers are available for individual consultations with students throughout the week. We strongly encourage these students to take advantage of this extra individual care.
- At the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO, we believe that mainstream teachers are also language teachers, and should be developing students' language skills, especially those required in their particular subject area. Without compromising standards, subject teachers can adapt, modify or simplify their materials and teaching style to take account of the needs of students who are not native speakers of English. Mainstream teachers are encouraged to correct the main mistakes in English as well as content of written work, and to provide missing vocabulary whenever possible.
- When possible, students can be paired with another student in the class or school who also speaks the student's mother tongue. This more experienced student can be an important source of help for the beginning student.
- Students may be given special time extensions to complete the coursework.

## **Elective English Courses in Grades 7 - 11:**

Grade 6: Non-compulsory elective: *Developing Reading and Writing Skills in English*. It is strongly recommended that students take this class as it is intended to accelerate student learning.

Grades 7 - 9: Compulsory elective: *Developing Reading and Writing Skills in English*. It is strongly recommended that students take this class as it is intended to accelerate student learning.

Grades 10 - 11: Non-compulsory elective: *Extension English* is not compulsory in these grades. However, it is strongly recommended that students enrol in this class as it is excellent preparation for the IB DP and is designed to accelerate student learning.

## **For students who are native speakers of English:**

These students are strongly encouraged to enrol in the MYP or DP programmes where English as the mother-tongue is offered. As the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO is implementing the MYP, native speakers may still join the bilingual Secondary School (Grades 8 - 11) and will receive an individual English study programme based on the MYP English A curriculum supervised by a native speaker English teacher. The student will attend English lessons with his/her classmates but will work on the Native programme instead of the ESL programme. For native speakers of English enrolling at our school in Grade 12 or 13, he or she will take English as Language A.

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE II: French/German/Spanish (8 Year Programme):**

<b>8 Year Secondary Programme</b>	<b>Number of lessons per week</b>	<b>Number of lessons per year (30 weeks)</b>	<b>Cumulative total</b>	<b>End of year</b>
Grade 8	2	60	60	---
Grade 9	2	60	120	---
Grade 10	3	90	210	---
Grade 11	3	90	300	A1
Grade 12	4 (+ 2)	120 (+ 60)	420 (480)	A2
Grade 13	4 (+ 2)	120 (+ 60)	540 (660)	B1

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE II: French/German/Spanish (4 Year Programme)**

<b>4 Year Secondary Programme</b>	<b>Number of lessons per week</b>	<b>Number of lessons per year (30 weeks)</b>	<b>Cumulative total</b>	<b>End of year</b>
Grades 1-9			180	---
Grade 10	3	90	270	A1-
Grade 11	3	90	360	A1
Grade 12	4	120	480	A2
Grade 13	4 (+ 2)	120 (+ 60)	600 (660)	B1

The 180 lessons of Foreign Language II can be typically achieved at the student's previous middle school if the student has had 2 lessons of Foreign Language II per week over 3 years in Grades 7, 8 and 9. A student enrolling in our 4 Year Secondary Programme **must** continue the Foreign Language begun in her or his previous middle school in order to reach the expected outcome of CEF Level B1 at the end of Grade 13.

Note: The 1<sup>st</sup> ISO cannot guarantee that every Foreign Language II will be offered in the 4 year Secondary School or upper 8 Year Secondary School. Typically two of the three main foreign languages (French, Spanish and German) are offered, dependant on the needs of the majority of students. In the rare case that the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO does not offer the same Foreign Language II that a new enrolling Grade 10 student has studied at her or his previous middle-school, the parents are strongly encouraged to enrol their son or daughter in private lessons for this "new" foreign language in order to ensure the student can reach the expected outcome of B1 by the end of Grade 13.

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE II: French/German/Spanish - IB Language B Ab initio: SL only**  
**- 8 Year Secondary Programme**

This option is available only for foreign students joining our school in Grades 10 or 11 who wish to take the IB Diploma Programme and who have had little or no previous experience learning the foreign languages offered at the Language B level. The target outcome expected by the IB for Ab initio is loosely specified as the A1/A2 level. Extra private lessons in the target language are recommended but not compulsory.

8 Year Secondary Programme	Number of lessons per week	Number of lessons per year (30 weeks)	Cumulative total	End of year
Grade 12	4	120	120	...A1
Grade 13	4	120	240	A1

**Summary of IB Diploma Programme Languages at the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO:**

IB Diploma Programme Course	Expected entry level of English Grade 12	Target outcome Grade 13
HL Language A - Czech, English	C1	C2
SL Language A - Czech, English, self-taught mother-tongue	B2	C1
HL Language B - English, French, German, Spanish	B1	B2
SL Language B - English, French, German, Spanish	A2	B1
SL Language B Ab initio	---	A1/A2

**Language A** - This course of study is intended for a student who is a native or near-native, fluent language user. It is generally described as the student’s best language or her/his “mother-tongue”. At the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO, the following options are offered:

- English Language and Literature SL and HL
- Czech Literature SL and HL
- Self-taught Mother-Tongue SL

*Self-taught Mother-Tongue SL* - The IB DP offers students the opportunity to study their best language through the school supported self-taught option. The Diploma Programme coordinator will ensure that all course requirements are met. A teacher will be available at the school to assist the student in the target language in terms of selecting appropriate works, signing off on the world literature paper(s) and helping supervise the oral exercises. While this teacher does not have to be able to speak the target language, they will understand all the requirements and expectations of the course.

**The Bilingual IB Diploma:**

From (first examinations) 2013 the award of a bilingual diploma will be for either:

- completion of two languages selected from Group 1 (Language A) with the award of a grade 3 or higher in both
- completion of one of the subjects from group 3 or group 4 in a language that is not the same as the student’s nominated group 1 language. The student must attain a grade 3 or higher in both the group 1 language and the subject from group 3 or 4.

## **IB Middle Years Programme and Languages at the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO:**

**MYP Language A:** This course of study is intended for a student who is a native or near-native, fluent language user. It is generally described as the student's best language or her/his "mother-tongue". At the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO, English is currently offered.

Other languages may be offered in the future in Language A in the MYP (e.g. Czech, Korean) if there are sufficient numbers of interested students. Otherwise, the following options are available:

- non-natives whose level of English is sufficient may enrol in MYP English A; however, it is strongly recommended that these students receive extra private lessons of English to accelerate their learning of the language.
- non-natives whose level of English is not sufficient to enable successful participation in the MYP English A course can be temporarily enrolled in the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO's 8-Year Secondary Programme's ESL course and remain there until her or his level of English is sufficient to allow the student to be transferred to the mainstream MYP English A course. These students should also take extra private lessons to accelerate her or his learning of English.

A school-supported Self-Study Mother-Tongue option is not offered by the IB in the MYP as it is in the Diploma Programme. Nevertheless, the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO strongly encourages the continued development of the student's mother-tongue and may even assist the parents in arranging private lessons for the student.

Students from the 8-Year Secondary Programme, whose level of English is at the native or near-native level may have the opportunity to join the parallel MYP English A class instead of attending the mainstream ESL course in the 8-Year Programme.

**MYP Language B:** German, French or Spanish may be offered depending on student interest.

**"české reálie":** This extra non-MYP course is compulsory for Czech students enrolled in the MYP. It is designed to ensure that Czech students maintain and develop their learning of Czech language, literature, history and geography in accordance with the requirements of the Czech Ministry of Education (RVP).

## **Expected Outcomes in Foreign Languages for the Czech National Final Graduation Examination (Maturita):**

For students who wish to take the Czech State Maturita, here are the objectives:

- cizí jazyk I (English) Expected level outcome - B2
- cizí jazyk II (French/German/Spanish) Expected level outcome - B1

## **Czech for Foreigners:**

At the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO, we honour and respect our Czech home and that is why we provide an opportunity for all foreign students to study the Czech language (and culture) while they are staying temporarily in this country. We encourage and recommend all foreign students take advantage of this opportunity to learn more about the Moravian-Silesian Region and the Czech Republic. These lessons are provided by the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO outside of normal school hours. Foreign staff are also supported and encouraged to study the Czech Language.

Foreign students who have migrated to the Czech Republic and who intend to make the Czech Republic their permanent residence may be excused from completing the examinations for mainstream Czech classes for up to three years. Instead, they must attend Czech for Foreigners classes on which they will be assessed and graded. After three years, the Czech Ministry of Education expects these foreigners' level of Czech to be sufficient for them to be integrated into normal mainstream Czech Language and Literature lessons.

## **Teacher Recruitment:**

Our school is required by the Czech Ministry of Education to employ language teachers who have a degree in education and a C1 level of language. All non-natives who use English as the language of instruction are required to have a C1 (advanced) level of English. At the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO, we invest considerable time and energy to ensure the language skills of all our teaching staff is of the highest possible standard. In addition, the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO is committed to the ongoing professional development of all teaching staff in the fields of language learning and teaching.

## **Standard English:**

At the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO, our policy is to avoid one particular style of English as we have in our community many equally acceptable native English dialects from countries such as Australia, England, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, Scotland and the USA. We rather focus on educating the students as to the similarities and differences among these dialects in terms of pronunciation, meaning, nuance and spelling. In general, we require consistency in language use, following either the American or British system.

## **The Role of the Library:**

The 1<sup>st</sup> ISO library and librarian play a critical role in the development and maintenance of languages at the school. The fundamental role of the library is to ensure there is a wide range of adequate age- and level-appropriate resources accessible for learners of all the major languages which co-exist in the school community. This is achieved through regular consultations between language teachers, parents, students and the librarian. For less common languages, the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO librarian can assist in finding literature, periodicals and reference materials either on-line or through other libraries in the wider community.

The 1<sup>st</sup> ISO is committed to continually expanding and upgrading the library resources over time to remain useful to both students and staff. In particular, the school is committed to ensuring library staff have appropriate training in librarianship and that they maintain an awareness of current thinking and new developments in language teaching and learning. Furthermore, part of the 1<sup>st</sup> ISO library collection is dedicated to books and periodicals for the professional support and education of the teaching staff regarding language teaching.

## **The 1<sup>st</sup> International School of Ostrava Language Policy Steering Committee:**

Mgr. J. Petrus	Secondary School Principal
Mgr. V. Mazurová	Secondary School Vice Principal (Curriculum)
P. Corkill B.A./B.ed.	IB Coordinator
G. Chunyo B.A.	Head of English Dept.
Mgr. E. Hájková	Head of Foreign Languages Dept.
Mgr. P. Helebrantová	Head of Czech Dept.
R. McMunn	School Librarian
Mrs. M. Holesinska	Parent Representative (Czech Republic)
Mrs. Gitte Jorgensen	Parent Representative (Denmark)

## **Sources:**

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