



# **COSTEAS-GEITONAS SCHOOL (CGS) LANGUAGE POLICY WHOLE SCHOOL STATEMENT**

## **IB mission statement**

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

## **School Mission Statement**

At CGS we strive to provide an academic setting where every student's skills and character can flourish to the fullest by encouraging meaningful connections between classroom and real life experiences. Our students work in an environment of ongoing inquiry, cooperation and mutual respect as they acquire a high caliber education and positive life attitudes to make a contribution to the world they live in.

## **Philosophy**

Language is central to life and learning. It enables all members of the school to appreciate the richness and diversity of cultural identities, and to facilitate intercultural understanding. It is our view that cultivation of a mother tongue/first language and second language acquisition are equally crucial for cognitive, academic and social development, and constitute an important aspect of personal identity.

At CGS, we believe that:

- Language teaching is a fundamental constituent of the school curriculum and its pertinent activities and enables students to develop lifelong learning skills
- Multilingualism establishes cognitive patterns of language acquisition that can be drawn upon in the learning of additional languages
- Language is acquired most effectively when it is used in an engaging and meaningful context
- One of the main goals underpinning language learning is to help students develop a sense of international mindedness while becoming critical and analytical thinkers who use language effectively, appropriately and confidently.

Language is not viewed in isolation, but rather considered in terms of:

- Learning language
- Learning through language
- Learning about language

At CGS:

- language instruction plays a key role and all of our students study at least three languages.
- development of the host-country language – Modern Greek – and an appreciation of Greek culture are essential
- the curriculum supports complex, rich, dynamic learning across a range of language domains and all teachers throughout the school are viewed as language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication.



- the development of literacy skills, including reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing in both Greek and English is emphasized and students are supported in acquiring additional languages offered by the school.
- language teaching is guided by the pedagogical attributes of the IB PYP, IB MYP, IBDP and national requirements.

### **Official Language of Instruction**

The vast majority of our students are native speakers of Modern Greek. We acknowledge that studying a mother tongue in depth facilitates the learning of additional languages and enables students to maintain their bonds with their culture and foster their identity. Therefore, Modern Greek is recognized as the school's official language of instruction. This applies to all school divisions in Elementary and Secondary School with the exception of the Pre-K and Kindergarten, which is a dual-language division and the IB Diploma programme where the language of instruction is English.

### **Multilingualism and Additional languages**

At CGS we place emphasis on intercultural awareness and communication regarding them as key sociolinguistic skills when it comes to language learning. We recognize the learners' need to be equipped with cultural and social awareness skills as well as language skills to become competent communicators and open-minded, global citizens.

The additional languages on offer within the timetabled school day are English, French, German, Spanish and Italian. However, the option exists for students to also take the abovementioned languages as well as Chinese as extra-curricular courses upon request.

All language programmes are designed in such a way that they are developmentally appropriate and tied to students' fields of interest and real needs. In addition, a range of resources is available to assist teachers with the design, implementation and review of our language programmes. We also address our students' need to certify their language skills by incorporating extra-curricular study programmes that prepare them for language certification exams.

The school also recognizes the significance of multilingualism by displaying the languages taught at school, and in turn ensuring cultural backgrounds are celebrated throughout school life and curriculum teaching.

### **Learning Support**

The school is committed to accommodating all students' language needs as far as possible and hence students are provided opportunities to maintain or obtain language skills – both in terms of language specific to the disciplines, the school's language of instruction, and their mother tongues.

Currently, there are few students enrolled or wishing to enroll, whose mother tongue is not the school's official language of instruction. However, the school is committed to addressing the particular challenges of those students who are learning in a language other than their mother tongue or first language. Although it does not apply to the current situation, budgetary implications and structure changes have been taken into consideration and should the need arise, the school will provide support for students who



come from a language background that differs from that of the school whenever possible.

In particular, learners who are unable to fully access the academic curriculum delivered in Modern Greek will receive individualized or small group after-school instruction in Greek as an Additional Language courses. These will run on a regular basis, will be taught by qualified staff and academic support will be scheduled as appropriate. The school will also work closely with the parents of these students to advise assistance by means of a tutor if necessary. In collaboration with the librarian and the personal tutor, who is responsible for the student, the school could provide educational support for the student in his mother tongue, when needed. However, such a process has not been yet required. Additionally, students can choose (where possible and appropriate) to work from multilingual sources, including their mother tongues.

In addition, given that learning difficulties may arise at any time, we regard the identification of students with learning difficulties as an on-going process. When a student has been identified with additional learning needs including language difficulties, intervention and support are provided through the School Counseling Department and the Learning Support programme.

The school caters for students with learning difficulties by differentiated instruction, helping students acquire and develop learning strategies and applying the regulations of the Greek Educational system according to which SEN students are examined orally along with their written tasks.

When it comes to assessment, accommodations are made for students with linguistic challenges. These include allowing extra time and disregarding criteria strands assessing grammatical or spelling accuracy. Instead, teachers highlight the importance of students' demonstrating their knowledge and understanding and their critical and creative skills as clearly as possible while they work on improving the students' linguistic competences as far as possible.

When it comes to IB examinations and moderation as well as official national examinations, the IB and national regulations apply respectively.

### **Extra-Curricular and Culture Opportunities**

Language learning opportunities are available through CGS school clubs fostering cultural understanding at a personal and global level. These include the Model United Nations (MUN) Club, the Global Issues Network (GIN) Club, student exchange programmes, joint projects with international schools abroad etc.

### **Rules and expectations about language use around the school**

We expect students' use of language to adhere to the CGS Code of Conduct with regards to decency and academic honesty. They are also expected to adhere to the MLA referencing protocols as explained in the CGS Academic Honesty Policy.

The school recognizes the need to offer school presentations, meetings, promotional publications and important documentation mostly in Modern Greek, which is the official language of instruction and mother tongue of the majority of the student body, parent body and teaching faculty. To maintain consistency, Modern Greek is also used for our formal written documentation and published materials. However, efforts are made to have the most essential documentation available in English or French for whom it may concern.



Students and teachers are encouraged to communicate in any language they wish when applicable.

### **Professional development**

CGS recognizes the need for professional development in the fields of language learning. When appropriate, we will call on the expertise of field specialists to support our professional development. However, we will also offer teachers IB-recognized professional development.

### **Communication and Review process**

The head of school, IB coordinators, language and literature teachers, language acquisition teachers, language support teachers, the school counseling department and school administration lead the discussions around developing and/or reviewing the language policy.

The draft language policy under review is discussed and analyzed in the academic departments during faculty meetings and all new teachers are made aware of the updated language policy document.

Parents are also informed about the language policy of the school, which is also accessible on the school website along with the other policies and can provide feedback either individually or through their representatives on the Board of the Parents Association.

This document was reviewed and updated in preparation for the upcoming MYP evaluation visit and was informed by relevant research in the field and all relevant publications issued by the IBO including:

- *Guidelines for developing a school language policy (2008)*
- *Language and learning in IB programmes (2011)*
- *Guidelines for school self-reflection on its language policy (2012)* and relevant PYP, MYP and DP programme-specific publications.

The language policy is reviewed regularly as part of the IB curriculum review cycle and the whole-school improvement plan and is to be approved by the Bureaus of Elementary and Secondary Education, which operate under the auspices of the Greek Ministry of Education.

### **Language Learning in the Primary Years Programme (PYP)**

In the PYP, each student receives sustained language teaching in at least two languages for each year of the programme.

From age 3 to age 6 the language of instruction is Modern Greek and English thus supporting the notion of our Dual Language Kindergarten and Nursery. From age 6 to age 12 all students study in Modern Greek, which is the language of instruction, and English as an additional language. From age 8 students are required to choose a second additional language. Their choice is among French, German and Spanish.

## Language Acquisition

At the PYP level, language acquisition English is offered for stage 1- stage 9 where stage 7 coincides with MYP phase 1, stage 8 with MYP phase 1-2 and stage 9 with MYP phase 2.

French, German and Spanish are offered as Cours Junior / Kinderkurs/ Ciclo Junior in grade 3, Cours Préparatoire / Grundkurs 1/ Ciclo Elemental in grade 4, Cours I/ Grundkurs 2/ Ciclo I in grade 5 and Cours II / Grundkurs 3 (Phase 1)/ Ciclo II in grade 6.

The aims are:

- to enable students to develop their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills
- to gain competence as effective communicators

## Placement

At the PYP level for students entering grade 1 or higher as part of the admissions process, the Heads of English/French/German/Spanish Departments, and the PYP coordinator will:

- Review student's language track record
- Administer assessments as necessary: placement tests
- Interview student and parents
- Inform on language placement before the student starts school

This information is used in forming the study schedule for each student according to the school's language acquisition continuum for the PYP (stages).

## Pathways

As CGS promotes multilingualism, students are encouraged to become fluent in their second language and learn a third language. Therefore, English as a Language Acquisition course is mandatory for all students. In PYP 2, grade 3 and higher students can opt for the additional language they wish to study, namely French, German or Spanish.

Students are allowed to move from one Language Acquisition course to another within the first weeks upon starting that course.

Movement in Language Acquisition takes place at the end of a quarter or the year.

Language Heads, PYP/MYP coordinators hold regular reviews of the language pathways of the students in preparation for MYP study.

## Language Learning in the Middle Years Programme (MYP)

In the MYP, each student receives sustained language teaching in **at least two** languages for each year of the programme.

Students study a minimum of:

- one Language and Literature course and two Language Acquisition courses, or
- two Language and Literature courses

All MYP students are required to take Modern Greek as the Language and Literature course, and English, either as a Language and Literature course or Language Acquisition course.

From MYP2 onwards students are required to choose a second additional language. Their choice is among French, German, Spanish and/or Italian. The vast majority of students opt for the second additional language they studied in the PYP. However, they are given the option to select a language other than the one they had studied before.

### **Language and Literature**

Language and Literature is offered to the students for which Modern Greek or English is their mother tongue or is the language that the student has the highest level of proficiency.

Modern Greek is the main Language and Literature on offer across the MYP curriculum whereas English is offered as Language and Literature courses mostly in MYP 5 if applicable. For students taking English Language Acquisition, the student must meet the learning outcomes of at least phase 5 in order to be placed in Language and Literature.

The Language and Literature Curriculum follows the guidelines of the Language and Literature MYP programme and the Greek National Curriculum for Literacy.

### **Language Acquisition**

At the MYP level, Language Acquisition English is offered for Phases 2 - 6, while French and German are offered from Phases 1 - 4. Italian and/or Spanish may be offered if there are an adequate number of students who have selected the course and are usually offered in Phase 1 in MYP2.

The aims are:

- to gain competence as critical communicators over the four years of study
- to enable students to become multiliterate and thus able to understand and use print-based and digital, spoken, written and visual texts
- to deepen the understanding of the interplay of the spoken, written and visual modes

### **Placement**

We aim to support students' language learning regardless of their linguistic background and placement is informed by knowledge of the student's language profile. A placement test is also taken at the start of MYP to determine the phase of MYP students for language acquisition. The same process is followed with incoming students. As part of the enrollment process, an intake team (MYP Language Acquisition Head, Heads of English/French/German Departments, MYP coordinator, counselor, and Language and Literature coordinator) will:



- consider the language profile of the student and review the student’s language background, including their PYP or other primary education language experience
- interview the student and parents if necessary
- record the students’ personal goals with regard to language learning
- administer assessments if necessary: placement tests
- inform on language placement and pathways according to the MYP before the student starts school

This information is used in forming the study schedule for each student according to phases. To this end, the MYP global proficiency table, the MYP language acquisition skills continuums and the phase-specific objectives of the Language Acquisition framework are used as diagnostic and reference tools to ensure the developing proficiency of learners within a common framework.

Under the direction of the MYP Head of Language Acquisition and the language department coordinators, the school ensures that the prescribed hours of instruction are effectively completed and the desired academic standards are met in accordance with the objectives of the respective phases. In this way we safeguard that the students are ready to make a smooth transition to the next MYP Language Acquisition phase.

## **Pathways**

- As CGS promotes multilingualism, students are encouraged to become fluent in their second language and learn a third language. Therefore, English as a Language Acquisition course is mandatory for all students whose proficiency in English is not adequate enough for them to study English as a Language and Literature course.
- In MYP 2, students can opt for the additional language they wish to study, namely French, German, Spanish or Italian. In case they are undecided, they can take a two-week ‘carousel’ course, during which students can experience a brief introduction to each language acquisition course offered in the MYP.
- After the introductory courses are completed, students must choose one of the languages from the carousel and continue with that language throughout the programme, or until they demonstrate a satisfactory proficiency in phase 4 to begin the study of another language.
- If a student reaches the outcomes of phase 4 in Language Acquisition, they are supported in the study of a fourth language.
- Students who are in Language and Literature in MYP cannot move to Language Acquisition in the MYP or in the DP.
- Movement in Language Acquisition takes place at the end of a quarter or the year.
- The move from one phase to another is determined by a grade of 6 or above and following standardization of the student work by Language Acquisition teachers.
- Movement into Language and Literature occurs at the end of the school year after the student has achieved a grade of 6 or above in phase 5 or 6 Language Acquisition and the language teams review the student work and agree that the student is ready for critical literature analysis in preparation for DP Language and Literature.
- Language teams, MYP/DP coordinators hold regular reviews of the language pathways of the students in preparation for DP study (please see appendix)

## **Language Learning in the Diploma Programme (DP)**

The CGS Diploma Programme supports language acquisition as a shared responsibility among all subject teachers and across all disciplines. We believe that language is at the heart of all learning and aim to develop learning experiences that provide links between subjects and offer students the opportunity to communicate effectively and to think critically and creatively across the curriculum. The language of instruction at CGS IBDP is English except for Language A Modern Greek and Language B courses.

### **IB DP Group 1 and Group 2 Subjects**

In the IB Diploma Programme language courses are offered in two of the subject groups:

#### **Group 1 - Language A**

- English A Language and Literature (SL and HL).
- Modern Greek A: Literature (SL and HL)
- Modern Greek Language and Literature (SL and HL),

As outlined in the IBO Subject guide, the literature course explores a range of literary texts of different literary genres from different historical, cultural, social and political contexts. The course encourages the appreciation of literature and develops students' analytical and critical skills. It requires that students respond to literature through oral and written tasks, enhancing not only their ability to analyze and interpret literature, but also their use and command of sophisticated language.

The language and literature course develops skills in textual analysis both in literary and non-literary texts. Students explore a wide range of texts and their construction of meaning in their wider cultural and historical contexts. Through the close study of texts students develop a thorough understanding of how cultural contexts affect and shape meaning. Students analyze texts through oral and written tasks, which refine their language skills and develop their skills as independent and critical thinkers.

#### **Group 2 - Language B**

In the IBDP, Language B Higher Level and Standard Level are offered in the following languages;

- English
- French
- German

The Language B courses are designed to develop proficient communicators who demonstrate cross-cultural awareness and understanding. Language B courses focus on the development of reading, writing, listening and speaking skills, skills central to empowering students to communicate effectively in a range of situations and in all subject areas. Students also study literary works in their cultural contexts to further reinforce the aims of the course.

## Learning Support

Students identified with special language learning needs are supported through the CGS Study Skills Programme. The programme is individualized to meet the specific language learning needs of each student. We also offer extra tutorials to students who require further support in their acquisition of language skills.

## Appendix

\*Pathways from MYP to DP – Table 1

	MYP	DP
<b>Phase 1</b>		Ab initio
<b>Phase 2</b>		Ab initio (in rare cases) Language B SL
<b>Phase 3</b>		Language B SL
<b>Phase 4</b>		Language B SL/HL
<b>Phase 5</b>		Language B SL/HL
<b>Phase 5</b>	It is recommended the student has at least one semester in MYP language and literature before starting these DP courses.	Language A: literature SL Language A: language and literature SL Literature and performance SL
<b>Phase 6</b>	It is recommended the student has at least one semester in MYP language and literature before starting these DP courses.	Language A: literature SL/HL Language A: language and literature SL/HL Literature and performance SL

Pathways from the MYP Language Courses to DP Group 1 and 2 Courses, MYP Language Acquisition Subject Guide (updated February 2018), page 6