

## **2. Language\_Policy\_**

### **School Mission Statement**

The mission of the Music School of Thessaloniki is to foster the comprehensive, harmonious, and balanced development of our students' intellectual and psychosomatic skills so that, regardless of gender and national origin, they all have the opportunity to evolve into well-rounded personalities and live a creative and meaningful life.

Specifically, it helps students:

- a) To become free, responsible, democratic citizens, to defend the national independence, and territorial integrity of the country, as well as democracy. To be inspired by love for humanity, life, and nature, guided by faith in our country, and the principles of Christian Orthodox tradition. Their religious freedom is inviolable.
- b) To cultivate and develop their mind and body, inclinations, interests, and skills. To acquire, through their school education, a social identity and consciousness, understanding and recognizing the social value and equality of both intellectual and manual labour. To be informed and trained in the proper, beneficial and sustainable use of the modern world's resources, as well as the values of our folk tradition.
- c) To develop creative and critical thinking as well as a sense of collective effort and cooperation, so that they take initiatives and, with their responsible participation and integrity, contribute decisively to the progress of our country and society as a whole.
- d) To understand the importance of art, science, and technology, to respect human values, and to preserve and promote our country's cultural identity.
- e) To nurture a spirit of friendship and collaboration with all peoples worldwide, aspiring towards a just, peaceful, and better world.

### **International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) 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 programs of international education and rigorous assessment. These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right."

### **Philosophy**

The Language Policy of Greek schools regarding Greek as the official language of instruction as well as the teaching of foreign languages is described and determined by the Integrated Language Curriculum (Ενιαίο Πρόγραμμα Σπουδών – Ξένες Γλώσσες), the PEAP Programme (Πρόγραμμα

Εκμάθησης της Αγγλικής σε Πρώιμη Ηλικία), and the Ministerial Decision 94214/Δ2/2021 (Government Gazette B 3791/2021).

The national policy for foreign language education in schools (Ενιαίο Πρόγραμμα Σπουδών – Ξένες Γλώσσες) responds to the emerging challenges posed by the EU policies and the European Commission's guidelines (2014-2020) for promoting multilingualism and plurilingualism among young people living and studying in Greece. It fully aligns with the European Commission's language policy, which states on its new platform for promoting multilingualism (<https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/improving-quality/multilingualism/about-multilingualism-policy>):

“Language competences are at the heart of building the European Education Area. They are indispensable for mobility, cooperation, and mutual understanding across borders.

The co-existence of many languages in Europe is a powerful symbol of the European Union's (EU) aspiration to be united in diversity, one of the cornerstones of the European project. Languages define personal identities but are also part of a shared inheritance.

The EU has promoted language learning across Europe for a long time. The arguments supporting ambitious education policies regarding language learning are plentiful

- for individuals, learning languages creates personal and professional opportunities
- for society, it fosters cultural awareness, mutual understanding and social cohesion
- for companies, workers with language and intercultural competences are a vital resource, helping businesses to succeed and grow in global markets.”<sup>1</sup>

Greek is the official language used throughout the Music School of Thessaloniki, except for the IB Diploma Programme, for which English is the official teaching language. In our school, there are 392 students, and approximately 10 students have a mother language other than Greek.

English as a 1<sup>st</sup> foreign language is introduced at kindergarten and continues throughout the school years until the end of Secondary school.

A 2<sup>nd</sup> foreign language (French and German) is also offered as part of the Greek curriculum. The IB Diploma Programme (IBDP) is taught in English in all subjects except Language A which is Modern Greek.

All teachers of all subjects are considered language teachers, as teachers across all disciplines play a role in developing students' language skills.

This policy reflects the IB philosophy that language is at the core of learning, culture, and identity. Language serves both as a means of communication and a tool for personal growth, intercultural understanding, and international mindedness. The IB considers language learning essential to developing the attributes of the IB Learner Profile, particularly in terms of being communicators, open-minded, and reflective. All teachers are regarded as language teachers and share responsibility for supporting students' language development across all subjects by integrating language development strategies into their teaching, such as explicit instruction of academic vocabulary, scaffolding tasks for comprehension, and structured opportunities for speaking and writing.

## **Greek Language**

The Greek language is strongly supported throughout the typical educational system in all Greek schools from Kindergarten to Secondary school and the IB DP as Language A is Modern Greek.

## **Ancient Greek**

Ancient Greek is taught in all three grades of the Lower secondary school (Gymnasium) and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of the Upper secondary school (Lyceum). Ancient Greek is compulsory in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Lyceum only for students in the Humanities stream. Based on the National Curriculum, the course is divided into two areas: a) Ancient Greek Language and b) Ancient Greek Translated Texts.

## **Foreign Languages**

The foreign language curriculum functions as a framework for teaching and learning language in socially meaningful contexts. Its primary goal is to cultivate learners' ability to understand and convey meaning as it emerges within specific sociocultural settings, using a range of spoken and written text types.

Students develop communicative competence, linguistic awareness, intercultural sensitivity, and mediation skills by gaining a deeper understanding of how the target language operates across various social contexts and communicative situations.

## **English (1<sup>st</sup> foreign Language)**

### **Kindergarten (ages 4 – 6)**

English as a foreign language is introduced in kindergarten and is delivered through a variety of creative activities such as group play, movement-based games, songs, and fairy tales. These engaging methods help students become familiar with spoken English and gradually build their confidence in using the language.

### **Primary School (Dimotiko, ages 6 – 12)**

In 1st and 2nd grade (ages 6–8), English is taught for 2 hours per week through playful, theme-based activities linked to other school subjects, supporting interdisciplinary learning. A variety of teaching methods are used to cater to different learning styles and intelligences, aiming to foster a positive attitude and motivation toward learning the language. During 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade (ages 8 – 12), English is taught for 3 hours per week with a more defined educational goal regarding the skills and the level (as described by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages CEFR) that students should achieve:

**Lower secondary school (Gymnasio, ages 12 – 15)**

In Lower Secondary School (Gymnasio), English language is taught for 2 hours per week with defined educational goals for the students to achieve (minimum/maximum):

**Upper secondary school (Lykeio, ages 15 – 18)**

English language is taught for 3 hours per week in 1<sup>st</sup> Lykeio and 2 hours per week in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Lykeio with defined educational goals (Πρόγραμμα Σπουδών για τις Ξένες Γλώσσες στο Γενικό Λύκειο, ΙΕΠ 2021) for the students to achieve:

	Level
3 <sup>rd</sup> Dimotiko	A1-
4 <sup>th</sup> Dimotiko	A1
5 <sup>th</sup> Dimotiko	A1+
6 <sup>th</sup> Dimotiko	A2
1 <sup>st</sup> Gymnasio	A2-/B1-
2 <sup>nd</sup> Gymnasio	B1-/B1+
3 <sup>rd</sup> Gymnasio	B1+/B2-
1 <sup>st</sup> Lykeio	B2
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lykeio	B2+
3 <sup>rd</sup> Lykeio	C1

**French/German (2<sup>nd</sup> foreign Language)**

A 2<sup>nd</sup> foreign language (French, German) is introduced during late Elementary school (5<sup>th</sup> Dimotiko) and continues until 2<sup>nd</sup> Lykeio. the 2<sup>nd</sup> foreign language is taught for 2 hours per week except in 2<sup>nd</sup> Lykeio where it is taught 1 hour per week, and the expected level is shown in the following table:

Grade	Level achieved
5 <sup>th</sup> Dimotiko	A1-
6 <sup>th</sup> Dimotiko	A1-
1 <sup>st</sup> Gymnasio	A1-
2 <sup>nd</sup> Gymnasio	A1
3 <sup>rd</sup> Gymnasio	A1+
1 <sup>st</sup> Lykeio	A2

2 <sup>nd</sup> Lykeio	A2+
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### **IB Diploma Programme (ages 16 – 18)**

All subjects in the IB Diploma Programme at the Music School of Thessaloniki, except for Language A (Modern Greek), are taught and assessed in English, as English is the official language of instruction.

Language plays a central role in the IB Diploma Programme, supporting the school's mission to develop active global citizens who respect and promote social and cultural diversity. The IB aims to prepare students for life in a globalized world, encouraging them to pursue both cultural and academic excellence while fostering a strong sense of social responsibility. These goals align closely with the broader values of the Music School of Thessaloniki and are especially emphasized within the IB Programme.

### **Teaching and Learning**

English is the language of instruction at the Music School of Thessaloniki IB Diploma Programme for all subjects except Language A (Mod. Greek): Literature and/or Language A (Mod. Greek): Language and Literature, where Greek is the language of instruction.

All teachers of all subjects, except Language A (Modern Greek), conduct their lessons in English and encourage students to use only English during the lesson. All homework, texts and textbooks, presentations, projects, etc. related to IB subjects and activities are in English.

### **Communication**

The official language of communication for all official IBDP activities (announcements, assemblies, faculty meetings, presentations, student projects, etc.) is English. Greek may be used during meetings or other occasions for communication with parents who are not proficient in English.

### **English Language (Language Acquisition)**

The English B language curriculum follows IB directives as well as the aims and objectives connected to these. The programme aims to develop students into sensitive, receptive, and skilled users of English by exploring the language through literary, social, and cultural contexts. It focuses on enhancing their abilities as readers, writers, speakers, listeners, and thinkers. Students are encouraged to see English as a flexible communication tool suited for various purposes and to recognize their unique personal styles. Ultimately, the programme promotes an active, evolving relationship with the language, empowering students as individuals and global community members.

### **Modern Greek (Studies in Language and Literature)**

The vast majority of students in the IB Diploma Programme of the Music School of Thessaloniki have Greek as their native language.

The Modern Greek language curriculum aligns with IB guidelines and the associated learning aims and objectives. The programme aims to support academic and career aspirations by fostering social, aesthetic, and cultural literacy alongside language and communication skills. Language and literature are examined with a focus on the relationships between texts, readers, and writers, as well as on the functions of texts across different times and places.

The school upholds the principles of language learning, which include valuing all languages equally, recognizing language as a key to personal identity, and encouraging lifelong language development. Multilingualism is promoted to enable students to utilize their full linguistic skills to enhance learning. In practice, this might involve using more than one language for scaffolding complex ideas, aiding understanding, and fostering deeper conceptual thinking, while gradually developing proficiency in the language of instruction.

Currently, there are no students enrolled in the IB DP whose primary language is not Greek. If such a case arises in the future, the school will do its best to support their mother-tongue.

### **Support of Mother Tongue**

Mother-tongue literacy is encouraged as it supports cognitive development and identity.

Mother-tongue support includes:

- Access to native-language literature and media in the library
- Guidance on access to literature and media in students' native languages
- Advise for opportunities for community-based cultural and language clubs

### **Support of Foreign Languages**

To support students whose English (the working language of IBDP) is not proficient, e-tutoring (Ψηφιακό Φροντιστήριο) is available.

Currently, only English is offered in the Language Acquisition group, but there is planning to introduce other languages (French and German) in the future as language B and language ab initio.

[Resources (books/subscriptions to journals etc) are available in the library to support students when working in a language which is not their mother language (English).]

### **Connections to other policies and IB Standards and Practices**

This policy is aligned with the IBO's "Guidelines for developing a school language policy", "IB language tenets", and "IB language tenets in Practice".

It is also aligned with the "Programme Standards and Practices, 2024":

**Culture 4: The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews a language policy that helps to foster intercultural understanding through communicating in a variety of ways in more than one language (0301-04)**

Culture 4.1: The school implements and reviews a language policy that is aligned with IB language policy guidelines. (0301-04-0100)

Culture 4.2: The school describes in its language policy the way that the school recognizes multilingualism as a fact, a right and a resource for learning. (0301-04-0200)

Culture 4.3: The school identifies in its language policy a variety of physical and virtual resources used to facilitate language development. (0301-04-0300)

Culture 4.4: The school clearly describes in its language policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and what constitutes good practice within the school context. (0301-04-0400)

**Lifelong learners 7: Students pursue opportunities to explore and develop their personal and cultural identities. (0402-07)**

Lifelong learners 7.3: Students take opportunities to develop their language profiles. (0402-07-0300)

**Approaches to teaching 5: Teachers remove barriers to learning to enable every student to develop, pursue and achieve challenging personal learning goals. (0403-05)**

Approaches to teaching 5.4: Teachers support language development with consideration for the language profiles of students. (0403-05-0400)

**Review process**

The present policy has been revised by all teachers, led by the Heads of all sections of the School:

Alexandra Mauridou, Head of School

In the IB DP:

Gerasimoula Papandrikou, IBDP Coordinator

Dafni Angelopoulou, Teacher of English B

This document has been discussed in Language group meetings and it will be presented for discussion with the entire academic staff at a Meeting in March 2026.

The final version will be posted on the School's website: <https://msth.gr/>

## **Bibliography**

IBO publications:

*Guidelines for developing a school language policy, 2008*

*IB language tenets, 2024*

*IB language tenets in Practice, 2024*

*Programme standards and practices, 2018, updated 2020*

Also:

“Η Ξενόγλωσση Εκπαίδευση Στην Ελλάδα: ΠΕΑΠ.” Η Ξενόγλωσση Εκπαίδευση Στην Ελλάδα | ΠΕΑΠ, [rcel.enl.uoa.gr/peap/](http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/peap/). Accessed 22 July 2025.

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“About Multilingualism Policy.” European Education Area, [education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/improving-quality/multilingualism/about-multilingualism-policy](http://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/improving-quality/multilingualism/about-multilingualism-policy). Accessed 22 July 2025.

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Ενιαίο Πρόγραμμα Σπουδών των Ξένων Γλωσσών (ΕΠΣ-ΞΓ),

ΙΕΠ (<https://ebooks.edu.gr/info/newps/Ξένες%20Γλώσσες/ΠΣ%20Ξένων%20Γλωσσών.pdf>)

Πρόγραμμα Σπουδών για τις Ξένες Γλώσσες στο Γενικό Λύκειο, ΙΕΠ 2021

Πρόγραμμα Σπουδών Νεοελληνικής Γλώσσας στις Α', Β' και Γ' τάξεις του Γυμνασίου, ΙΕΠ 2021