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**Language policy**

**School language philosophy**

The ILS mission is to create for our students an educational environment that encourages an intelligent, inquisitive approach to learning and a proactive approach to life; that teaches children how to help create a better, safer world; and that fosters love and respect for one’s own culture and history as well as the history and culture of other nations.

In keeping with our slogan “Education for Life”, ILS uses the International Baccalaureate programme as an instrument for students’ cognitive motivation and a means of encouraging them to be responsible, active people with a thirst for knowledge that will carry them successfully through life.

It is important for our graduates to be skilled decision makers and problem solvers, guided by proper personal values, critical, creative thinking, and effective action in a wide range of situations and in cooperation with others and with due care for people’s health and safety. (ILS Mission Statement)

We see ability to communicate effectively in more than one foreign language as well as one’s own mother tongue to be essential to the concept of international education that promotes intercultural awareness.

The school sets the goal to encourage the students to communicate effectively in English, Russian and in their native language as well as in other foreign languages and to use them as tools for personal, academic and future professional development.

**School language profile**

ILS is a bilingual school where the languages of instruction are Russian and English.

The majority of ILS students are Russian native speakers or Korean native speakers. Also there is a small number of English, Japanese and other languages native speakers.

**Languages offered and at what levels**

For Russian native speakers Russian is the main language of instruction for the Russian national curriculum subjects in the middle school of ILS. In addition to this, students learn English as a foreign language in groups of no more than 10 students and their English language skills are further developed in the lessons of Reading/Literature, Science, Cultural Studies and Economics, which are taught in English. The total number of lessons per week taught in English in the middle school is 18 for students of 5th - 7th grades, and 20 for the students of 8th - 9th grades.

ILS is a recognized Cambridge English Language Assessment preparation centre and middle school students are encouraged to take Cambridge English Exams at the levels from Flyers for 5th grade students to FCE for 9th grade students.

The levels of the language acquisition in the middle school are the following:

Grade 5- starter/elementary

Grade 6- pre-intermediates

Grade 7- pre-intermediate

Grade 8- intermediate

Grade 9- upper-intermediate

English is the main language of instruction for students of grades 10-12 enrolled in the Diploma Programme of International Baccalaureate offered by ILS. Students pursuing both the Certificate of Secondary (Complete) General Education and the IB Diploma have about 30 lessons taught in English per week, which is more than the number of lessons they are taught in Russian.

English is offered as Language A to the students who are native speakers. The school is responsible for providing a teacher with appropriate teaching credentials to teach the course.

ILS offers English as Language B (HL or SL) for the majority of students. For Language B the group usually doesn’t exceed 10 students. In case there are more than 12 students, two groups are formed. The level of English is taken into account when groups are formed.

English language course is organized so that all four skills (reading, listening, writing and speaking) are developed. They use relevant textbooks as well as other materials prepared by the teacher; in addition, they have communication practice classes with a native speaker. The students are also encouraged to use resources from the library, the internet and other sources.

Most of the students choose English as a Unified State Exam by the end of the11th grade. Their results are usually very high (75-85% in general, up to 97 – the best ones). Many students take IELTS by the end of grade 11. Their results are also high - 7 to 8.5.

Russian is the language of instruction for the subjects of the Russian national curriculum in grades 10 and 11. Students who are both native and non-native but fluent speakers of Russian and wish to obtain the Certificate of Secondary (Complete) General Education take the Unified State Exam in the Russian language and a range of other subjects at the end of the 11th grade. Russian is also offered as Language A in grades 11 and 12 to students pursuing the IB Diploma.

Less fluent non-native speakers and beginners learn Russian as a foreign language with the aim of taking Test of Russian as a Foreign Language at the levels from basic to levels 2 and 3. They are offered 6 40-minute lessons of Russian per week in the 5th grade, 8 lessons per week in grades 6 to 11 and 4 lessons in the 12th grade. The students work in small groups or in one-to-one lessons, which allows considerable flexibility in meeting the students’ language needs and individual learning styles. Russian is also offered as an ab initio course for those wishing to take it as part of the IB Diploma Programme.

Korean is offered as Language A to the students who are native speakers. The school provides a teacher with appropriate teaching credentials and relevant IB training to ensure that the students’ mother tongue needs are met. Korean can also be learned by non-native speakers as an additional foreign language.

Several other foreign languages are offered in ILS to middle school and high school students. These are French, German, Japanese and Chinese. The students must have a minimum of 3 40-minute lessons of an additional foreign language in middle school; in grades 10 to 12 the students usually continue studying a second foreign language but not as part of the IB Diploma Programme.

In order to enhance the breadth and depth of language learning in the continuum of language and learning domains ILS emphasizes the importance of out-of-the classroom events and activities offered to and organized by students. Participation in educational trips, conferences, forums, competitions and exchange programs is optional but it is an important part of students’ school life.

The School hosts a range of events, interdisciplinary projects and activities each year to enrich the students’ experiences in mother-tongue languages, second languages or additional languages with the aim of increasing their cultural awareness and international-mindedness. Among the most well-established are the following:

International Day

Reading Poetry

Performing Classics

The Russian Language Contest

Thematic Round Tables focusing on various cultural aspects

The Annual Culture Festival at Far Eastern Federal University

“I study in Russia” at Vladivostok State University of Economics and Services

“TruD” a project for learners of Russian within the international educational event “Totalny Dictant”

“Spelling B”

ILS has agreements with CHUO High School in Morioka, Japan, the Chinese International Institute of the Shanxi Pedagogical University in Xian, China, School Districts of Vancouver, Vernon and Penticton, British Columbia, Canada. On vacations educational trips to Canada, China, South Korea and across Russia are popular among both middle and high school students. The students stay with the host families during their visits, which offer another opportunity not only to practice a foreign language in the everyday environment, but also to promote their intercultural awareness and international mindedness.

These trips provide an opportunity to foster foreign language acquisition as well as leave the comfort zone of their own culture and become immersed in a different cultural environment. This experience allows the students both to ask questions about a different culture and to better understand and appreciate their own culture. They get accustomed to evaluating different points of view and broaden their first-hand knowledge.

**Strategies to support all teachers in their contribution to the language development of students**

ILS promotes the view that all school teachers are first of all language teachers. Therefore, the school invests in qualified, professional language and subject teachers who are expected to speak at least one foreign language fluently.

As most of the subject teachers at school are not the native speakers, the school pays attention on how to encourage the teachers to increase their foreign language competency as they are responsible for supporting the linguistic needs across the curriculum.

All the IB teachers were hired on the Diploma Programme only if they demonstrated the satisfactory level of one foreign language, the necessity to improve the language on regular basis is recognized.

1. The teachers attend the workshops organized by the IBO.

2. They attend English language courses that are organized by language schools of the city.

3. During 5 years the School provided in-school English courses for the teachers.

4. The teachers attend English Language courses while they travel as chaperons with the students to Canada, China, South Korea.

5. The teachers participate in programs that provide scholarships for temporary study, project development and scientific research (Fulbright, Teacher-to teacher program, skills transfer programs).

6. The school organizes in-school professional skills workshops with the special emphasis on approaches to teaching and learning.

**Bibliography:**

IB publications:

Guidelines for developing a school language policy

Diploma Programme: From principles into practice

Language and learning in IB programmes

Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes

