



# Language Policy

## Samara Medical Technical Lyceum

### Starting from 2011

#### 1. Introduction

Language policy is designed to help developing key requirements for all grades and levels and to give a smooth transfer of students to the "International Baccalaureate Diploma" programme as well as to make its further successful implementation.

This language policy is based on the previous language policy that has been revised in 2010 and will start with its implementation from 2011-2012.

Language policy is based on the results of meetings and discussions with the administration, teachers, parents, children, members of the Governing Body and the methodologists and experts in the field of teaching English.

This policy was developed on the basis of internal IB documents «Guidelines for developing a school language policy» and «Learning in other language».

Based on the Language policy the Lyceum is developing further subject programmes and detailed requirements for teaching languages from primary to senior levels, as well as targets and goals to be achieved by students at the end of their studies.

Language policy provides guidelines for choosing the educational materials, as well as the number of hours of classroom and home work for all levels.

All requirements are based on SEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) and a description of skills is done on a basis of ALTE (Association of Language Testers in Europe).

- A1 Breakthrough
- A2 Way stage
- B1 Threshold
- B2 Independent user
- C1 Advanced (Advanced)
- C2 Mastery

Pan-European scale applies to all European languages, the second and third foreign languages are given in the description of a pan-European scale.

#### **RUSSIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

Based on the fact that most students learn Russian as their mother tongue from the very start of school, and it is included in the National program, the development of

Russian language and literature in this document will not be given much attention. However, in future, if there is a tendency of Russian language knowledge lowering or there will be other students whose mother tongue is not Russian this paragraph will be extended.

## **ENGLISH**

### **Primary school Grades 1-4 - Flyers**

In the primary school there are no specific requirements by which level or class the pupils have to achieve the certain level. The teacher should plan the work based on the previous background of the children, whether they have initial knowledge of English or not, whether they are developed psychologically to start learning English from the first month or they need an introductory course. All these questions the teacher has to decide on his own.

If you look at the amount of hours needed to achieve the levels according to the Common European Framework and Cambridge ESOL levels then you can see that to achieve Starters level you will need approximately 200 academic hours. To achieve the level of Movers (A1) additional 200 hours is required and to achieve Flyers (A2) –again additional 200 hours. These are very general recommendations and they are given based on the fact that children did not study English before.

In case the progress of the learners goes faster the teacher can decide to pass the levels quicker.

Another question which arises is whether at this stage it is obligatory for pupils to sit Cambridge Examinations. At the moment the decision of the Administration is that it is not obligatory to pass Starters and Movers. But it is required to sit Flyers examinations at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade because we need to know the result of learning English during the whole primary school.

The earlier the child gets used to the format of international examinations, tasks, approaches, the more successful he will pass the next exam. The success of obtaining the international certificates encourages children and teachers to work more actively and to achieve better results.

At our Department we have Handbooks for Teachers and Sample papers from Cambridge ESOL which can help each teacher with the right description of Vocabulary and Functions list for each level.

International requirements for children's' progress evaluation in the format of exams, helps to set the right goals for learning and provides quality preparation not only for Cambridge examinations but for all other types of exams.

**IMPORTANT!** At the primary years the emphasis should be made on children's ability to memorize, imitate and repeat. You have to pay quite a lot attention to the aspect of pronunciation, intonation and speech flow. Attention should be drawn to the correct spelling of letters and words.

From level to level requirements are changing. And if at Starters level we pay less attention to grammar and length of a written and oral discourse, the higher levels give greater attention to the ability to communicate, to respond, to understand foreign speech. At the level of Flyers all aspects are taken into account.

Modern teaching materials must include all the components to work effectively in the classroom and at home. Availability of DVD, Flashcards and CD for home work is important. There should be methodologically clear and well developed either a Teacher's book or a Teacher's Resource book with additional assignments, quizzes, games, etc. As all our rooms are equipped with white boards it is necessary for a chosen book to have whiteboard software. It is desirable that the student workbook contains a disc for doing homework and listening, in addition, you can use a recipe. The selected Course materials should retain minimum errors. Teachers' book has to reflect not only the right methodology approach but should be based on the children's psychology.

### **Secondary school Grades 5-7 grades - PET**

Starting from Grade the 5th grade 2 additional hours of English is added to the curriculum. This is done because we need to start the process of teaching our children reading and writing techniques which will be required for study at the IB department in the future.

For the development of reading skills and expand vocabulary the simple texts in Maths, History, Natural science has to be given for children. At this level pupils start to read some books in the original. Of course this not an easy task to do, but little by little they need to get used to more complicated texts. Teachers should used a CLIL approach in teaching English, so to say the language is only an instrument that allows them to receive knowledge in other spheres and subjects.

At the end of grade 7<sup>th</sup> the students have to reach the level B1 of Common European Framework.

Each teacher has to decide on his own whether there will a separate hour devoted to the exam techniques or there will be short exam strategies preparation course at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> form. But some practice tests should be done anyway

The feature characteristics of B1 level is that it requires further (Higher then A2) reading, writing, listening and speaking skills to be developed already. Though the vocabulary range of students might be not full enough and grammar structures are not so complicated the students have to show the ability to communicate in the language (both written an oral communication skills).

Forming a vocabulary is a process that requires the ability to work independently and this aspect needs special attention. Academic skills required for study abroad are fundamentally different from those accepted in Russia.

Each perspective student must be able to work independently, read quickly and seek the necessary information. That is why there should be more reading and writing tasks within the learning process as well as final testing should comprise written tasks in writing for the students to be able to arrange their thoughts on paper correctly.

An independent testing should be mandatory for all students in grades 7 according to the format of Cambridge exams - the level of PET, as if at that time a student has not

received the required level of language, further development will be quite difficult.

### **Secondary school (Pre-IB preparatory classes) Grades 8-9 - FCE**

This years give further practice to students to make their language skills developed.

As the format of the exam requires reading of quite complicated texts and while showing the grammar they have to use not only simple structures, the preparation should be based not only using one textbook but a number of additional sources, including not adapted sources for students to be on the right level before entering the IB department.

A lot of attention should be paid to developing academic skills like writing a report, an essay, a summary, an abstract, a commentary e.t.c. Students have to enrich their vocabulary by specialized lexics. The teachers should use additional courses Guide to Science, Guide to History, Guide to Literature, Guide to Economics.

Admission to the International Baccalaureate Diploma programme is primarily based on the results of the official examinations (or the results of pre-testing, tested in Cambridge). If there are students whose level of English is not enough to sit FCE exam, then there is an option for them to have additional classes in summer and pass the exam in August. They can either choose the local preparation courses or go abroad and prepared for the exam intensively.

Those children who enter the lyceum from other schools will need to sit during summer preparation course for the IB programme where their language will be increased and they will receive some academic skills.

Choosing a textbook should be based first on the topics and vocabulary covered. The course book should have many components as well to be used by the Teachers and by the students (DVD, Teacher's resource pack, Whiteboard software)

The teachers have to use not only one book but a number of extra resources as well.

### **Senior grades 10-11 – IELTS (CAE) and IB examination**

Studying at the International Baccalaureate Programme gives you the chance to study in English a lot of subjects that is why the number of hours spent for the English language class can become less.

At this stage each student sets his or her own educational tasks and either prepare for test IELTS or CAE, BEC or in case of entering Russian University – State Unified exam.

At this stage the students polish their language, enrich widely their vocabulary (because they learn new vocabulary at their subjects) and develop good writing techniques.

Number of class hours per week is reduced to 4. Each student has a plan of individual work to do, which is checked at the end of the semester. During this period the biggest attention is paid to the ability of studying on their own, read newspapers, magazines, books, watch movies, listening to radio broadcasts, etc.

All materials at the International Baccalaureate Diploma programme should be

developed in English and subject teachers have to use the same CLIL approach as language teachers.

The choice of textbooks should be based on sufficient materials for exam preparation as well as variety of tasks.

Table of levels and classess

| Class | Level Exam     |
|-------|----------------|
| 1     | A1 Starters    |
| 2     | A1 Movers      |
| 3     | A2             |
| 4     | A2 Flyers      |
| 5     |                |
| 6     |                |
| 7     | B1 PET         |
| 8     |                |
| 9     | B2 FCE         |
| 10    |                |
| 11    | C1 CAE / IELTS |

## **IMPORTANT**

### ***Groups***

There is an approach that you divide the class into two subgroups. It is required that those students who go faster can be put the most developed group, but this should be done with great care, because if you put all lower level students in the same group the progress will be much less.

### ***The use of the Language***

One of the key principles of learning a language is the practice. At the lower levels (elementary, pre-intermediate) the use of language may be done in participating in the performances in English. This form of work has been widely used by the teachers and shows that children are more motivated and encouraged to use the language when they can show their results.

While preparing drama they are not afraid to talk, learn new conversational speech models, and develop their creative abilities. Besides that each theatrical performance units children to prepare decorations, music, dances and develops other skills.

At older stages the use of language is becoming more and more important. It is possible to develop it through participation in summer educational programs in other countries, exchange programmes, conferences abroad, meetings with peers, e-mailing to children from abroad, developing excursions for tourists, participate in the translation competitions.

### ***Transfer from other institutions***

When the student is transferred from other school extra attention has to be given to such child. This is either a special support programme in English or the teacher of English has to support such child during the classes by giving extra individual tasks.

There are cases when children come to the lyceum with not enough level of English. If the level is much lower then the choice is to give an individual programme of teaching.

## **FRENCH, GERMAN, ITALIAN**

Council of Europe decided that everyone should know 2-3 European language in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The lyceum offers 3 languages at the moment – French, German and Italian.

Students begin to study the second language at the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade. And before entering the IB programme they already have some basic knowledge. During the IB programme some students chose to develop their language skills further.

## **Conclusion**

The quality of education at the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme depends on the students' understanding of the subjects in English and the level of teaching at the programme. Therefore, the Language policy has been developed to provide more common approach in teaching for all teachers of English and other languages, to give guidance on textbooks choosing, to escape the most common mistakes while preparing the students and to overcome difficulties which occur with the students having different abilities and different language levels.

The language policy will have one more item which will be developed further – this is the professional development and training of the staff, the more detailed description of the use of language, and more suggestion for teacher on working with complicated groups of students.