



**FAGERHAUG INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

# **Language Policy**

Guidelines for Members of the  
Primary- and Middle Years Programme

- **Policy implementation:** September 2020, PYP and MYP committee, reviewed fall 2023
- **To be reviewed:** September 2026

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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)*

At FINT we strive to 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 students are expected to learn language; to learn through language and to learn about language.

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 utilising our 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.

FINT builds upon the shared beliefs that:

- All learners are language learners.
- All teachers are language teachers.
- Language is taught through inquiry as well as through methods/instruction.
- Language is key to connect with one's self, text and others.
- Language is used to develop reading, writing, viewing, presenting, speaking and listening skills.
- Language is the means for inquiry, which allows students to make connections and develop understanding.
- First language development supports all learning and affirms identity.
- Language learning is built upon and extends prior knowledge, enhancing the application of conceptual understandings in language.
- Language learning requires knowledge and skill to attain proficiency.
- Language learning includes exposure to a rich array of language experiences, enhancing international mindedness.
- Linguistic diversity and cultural diversity contribute to language learning.

### **3. Language Profile and Stakeholder Responsibilities**

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

- An understanding that all languages are of value and are respected.
- All teachers need to be well-versed in English and willing to learn Norwegian.
- There is a coherent and consistent approach towards the development of language throughout the school.
- PYP and MYP staff collaborate to develop common understandings throughout teaching, learning, and assessment to support learning criteria in a way that supports multilingualism and cultures.
- Languages (Norwegian and English) are taught through relevant and realistic contexts in several subjects.

- Diversity of the student/staff body is celebrated through recognition of the first language (mother tongue).
- Clear expectations for and from parents of the whole school language policy.

#### Leadership Team Responsibilities

- Model the attributes of the IB Learner Profile.
- Read and implement the school's Language Policy.
- Be aware of the languages present in the school to facilitate and map communication needs.
- Provide the resources to support effective implementation of the school's IB Language Policy.

#### Teacher Responsibilities

- Understand and practice the framework that, "All teachers are language teachers".
- Model the attributes of the IB Learner Profile.
- Read and understand the school's Language Policy and utilise the Essential Agreements for Teaching and Learning.
- Teach core academic vocabulary, unit vocabulary and command terms.
- Explicitly teach ATL skills.
- Teach APA referencing and bibliographic styles according to Academic Integrity policy.
- Explicitly state and reinforce the language of instruction.
- Provide clear guidance for learning tasks, ensuring that all students understand the task requirements and expectations and assessment criteria.
- Scaffold larger tasks, using formative assessments with feedback to support learning (as outlined in the assessment policy).
- Differentiate planning, teaching and assessment to support language learner differences and inclusion needs.
- Develop writing samples.

#### Paraprofessional Responsibilities

- Model the attributes of the IB Learner Profile
- Read and understand the school's Language Policy and utilise the Essential Agreements for Teaching and Learning.
- Support the teaching of core academic vocabulary, unit vocabulary and command terms.
- Support explicitly teaching ATL skills.

- Be aware of the languages present in the school.
- Explicitly state and reinforce the language of instruction.
- Provide clear guidance for learning tasks, ensuring that all students understand the task requirements and expectations and assessment criteria.

#### Librarian

- Model the attributes of the IB Learner Profile.
- Read and understand the school's Language Policy.
- Be aware of the languages present in the school.
- Ensure easy access to the library in the school, which includes helping identify and suggest support resources in consultation with all teachers (for English, Norwegian, Spanish and mother tongue languages that are present in our school).
- Provide support and access to print materials, websites, videos and other materials designed to support subject group aims and objectives linked to language support.

#### Parent Responsibilities

- Reinforce the attributes and the language of the IB Learner Profile.
- Read and understand Fint's Language Policy.
- Consistently support school learning activities e.g shared book reading, storytelling, teaching letters and numbers and visits to libraries that provide children with a foundation for early learning and language growth.
- Reinforce student ATL skills in the home to support the school's IB Programmes

#### Student Responsibilities

- Practise the attributes of the IB Learner Profile
- Express ideas in the language of instruction for that specific class and respect the communications of others.
- Support classmates in fluent use of the language of instruction.
- Speak English in all English instructional contexts.
- Speak Norwegian during Norwegian instructional contexts.
- Use language of choice during personal time (breaks, before school, after school).
- Language is an inclusive communication tool, and not used as a means to exclude students or staff.

## 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.

FINT's library strives to support not only English and Norwegian but also multilingualism. Students are encouraged to select and read in their first language.

Signs throughout the school are displayed in English and Norwegian. French, Spanish and first language (mother tongue) will be encouraged on displays throughout the school.

## 5. Admission, Host Country Language, and Language Placement

Fagerhaug International School accepts students from diverse ethnic, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds at all year levels. All students are expected to learn English and Norwegian in the PYP and MYP programme.

Fagerhaug International School is positive about accepting 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. Students who have limited Norwegian can be offered additional assistance with language acquisition during Norwegian.

As students begin at FINT a preliminary interview may be done to map the language competencies ranging from the students home life to how they function in academic and social settings to understand the needs from a linguistic and cultural perspective. As the student progresses portions of the interview may be revisited to monitor progress.

## 6. First language

First 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. A child may refer to a best language as the language that an individual is most proficient at.

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 a first language or mother tongue languages are beneficial resources for both students and teachers, as they provide varied perspectives and build awareness in our learning community. Each year at FINT we celebrate Mother Language Day on (or around) 21st of February with our school community.

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

FINT strives to work to understand each child's language and learning needs. Children who come from multilingual backgrounds may be more difficult to map and evaluate if it is not known if learning needs are challenging due to learning several languages or if additional learning needs are present (learning disabilities, dyslexia, etc.). FINT will work actively with parents and the special needs services within the appropriate county to support these students in the best possible manner.

We endeavour to connect with parents and the wider community by informing them of language courses offered in the community. We strive to source books in many languages in our school library and suggest many appropriate online resources. 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

In the PYP classroom, language is supported through various literacy activities such as guided reading, writer's workshop, instructional vocabulary, individual word lists, daily read aloud and opportunities for students to use language during presentations and collaboration.

Learning is differentiated in the **PYP classroom** in a variety of ways. Students are individually assessed in their reading ability (Raz), which may be used to organise the students into flexible groups (literature circles, reading partners, etc.). They participate in Daily 5 language organisation (Read to self, Read to someone, Word work, Writing work, Guided reading) and use CAFE (Comprehension, Accuracy, Fluency, Expand vocabulary) strategies. Students are assessed individually using Words Their Way and organised into groups focusing on spelling patterns. Writing is used to focus on meaning making in addition to addressing aspects of writing as a technical skill, and self-expression is encouraged by regular intervals of written and oral reflection. The six traits of writing (Ideas, Organisation, Voice, Sentence fluency, Word choice, and Conventions) are used to support the writing programme. The focus of the learning is for the experience to be relevant, engaging and challenging to each student.

Language is integrated throughout the **Program of Inquiry**. Higher level thinking, key concept questions, and extended research all lend themselves to having a strong vocabulary and language presence within the planners. Oral, visual, and written language are all present within planner activities. Literature selections both in read-alouds and guided reading are chosen to build an understanding of the concepts within the planners.

- Authentic learning experiences 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, writing, speaking, listening and use of media are actively integrated throughout the units of inquiry.
- Collaborative planning between class teachers and specialists is essential
- All languages are valued and students are encouraged to use their first language to acquire and show learning.
- FINT strives to make every student proficient in English and Norwegian.
- A learning portfolio is kept to track students in the 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, and Spanish. 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 (language acquisition and language and literature) collaborate closely to provide a smooth transition.
- Students must study a third language continuously throughout each year of the MYP. Spanish is available as a third language option. If a student requires additional support in English or Norwegian, they may receive extra language acquisition in English or Norwegian instead of studying a third language.

## 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.