

Our school has students with different social and cultural backgrounds and hence different linguistic backgrounds.

We believe that the promotion and learning of languages go hand in hand with the learning and the acceptance of different cultures and then, consequently improving knowledge and awareness of your own language and culture. We believe that welcoming students and teachers with different cultural background is enrichment to both our school community and the local community. This also enables us to get perspective on our own language and culture.

We also believe that we need to cooperate with people from other countries, with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds in order to solve the challenges the world issues in future e.g. environmental changes and resource management, sustainable development, cross - cultural understanding and respect. The world is getting smaller and smaller so that we need to be able to communicate without misunderstanding and be able to function in a globalized world. We want to give our students these skills. We believe that these attributes, alongside with linguistic competence, cultural understanding and respect are best learnt when students with different languages and cultural backgrounds cooperate on a daily basis working and studying together. We emphasize that interaction is the key for this learning and not just mere observation. Interactions mean that you go beyond the surface whereas observations of language and cultures contribute more to strengthening stereotypes and regress individual cross-cultural development. This way, we want to make sure that both we and our students have the awareness that “all people with their differences can also be right”.

Our basis for all language learning is the idea that everyone can learn languages. Language is the basis for all communication between people, and that interaction is the foundation and the aim for language learning and intercultural communication. Language competence in the language of instruction is also the key to learn and communicate what you know which is the basis of assessment.

Senja videregående skole's Language Philosophy

1. Language learning equipment

Our school has an extensive library with resources. The school has a reliable wireless broadband system and all our staff and students have their personal lap-tops enabling us to make use of internet and other digital resources available at any time. All the books and materials are updated and we have several games that can be used in all language teaching. The school has extensive funds to update school books and other support materials. We use interactive programs for language training purposes as well as such programs as Skype which helps us to communicate with the whole world through internet.

Language laboratory is also available for the individual –and group activities and language training. It contains advanced system for learning foreign languages and mother tongues.

Students and teachers are encouraged to use the facilities for further studies. In addition, the school has several mini recorders that is often used in languages classes.

2. All teachers are language teachers

All teachers are responsible for the development of the languages of the students since language is used when students are expanding their knowledge and are communicating their knowledge. Emphasis is put on students` developing vocabulary specific to the different subjects, concepts and subject terminology so that they can communicate fluently and with great accuracy. Learning specific terms related to particular subjects are crucial not only for these peculiar subjects but also for the individual development as well as for other issues of general matter or different scientific value. One can always correlate terms and concepts studied on other learning materials.

Language learning is closely linked to Theory of Knowledge. Developing language means developing the thought. How and what you learn depends on the language used in the process. Language is the medium of critical reflection. Correct use of vocabulary, especially the command terms, means that the communicator fully understands the concept and content of the word and therefore enables or enforces critical reflection. This is integrated in all subjects.

3. Learning of foreign languages

Senja vidergående skole offers a wide range of foreign languages: Norwegian as a foreign language, English, German, Spanish, French and Russian.

In the IB, we have offered the following foreign languages: English A Language and Literature and English B, Norwegian B and Russian ab initio.

We encourage our students to choose foreign languages by actively promoting the importance of language and cultural learning in the global knowledge society.

Due to financial constrain in our budget, we actively look for good practical solution so that the range of our language offering is varied. Pointing our focus on our closest international environment here in Arctic Norway, we have chosen to concentrate on the Barents Region and the cooperation between Norway and Russia with the huge differences in wealth, languages and cultures. As a result of this focus, we have chosen to offer Russian ab initio instead of French ab initio.

4. Mother tongue support

All students are offered school based self-taught mother tongue learning. We have one designated teacher, Mrs. Larissa Johansen who has the responsibility to monitoring these students. Students get support and guidance in relation to planning the individual balanced programme adjusted to each student`s need and interest. Monitoring the work in progress, the teacher guides the students in relation to learning the language through literature, helps to study and use literary terms and develops the students` insight within literary analysis through English. The students are expected to do most of the work individually and get help and support whenever they need from the teacher. So far this practice has worked well and we are proud to state that our self- taught candidates have achieved impressive results in the final exams.

5. Language and access to the IB

Learning the foreign language or proceed studying one`s mother tongues can be challenging at times. Students who struggle with these issues have access to many technical aids such as personal computer, spell-check programs in addition to the regular hours with the subject teacher who helps students to master learning techniques through individual tutorials.

Otherwise, English is a widely spoken language that most people use daily both professionally but also in relation to free time activities and virtual- and mass media. Using general language is not a challenging problem for the students. However some of them have a tendency to struggle with the subject specific terms sometimes. This type of language needs to be carefully developed so that the students are enabled to grasp the subject didactics immediately. In that respect the teachers are trying to make the students conscious from the very beginning of their studies , that use of subject related terminology is crucial for mastering the subject and needs to be developed carefully and systematically.

6. Host country language: Norwegian B

All students are strongly advised to have Norwegian as one of their subjects. Students with another linguistic background than Norwegian are offered Norwegian B both HL and SL.

This group of students is very diverse in background and level when they start the IB ranging from people who can make them understood, including both literary texts and conversations to beginners. In order to have the possibility of entering Norwegian universities, students are required to have at least Norwegian B. We therefore do not offer Norwegian ab initio, only Norwegian B.

Due to the diversity of linguistic backgrounds, we have one of our most flexible and experienced pedagogues teaching Norwegian B, Mr Hans Roald Hansen. He facilitates the learning of Norwegian tailor made each student`s needs and simultaneously integrating them

in a group where they learn with and from each other. He, together with the rest of the staff at Senja videregående skole, encourages students to start using the Norwegian language in both the school community and the local community from day one in the IB.

Norwegian and CAS: The community service aspect of CAS requires that students need to be able to communicate with people internationally but also locally. Even though the majority of the population speaks English, people tend to want to use their own language in daily situation. Therefore, being able to communicate in Norwegian is essential to a good and well balanced CAS programme.

There are many examples of Norwegian CAS correlation, connected to the main principles of CAS philosophy. Sharing energies and talents, developing of awareness, concern for and ability to work with others, service to the community as a complement to intellectual development in academic activity among many others are the examples of importance of Norwegian language to generate successful fulfillment of CAS outcomes.

7. Professional development

General professional development:

Teachers of the foreign language department of the school have personal and collective responsibility for individual and common professional development. On weekly basis teachers cooperate within the planning and methods of teaching, update each other and share materials and impressions from different personal experiences and professional courses.

Every year, our teachers take part in a two-days' workshop in their subject. These workshops are organized for all teachers in our county and experienced educator lead the workshops with focus on the latest developments of the subject area based on the challenges that teachers face in teaching and learning.

Another tradition of our school is the subject day in English for the students and a course day for the teachers given by Roving Scholar from the US through Fulbright Foundation. Other courses are given by the Educational department in the Troms county which are optional for the teachers as well as the courses given by the publishing houses e.g. Cappelen, Gyldendal etc.

Comenius Language training:

All teachers of foreign languages and teachers who teach in a language other than their own (which means most teachers in the IB) are well informed about the opportunity of receiving training funded through Comenius either courses in languages our job-shadowing at a school abroad.

IB Workshops

All teachers of the IB are offered IB workshops at a regular basis.

8. Involvement of parents.

In the beginning of the school year the school holds a parents' meeting for all foundation course students. The formal presentation of the school, its traditions and visions is given to the parents and the students. The administration of the school describes the options for further educational opportunities for the students and presents key persons for the young people at school. Groups of parents, students and contact teachers get better acquainted then and discuss the challenges of the coming school year. There is a possibility for individual talks and cooperation between parents, teachers and the students. Once a year parents are offered a talk with the contact teacher where the parts discuss the general progress of a student and the steps for further development. The contact teachers have responsibility to monitor closely the attendance. Parents are welcome to participate in class activities such as e.g. Russian evening that the IB year 1 students have organized to raise funds for the trip to Russia.

Actions describing practices for achieving and evaluating goals:

- A. Positive attitude towards enrolling students with different linguistic background into the IB Diploma Programme. Work actively to facilitate the entrance of students from our partner schools in Russia and in Haiti by actively applying for funding.
- B. Annual study trip to Murmansk, Russia where English is used as Lingua Franca and where students are encouraged to use each other's languages.
- C. Encouraging, facilitating and financially supporting leaves for teachers when they go on excursions with students abroad or when attending training, both specific IB and other types of training, either at home or abroad.
- D. Continuous update of both digital and other resources available for both students and teachers.
- E. Language training by students. Russian and Norwegian students cooperate in regards to language training of each other in spare time. Usually practical oral activities, learning and understanding cultural and historical differences and many more.
- F. CAS doing individual programs and collaborating fellow students, teachers, parents and local organizations and community while undertaking challenging chores.
- G. Class day in the beginning of the school year. The goal of this day is to learn to know each other
- H. PACT
- I. "How to study in a foreign language" is integrated in contact teacher lessons and in each subject.
- J. In-house workshop about language learning for all IB teachers with links to ToK (planned).
- K. Funding of school trips abroad: 800 NOK per student.
- L. Knowledge on applying for external funding for projects esp the Barents Secretary that funds culture exchange projects in the Barents Region with focus on exchanges

between Russia and Norway. They have fully financed our Barents Projects the last four years.

M. Facilitating lessons in Norwegian B and school supported self-taught, and other languages.

N. General flow of information about language training, especially the possibilities within the Comenius system.