



NORLIGHTS  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL  
Oslo



# Language Policy



***“ If a child can't learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn ”***

***- Ignacio Estrada***

## **School Mission**

Our mission is to provide a high quality education, bringing up inquisitive and knowledgeable, productive learners who are motivated to succeed.

In addition, we aim to nurture internationally minded compassionate young people with intercultural understanding and respect who strive to create a better and more peaceful world.

The objective is to provide the students with the academic and social skills that will help them reach their full potential, enabling them to be open-minded individuals who are able to think critically, and are encouraged to challenge norms and tackle change.

## **School Philosophy**

At Norlights International School, we believe language is a vital tool for learning. We challenge students to become responsible and effective world citizens. Language learning is driven by the idea of encouraging intercultural awareness, open mindedness, curiosity, and an appreciation of our world's diversity. We believe that learning of any language is developmental by nature. We want our students to know how to use and appreciate the power of language with integrity. The learning process involves learning language(s), learning about language(s), and learning through language(s). We as a school community are the role models for using and learning language and foster a positive attitude toward language amongst our students.

## **Purpose of Language Policy**

The purpose of the language policy is to provide guidance for developing the curriculum and to facilitate learning and development among the students. This policy is consistent with school's vision, mission as well as with the standards and practices of the IB PYP and the MYP.

## **Diversity of language needs**

In the first year of operation (2015-16), there were 40 students in the school from 10 different countries. The majority of the language speakers were Indian and Turkish. In the following year (2016-17), the school had students from 24 different countries. In the current year (2017-18), the school has students from 17 different countries. The majority of the speakers are Indian, Turkish and Norwegian.

## **Information on languages of teaching and learning:**

The main language for instruction in the classroom is English. The school ascribes to Halliday's aspects of language development; learning language, learning about language and learning through language. In this way, students are encouraged to use their strongest language to research and learn when they need to in order to enhance their understanding. Students are also encouraged, both by the teachers and by the school as a community to communicate in English with each other and on the playground. All the teachers are the language teachers and teach in English other than during Norwegian and French lessons.

## **Other language needs of the community- Norwegian**

Norwegian is the language of the community and the law requires that Norwegian should be taught in schools. At Norlights International School, Norwegian serves as the second taught language. The school offers Norwegian instruction for the beginner through to the native Norwegian speaker. The native Norwegian classes are designed to meet the needs of native speakers or students with near native competence in Norwegian. The students are introduced to different aspects of the Norwegian culture and language through vocabulary, stories, role-play and songs. The students at Norlights International School

are divided into two groups: beginners and advanced. Beginners work on letters, words and vocabulary in Norwegian and the advanced group works according to the state curriculum.

### **Mother tongue support**

Within the student community, there are students who have different language needs. Parents being an important part of the school community are encouraged to provide first language experiences to their children, and to help their children to continue to develop their mother tongue. At Norlights International School, we look forward to include books in the mother tongue to be added to the school library with parental support.

Norlights International School, also intends to start an after school language club. Volunteer parents in their mother tongue will run this language club.

### **Beliefs held about language learning and teaching at primary and middle school**

- All staff members at the school recognize that all teachers are language teachers and that language learning is the basis of all learning
- The school ascribes to Halliday's aspects of language development; learning language, learning about language and learning through language
- The school appreciates the richness and diversity of language and believes that it is important for maintaining cultural identity and emotional well-being
- Language competence effects the student's ability to communicate. Thus they can research and work in small groups or at home in their own language
- Students are facilitated to develop their competence across all the strands of language: listening and speaking, viewing and presenting, reading and writing
- The school has adopted the language scope and sequence of the PYP as its main language curriculum
- Learning outcomes from the scope and sequence are keyed in to the unit work and differentiated by phases for student levels
- It is expected that students are at different phases and developing through the phases along varied pathways
- Language learning at the school is supported by print and media resources in English and Norwegian
- Teachers are sensitive to children's language learning levels, and readily provide visual media resources to aid in understanding of concepts
- In order to cater to the differentiation needs of the students, primary and middle school teachers are required to include teaching strategies into the unit plans
- The assessment policy outlines the school's commitment to assess all students at their own level, according to their current phase. This applies to language as well.
- The assessment policy also expresses a commitment to flexible and differentiated assessment tools that will allow each child to demonstrate the extent of their learning beyond their language level

### **Support for Language Development**

Norlights International School, has several support services available to help students in their language development. These include:

#### **EAL SUPPORT**

At Norlights International School, we ensure students who need additional English support are identified at the beginning of each school year. We use a variety of assessments to ensure students are recognized early as an English as an Additional Language Learners (EAL). An instructional program has been developed that incorporates parents, teachers, and student data to best meet the goals of each individual

student. Pull out and Push in program models are used to reach each child's potential.

**Pull Out:** Beginner level EAL students receive small group instruction by an EAL Teacher. This small group intensive instruction provides students with individual language support to meet varying language goals.

**Push In:** The EAL teacher in conjunction with the mainstream teacher plans and delivers language lessons that are scaffolded and differentiated to meet the needs and styles of all students. The two teachers work collaboratively to plan and implement language lessons across the PYP and MYP curriculum.

**Planning:** The entire Norlights International School, staff is responsible for planning lessons that meet the individual needs and styles of all students regardless of language backgrounds. EAL expert collaborates with mainstream teachers to plan lessons that meet all learners' diverse backgrounds.

## TECHNOLOGY

Students are encouraged to use wide range of technology that supports language development. Computers, smart boards and projectors all help students to compose, share and connect ideas. School has access to reading A to Z platform for all the students to map their reading levels.

## ASSESSMENT

Students are assessed for their development in all the strands of language: listening and speaking, viewing and presenting, reading and writing. While the end product is often assessed as an indicator of growth, the process is also vitally important. All the students at Norlights International School, are assessed; formally and informally; during the course of school year. Students get feedback based on their growth towards age appropriate learning goals.

Being an international school in Norway, students of PYP 5 are obligatory to take national test in English for reading comprehension, vocabulary and grammar.

## Plan for Implementation and Review

The PYP and MYP staff members along with the Pedagogical Leadership Team accept the responsibility for ensuring the language policy is put into practice. Teachers and administrators communicate language policy to parents, and is updated on the school website. The Leadership Team will regularly evaluate implementation of language policy as evidenced by classroom observations and school presentations. The Language Policy is in effect from August, 2015 and will be reviewed as and when needed by the Norlights International School staff members and the pedagogical leadership team.

Review with the whole staff: 18<sup>th</sup> Aug'16

Review with the consultant: 24<sup>th</sup> Aug'16

Review with the administration with suggested changes: 8<sup>th</sup> Sep'16

Review after the consultation visit: 30<sup>th</sup> January'17

Review with the whole staff in the new school year: 17<sup>th</sup> Aug'17

## Resources

(2006) *Primary Years Programme: Guidelines for developing a school language policy*. International Baccalaureate Organization.

(2009). *Making the PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education*.

"Information about national tests 2015 - For parents with children in Years 5, 8 and 9".

<http://www.udir.no>. Utdanningsdirektoratet. Web. 29 Aug. 2017