

Language Policy – Primary Years Programme (PYP)

September 2025

Basic documents

1. Guidelines for developing a school language policy
2. IB language tenets
3. IB Programme Standards and Practices
4. Monnet International School Statute

1. Philosophy

Monnet International School, established in 1992 and implementing the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) since 2012 in both the Paddington Bear Kindergarten and in the Primary School (Grades 0-4), promotes an inclusive, inquiry-based environment where bilingual learning fosters global understanding and academic excellence in both Polish and English.

Our educational philosophy embraces the IB's recognition of language as central to learning, identity, and intercultural understanding. Language learning at Monnet International School is not limited to vocabulary acquisition—it is about learning language, learning through language, and learning about language, enabling students to communicate, inquire, and reflect across disciplines. We support communication in Polish, English, and Chinese while emphasizing non-verbal expression, ethical awareness, and emotional well-being.

We view international education as a continuous, multi-level process that equips students to engage with global challenges. Our commitment to multilingualism, inclusion, and cultural awareness fosters students' compassion, resilience, and capacity for socially responsible action. Our educational offer aligns with international standards and teaching methods, ensuring that all programs implemented at our school foster sensitivity to other people's cultures, attitudes, and needs. This approach is designed to help young learners find their place within the international community and encourage them to be active members of a global society.

2. Host Language and Mother Tongue Cultural Context

As a school located in Poland, Monnet International School ensures that the Polish language and culture are deeply integrated into the curriculum. Through alignment with national standards, cultural celebrations, educational field trips, and a variety of language-rich

experiences, students develop pride in their local heritage while making meaningful connections to global themes.

At our school, the host language also serves as the mother tongue for the majority of students. Instructional practices promote balanced exposure to both Polish and English, with teachers communicating in each language in approximately equal measure. However, students predominantly use Polish for informal interactions with peers during unstructured time. At the same time, most students are able to respond, collaborate, and engage effectively with peers who do not speak Polish or for whom Polish is not the first language, creating a supportive and inclusive language environment aligned with IB principles.

The school provides targeted support in the form of extra Polish-as-a-foreign-language classes for students with a foreign background, enabling them to develop communicative competence necessary for active engagement in classroom activities and full participation in the school community. The classes are delivered twice weekly during school hours in small, mixed-age groups.

3. Languages of instruction

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) at Monnet International School is delivered in both Polish and English. Language practices differ between the Paddington Bear Kindergarten and the Primary School (Grades 0–4).

In the Paddington Bear Kindergarten, each age group is supported by two homeroom teachers: one who communicates exclusively in Polish and the other exclusively in English. Both teachers actively participate in planning, delivering, assessing, and reflecting on inquiry-based learning. They share equal responsibility for supporting students' acquisition of knowledge and skills in both languages of instruction.

In the Primary School (Grades 0-4), each homeroom teacher communicates with students in both Polish and English. Support teachers and subject teachers primarily use Polish, incorporating English as appropriate, while English language classes conducted by a native English speaker are delivered exclusively in English. The overall distribution of Polish and English in the Primary School is approximately balanced, with an estimated ratio of 50:50.

Learning experiences in both the Kindergarten and Primary School are intentionally designed to foster the development of language skills within authentic and engaging contexts. Through inquiry-based units, students establish meaningful connections, apply their understanding across disciplines, and transfer knowledge to new situations. They build upon prior knowledge while simultaneously developing literacy in both languages of instruction.

4. Supporting languages of instruction

To support language development and ensure equitable access to learning, the school implements strategies that promote comprehension and communication for all students. Teachers use visual aids such as charts, diagrams, and pictures to reinforce understanding. Sentence starters and word banks are provided to assist students in speaking and writing tasks. Instructions are broken down into short, clear steps, with regular checks for understanding. Reading materials are offered at varying levels to match students' language proficiency, and bilingual glossaries are available for key terms. For learners with limited language skills, alternative response formats such as oral answers or drawings are encouraged. Additionally, students receive guidance in both languages of instruction when necessary to foster academic success and inclusion. Grouping strategies that support peer modeling and collaboration are also implemented in the learning process.

Digital tools and multimedia resources significantly enhance bilingual learning by making language acquisition more dynamic, interactive, and effective. Videos, podcasts, and audiobooks expose students to authentic language use in real-world scenarios, allowing them to hear a variety of speakers beyond their teacher. The integration of digital tools in lessons encourages students to actively engage and communicate in the target language. Additionally, interactive platforms: Blooket, Getepic, Writereader, KhanAcademy or Kahoot make learning more engaging and support independent and interactive language tasks, particularly in English.

Translanguaging is an essential part of supporting communication and learning in a bilingual setting at Monnet International School, as it allows students to access the full range of their linguistic resources and engage actively with their learning. Students are encouraged to use their mother tongue as well as other known languages when needed to enhance understanding. Our students are encouraged to use translanguaging as a way to draw on all their linguistic resources to acquire knowledge and deepen understanding, which reflects our belief that multilingualism is not only a reality but also a valuable asset for learning and inquiry. Furthermore, translanguaging is a strategy we actively support for use beyond the classroom; students are encouraged to apply it when working at home to better understand and explore topics they will later present at school in one of the languages of instruction. This approach strengthens their ability to connect ideas across languages and fosters deeper conceptual understanding.

5. Mother tongue support

We recognize that maintaining and developing a child's home language contributes significantly to cognitive development, cultural identity, and academic achievement. The school provides a range of resources and initiatives to support mother tongues, including access to multilingual books, culturally relevant materials, and opportunities for students to engage in language-rich activities that honor their heritage. Teachers encourage the use of students' mother tongue in classroom discussions, research, and presentations, helping them make meaningful connections between their home language and the languages of instruction.

Additionally, the school fosters an inclusive environment where linguistic diversity is celebrated through special events, cultural festivals, and projects that promote appreciation of different languages and traditions. We also strongly encourage parents to support various school initiatives that aim to strengthen students' cultural identity and promote fluency in their mother tongue.

Language progress in the mother tongue that is not one of the languages of instruction is continuously supported and monitored by the homeroom teacher in cooperation with the parents or legal guardians. The school authorities believe that the activities described above have a key impact on planning students' language profiles and development.

6. Additional language learning

Chinese language learning at Monnet International School offers students the opportunity to explore one of the world's most historically and culturally significant languages. Instruction focuses on developing foundational skills in Mandarin, including phonetic recognition, character writing, and basic conversational ability. Beyond linguistic competence, students gain insight into the cultural dimensions of Chinese through engagement with traditions, music, art, and celebrations such as the Chinese New Year.

This integrated approach nurtures intercultural understanding, strengthens global engagement, and promotes multilingualism — the three core components of international-mindedness — while supporting cognitive development and aligning with the IB's holistic educational vision.

All PYP students (Grades 1–4) participate in additional language (Chinese) classes, which are an integral part of the school schedule and take place twice a week.

7. Language development across curriculum

At Monnet International School, language learning is embedded in all subject areas to ensure that every student develops strong communication skills. Every teacher is a language teacher, actively supporting language growth through scaffolding, modeling, and fostering subject-specific language skills during instruction. Teachers plan intentionally for vocabulary development, reading, writing, and oral communication across diverse learning contexts, making language development an integral part of the curriculum rather than the responsibility of language classes alone. We believe language is the vehicle for inquiry. Through discussions, reflections, and explorations in both Polish and English, students deepen conceptual understanding.

8. Host Language and Mother Tongue Cultural Context

As a school in Poland, Monnet International School ensures that Polish language and culture are deeply embedded within the curriculum. Through alignment with national standards, cultural celebrations, field trips, and a variety of language-rich experiences, students develop pride in their local context while making meaningful connections to global themes.

At our school, the host language also functions as the mother tongue for the majority of students. Although instructional practices promote balanced exposure to both Polish and English, with teachers communicating in each language in approximately equal measure, students predominantly choose Polish for informal interaction with their peers during unstructured time. At the same time, most students are able to respond, collaborate, and engage effectively with peers who do not speak Polish or for whom Polish is not the first language, demonstrating a supportive and inclusive language environment aligned with IB principles.

9. Policy Review

The Language Policy is reviewed annually during planning meetings and professional development sessions to ensure it remains relevant and aligned with IB expectations and the needs of our learning community. The policy is communicated to students in age-appropriate language and published on the school website to ensure accessibility for all stakeholders, including parents and prospective families. Key elements are highlighted during parent information sessions and integrated into teacher onboarding and ongoing training.