

## **OIS Internationalization plan**

Oulu International School (OIS) is an IB (International Baccalaureate) World School owned by the City of Oulu and exists to meet the educational needs of the international and internationally minded community in and around Oulu.

The aim of Oulu International School is to educate children to become interculturally minded, active and co-operative citizens, who have good learning skills and knowledge to contribute positively to society. In practice, this means that we aim to:

- provide students with skills they need to thrive in an increasingly interrelated, diverse and complex world
- appreciate people of many languages and backgrounds
- ensure that students receive the individual attention and support they need to succeed
- encourage students to become creative problem-solvers and independent thinkers
- create an active concern for a sustainable community and environment.

Oulu international school community follows the internationalism, cultural diversity and language awareness guidelines stated in the national Finnish and local Oulu city's curriculum. According to these guiding documents, the school as a learning community is part of a culturally transforming and diverse society where the local and the global overlap. Different identities, languages, religions, and worldviews coexist and interact. Internationalization at home is an important resource for a learning community. The community appreciates and draws upon the country's cultural heritage and national languages as well as cultural, linguistic, religious, and philosophical diversity in the community itself and in its environment. It brings up the importance of the Sámi culture and various minorities in Finland. It promotes understanding and respect between individuals and groups as well as responsible action. The community recognizes the right to one's own language and culture as a fundamental right. The pupils become acquainted with cultural traditions, constructively discuss different ways of thinking and acting, and create new ways of acting together. (Finnish National Curriculum 2016.)

One manifestation of cultural diversity is multilingualism. Each community and community member is multilingual. Parallel use of various languages in the school's daily life is seen as natural, and languages are appreciated. A community with language-awareness discusses attitudes towards languages and linguistic communities and understands the key importance of language for learning,

interaction and cooperation and for the building of identities and socialization. Each subject has its own language, textual practices and concepts. The languages and symbol systems of different fields of knowledge open up different viewpoints to the same phenomenon. The instruction progresses from everyday language to the language of conceptual thinking. In a language-aware school, each adult is a linguistic model and also a teacher of the language typical of the subject he or she teaches. (Finnish National Curriculum 2016.)

The World Citizen’s path in the city of Oulu helps the pupils to perceive, contemplate and appreciate the cultural diversity and multilingualism of themselves, their families, their neighbourhood, Finland and the entire world. The World Citizen’s path approaches multilingualism and cultural diversity through information, skills and attitudes. (The local curriculum 2016.)

As a multicultural learning environment, OIS emphasizes **intercultural skills** in several ways (**L2 from the transdisciplinary skills**).

Intercultural skills L2	gr 1-2	gr 3-6	gr 7-9
National core & IB curricula  Architecture, Design and Crafts	Getting to know our local heritage and cultural environment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Merimiehenkoti museo</li> <li>• Turkansaari</li> </ul>	Becoming familiar with the cultural, religious and other worldviews, and linguistic elements in the local environment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kierikki</li> <li>• Buildings and Art around us</li> </ul>	
Performing Arts and Music	Acquiring international experiences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oulu International Children’s Film Festival</li> <li>• Oulu Sinfonia</li> <li>• Akseli Klouk</li> </ul>	Having the possibility to experience and interpret art and culture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oulu International Children’s Film Festival</li> <li>• Oulu Theatre Festival for Young Audiences</li> <li>• Oulu Sinfonia</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitors to school; Drama/Theatre/Music</li> <li>• Oulu Music Festival</li> </ul>	
Celebrations, Events, Cultural Heritage	<p>Is allowed to express oneself, and things that are important to oneself using many different kinds of methods:</p> <p>Getting to know the main principles of children's rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Celebrations, events and assemblies</li> </ul> <p>Third Culture Kids -group</p>	<p>Experiencing diverse methods of expression and enjoying the satisfaction that comes through expression.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Celebrations, events and assemblies</li> <li>• Pohjois-Pohjanmaan museo</li> </ul> <p>Third Culture Kids -group</p>	Third Culture Kids - group
Word Art and Media	<p>Getting to know one's cultural heritage and learning to respect the habits and traditions of one's family and community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pohjois-Pohjanmaan museo</li> <li>• Sanoma –ja aikakauslehtiviikko</li> <li>• Kirjastoreitti</li> <li>• Oulun koulun kohinaa-lehti (gr.2)</li> <li>• Sanataidefestivaali toukokuussa</li> </ul>	<p>Supporting the student's growth to become a well-rounded and skillful user of language in one's mother tongue as well as other languages. Learning to analyse and recognize the influence and effects of the media.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sanoma –ja aikakauslehtiviikko</li> <li>• Kirjastoreitti</li> <li>• Oulun koulun kohinaa-lehti (gr.6)</li> <li>• Sanataidefestivaali toukokuussa</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oulu City Art Museum</li> <li>• Valve Gallery and other Art Galleries</li> </ul>		
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Oulu international school participates in Erasmus projects on a regular basis. We have an Erasmus coordinator who facilitates together with other staff members and students the Erasmus application procedures and activities. Additionally, the school co-operates with different international associations and organizations for example with the city's sister school in Hangzhou. OIS also provides trainee possibilities for teachers in the university of North Carolina and in the Erasmus programme. Additionally, we have different international trainees from several different schools from Oulu region.

### **Internationalization and multilingualism**

Teachers at OIS work on creating opportunities to represent and appreciate different mother tongues in classrooms. We aim at creating everyday practices that reflect our international and multilingual student body. Teachers are sensitive to diversity and aim at cooperating with guardians in supporting mother tongue teaching and resources. Teaching a language includes learning about the language, through language, and of language as an art. All teachers should be aware of language development and consider language development in their lesson planning.

In Finland, Finnish and Swedish have a special status by law. These languages are taught during the school day at OIS, with Swedish starting from grade 6. Teaching of other mother tongues (e.g. Chinese, German, Japanese, Greek and Italian) is organized by the Education Office of Oulu outside school hours whenever there are enough students to form a study group. Cooperation between OIS and teachers of other mother tongues is desirable.

Supportive measures need to be used for students who are not proficient in the language of instruction. It is possible to support them by, for example, modifying the language in materials, differentiation of assessment tasks, or parallel resources in students' mother tongues.

Teachers choose which language to use based on the situation. In cases of learning difficulties or challenges and in certain other problem situations (e.g. bullying), the language used with students

should be the one students are most comfortable with (the mother tongue of the student is used if possible).

In OIS, cultural and linguistic diversity is integrated in all teaching and learning. Different cultures and languages are also a part of several units of inquiry in PYP. In MYP, units in different subjects discuss e.g. languages, arts, history, nature and culture of different countries. They can also be chosen as topics for the Personal Project.

Guardians and other members of the multicultural communities of OIS and the Oulu region are encouraged to be involved in various topics of learning. They can be invited to visit lessons and events and to provide materials.

If possible, teachers provide parallel resources in the students' mother tongue. This happens mostly in cooperation with the parents and so the active participation of parents is crucial. The main concepts are provided in both English and Finnish.

Guardians are encouraged to be involved in ordering materials for the school in their child's mother tongue. The school library supports different mother tongues by offering books in different mother tongues. Teachers may also cooperate with the City library to offer resources in different mother tongues.

Learning through a language other than their mother tongue is challenging for a child. Guardians and teachers have different roles in supporting a child's learning. A guardian's role primarily is to support the child's Mother Tongue. Guardians are asked to support their child's mother tongue(s) by providing resources at home which relate to school learning such as PYP units of inquiry or projects in MYP. Guardians can also be involved in homework activities, discussing the issues which come up in units of inquiry and MYP subject related issues, for example, in their child's mother tongue(s). Guardians can also encourage the use of English, e.g. providing materials and games in English.

It is worth noting that "...it can take up to seven years for learners who are using a language other than their mother tongue to attain the same levels in academic language proficiency as those expected for learners learning in a mother tongue." (Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes, IB 2008, p. 5)

Guardians of Finnish as a second language students are asked to encourage their children to actively focus on developing their Finnish skills, both at school and in their free time. Finnish skills will promote the child's social well-being and their integration into the society.

The units of inquiry and the interdisciplinary units contain elements of language and identity. Intercultural awareness is fundamental in the approaches to teaching and learning in OIS. CLIL methodology is a tool to apply the intercultural awareness in teaching and learning. In addition to this, the school fosters the language and cultural awareness, for example, by organizing a week that concentrates on language and cultural awareness where all grade levels are involved.