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EAL POLICY- 2019-2020

The Department for Education (DfE) and EAL in the National Curriculum

The Department for Education (DfE) defines 'first language' as *'The language to which a child was initially exposed during early development and continues to be exposed in the home or in the community'*. For almost all EAL learners, this means that if they are an EAL learner when they start school at 3-5 years old, they will be an EAL learner throughout their education and their life.

Through the National Curriculum, the DfE expects effective teaching and learning for EAL to take place within the curriculum:

- Teachers must take account of the needs of student's whose first language is not English. Monitoring of progress should take account of their age, length of time in this country, previous educational experience and ability in other languages.
- The ability of students for whom English is an Additional Language to take part in the national curriculum may be in advance of their communication skills in English. Teachers should plan teaching opportunities to help them develop their English and aim to provide the support students need to take part in all subjects.

RATIONALE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the school's approach to identification and meeting the needs of students who are classified as having English as an additional language (EAL). In addition to this, it is to raise awareness of the school's obligations in order to support the planning, organisation, teaching and assessment procedures, and also highlight the implementation of resources and strategies in order to meet the needs of all EAL students. The end result is to raise student achievement.

DEFINITION

In defining EAL we have adopted the following definition:

'An EAL student is a student whose first language is not English. This encompasses students who are fully bilingual and all those at different stages of learning English.'

EAL students may be:

- Newly arrived from a foreign country and school;
- Newly arrived from a foreign country, but an English-speaking school;
- Born abroad, but moved to the UK at some point before starting school; or

- Born in the UK, but in a family where the main language is not English.

PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT AT ST AUGUSTINE'S

Students with EAL have the right to a safe and stimulating learning environment in which their languages and cultures are valued. They are entitled to the same educational opportunities as their monolingual peers with access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum

EAL learners are not a homogeneous group. They have distinct and different needs affected by, amongst other things, their previous experience of schooling and literacy in their first language, the age at which they enter the UK educational system and their home and communities' expectations of education, language and learning. Some students have suffered emotional and psychological trauma as a result of loss and displacement in their countries of origin.

Students' general and language knowledge must be considered when placing them in learning groups, setting targets in different areas of the curriculum and planning teaching and learning.

EAL learners make the best progress within a whole school context, where pupils are educated with their peers.

Bilingualism is viewed as a positive and life enriching asset.

The school structure, pastoral care and overall ethos help EAL students integrate into the school whilst valuing diversity

Although learners may acquire fluency in conversational English quite quickly, it takes much longer (7 years or more) to acquire the level of proficiency in academic English which is required to succeed within the school curriculum.

MISSION STATEMENT

As a school, we recognise that EAL learners and their families make a valuable contribution to both the school and the community.

English is best learnt through the curriculum and students should be encouraged to play as full a part as possible in class activities from the start. Resources and support should be available where necessary for them to access the curriculum.

Learning an additional language may present challenges to the curriculum but this does not signify that the student has a special education need.

Students with English as an Additional Language may also have Special Education Needs and these need to be assessed accordingly.

INTEGRATION OF EAL PUPILS AND THEIR FAMILIES INTO THE SCHOOL

We encourage parents to understand how they can support their children at home, and encourage them to continue the development of their first language which in many cases can be taken at GCSE and 'A' level.

We encourage the celebration of the linguistic, cultural and religious background of all students and hold celebrations to educate the whole school about the diverse languages and cultures represented within our community through assemblies and events.

ST AUGUSTINE'S CONTEXT

The population at the school is 80% EAL with over 30 home languages, the most common being, Arabic, Bengali, Somali, Kurdish and Portuguese.

The students come from a broad spectrum of backgrounds. Some new arrivals have experienced trauma which will have had a huge impact on their learning whereas some others are in the U.K. because one or both parents is attached to an embassy and these students usually function at a high academic level. Although many students have attended school and are literate in their home language on arrival, there are some who may have had very little or no previous formal education. This wide range means that responsibility of teaching these students is a challenge for everyone concerned.

Every new arrival is assessed by the EAL department. Their stages of English as specified by the DfE are then recorded. Information is also collected on the students':

- family
- linguistic background and competence in another language/s
- previous educational experience

This informs the department on how best to support the student.

The department uses a holistic approach as identified by The Prism Model of Thomas and Collier

KEY PRINCIPLES OF ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

As the access to learning requires attention to words and meanings, it is imperative that teachers provide keywords which are explicit and accessible to the student. Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum and therefore, the language demands of learning tasks need to be identified and included in planning.

Language is not only central to our identity, it is expressed from where we have come. This is why home languages of all students and staff is not only recognised but also valued.

Many students are very quickly, able to express themselves at a more competent level in their spoken English however, their skills in writing and reading take much longer to acquire. The level of language needed for academic study is more difficult to master and because of this they can require continued support for more than 7 years. Teaching and support staff therefore play a crucial role in modelling uses of language.

ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING

As well as the initial assessment, all EAL learners are also tested mid-year with a whole school writing task in order to measure the progress made. At both points of the assessment cycle, the Head of EAL is responsible for inputting data onto the school system (SIMS) from which an EAL register is generated for staff to access information.

The initial assessment forms the basis of student records, which are kept in the EAL Office.

Students receiving in-class support and/or 1:1 intervention are also monitored with the teacher and student self-assessment sheets where they can identify the skills needed to become increasingly competent in English reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Early stage EAL students are provided with EAL Progress Reviews at Academic Review Days (ARD). These reports are given to them at the same time as their whole school report and they not only show the student's current EAL stages in reading, writing, speaking and listening but also includes targets for further improvement. EAL staff are available to provide parent/carers with additional information on student progress as well as act as interpreters where necessary.

New arrivals coming from abroad do not have any prior data and we endeavour to provide them with targets and grades after a suitable time of settling in.

In order to achieve this, they sit Cognitive Ability Tests or **CATs**, which are used to measure their potential as well as highlight any potential difficulties that they be encountering. These tests are repeated over the academic year in order to provide targets and grades as well as measure progress in line with their cohort.

DEPLOYMENT OF EAL TEACHERS

The following criteria are used by the Head of department when allocating EAL staff to classes:

- classrooms with high numbers of targeted pupils (usually Stage A-C)
- the core areas: English, Maths and Science are the main focus initially
- to support the development of effective teaching and learning in the multilingual mainstream classroom through modelling good practice

An EAL teacher's subject knowledge and experience may be taken into consideration when timetabling support for pupils with EAL. Ideally, a minimum of two lessons of a class's subject per week are supported.

ROLE OF THE EAL TEACHER

The EAL teacher brings particular expertise to the mainstream classroom. This will include an awareness of the role of language in learning, experience of the language development of students, and knowledge of the students in the classroom. Effective classroom practice will draw on the skills of both teachers and there will be flexibility.

The main knowledge and skills of an EAL teacher can be seen in the following categories:

- Second language teaching – subject knowledge.
- Second language learning in the curriculum.

- Classroom practice.
- Assessment and recording of EAL students' progress.
- The wider role of the EAL specialist teacher / professional development.
- Equality of opportunity.

An EAL teacher will support students in some or all of the following ways:

- Analyse the language demands of the task or unit of work
- Support students' access to the curriculum in the classroom
- Develop differentiated materials for early stage students as classroom or homework activities
- Ensure that students' prior knowledge and skills are activated through the use of dictionaries, glossaries, visual cues etc.
- Suggest strategies for teaching and learning which enhance opportunities for the language development
- Use linguistic and cultural knowledge to support students' learning
- Model good practice.

