



# Haileybury Astana

## LANGUAGE POLICY

### THE AIM OF THIS POLICY:

*Haileybury Astana School recognises that language acquisition and its proficiency is instrumental to the success of all pupils, as scholars, community members, and life-long learners. For this reason, and since language is vital across all subject areas, HAS believes that all teachers are language teachers, regardless of discipline or teacher learner age group. HAS is committed to supporting appropriate language development for all pupils, through language courses in English, French, Kazakh, Russian and Spanish as well as mother tongue provision. Though our primary language is English, we place great value upon all languages as an instrument to raise racial, cultural and ethnic awareness and respect for all our community stakeholders. This policy is a working document that all school administrators, teachers and librarians are expected to be familiar with.*

### HAS Language profile

About 80% of our pupils speak English as an additional language. They have over 20 different mother tongues and come from at least as many different countries. All of our teaching staff and most of our administrative staff speak English and the majority is fluent in at least one other language.

### Languages of Instruction

English is, essentially, the language of instruction at Haileybury Astana School for all classes, apart from in Language-specific classes, such as French, Kazakh, Russian and Spanish.

### The English Language

As the language of instruction, English is taught to all pupils, focusing on language acquisition and skills in all year groups. We believe that it is essential pupils develop language and communication skills in order to be successful learners in a global society. The English Language programme lies at the heart of Haileybury Astana School's vision, whereby pupils become independent, critical thinkers, lifelong learners, and responsible citizens. The programme encourages pupils to develop a love for language and literature, and to understand that language is fundamental to all forms of learning. English is both an essential tool for learning and a medium for communicating meaning, intent, analysis and emotion. The



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English programme will include and challenge pupils, preparing them for the next stage of their education (post-IB Diploma) which demands mastery of the full range of language skills.

## The EAL Programme

HAS provides English as an Additional Language (EAL) classes to serve pupils whose English skills limit their full access to mainstream instruction. Lessons operate instead of other classes such as French, Russian or Spanish. Where possible, the EAL teachers schedule inclusion times in the pupils' other lessons to assist with their work in that class and in order to work more closely both with the pupils and their regular classroom or subject-specific lessons. Entrance into the EAL programme initially begins with a formal assessment or an observed assessment in the case of the lower year groups. Newly admitted pupils of Year 3 and above are formally assessed as part of the admissions process to HAS.

Generally, pupils remain in EAL until their abilities in English improve enough to enable them to successfully access the main curriculum without EAL support. Exit from the programme is determined jointly by teacher recommendation and successful performance on a subsequent English Language assessment test.

## The Kazakh Language

As the host language, Kazakh holds a crucial position in the lives of our pupils. For cultural, practical and multinational reasons and out of respect to our host nation, the teaching of Kazakh is given high priority at HAS from **Key Stage 1** onwards.

Haileybury Astana School serves a diverse group of pupils with disparate linguistic backgrounds. These tend to fall loosely in three groups: pupils with little or no experience of Kazakh prior to being enrolled at HAS, pupils with some social experience in Kazakh, but little or no academic experience, and pupils with both academic and social experience in Kazakh.

To provide for the development of language skills in all pupils, regardless of prior experience, HAS Kazakh classes in all years provide a rich cultural and linguistic environment. Classes focus on the major language areas of reading, listening, speaking and writing, and all pupils are further engaged in a rich array of Kazakh cultural activities.

Upon entry to HAS, each pupil is placed in the Kazakh class most appropriate for their background and ability level. This decision is made by the Kazakh staff following assessment. At secondary level we offer Kazakh at IGCSE level in KS4. The availability of Kazakh as a Group 1 subject in the IBDP is being considered.



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## French, Russian and Spanish

French, Russian and Spanish courses are also offered at HAS. In Key Stages 2 and 3 all pupils study French, Russian or Spanish or attend EAL language classes. These language courses are available in Key Stage 4 as IGCSE Russian for first or second language speakers and as IGCSE French and Spanish for second language learners. In the IB Diploma programme we plan to offer Russian for first language speakers, second language speakers and ab initio, Spanish B and French B. The level for each pupil depends on the individual pupil's prior experience with that language (the IB Coordinator will be the final arbiter on such a decision).

## The Library

A wide range of literature in the school library extends and supplements classroom resources. The aim is to help pupils become independent and committed readers, through free interaction with a variety of texts, in order to develop literacy skills and the ability to engage critically with literature. The school library includes fiction and non-fiction selections.

## Language, Tolerance and Respect

Haileybury Astana School is mindful of the power of language and words, and acknowledges that what individuals say, and how individuals say things, directly affects people's perceptions of our intentions, goals and values. As an authorized IB World School, we therefore encourage all HAS community members to develop positive means of communication that foster a sense of global community. For this reason, pupils and teachers should, when in a group, use a language which is common to all members of that group. This also means avoiding the use of words that degrade or alienate others.

Above all we value languages as a vehicle towards promoting other nations and therefore other ethnicities, races, religions and cultures. Each year we celebrate our diversity with our International Week activities, with additional costume, music and dance performances and ethnic foods brought in by parents. In addition French, Kazakh, Russian and Spanish cultural events are enjoyed at various times throughout the year. We present diversity including the rich tapestry of languages at HAS as a positive influence in our lives and consciously steer away from all potential negative connotations.

Our language policy is an integral part of our central school aim and philosophy to promote harmony and appreciation in our multi-ethnic and multi-racial setting, as we seek to prepare pupils as life-long learners in a global community.



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## **Further implications and review process**

Experts qualified in language acquisition, such as the Head of the EAL department, are available in school to work not only with learners but also with teachers, librarians and administrators to ensure all are aware of and trained in the best practices for teaching those learning in a language other than their mother tongue. This is part of the school's Continuous Professional Development programme.

The language policy will be reviewed as new ideas are developed, the results of research are gathered and the school language profile changes. The Director of Studies, who is leading the language policy steering committee, will be responsible for the evaluation of the effectiveness of the language policy as a working document.

## **Communication of the language policy to the HAS community**

The language policy has been introduced to the HAS community through staff meetings, special evenings for parents, key stage assemblies and the Headmaster's Newsletter. The policy is also available on the HAS intranet. New staff will be familiarised with the document during orientation.

## **Review**

The admissions policy will be subject to review at least every two years.