

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



EAL Policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to describe how the school meets the needs of pupils identified as having English as an additional or acquired language. The policy links closely with the Literacy Policy. The four literacy priorities for years 7 and 8 are described in the policy. As with the learning of other modern foreign languages in the school, pupils will develop their capacity in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Unlike in these curriculum subjects, pupils will be acquiring their English skills in wide range of ways, both across the curriculum subjects and in numerous informal ways in and out of school. Traditionally, the numbers of pupils with EAL in the school has been low and most have, by the end of Y11, English skills comparable to their peers, indeed some are functioning at a high academic level. It is essential though to be aware that there may be hidden weaknesses, which might impact on their academic performance.

The policy also provides the policies and strategies the school will follow when pupils of increased need enter the school. We should also be aware that:

'Many of the factors associated with risk of low achievement are the same for EAL pupils as for their non-EAL peers. These include (roughly in order of impact): having an identified SEN, being entitled to a free school meal, living in an economically deprived neighbourhood, attending school outside London, and being summer born (and therefore young for their year-group).'

(Strand et al, 2015).

Values

The school believes that school strategies, pastoral care and overall ethos should help pupils with EAL integrate into the school, whilst also respecting and valuing cultural diversity. Where possible, pupils should be encouraged to take an examination their first language to help to develop their esteem and confidence. Evidence demonstrates that bilingualism has both cognitive benefits and offers professional advantages in a globalised world

Definitions

'A first language, where it is other than English, is recorded where a pupil was exposed to the language during early development and continues to be exposed to the language in the home or in the community'

(DfE School Census Guide 2016-17, p 63)



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'Pupils who have English as an acquired language are not a homogenous group as there may be many variations between individuals as they come from diverse linguistic, cultural and educational backgrounds. Learners may be at different stages of English acquisition, from complete beginner to advanced bilingual), but even those at the same stage of English language acquisition will have different backgrounds and needs.'

Ofsted Guidance for EAL (2012)

As every EAL learner has a unique profile the influence of the following factors needs to be considered: age; first language; educational history; first language literacy; English language proficiency; English-medium schooling experience; academic track record; family and community circumstances.

The variety of experience might also relate to whether a pupil has: newly arrived from a foreign country school; newly arrived from a foreign country but attended an English school; was born abroad but moved to the UK before starting school; was born in the UK but lives in a family where the main language is not English.

The identification of needs

- The Bell Foundation has developed a very comprehensive EAL Assessment evidence-informed Framework for Secondary Schools (see reference below). The school does not currently use this, but will if appropriate in the future
- The school seeks guidance from feeder (mainly primary) schools. In particular, the Head of School liaises with, and potentially meets, parents in order to build up a profile of the pupil. For example, whether English is the first mode of communication at home
- All pupils in Y7 take screening tests which all pupils (CATs, reading, spelling) which help to identify potential problem areas
- Further standardised testing can also be carried out
- English teachers will routinely assess English skills and identify areas of weakness.
- Subject teachers may identify areas of concern, e.g. difficulties in longer writing tasks

Provision

- Pupils who have EAL are monitored closely by the English department for example through catch up sessions at lunch time. The English department will work with HOS and SENDCO to develop both generic and individualised strategies as necessary to support pupils in improving their English skills
- Specific targets are set for each pupil with EAL; according to their assessed needs (unless it is clear that English skills are at a very high level). They will focus primarily but not exclusively on improving English skills. They will be reviewed regularly and new targets set as appropriate

Last reviewed May 2021

Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – June 2024



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- All staff are reminded of the EAL status of pupils, particularly when pupils join the school
- The specific targets for each pupil are advised to subject teachers and they will be asked to review the pupils' progress three times a year. Progress is fed back to parents through meeting such as parents' evening
- Progress is monitored in internal tests and examinations
- Feedback from parents
- Opportunity for EAL pupils to attend Home Learning Club after school
- Pupils provide self-assessment and give feedback
- Sometimes it may be appropriate to provide additional SEND support, for example a SEPP or inclusion on the SEND register if wider SEND needs are identified
- Where appropriate access arrangements may be considered
- The school aims to place students in sets which reflect their academic ability rather than their level of English even if this means that they initially need a great deal of differentiation to access the curriculum
- Opportunity for entry for home language GCSE exams where available
- In communicating with parents we ensure that written communications are fully accessible to them as well as verbal communication for example at Parents' Evenings
- If there are any difficulties, the following may also be provided: make class letters/school information accessible through the use of clear language and short sentences; use multilingual staff to interpret if necessary
- Although most pupils with EAL may not have additional special needs, teachers will monitor pupil progress carefully and may refer them to the SEND department for further analysis and testing
- It is anticipated that Quality First subject teaching will respond to many EAL needs and that further EAL friendly strategies may not often be needed at present
- Many of the strategies will benefit all pupils, as it is not only EAL learners who need support in developing the language needed to access the curriculum

Teachers use a range of EAL friendly strategies such as:

- Print out of PowerPoints, tasks and key words/definitions prior to lessons
- Revisit topics from previous lessons/brainstorms
- Relevance sorting and prioritising tasks
- Work with more able partners
- Visual examples to bring context
- In writing, using gap fills, sentence starters and writing frames
- Sit pupils at the front of the class so that pupil understanding can be checked more quickly
- Make available and encourage learners to use an age-appropriate English dictionary and thesaurus
- Give EAL learners thinking time (as they need to process what they hear and what they say)
- Repeatedly check understanding of topic, basic learning intentions and what to do in a task.



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References

Bell Foundation <https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/>

- (a) EAL ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOLS: SECONDARY
- (b) EAL ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOLS: USER GUIDE

Parsons, E. (2019) Supporting EAL learners in the classroom EAL learners in your classroom

Strand et al. (2015) Ethnicity, deprivation and educational achievement at age 16 in England: trends over time. (DfE Research Report 439B). London. Department for Education

