

# **Developing a Whole School English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy**

**Draft Guidelines**

**LCC Equality and Diversity Team**

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## **Why Develop a Policy?**

In order to establish priorities and developments necessary for the effective education of EAL learners, a school needs a policy as a whole school statement of intent. A policy raises awareness of a school's obligations. It helps to support planning, organisation, assessment procedures and the use of resources and strategies to meet the needs of EAL pupils and to raise pupil achievement.

Provision for EAL learners is ideally covered in a specific policy but may be within several, i.e. Equality Policy, Curriculum policy etc. Provision for EAL learners should not be within the SEND Policy. A whole school policy may include elements of an English policy but will address wider whole school issues such as bilingualism, culture, race, ethnicity, communication with parents and whole school ethos.

## **Developing a School EAL Policy - The Process**

Whole school policies for teaching EAL should be based on an accurate knowledge of pupils' needs and attainment and include ways of monitoring the effectiveness of overall provision. There will be a number of stages in the development and implementation of a policy and these might include:

1. Audit of pupils, identifying needs and levels of attainment
2. Audit of languages spoken by the pupils and stages of language acquisition
3. Audit of resources
4. Audit of staff knowledge and skills to identify possible training needs
5. Audit of teaching and learning styles to support curriculum access and language learning
6. Agreement on whole school philosophy in relation to language issues and practice
7. Links with parents and community groups and involvement of governors
8. Development of systems to monitor and evaluate the policy on a regular basis
9. Audit of admissions procedures

## **A Framework for a Policy**

*The framework which follows can be used to set out a whole school EAL policy. Note that any text in italics (such as this paragraph) will guide you as you write your own policy but it is not intended to be included in the final version of the whole school EAL policy. Make sure you delete the italic text before you publish your policy.*

*All the statements in normal text are given as examples only. They could be used directly but it is best to modify them to fit your own circumstances.*

**Introduction**

**Statement of Aims**

**The Context of the School**

**Key Principles**

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**Teaching and Learning**

**Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation**

**Special Educational Needs and Gifted and Talented Pupils**

**Assessment**

**Resources**

**Admitting New Pupils**

**Parents/Carers and the Wider Community**

**Staff Development**

**Review and Evaluation of Policy**

## Introduction

*Use this section to set out your own introduction or 'mission statement'. You can give your broad vision in relation to EAL pupils and link to your vision for the school and the values that underpin all your work. You can also explain what the policy aims to achieve. It is best to use general statements in inspiring language. Here is an example – but do write your own:*

All pupils need to feel safe, accepted and valued in order to learn. For pupils who are learning English as an additional language, this includes recognising and valuing their home language and culture. As a school, we are aware that bilingualism is a strength and that EAL pupils have a valuable contribution to make. We take a whole school approach, including ethos, curriculum, education against racism and promoting language awareness.

This policy aims to raise awareness of the school's obligations and to support the planning, organisation, teaching and assessment procedures, and the use of resources and strategies to meet the needs of pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) and so to raise pupil achievement.

It is important to include here reference to the Equality Act 2010 and to its legal protection from discrimination against protected characteristics as identified by the Act. Learners for whom English is an additional language may be at particular risk of discrimination on the basis of one or more of these characteristics (particularly Race).

## Statement of Aims

*Use this section to set out your general aims for EAL learners and say what you are committed to. This is an example but please write your own.*

The school is committed to ensuring that all our learners including EAL learners, feel safe and know that they are valued.

This school is committed to making appropriate provision of teaching and resources for pupils for whom English is an additional language and for raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils who are at risk from underachievement.

The school will identify individual pupil's needs, recognise the skills they bring to school and ensure equality of access to the curriculum.

## The Context of the School

*Use this section to*

- *describe what information the school holds about EAL learners*  
*(eg linguistic competencies in different languages, previous educational experience, special interests, family and biographical background)*
- *give an overview of EAL learners in the school. Answer questions like:*
  - *How many EAL learners are there in your school?*
  - *What first languages are spoken?*
  - *Are they born in the UK or are they new arrivals?*
  - *Are they isolated learners or is there a large cohort of pupils who speak this language?*
  - *Are they literate in their home language?*
  - *Have they experienced formal education before arriving in school?*

## Key Principles

*Identify key principles which underpin all your work with EAL learners. These are principles which underpin all your work in school. Choose from the list below or create your own:*

- Our children with EAL are entitled to opportunities for educational success that are equal to those of our English-speaking children.
- Children with EAL are not a homogenous group: their needs vary according to a range of factors. We provide a range of teaching and learning activities to meet curriculum demands and different learning needs/ styles.
- Well planned mainstream lessons in appropriately organised mainstream classrooms provide the best environment for acquisition of English by children with EAL.
- The bi/multilingualism of our children and staff enriches our school and our community.
- To become fully competent in the use of curriculum/academic English is a long process, therefore children require long term support.
- Having a home language other than English is not a 'learning difficulty'. A clear distinction should be made between EAL and Special Educational Needs (SEN). Children with EAL are not placed on the SEN record, unless they have SEN.
- It is important that children with EAL are provided with opportunities to use their home or first language where appropriate.

- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum.
- Effective use of language is crucial to the teaching and learning of every subject.
- The language demands of learning tasks need to be identified and included in planning.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants play a crucial role in modelling curriculum language.
- The focus and timing of additional support is an integral part of curriculum and lesson planning.
- Although many children acquire the ability to communicate on a day to day basis in English quite quickly, the level of language needed for academic study is much deeper and more detailed, and can require continuing support for up to ten years.
- Language is central to our identity. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of the importance of pupils' home languages and to build on their existing knowledge and skills.
- Many concepts and skills depend on and benefit from well-developed home language and literacy in home language enhances subsequent acquisition of EAL.
- All languages, dialects, accents and cultures are equally valued.

## Roles and Responsibilities

*Use this section to Identify who has overall responsibility for EAL provision and to give details of specific responsibilities of staff members for EAL within the school (e.g. monitoring progress, maintaining an EAL register, ensuring staff are well informed about the background and additional needs of individual EAL learners, supporting staff to liaise with families of EAL learners)*

*It is helpful to include a reminder that there is a collective responsibility for EAL learners. You could include a statement such as:*

All teachers are language teachers and there is a collective responsibility, held by all staff, to identify and remove barriers that stand in the way of the learning and success of EAL learners and to support their language development.



## Teaching and Learning

*What teaching strategies are used to ensure that the principles outlined in the section above are translated into practice in the classroom and that EAL learners are well supported across the curriculum? Here are some examples. You can choose from this list or add your own:*

- Classroom activities have clear learning objectives and use appropriate materials and support to enable pupils to participate in lessons.
- There is a focus on both language and subject content in lesson planning.
- EAL learners are encouraged to use their first language for learning.
- Scaffolding is provided for language and learning, eg talk frames, writing frames.
- Pupils have access to effective staff and peer models of spoken language.
- Additional visual support is provided, eg posters, pictures, photographs, objects, demonstration, use of gesture.
- Additional verbal support is provided, eg repetition, modelling, peer support.
- Learning progression moves from the concrete to the abstract.
- Steps are taken to ensure the cognitive challenge remain appropriately high for EAL learners and is not reduced because the English language demand has been reduced.
- Key language features of each curriculum area, eg key vocabulary, uses of language, forms of text, are identified.
- Enhanced opportunities are provided for speaking and listening, including both process and presentational talk, and use made of drama techniques and role play.
- Use is made of collaborative activities that involve purposeful talk and encourage and support active participation.
- Discussion is provided before, during and after reading and writing activities.
- Specialist EAL support is available for new arrivals from qualified staff who have received appropriate training and support.
- Any withdrawal of EAL learners is for a specific purpose, is time based and linked to the work of the mainstream class.
- Class/subject teachers plan collaboratively with EAL support teachers or teaching assistants.



## Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

*Use this section to describe:*

- *how curriculum planning takes account of the needs of EAL learners (e.g. building on their previous experience and considering their religious, cultural and linguistic backgrounds)*
- *how targets are set for EAL learners (are they appropriate, challenging how regularly are they reviewed?)*
- *how progress is monitored for EAL learners (how is this assessed and recorded by staff?)*
- *how provision is evaluated.*

## Special Educational Needs and Gifted and Talented Pupils

*Use this section to set out the approach to SEN and Gifted and Talented EAL learners. E.g*

- *Does the school ensure that EAL learners are not over represented in SEN groups or under represented in Gifted and Talented groups?*
- *Does the school makes sure that any EAL pupils who do have identified SEN needs have equal access to SEN provision?*
- *How does the school recognise and support EAL pupils who are gifted and talented even though they are not fully fluent in English?*

## Assessment

*Use this section to set out any special considerations made for EAL learners in assessment. For example:*

- *Do staff have regular liaison time to discuss pupil progress, needs and targets?*
- *How is progress in the acquisition of English assessed and monitored for new arrivals? (e.g. by using NASSEA, Bell Foundation or Solihull etc. assessment frameworks)*
- *Are assessment methods across the curriculum checked for cultural bias and is action taken to remove or minimise any that is identified?*

*(Alternatively, include this information in the assessment policy and simply make reference to the assessment policy here)*

## Resources

*Use this section to describe the range of resources available in school to support EAL learners across the curriculum. For example:*

- *Have you purchased any specialist resources to support EAL learners (eg bilingual books, bilingual dictionaries, Talking Pen, Progression in Language Structures, Racing to English etc)?*
- *Do staff in all departments and across the curriculum use a range of resources to support EAL learners (e.g. games, visual materials, adapted worksheets, bilingual dictionaries, key word lists, audio visual materials, computer software, etc.)?*
- *Are general resources used for reading and writing activities monitored for grammatical, lexical and cultural accessibility?*
- *Do displays and resources across the school reflect linguistic and cultural diversity?*
- *Do assessment materials use images and texts which are appropriate for all pupils?*
- *Does the school buy in support for EAL learners from the Equality & Diversity team?*

## Admitting New Pupils

*In this section outline the process of admission for EAL new arrivals. Make reference to the general admissions policy but outline any special measures you take for EAL learners and their families. For example:*

- *Does the school make sure that parents who are not familiar with the English education system understand the school's expectations of pupils and parents, including behaviour and rewards? How do they do that?*
- *How does the school find out about the pupil's linguistic competencies in different languages, their previous educational experience, special interests, and family and biographical background and home languages?*
- *How is this information passed on to all the staff who will work with that pupil?*
- *Does the school operate a phased induction to meet individual needs?*
- *Does the school have a 'buddying' system with training and rewards for 'buddies'.*
- *Does the school produce a visual timetable for new arrivals?*

## **Parents/Carers and the Wider Community**

*Use this section to describe how the school makes links with parents, carers and the wider community. For example:*

- *How do you ensure that the admission process and induction, assessment and support of new arrival pupils and their families/carers is welcoming?*
- *How do you ensure that communications with parents and carers families are understood? Do you translate letters home? Do you provide interpreters for meetings?*
- *How do you take account of parents/carers linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds when developing home-school links?*
- *How do you work with members of the wider community to support your EAL pupils?*
- *How do you make sure that parents, carers and the wider community feel welcomed in school?*

## **Staff Development**

*In this section describe how the school ensures that all staff feel confident and have the necessary skills and understanding to meet the needs of EAL learners and help them reach their full potential. e.g.*

- *Does the school encourage staff to undertake professional development to ensure that provision for EAL pupils is appropriately delivered and co-ordinated?*
- *Is there a programme of regular INSET which includes a focus on EAL learners?*
- *Does the School Development Plan incorporate action plans and reviews relating to raising the achievement of minority ethnic//EAL pupils?*

*Include a statement that reminds everyone that responsibility for the progress and well-being of EAL learners lies with all staff.*

## **Review of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed (*when*) by (*whom*).

## **Final Points**

Reference to other school policies should be made where appropriate, e.g. Assessment, Home-School Policy, Behaviour Policy, Teaching and Learning, Equality Policy.