



Kungsbacka

Language Policy

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Language Philosophy

The IB Diploma Programme at Aranäsgymnasiet recognises that language is fundamental to all learning since it permeates the entire curriculum and fosters international-mindedness. Therefore, we acknowledge that all teachers are also language teachers who promote linguistic diversity, language learning and communication skills through their different subjects.

We recognise that it is essential to be aware of how language, identity and learning are closely intertwined. Respectful and inclusive attitudes towards bi- or multilingual students are vital for a positive and stimulating learning environment. Language promotes cognitive growth as well as being an expression of personality and culture. Thus, language is essential for self-esteem and is an integral part of a student's sense of identity.

We also recognise that learning goes on outside the classroom as well as inside it. Language develops in all sorts of situations where people meet, such as the school canteen, the corridor, the library and online.

Our pedagogic perspectives recognise plurality, complexity and variations in learning situations. Equality does not mean that everyone is the same, but that diversity is treated equally. Learning languages is a way to develop multicultural understanding and international-mindedness.

Current language situations and practices

On the IB Diploma Programme, we have a diverse mix of students with different native languages. All teachers on the programme speak Swedish and English fluently and some of them also speak other languages (Spanish and French for example).

Students in the Swedish school system have studied English for approximately 7 years when they start upper secondary school. For many of our students, using English as the working language is a new experience when they start Pre-DP. All students in Pre-DP attend English lessons as a part of the school's national curriculum and the students are well prepared when they begin the DP years.

Since all subjects are taught in English (except Swedish A and Language B) it is very important for the native Swedes to maintain and develop Swedish-

This situation can be compared to teenagers moving to Sweden from other countries, starting Swedish national school where they have to learn Swedish to be able to follow the teaching in all subjects. For them it is essential to keep learning and developing their first language. Scientific studies have shown that teaching in the first language supports learning in the second language and vice versa¹. It is very important to develop the first and the second language simultaneously because it will benefit learning in all subjects, at the same time as it strengthens the students' self-esteem.

On the IB Diploma Programme, Swedish and English are offered as Language A. In addition, students with other first languages have the opportunity to take extra lessons in their native language. The local community offers a teacher and scheduled lessons when there are at least five students with the same language.

The classroom is an English-speaking zone. English is used exclusively in teaching situations, except when certain terms need to be explained in Swedish, and except for Swedish or other language lessons when the working language is the same as the language studied.

The students mainly use Swedish or English in school outside lesson time.

There is a special educational needs teacher who does screening tests on students in Pre-DP to identify students with difficulties with reading speed. The special educational needs teacher then consults with mentors, other teachers and the school health team to determine what support the students may need. The IB team of teachers have regular meetings with representatives of the school health team, including the special educational needs teacher, to follow-up and discuss any further need for help.

Most students study one modern language in Pre-DP (French, Spanish, German or Italian). French and Spanish are offered as Language B in the IB Diploma Programme, together with Swedish B and Swedish Ab Initio.

The school library helps students and staff to find information and also to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively use that information. The libraries have databases that contain professional material, scholarly articles, newspapers and magazines in many languages, which are accessible through the school's intranet.

Aims and plans for action

We recognise that language is learnt in a variety of ways and all students should be encouraged to find their best learning style. The teachers should provide opportunities to learn in different ways and contexts. We should remind ourselves to see the students as resources, not just objects of teaching. Situations when students teach students occur spontaneously in peer response and classroom discussions, but can also be used in a more organised way, for example in CAS and study groups.

¹ e.g. Collier, V. P. & Thomas, W. P., *Validating the power of bilingual schooling: Thirty-two years of large-scale, longitudinal research*, 2017.

We are continually working with language issues in focus and we aim to

- foster an appreciation of the value and diversity of language and thus strengthen the students' confidence and self-esteem
- promote a multilingual and multicultural society that fosters international-mindedness
- make Aranäsgymnasiet a school without prejudice, with an inclusive, open-minded and welcoming atmosphere
- encourage students to develop their ability to be communicators who can think and express themselves with precision, clarity, confidence and imagination in at least two languages
- encourage students with other native languages than Swedish or English to attend extra tutoring in their first language outside regular school hours
- encourage students with other native languages than Swedish or English to teach their languages to other people as CAS, for example in small study groups
- give the teachers opportunities to develop and maintain their English when it is not their first language, for example by using English at team meetings.

Communication of the policy

The language policy is communicated to everyone involved in the IB Diploma Programme through pathways, such as staff meetings, student mentor time and class councils. It is also posted on the school's intranet.

The policy is reviewed every year as a part of the process of revising the general implementation plan of the IB Diploma Programme.