

Language Policy

This Language Policy has been updated in the spring of 2022.

The School Language Philosophy

Our language policy aims to help our students achieve individual and common language goals in this school. We firmly believe that the awareness and conscious use of language is the basis of intercultural understanding and mutual respect.

The School Language Profile

The IB Department at “Stenhus Gymnasium” is a smaller unit in a large Danish school. Consequently, the majority language in the school is Danish. The following languages are taught at the school: English, German, French, Spanish, and Chinese.

Support for mother tongue languages

We are aware of and appreciate our students’ mother tongue languages and the cultural diversity that they represent. A certain percentage of our student population have Danish as their mother tongue, for others English is their best language, and a third group of students will have another language as their first language. For this reason, the school offers Self-Taught Language A supervision in languages other than English and Danish (please see more below). Typically, between 15-20% of a cohort will study their mother tongue as a Self-Taught Language.

Outside of the classroom, students are encouraged to maintain their own mother tongue by speaking it to their fellow native speakers. However, students are also encouraged to have an awareness not to exclude others who do not speak the language.

Support for students who need help in English (the language of instruction)

The language of instruction is English, except for Danish A and B classes. All teachers are language teachers in their respective subjects and work towards the common goal of establishing awareness of the target language. English is spoken in the classroom and is encouraged as the language of communication outside the classroom. Speaking one’s own mother tongue is to be avoided in the classroom in order not to exclude others who do not speak this language.

Support for students who are not native speakers of Danish

It is the school’s general language policy to encourage all students who plan a future in Denmark to study Danish. For non-Danish native speakers Danish B HL is recommended in order to fulfil the requirements of Danish universities.

In the Pre-IB programme, students who do not speak Danish upon entering the programme will be offered a course in Danish ab initio in conjunction with the school’s cohort of exchange students. In the IB Diploma Programme, three levels of Danish as a Second Language are offered: Danish B ab initio, Danish B SL, and Danish B HL.

As the school environment is Danish, there is ample opportunity to practice the language in the pursuit of extracurricular activities, theatre, musical performances, etc.

Reflection of the needs of students in group 1 and group 2 course offerings

Group 1

All students study their first language – a placement test at the start of the school year helps to secure appropriate choices. We offer Danish A HL, Danish A SL, English A HL, and English A SL as taught courses. Other languages can be studied as School Supported Self-Taught Language A SL with the help of a supervisor (a qualified IB Language A teacher).

Group 2

All students study at least one language in addition to their mother tongue. In the IB we offer English B HL, Danish B HL, Danish B SL, Danish B ab initio SL, Spanish B ab initio SL, German B HL, German B SL, French B HL, and French B SL as second language options.

Strategies to support all teachers in their contribution to the language development of students

Not all IB teachers are native speakers of English. We offer all new IB teachers language support. All communication about the IB on the school's intranet and at IB staff meetings takes place in English to further train the target language.

