



ASTANA
GARDEN SCHOOL

«Confirmed»
by the Director General
of «CA GARDEN SCHOOLS» LLP
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LANGUAGE POLICY
of high school

Astana

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1. Mission, vision, values

Mission

To reveal and continuously develop the potential and the individuality of each member of the school as a community for the betterment of the world.

Vision

To develop a universal school model with a unique educational programme focused on the development of a harmonious personality, with elements of the region's national and cultural identity, and a corporate system of professional development for teaching staff.

Values

Honesty and openness:

The school treats all its members fairly, follows ethical standards and rules in fulfilling its obligations.

The school adheres to a policy of maximum transparency in its activities with respect to the entire school community.

Curiosity and continuous learning:

The school helps to increase the motivation of each member of the school community for innovation to acquire new knowledge.

The school develops skills according to their personal development paths.

Indifference and compassion:

The school shows empathy and ownership at all levels of activity.

The school develops a caring attitude towards the world around it.

Respect and tolerance:

The school accepts, appreciates, and promotes positively creative culture and traditions of the all the nations around the globe, the diversity of ideas and views. The school strives to maintain peace and harmony in society.

Chapter 1. Glossary

IB PYP - International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program - International Baccalaureate Early Childhood Education and Primary School Programme for children aged 3-12 years, based on an inquiry-based approach, ensuring the academic, social and emotional well-being of students.

IB CP – International Baccalaureate Career related Program – An International Baccalaureate High School educational programme designed for students interested in career-oriented learning.

Unit (unit of study) - a thematic unit studied in depth in a specific time period, which is carried out within a transdisciplinary theme.

Phase Learning (Phase) - the gradual development of language, where each phase builds on and complements the previous one. There are six phases in the school, with transition between them based on test scores.

Language phases - levels of language learning.

Instructional language - the language in which the subject is taught.

Mother tongue - one of the main signs of a person's national (ethnic) affiliation.

First language - language learnt by a person since childhood.

Second language - language learnt after the mother tongue or first language.

Chapter 2. General provisions

Astana Garden School Primary (hereafter referred to as the School) believes that every language is an invaluable resource that enables us to learn more about the world and opens up opportunities for us to successfully achieve our goals.

The school offers three languages of instruction:

- Russian language of instruction
- Kazakh language of instruction
- English language of instruction

In Russian language classes (Language 1 - L1) students study core subjects in Russian, in other words, the language of instruction is Russian. The second language (L2) is Kazakh and is learnt by students in the subject "Kazakh language". English (L3) is an additional language and is learnt by students in the subject "English language". At the same time, students study Russian in depth in the subjects "Russian Language" and "Literary Reading", while Kazakh and English are studied in phases (see the section "Phased Learning").

In Kazakh-language classes (Language 1 - L1) students study the main subjects in Kazakh, in other words, the language of instruction is Kazakh. The second language is Russian (L2) and is learnt by students in the subject "Russian language", English is an additional language (L3) and is learnt by students in the subject "English language". In this case, students study Kazakh language in depth in the subjects "Kazakh language" and "Literary reading", while Russian and English languages are studied according to the phases (see the section "Phase-based learning").

In English language classes, students learn the main subjects in English (L1), in other words, the language of instruction is English. The second/foreign language is Kazakh language (L2) and is studied by students in the subject "Kazakh language", Russian language (L3) is also the third/foreign language and is studied by students in the subject "Russian language". At the same time, students study English in depth in the English language subject, while Kazakh and Russian are studied in phases (see the section on 'Phased Learning').

In teaching the first language, the focus is on developing students' skills in expressing their ideas and thoughts freely in writing and orally, and their ability to fully understand information presented in various formats (audio, text, video).

The school actively creates an environment in which the learner is surrounded by grammatically correct and comprehensible speech, and uses a system of monitoring and evaluating students' language skills and abilities. First language instruction also includes the inculcation of spiritual values and positive life principles through language.

In teaching a second, additional and/or foreign language, great attention is paid to creating positive attitudes towards language learning and developing interest in this process through the implementation of an individualized approach.

The number of academic hours of language subjects is distributed in accordance with the State Compulsory Education Standard (SCES) and the Primary Years Programme (PYP) and is approved at the beginning of the academic year.

Chapter 3. Phasing in language teaching

In language subjects (L1, L2, L3) learners are differentiated according to their language skills and knowledge. A division into six phases is used in order to implement an individualized approach in teaching and to create conditions for the development of language skills depending on the language needs of the learners.

In all classes, the phases are divided into phases during the first month of schooling, and an intermediate diagnostic test is conducted in the second half of the year, in January. This test is aimed at determining language proficiency and assessing reading, listening, writing and speaking skills. The test is prepared by teachers who teach L1, L2 and L3 in two versions, taking into account the content and learning expectations of each phase.

After summarizing the results of the diagnostic test and identifying the phases, the classes are divided into subgroups.

The duration of each phase is one academic year. However, according to the results of the school quarter, if there are places in the corresponding phase group, students have the opportunity to move to a higher phase, while moving to a lower phase is not foreseen. At the end of the school year, a final diagnostic test is conducted to determine students' progress.

Curricula approved at the beginning of the school year contain information on objectives and outcomes by phase.

Chapter 4. Language support

All official documents of the School are compiled and published in three languages: Kazakh, Russian and English.

All communications and mailings from the school are organized in the three working languages: Kazakh, Russian, and English.

The school continuously liaises with the parents of students through letters, which are written in three languages and sent via the social network WhatsApp and the Toddle or ManageBac platform.

Astana Garden School recognizes the important role that mother tongues play in our society. We believe that the mother tongue of every student at AGS School should be supported. Mother tongue is an aspect of students' individual and cultural identity, a key to preserving and maintaining national identity, which also needs to be developed as one of the important factors in a child's all-round development.

Astana Garden School endeavors to create conditions for the development of the mother tongue and to support its use both at school and at home. Students' mother tongues enrich the learning environment by establishing links between those languages practiced in and out of the classroom.

In practice, this means the following:

- using greetings or phrases in the mother tongue;
- developing library resources;
- language books, reference books and interactive media;
- general reference books, interactive media and DVDs;
- if the assessment is not language-specific but subject-specific, learners may respond in her/his own language that serves as a resource or use language tools such as dictionaries and/or translators;

- use of games, pictures and other visual aids;
- use of a differentiated approach;
- intercultural awareness day;
- cultural activities;
- language activities (language day);
- liaising with cultural centers and embassies;
- olympiads, competitions, fairs.

To support and develop reading skills in foreign languages, the school provides access to the Raz-Plus educational platform, where students read fiction and science literature in an age-appropriate way. In addition, in order to maintain and develop Kazakh language skills, regular activities are organized with the active involvement of all members of the school community. The schedule of these events is included in the school calendar and approved at the beginning of the academic year.

The school offers the opportunity to participate in weekly Reading and Speaking Clubs in Kazakh and English.

If necessary, new students with a low level of English are offered individual English lessons outside of school hours. Classes are held twice a week.

English teachers create an individualized learning support plan.

Parents are encouraged to buy books and to read, write and speak to their children in their mother tongue at home. Students are encouraged to attend extracurricular activities in their mother tongue.

Above all, we value languages as a means of interacting with other ethnic groups, races, religions and cultures. Each year we celebrate our diversity in activities that are organized in the main three languages and with costume, music and dance performances. We envision the diversity and richness of languages as a positive influence on our lives, so we also welcome and support the use of the mother tongues of students of other nationalities.

Chapter 5. Transferring students to High school

During the school year, a language profile is compiled for each 4th grade student, which reflects the level of language proficiency. This profile is handed over to the High School together with the student's file. In order to ensure continuity of language teaching between Primary School and High School teachers, meetings are organised.

Chapter 6. Bilingual classes in High school

Transitional bilingual education at Astana Garden School involves teaching in the students' mother tongue (Kazakh or Russian) to ensure that students do not fall behind in subject areas such as mathematics, science and social studies while they are learning English. When a child's English language skills are deemed to be satisfactory, they can switch to English-only education.

Bilingual education at Astana Garden School is based on the 70/30 model in the fifth grade. According to this model, 30 per cent of the teaching material should be presented in English and the rest in the students' mother tongue (Kazakh or Russian). In addition, teachers use

Scaffolding, Glossary and other CLIL approaches, including methods for implementing effective bilingual education. History of Kazakhstan is taught in Kazakh and Russian only.

Partial immersion at Astana Garden School involves a 50/50 model in the sixth grade, where the mother tongue is used in the classroom and approximately half of the class time is devoted to second language learning. Teachers also use Scaffolding, Glossary and other CLIL approaches, including methods for implementing effective bilingual learning.

Bilingual education at Astana Garden School for Grade 7 is based on the 30/70 model of teaching 'sheltered English'. According to this model, 70 per cent of the course content should be in English and the rest in the students' mother tongue (Kazakh or Russian). The following teaching approach is used to make academic instruction in English understandable to English language learners, to help them master the English language and at the same time achieve results in subject areas.

According to the model of the school foreign language program in grade 8, 90% of the course content should be taught in English and the rest in the students' native language (Kazakh or Russian). The English component of the course includes: classroom language, lectures, thematic vocabulary, discussions.

The language of instruction at Astana Garden High School is English (Grades 5-8), and in all Grades 9-11 it is English only, with the exception of Kazakh language and literature, Russian language and literature, History of Kazakhstan, Military Education and Physical Education. In English classes, lessons in Kazakh language and literature, Russian language and literature, history of Kazakhstan, military education and physical education are taught using the CLIL and differentiation approach.

Chapter 7. English language in High school

As Astana Garden High School prepares students to find their calling and the best university fit all around the world, our primary language is English. To become successful learners, students need to acquire English as early as possible and be fully exposed to it. Therefore, the English Language program plays an important role in Astana Garden School's mission. We want our students to be independent, critical thinkers, lifelong learners, and responsible citizens. The program provides intensive hours of language learning in the first stages and encourages students to develop the full range of language skills in the final stages. We believe that it is essential to provide additional support to our students who are just starting their journey in language learning, so the program includes ability-based teaching in lower classes like Grades 7-8 and a differentiated teaching approach in higher grades. During grades, 10-11 students also develop academic English skills to succeed in standardized tests such as IELTS, SAT, TOEFL, and others. To pass the High school admission process students are required to have at least a pre-intermediate level of English (A2) and improve that level to the highest possible one (B2-C1) upon graduation.

Chapter 8. French language in High school

In our language policy, French is offered as a comprehensive language program for students in grades 5 through 11. From 5th to 7th grade, as well as in 10th and 11th grades, French is offered as an optional Language Club that students can choose to participate in. This

provides them with the opportunity to explore the language and its culture in a more relaxed and leisurely setting.

From 8th to 9th grade, French becomes a compulsory subject, with students receiving two hours of instruction each week. This ensures that all students have a solid foundation in the language, allowing them to develop their language skills and cultural understanding even further.

By providing a range of options for studying French, we aim to cater to the diverse learning needs and interests of our students. Whether they choose to join the Language Club or pursue French as a compulsory subject, we strive to cultivate a love for the language and its rich cultural heritage among our students.

Chapter 9. Supporting students with low language proficiency in High school

As Kazakh is the state language and is important in Kazakh schools, every student at Astana Garden School is given the opportunity to learn the language regardless of their previous experience. Therefore, all our students are divided into three different levels: students with little or no Kazakh language experience, students with some social Kazakh language experience but little or no academic experience, and students with both academic and social Kazakh language experience.

Russian language and literature are also taught to students with varying levels of experience in the same classes. Students are not divided into groups according to their level of experience, but are treated in a differentiated way to meet the needs and abilities of each student. If a student has not studied the subject before, a plan for accelerated language learning is drawn up and shared with the student and parent. The plan is approved by the vice-principal for academic work.

If a student is in the 9th or 11th grade, where a state examination is expected at the end of the school year, the student is assigned to additional lessons with a teacher of the Russian (Kazakh) language. At the beginning of the school year, a plan for accelerated language learning is drawn up, with which the student and parent are familiarized. The plan is approved by the deputy headmaster for academic work. The teacher for the main subject and for the additional subject must be the same teacher.

Chapter 10. Project-based learning

The defense of projects and research in grades 5-7 can be made depending on the level of proficiency in one or another language (Kazakh - English, Russian - English). Students of English language classes present projects in English, except for projects defended in Kazakh, Russian and History of Kazakhstan.

Students of 7-8 grades presenting projects, except for the subjects Kazakh language, Russian language and History of Kazakhstan, are required to submit in English language.

Chapter 11. Monitoring the development of language levels

Our school has implemented a comprehensive language policy to ensure effective language development among our students. To achieve this, we have established different proficiency levels for each grade. This system allows us to cater to the unique needs and abilities of students at various stages of their language learning journey.

At our school, 5th graders are classified as being at the Elementary level, with the exception of English classes where they may be placed at a different level depending on their abilities. Moving forward, 6th graders are considered to be at the Pre-Intermediate level, while 7th graders are classified as Intermediate level learners. Finally, 8th graders are recognized as Upper-Intermediate level students.

By adopting this progressive language policy, we aim to provide tailored instruction that challenges and supports each student's language skills. This approach ensures that students are neither overwhelmed with advanced content nor held back by material that is too easy for them. Instead, it allows for a balanced and enjoyable learning experience throughout their academic journey.

Through our language policy, we strive to foster a positive and engaging environment for all students, enabling them to develop essential language skills while building confidence in their abilities. We believe that this approach will prepare them for future endeavors and equip them with the tools they need to succeed in their academic and professional lives. To determine the initial level of each student, the school conducts a diagnostic test at the beginning of the year. This test is likely the Cambridge English Placement Test (CEPT), which assesses students' English language proficiency. The CEPT includes different types of questions to evaluate various skills such as reading, writing, grammar, and listening <https://support.cambridgeenglish.org/hc/en-gb/articles/360000241043-Cambridge-English-Placement-Test-CEPT-Types-of-CEPT-Questions>.

At the end of the school year, same diagnostic test is administered to assess the progress of each student throughout the year. This test may help to identify areas of improvement and inform any necessary adjustments to the curriculum or teaching methods.

The students of 9th to 11th grade are required to pass IELTS (International English Language Testing System).

The school also has plans to implement the International Baccalaureate Career-related Program (IBCP). The IBCP is a specialized program within the International Baccalaureate (IB) framework that combines academic subjects with career-related studies. It aims to provide students with practical skills and real-world application of their knowledge.

Overall, the school emphasizes the importance of continuous assessment and tailoring the curriculum to meet the individual needs and progress of each student.

Chapter 12. Additional learning

In order to provide additional learning, the school believes it is important to:

- Integrate languages outside the classroom, particularly in elective classes such as drama, choir, sports and activities organized by the library.
- Provide students with suitable information resources in the three languages and emphasize the use of authentic texts among language learning materials in the school library and information centers.
- Support mother tongue learning for learners of different nationalities.
- Take into account the individual needs of each learner, liaise with relevant organizations and invite learners to attend mother tongue courses.

The school regards each member of staff as a language teacher whose responsibilities are to develop students' interest in language learning and to create an effective and positive language

environment. Consequently, school staff, particularly teachers and teaching assistants, should be proficient in Kazakh, Russian and English. In order to achieve this, teaching staff are given the opportunity to learn Kazakh and English within the school. The ultimate aim of Kazakh and English language tuition is the understanding and command of the language required to communicate with students and parents. Instruction follows a timetable approved at the beginning of each academic year.

If necessary, the school may request certificates from staff to confirm language proficiency levels.

Chapter 13. Library

The Astana Garden School library provides materials in Kazakh, Russian and English, which are the languages of instruction at the school. New literature is added to the library collection each year. Teachers and children can make requests for resources.

Librarians work with foreign language teachers to ensure a variety of texts. If necessary, the library can provide fiction and science literature in other languages as requested by members of the school community. Parents also assist in adding to the book collection of their class.

The librarian organizes an annual ReadX event which fosters a love of reading and also supports language development in the school. Pupils can join a book club to support and develop Kazakh, Russian or English language development.

Chapter 14. Policy review

At the end of each school year, this policy is reviewed by a special working group consisting of members of the school administration, teachers, parents and students to make any necessary changes and additions. The language policy is an official working document that is binding on all school staff. All members of the school community should be familiarized with this language policy.