

LANGUAGE POLICY

The language of instruction at EIS is English, our program is designed to support the school vision of serving an international community and providing strong mother tongue support for our students at the same time. Therefore, the primary language of instruction in EIS is English.

At EIS, students learn language, learn through language, and learn about language in an environment where they are actively engaged in inquiry and problem solving, making meaning, thinking reflectively and building lasting understandings. Since language is central to learning, all teachers are, in practice language teachers. Our school’s core learning outcomes promote an environment where language acquisition permeates the curriculum. Therefore, teaching and learning language is integrated within all subjects and units. As an international school, we strive to provide a multicultural educational environment to EIS students in becoming active international citizens.

Keeping in mind that most of our students are not English native speakers, we support the English language in the lessons using the CLIL approach and providing a unique staffing model with English speakers working together with local teachers.

We believe that languages are best acquired in the environment that promotes them. Therefore, we have developed a system that prioritizes mother tongue over foreign languages and emphasizes the most desired foreign language. We are asking every family about their preference of mother tongue and provide school wide mother tongue support for Russian, Latvian and French.

Core Principles and Implementation in the order of priority:

	Core Principles	Implementation
1	Language is first and foremost a necessity for communication and thus best acquired by exposure to the environment where it is spoken. The primary goal of all our parents and our focus for students as international global citizens is to achieve English language proficiency. Therefore, it is necessary to provide both explicit instruction and immersion into the environment.	EIS will hire expat faculty fully proficient in English. They will lead at least 4 Explicit English Language Classes per week plus Science, Social Studies, and Math implemented as an immersion program. Resulting in the following number of classes in English per week: Grade 1-3: 10 - 12 Grades 4-5: 11 - 13 Grades 6: 12 – 14 Grade 7: 15 - 17
2	Mother tongue acquisition serves as a strong foundation for acquiring other languages and all other disciplines.	We support strong <u>local</u> mother tongue acquisition by offering a choice of mother tongue course for Latvian and Russian native speakers with intensity 4-5 lessons of instruction per week. Students whose mother tongues are other than Latvian or

		Russian will be offered a choice in the times of the Mother tongue classes: a. parents or parent hired private tutor becomes their child's teacher in mother tongue, b. additional English Language and Literature classes are offered by the school.
3	Latvian law requires teaching Latvian language to all students in the accredited educational institutions.	All students who do not choose Latvian as their mother tongue will have Latvian as their required foreign language during the day.
4	Secondary benefit of learning languages is brain development. Neuroscience confirms the benefits of learning languages for the brain in multiple studies over the last few decades.	French/another language will be offered in the afternoon as Foreign Language 2. Upon parents' request and formation of a group of at least 5 students the school will look into the opportunities to offer other foreign languages.

EIS Language Proficiency Framework (expectations for production)

EIS Language Proficiency Framework is based on Common European Framework of Reference for Languages https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/source/framework_en.pdf and Guide for the Development and Implementation of Curricula for Plurilingual and International Education <https://rm.coe.int/guide-for-the-development-and-implementation-of-curricula-for-plurilin/1680702437>

EIS Expectations for target languages are shown in the table below.

Language levels may differ for:

- Comprehension
- Production

At EIS the target levels are for "production". The level of "comprehension" may exceed the target level of production.

Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Number of lessons/ week	Target (after Grade 12)
English*	0/A1	A1	A1	A2	A2	B1	B1	B2	B2	4/5	C1
Mother tongue**	A2	A2	B1	B1	B2	B2	B2	C1	C1	4	C1
FL1**	0/A1	A1	A1	A1	A2	A2	A2	B1	B1	3/4	B2
FL2**	0/A1	A1	A1	A1	A1	A2	A2	A2	A2	2	B1

* This is the language of instruction. Language support is provided if the student has just enrolled, and throughout the educational process if difficulties in language acquisition arise.

** Students will acquire the language in the mixed-age groups according to their initial level of language, and may be transferred to upper-level groups in accordance with their progress.

Essential agreement about English Language Acquisition at EIS

The acquisition of English is a core component of EIS curriculum, as the language has a role of the medium and influences students' inclusion in the school community, general understanding of the themes and subject areas, activity and productivity in the lessons and school events. It makes English a subject of special attention at EIS. The set of expectations for English acquisition is described below.

EIS students acquire English as a language

- As a subject
- In the core curriculum and extracurricular classes through the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL approach)
- As a medium of communication in school everyday life and events

English language acquisition facilitators are expat teacher whose mother tongue is English.

Core principles for EIS in English language acquisition

- EIS targets at integrating the subjects and using CLIL methodology in core lessons, which is a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for learning and teaching of content with the objective of promoting both content and language mastery to predefined levels (Maljers, Marsh, Genesee, Frigols-Martin, Mehisto, 2010).
- In every teaching event (lesson, project, extracurricular activity etc.) there are specific goals for both the subject area and the language.

- The lessons of English serve as support time to acquire the concepts and vocabulary of other subjects. Thus, English teachers' cooperation with the specialist teachers is an essential tool for academic progress.
- The procedures that foster students' enquiry (morning circle, Learner Profile components, etc.) should be integrated in English language program.

Common components to facilitate convergence between the languages

It is important for students to incorporate the principle of convergence in all languages they learn at school. Language teachers (English, Latvian, Russian, French/other) mutually agree to regularly use the following principles in their daily work:

- Communicative approach in language acquisition and linguistic reflexivity. Linguistic reflexivity means supporting learners' intuitions concerning the way in which languages work.
- Building students' understanding about the norms and variation in languages.
- The development of cross-linkages calls to utilize the similarity and dissimilarity between languages.
- We strive to establish the points of convergence and encouraging cross-cutting links between all languages taught at school. The teacher planning time includes common discourse meetings for language teachers. The language teachers are expected to plan thematic and grammar-related program components together to promote convergence in all languages (e.g. similar grammar structures in foreign languages are acquired at the same time, the comparison between grammar issues in a foreign language and mother tongue is provided).
- Using a variety of textual genres in all subjects.
- Intercultural education. We strive to involve students in learning the language and the culture of its origin. It is appreciated to facilitate learners' involvement in projects, excursions, and cultural diversity events.
- We strive to support learners' extensive reading in school individually, together with a teacher, reading in roles, discourse and discussion, debate, book-crossing events, inviting book authors to lessons etc.; and at home – individual, with parents and friends.