

Appendices to Policy Brief



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**Methodological Concept
of Preparatory Classes**

Policy Brief

APPENDIX 1

Ad. 2 Legal aspects of organising a preparatory class

At the beginning of the 2024/25 school year, the conditions for establishing, organizing, and operating preparatory classes in Polish schools were defined by a series of regulations issued by the Minister of National Education – including the regulation from August 2017 and three subsequent ones issued after the escalation of the war in Ukraine (2022–2024).

1. Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23 August 2017 on the education of persons who are not Polish citizens and persons who are Polish citizens who have received education in schools operating in other countries' educational systems (Journal of Laws 2017(1655)) and
2. Regulation of the Minister of Education and Science of 10 March 2022 amending the Regulation on education of persons who are not Polish citizens and persons who are Polish citizens and who have received education in schools operating in other countries' educational systems (Journal of Laws 2022(573)).
3. Regulation of the Minister of Education and Science of 21 March 2022 on the education, upbringing and care of children and adolescents who are citizens of Ukraine.
4. Regulation of the Minister of Education and Science of 26 August 2024 amending the Regulation on the organisation of education, upbringing and care of children and youth who are citizens of Ukraine.

The Regulation of 23 August 2017 on the education of persons who are not Polish citizens and persons who are Polish citizens who have received education in schools operating in the other countries' educational systems (Journal of Laws 2017, item 1655) is the key source of information on organising the preparatory classes. It covers areas such as:

- the composition of the committee that qualifies a student to a PC,
- the maximum number of students in a class (until March 2022, it was 15 students, and since March 2022 it is 25; The document does not specify the minimum number of students, so a class can also be organised for one student),
- curricula and methods and forms of their adaptation and implementation (item 3, section 16),
- personal tutors and the possibility for teaching assistants who speak the language of the student's country of origin to support the process (item 4, section 16),
- number of hours in the weekly timetable (item 5, section 16),
- the possibility of organising teaching in combined classes (item 6, section 16),
- the conditions of the decision to reduce or extend the period of study in the PC and the manner in which this decision is made (item 7, section 16),
- the possibility of organising a PC during the school year (item 8, section 16),
- the number of hours of Polish language study and the basis for curriculum development (item 9, section 16),
- conditions and manner of organising the PC classes in an immigration detention centre (item 10, section 16).

Ad. 3. Practical and pragmatic aspects of the functioning of preparatory classes

3.2. Procedure for enrolment to a specific class

Procedure
1. Enrolling the student to school in accordance with the legal provisions (that is, under the conditions and recruitment procedure that applies to Polish citizens) and qualifying them to an appropriate class on the basis of the years of schooling and age criterion.
2. A preliminary informal diagnosis to determine to what extent the student's language proficiency enables them to learn in a general classroom and whether there is a need to direct the student to an existing PC or to establish a PC at the school.
<p>If no PC at school:</p> <p>A. Undertaking efforts to establish a PC: obtaining approval from the governing body.</p> <p>B. Appointing a board to qualify students to the PC (two teachers, a school counsellor or psychologist).</p> <p>C. After obtaining approval from the governing body: creating a PC at school</p> <p>D. Preparing an addendum to the school's organisation sheet for the given year to take into account the changes resulting from establishing a PC at the school.</p>
3. Qualifying the student to the appropriate education level, appropriate grade on the basis of a complex diagnosis.
4. Referring the student(s) to the appropriate grade and seconding them to be taught in a PC.
5. Developing a weekly teaching plan for the PC, taking into account the teaching framework for the class to which the student is qualified.
6. Assigning responsibilities to subject teachers.
7. Appointing the tutor: the tasks of the tutor are carried out by the teacher of the class in which the student has been enrolled. If the PC has many students (e.g. over 5, also appointing the PC tutor)

3.7. Curricula and adapting the methods and forms of implementation to students needs

3.7.3. Polish language teaching in PCs

To fully understand the role of language learning, it is indispensable to explain the concepts of BICS and CALP¹.

BICS - Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

- the language of everyday communication, is the language that is:

- cognitively undemanding,
- always set in the "here and now",
- used in a familiar context,
- used in a face-to-face interaction,
- covering high frequency vocabulary (around 2000 words) and simple sentence structures, used in a low-pressure situation.

At school, it is the language used during breaktime. Communicative proficiency requires from one to three years of learning and depends on individual predispositions, the typological distance of the learner's mother tongue from Polish, the degree of language immersion and age. Frequently includes a so-called silent period (a period of silence, when the learner already understands much in the foreign language, having receptive language skills, but does not yet talk in this language).

CALP - Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

- school education language, academic language - is cognitively demanding language, defined by:

- experience (experiencing) and contact with culture,
- lectures, written texts, specialised terminology,
- humour, phraseology, non-verbal communication,
- formal register, language of textbooks, register/appropriateness issues,
- limited interaction (working with the text),
- abstract language,
- a less well-known context, subject,
- decontextualised use,
- low frequency vocabulary,
- high stakes (high pressure).

It is the language used at school in lessons, the language of schoolbooks. Proficiency at intermediate level requires a minimum of five years of study. In Poland, the acronym JES² (Polish: język edukacji szkolnej, school learning language) is sometimes used; it might be considered a CALP equivalent.

Migration experience	Language skills	Scope of support
Children of migrants born abroad	No or little knowledge of Polish	Language of communication Language of school education
	Good communication skills	Language of school education
Children of migrants born in Poland	Good communication skills	Language of school education
Children of Poles born or brought up abroad (so-called returning students)	Poor communication skills	Language of communication Language of school education
	Good communication skills	Language of school education
Children from bicultural families, born or raised abroad	No or little knowledge of Polish	Language of communication Language of school education
	Good communication skills	Language of school education

¹ The concept of BICS and CALP was proposed by Jim Cummins in Cummins, James (1979). "Cognitive/academic language proficiency, linguistic interdependence, the optimum age question and some other matters"

² <https://metodajes.pl/>