



**FAGERHAUG INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

# **Language Policy**

Guidelines for Members of the  
Primary- and Middle Years Programme

- **Policy implementation:** September 2020, PYP and MYP committee
- **To be reviewed:** September 2021

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# Mission Statement

*Our mission at Fagerhaug International School is to strive for academic excellence with personal integrity to develop internationally minded students. We challenge ourselves, our students and our community to become caring and knowledgeable lifelong learners who inquire and take action to create a better world.*

## 1. Purpose of Language Policy

This language policy is a working document developed by staff and administration at Fagerhaug International School (Fint). The policy is consistent with the stipulated principles and practices of the IB and the document outlines our school's linguistic and academic goals and defines the program designed to help our students attain these goals.

This policy is intended to provide an overview and guiding principles for language learning that permeates the entire school curriculum through authentic contexts in a culturally rich and diverse environment. Our policy is a statement of agreement - one to which the staff and the Fint community is asked to commit to so our school can achieve its mission.

## 2. Philosophy of Language teaching and learning

Language wraps itself around, in, through and between everything that we teachers and learners do in the classroom. Ritchhart (2002, p.141)

Fagerhaug International School is a PYP International Baccalaureate School and an MYP International Baccalaureate Candidate School. At Fint we create a challenging and motivating multilingual environment where the languages of instruction are English and Norwegian. We view language as a tool for making meaning in the world. We believe that every student has an individual and a cultural set of experiences, skills and interests, which must be considered in the teaching and learning process.

At Fint all teachers are language teachers as language transcends curriculum areas. Through the IB language programmes, we aim to develop confident, curious, highly proficient and enthusiastic readers, writers, viewers, presenters, speakers and listeners.

Fint is strongly committed to providing students with access to Norwegian language learning and utilizing our host country and community for language and cultural experiences throughout the curriculum. Equally important to the school is the belief that each student should have the opportunity to maintain and develop their first language. .

In the MYP students will choose a third language, French or Spanish or specialization in Norwegian or English.

As IB World Schools, we are committed to the following practices:

**Statement of language philosophy:** All students are expected to learn language; to learn through language and to learn about language.

### 3. Language profile

Fagerhaug International School (Fint) is an International School with a diverse population and language needs.

- All teachers need to be well-versed in English and willing to learn basic Norwegian.
- There is a coherent and consistent approach towards the development of language throughout the school.
- Consistency is expected throughout the PYP and MYP in procedure; expectations; differentiation and assessment.
- Language is taught through relevant and realistic contexts in all subjects.
- Diversity of the student/staff body is celebrated through recognition of the first language and mother tongue.
- Clear expectations for and from parents of the whole school language policy.
- An understanding that all languages are of value.

## 4. Language development

Language development is the centre of all academic learning and is taught through personal inquiry, collaborative inquiry and guided inquiry. Structured, purposeful inquiry is the main approach to teaching and learning language at Fint. There is a school-wide approach towards developing listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting skills.

Development of a multilingual resource base and library is in progress and school information and signs throughout the school should be displayed in both English and Norwegian. French, Spanish and mother tongue languages should also be displayed.

## 5. Admission, learning of the host country language and placement

Fagerhaug International School accepts students from diverse ethnic, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds at all year levels, class size permitting. All students are expected to learn English and Norwegian in the PYP, and a third language is added in MYP, French or Spanish or specialization in Norwegian and English.

Fagerhaug International School is positive about admitting students without Norwegian or English as their first language. However, Fagerhaug is not able to offer first language support in subjects taught in English and there may be limited first language support for Norwegian. All of the teachers are supportive of students and the languages that they bring to school, however, the funding structure does not allow us to meet these needs in an ideal fashion.

In the MYP, students in Language Acquisition are grouped into phases, giving students a placement test to determine in which phase they will continue with language acquisition from PYP.

**With the new guidelines for Language Acquisition there are three levels:**

- 1- Beginner students of Norwegian or English are grouped in a phase 1 and 2
- 2- Intermediate students of Norwegian or English are grouped in a phase 3 and 4
- 3- Proficient students in Norwegian and English are grouped in a phase 5 and 6

Students are also given the option to choose either French or Spanish as a third language. These are at the moment only offered as a language acquisition study with three different phases.

Differentiation occurs within these different phases.

## **6. Mother tongue languages**

Mother tongue language is the language that is most strongly linked to the culture that an individual identifies with as their culture of origin, and often is the language used at home. The best language is usually the language that an individual is most proficient.

At FINT we encourage the development of students' mother tongue languages, through an ethos of acceptance and celebration of linguistic diversity within the community. We acknowledge that mother tongue languages are a beneficial resource for both students and teachers, as they provide varied perspectives and build awareness in our learning community. We create an annual language profile of our school community.

The school's curriculum consists of English and Norwegian in all year levels. Spanish and French are offered as an elective from MYP 7. Our curriculum facilitates other mother tongue languages by including cultural perspectives, which encourage students to share their languages appropriately.

We endeavour to connect with parents and the wider community by informing them of the variety of world language courses offered in the community. We strive to source books in many languages in our school library and suggest many appropriate IT resources both online and through software. Students are encouraged to research (both online or library resources) topics during guided or independent inquiry, as well as personal research projects in their mother tongue. Students new to Norwegian and English have access to online translation sites to help aid in instruction or directions to allow them to access the curriculum.

We encourage students to express themselves in multiple languages, including mother tongue, during Student Led Conferences, whole school assemblies or within units of inquiry.

## 7. Language programmes in the PYP

- Authentic learning must be appropriate and relevant
- Focus should be on how children best learn – practical, using a variety of strategies
- Linked with and developed through the unit of inquiry
- Reading, speaking, writing, use of media, all need to be covered and linked
- Collaborative planning between class teachers and specialists is essential
- All languages are valued and Fint strives to make every student proficient in two languages
- A learning portfolio is kept to track students in the PYP
- Children with multiple languages may present with adequate language skills and levels of comprehension in the lower PYP and need to be screened in the upper PYP.
- All PYP 6th grade students will be placed through a team decision meeting to place all of the students in Language and Literature and Language Acquisition for MYP.

## 8. Language programmes in the MYP

**Language and Literature:** An IB MYP subject group that is designed for mother tongue courses. In our school these courses include Norwegian and English. It engages students in the study of many aspects of language and literature of a community and their respective cultures. A course offered in this subject group allows the study of a wide range of literary and nonliterary text types, writing styles and techniques, allowing students to comment on the significance of any possible contexts, audiences, purpose, and the use of linguistic and literary devices. (MYP Language and Literature).

**Language Acquisition:** An IB MYP subject group that is designed for additional language learning courses. In our school these courses include Norwegian, English, Spanish and French. It engages students in the ability to communicate in a variety of

modes, in more than one language and is essential to the concept of an international education. A language acquisition course provides a linguistic and academic challenge for students in order to facilitate the best possible educational experience. (Language Learning in MYP)

- Students should have at least one language and literature and one language acquisition
- There is consistency in how language acquisition and language and literature is taught no matter what the language of instruction.
- Teachers from the two language groups collaborate closely to provide a smooth transition.
- Students must be able to study a third language sustained across the entire year in each year of the MYP and the same additional language in each year of the MYP.

## 9. Language Assessment

Forms of language and language instruction are broken into four strands:

- Oral language (listening and speaking)
- Visual language (viewing and presenting)
- Written language (reading)
- Written language (writing)

Language will be assessed formatively and summatively, based on the strands above and in accordance with the school's Assessment Policy, the School's PYP Language Scope and Sequences, and the MYP Language Acquisition, and Language and Literature assessment criterion.

- Language learners will be screened twice a year and may be placed in regards to levels (ex. Raz kids) or phases (1 to 3 in MYP). Note: grade levels may not be used.
- All students need to have a best fit which is based upon the phase or level the screening tool has provided, class work, previous formative and summative



assessment work in all of the language strands, and taking into account the students additional language challenges (dyslexia, learning difficulties, etc.).