

AZBUKA Russian-English Nursery, School, Club. Bilingual Education Resource [www.azbukafoundation.org](http://www.azbukafoundation.org)  
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AZBUKA Foundation

## AZBUKA Russian-English Bilingual school (primary)

**Azbuka Foundation is a unique educational project for London. It operates AZBUKA Russian Nursery school, Saturday complementary school, Bilingual Education resource and Russian-English primary school (from 2016).**

Azbuka Foundation has been formed as a UK registered charitable Foundation, governed by a board of experienced Trustees. **Azbuka Russian-English Bilingual primary** school is based on the 16-year work of the over-subscribed Azbuka Russian Nursery, Azbuka Saturday School and Azbuka Club in London. It will operate under the same umbrella of AZBUKa Foundation.

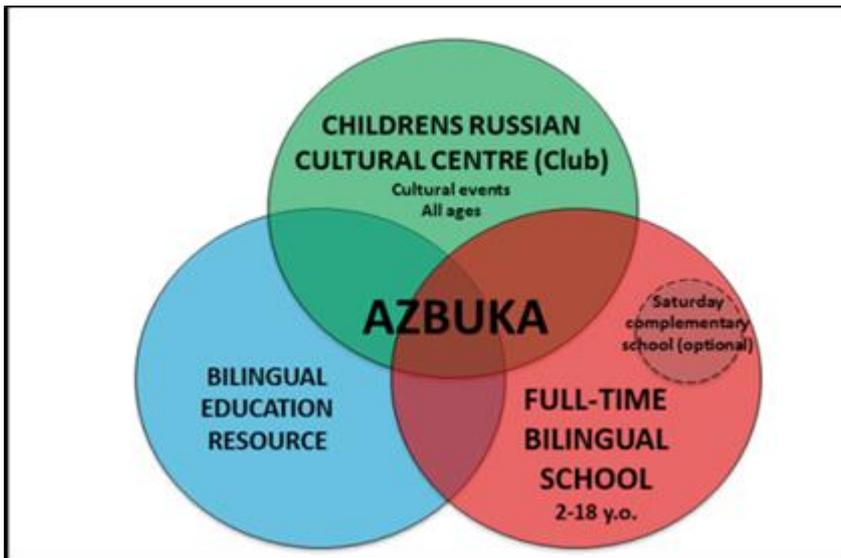
**Azbuka Foundation** Project.

[www.azbukafoundation.org](http://www.azbukafoundation.org)

The Project is the creation of London's first charitable organisation that will comprise:

- **Russian-English bilingual school** serving children from 2 to 16+ years old (nursery, primary school and secondary curricula)
- **Children's Russian cultural Centre** offering the best of Russian art, literature, theatre and culture *for children*: Russian writers, musicians, poets, teachers, visiting theatre groups and artists. Open to the wider community
- **Bilingual education resource** for all children and families (regardless of languages spoken)

All three parts will operate under the unique umbrella of AZBUKA FOUNDATION, UK registered Charity No. 1153976



### **AZBUKA Russian-English bilingual primary school vision is:**

Establishing an educational organisation and programme, which will:

- meet the educational, cultural, linguistic and social needs of Russian and English bilingual and bicultural children and families living in London
- provide a new effective bilingual education model (School in the broader sense), applicable for all children and families, regardless of languages spoken and cultures involved
- bring Russian culture and language for children to the wider community in London
- inform and encourage the advantages of bilingual education to the wider community, and
- provide an educational model, which is embedded in the cultural and linguistic profile of the community

### **Philosophy behind the Azbuka Project**

In the current mobile world a child's multiple languages and multiple identities are becoming more commonly the fact of life. A bilingual education of different types is an educational model that would serve and be relevant to the needs and aspirations of many families in London (and the world in general). The needs – social, emotional, cognitive and language/literacy development as well as identity and culture.

### **The Azbuka bilingual education Project has the following beliefs at its foundation philosophy:**

- Implementation of Curriculum through both languages embedded in both cultures (bilingual education) is the essential model of education for many families- linguistically, cognitively, socially, emotionally and culturally.
- Bilingual education brings fluency and high proficiency in another language, results far better (as consistently shown by research) than results achieved through a monolingual education where another language is merely taught as a subject.
- Children from a minority language communities achieve far better educational results in all subjects and areas of learning, when taught through both minority and majority languages (Russian and English in this case) as opposed to English only.

- Children from well implemented bilingual programmes do not just achieve higher and quicker proficiency in English, but also sustain their bilingualism by developing their first or minority language.
- Bilingual children have the ability to understand different cultures, the way of thinking and different ways of learning, which make them better citizens in modern society, provide better economic and employment benefits to the country (UK plc).
- Bilingual education and bilingualism are linked to better metalinguistic awareness and multitasking abilities in children and adults. It also linked to a higher creative thinking which will be applicable and valid in any job in the future.
- Bilingual education, in essence being a bicultural education, fosters tolerance, understanding and inclusion from early age in general, empowering all children through the languages and culture of their communities.
- Run and managed as a 'not-for-profit' organisation, accessible to a wide range of families.
- Aspire to support and provide the most effective bilingual education to all children, regardless of the special needs requirements, cultural and linguistic background, financial circumstances of the families etc.

## Organisation. Background

[www.azbukafoundation.org](http://www.azbukafoundation.org)

The School will be based on the long established and heavily over-subscribed *Azbuka Russian Nursery*, *Azbuka Saturday School* and *Azbuka Club* established in 2000.

## Organisational structure

Azbuka Foundation will consist of 3 parts working together:

- **Russian-English bilingual school**, offering a structured bilingual education programme. Full-time school - Nursery (for 2-5 year olds, est.2002), Primary School (6-11) and *Secondary School (11-16+)*. The School will include **a Complementary School** option (either a Saturday or afternoon school) - for those children who wish to carry on their Russian language, but cannot for different reasons attend Azbuka full-time school. Those children would go to other London full-time English (or other language) schools and attend Azbuka Complementary option on a two-evening a week basis or on Saturday (all-day).
- **Russian children cultural Centre**, complementing School curriculum through additional Russian events, talks, performance etc. on one hand and bringing Russian culture and language to the wider community - on the other. Est in 2000.
- **Bilingual Education Resource**. Help and information related to bilingual education and bilingualism to the wider communities of London. May include *sub-letting* of premises to the minority language groups in London (especially smaller linguistic groups) to help accommodate their play-groups and children's activities; lectures and talks on child's bilingualism and bilingual education; open to academic research in the field of education and bilingualism; other support.

## **Legal Structure and Governance.**

Azbuka Foundation is an incorporated limited company. **Company House Registration number is 8586329.**

Azbuka Foundation will be run as a non-profit organisation, an independent UK registered Charity.

**Charity name: AZBUKA FOUNDATION. Reg number. 1153976**

## **AZBUKA Russian-English bilingual primary School**

### **Curriculum/general**

**The School** will operate a bilingual curriculum, with subjects taught in both languages and children immersed in both cultures. It will be based on the well established 'two-way immersion programme.' On exit children will sit internationally recognised qualifications and be competent in written and spoken Russian and English. Children will acquire a strong academic foundation for life and work in the UK, Russia and around the world. The curriculum is being designed and implemented using the best international bilingual education practices today, drawing on experience in Canada, the USA, Europe and Asia and involving leading teachers and academics in the field of bilingual education as well as Azbuka's own experience operating for more than 14-years in London.

In designing and deciding on a particular option, shape and form of Azbuka bilingual education curriculum, the following considerations have been taken into account:

- The main aims of Azbuka bilingual education programme philosophy - ethical, linguistic, cultural and educational/academic
- The nature of bilingualism and societies bilingual practices. Including the research on the subject and educational experience
- European, American and Asian experience and practice in implementing different types of bilingual education programmes in similar contexts.
- Particular needs of Russian and English communities in the current historical context (linguistic and cultural competence, education, qualifications, jobs opportunities)
- Azbuka's experience in working with similar families and children in London
- Legal English requirements in relation to Education, employment, equal opportunities and child protection and safeguarding
- Accessibility of qualified/other bilingual Russian, European and English teachers
- Russian and English curriculum - similarities and differences
- Educational and cultural traditions (in Russia and England)
- Availability of Russian/authentic educational materials and recourses
- UK/English employment legislation

The School will be registered as an independent school and operate under its Policies and Procedures, including the Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Child Protection etc.

## **Curriculum overview:**

Bilingual education programmes come in many shapes and forms, depending of the following factors: languages involved, languages taught in (child's majority or minority languages of the society), prestige, size and economic status of a certain language, subjects taught in each language, language distribution in the time of the curriculum, language distribution by location - classrooms, teacher, week etc), legal requirements in tests in certain countries, availability of teachers and materials - among others.

There are a number of different bilingual programme names under one "bilingual education" umbrella. The main ones are:

- 'One-way immersion' - where children from the predominantly majority language background are taught through a medium of a minority language (English-American children are taught in Spanish or Chinese - part-time or full-time).
- 'Two-way immersion' - where two groups of children from both majority and minority dominant groups are taught in both languages alongside - for example 50-50 model - 50 in English, 50 - in Spanish.
- 'Developmental bilingual education programmes', where children are taught in both their languages -familiar to children on entry but with different dominance- the majority and the family/first language with the aim to develop and keep both.

## **Type of curriculum for AZBUKA Russian-English bilingual primary school:**

The Azbuka Foundation school will operate a "Two-Way Immersion Developmental Programme". It means:

Most children will be from an already "bilingual background", but some - from English/other language dominant, some - from Russian dominant. They will be taught in both languages (in the course of Nursery, Primary and *later Secondary*) in order to keep and develop linguistic and cultural competence as well as academic achievements in both. In other words - they will develop both of their languages through a structured curriculum.

Overall it will:

- provide academic achievement in all content areas.
- provide linguistic and cultural competence - It will aim at English competence in the monolingual environment, Russian competence in the monolingual environment, and , and bilingual competence in the Russian-English cultural environment.
- Aim for children to develop in all areas of learning and be happy in his/her bilingual and bicultural identity.

## **Admission:**

Nursery level (from 2-5yo) - By waiting list or time of enrolment. All children regardless of background, languages spoken, first language, family language or race, nationality or citizenship. Priority is given to families where Russian is spoken and present on a daily basis - those with linguistic and cultural heritage.

School level Y1/Y2 (5-6) – By waiting list or time of enrolment. All children regardless of background, languages spoken, first language, family language or race, nationality or citizenship. Priority is given to families where Russian is spoken and present on a daily basis - those with linguistic and cultural heritage.

School level Y3+ (from 7yo) By interview with the family, assessment of the child's language skills (Russian and English)/maths and by the place on the waiting list. Priorities are given to siblings, and those children who may have attended Azbuka Nursery.

All children have to pass the standard interviews, assessment requiring the basic conversational level of Russian and English.

## **Language distribution by time in the curriculum :**

Overall chart:

2-4 year old (Nursery level) - 90% - Russian

4-5 year olds (Reception level) – 20% (English – in all areas of learning)/80% (Russian)

**5-11 (Primary School) – 50% (English)-50% (Russian) – in core subjects.**

*11-16+ - (Secondary School) - 50% Russian / 50% English – in core subjects*

Children will be taught half a day in Russian and the other half in English  
*Subject to variations.*

## **Language distribution by place and teachers:**

By classes (Russian class and English class or English and Russian/English parts of the same classroom)

## **Subjects and areas of learning:**

*All areas of learning in the curriculum ( starting from age 5) - are taught by two teachers as partner English-Russian teachers. They examine, discuss and plan their lessons in pairs - deciding which part/aspect/topic and module of the subject is taught in what language.*

Nursery - all areas of learning (social, emotional; language and literacy; physical; mathematical; knowledge and understanding of the World; creative; cultural (Russian and English))

Primary School - Areas and subjects (Russian, English, Maths, World around Us (Geography, History, Science), PE, Music, Dance, PSHE (including Citizenship), other subjects (incl. Art, ICT, foreign languages, incl the other languages of the family))

Secondary School - English, Russian, Maths, Humanities, Science, Music, Art, PE, ICT and others

*Below are proposed extra curriculum areas, specific to Azbuka and reflecting the Philosophy and mission of the Foundation.*

+ Bilingual Workshop

+Linguistics

*There are possible extra-curricular lessons (tutor groups, clubs and activities), that could be incorporated in the After-School offerings to make the child's transition easier to the next school.*

### **Links with the Cultural Centre:**

Russian/English speaking activities and events, talks and meetings with Russian artists, musicians, historians, parents and professionals - will support the Russian side of the Curriculum, - linguistically (by extra immersion in the variety of Russian language, texts, literacy etc.) and culturally.

Certain Clubs and events events will be compulsory for School children and form part of the Curriculum.

### **Links with the Bilingual Education Resource:**

- Supports the AZBUKa curriculum
- Supports the other minority languages and cultures of the families
- Supports bilingual education in the wider community
- Open to academic research in the area of bilingual education

### **Assessments, tests and qualifications:**

*Nursery* – annual reports and annual assessment/2-year old checks/EYFS Profile.

**Primary School** - Ongoing assessment of child's language and all other content areas of education (example – “Moving On”). At the end of the Primary school children will be expected to take exams/required tests in English, mathematics and Russian.

*Secondary school* - Qualifications and tests in standard topic areas as well as Russian and English.

## **The main features of the Curriculum:**

- Curriculum is designed from the practice and traditions of both cultures. It is connected to the English New National Curriculum as well as the Russian educational traditions. Teachers plan their teaching together in pairs and decide how they will combine two curricula.
- Teachers are given an introductory course in bilingual/immersion education and school philosophy and practice.
- School implementation of the curriculum is based on the practice of content and language integrated learning. It means all subject teachers support their pupils in all aspects of language along side of content teaching - to the best of their abilities.
- School will aim for an extra support of spoken minority language and culture - Russian and language development through a consistent and well planned Russian language and culture immersion organised by the cultural centre, tours, excursions, internet virtual learning etc.
- School will be based on strong active learning and well equipped hands-on activities, combining the child-led and teacher-led approaches in teaching and learning.
- School will follow the latest research and practice in bilingual education
- Curriculum and linguistic aims: the programme will aim on
  - *English competence in a monolingual English environment*
  - *Russian competence in a monolingual Russian environment*
  - *Bilingual competence, as the primary mode of communication among this group children and families*
- Curriculum will aim at bicultural teaching: children will experience two different pedagogical approaches , not only in learning two different content areas (in some cases), but learning the same subject, but with different methodology (for example in the subject like maths).

## **Staff and employment:**

The school shall aim to employ both English qualified and Russian /European qualified teachers as best suits the teaching and managerial objectives.

## **Management**

AZBUKA will employ both English speaking and Russian speaking staff at senior level.