EAL Policy

Introduction

The term EAL is used when referring to pupils whose main language at home is a language other than English. This policy sets out St Thomas the Martyr Primary School's aims, principles and strategies with regard to meeting the needs and celebrating the skills of EAL pupils and helping them to achieve the highest possible standards. 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 strength and that EAL pupils have a valuable contribution to make.

Aims

The school is committed to ensuring that all our learners, including EAL learners, have their needs met and to raise pupil achievement and aspirations. We aim:

- To give all pupils the opportunity to overcome any barrier to learning
- To welcome and value the cultural, linguistic and educational experiences that pupils with EAL bring to the School whenever possible.
- To implement appropriate strategies to ensure that EAL pupils are supported in accessing the full curriculum
- To help EAL pupils to become confident and fluent in speaking and listening, reading and writing in English in order to be able to fulfil their potential.
- To encourage and enable parental support in improving children's language skills.

The Context of the School

At our school, there are approximately 7 languages spoken in the family home. These include Polish, Latvian, Turkish, Ukranian and Hungarian. There are a mixture of British born and newly arrived children.

Key Principles

We will assist all EAL pupils to become fluent English speakers as quickly as possible.

Our children with EAL are entitled to opportunities for educational success that are equal to those of our English speaking children.

Our children with EAL are entitled to the full National Curriculum programme of study and all their teachers have a responsibility for teaching English as well as other subject content.

Well planned mainstream lessons in appropriately organised mainstream classrooms provide the best environment for acquisition of English by children with EAL.

The bilingualism of our children enriches our school and our community.

Although many pupils acquire the ability to communicate on a day to day basis in English quite quickly, to become fully competent in the use of curriculum/academic English is a long process, therefore EAL 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 and Disability (SEND). Children with EAL are not placed on the SEND register unless they have SEND.

All languages, dialects, accents and cultures are equally valued.

Roles and Responsibilities

Admissions Officer

To obtain, collate and distribute information on new pupils to relevant teachers. This includes:

- Language(s) spoken at home
- From the previous school, information on level of English studied/used (when possible).

Teachers

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.

Staff will continue to develop their knowledge and expertise in teaching EAL children.

Teaching and Learning

Staff can help children learning English as an additional language in a variety of ways:

- By planning differentiated work for EAL pupils if necessary
- By setting appropriate expectations; encouraging children to contribute and give more than one-word answers.
- Recognising that EAL pupils may need more time to process answers.
- Learning progression moves from the concrete to the abstract.
- Scaffolding is provided for language and learning, e.g. talk frames, writing frames.
- Pupils have access to effective staff and peer models of spoken language.
- Additional visual support is provided, e.g. posters, pictures, photographs, objects, demonstration and use of gesture.
- Additional verbal support is provided e.g. repetition, modelling, peer support.
- EAL learners are encouraged to use their first language for learning and to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another.
- Use is made of collaborative activities that involve purposeful talk and encourage and support active participation.
- Any withdrawal of EAL learners is for a specific purpose, is time based and linked to the work of the mainstream class.
- Use of Bilingual resources, e.g. dictionaries, on-line support, bilingual staff/pupils, texts, key word lists.

Assessment

Consideration and sensitivity is given to the appropriateness of testing EAL pupils at the earlier stages of English acquisition. Staff regularly observe and assess pupil's developing use of language.

Assessment for pupils is based on the Early Years outcomes and the National Curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The use of translators or written translations is used when and where appropriate.

Teachers will discuss pupils' progress with Senior Leadership each term. Teachers will meet parents each term to discuss progress.

Teachers will use the Bell Assessment Tracker to inform practice and to enable teachers to show how far pupils learning through EAL have progressed, especially where their progress does not show up when the pupils are assessed in the same way as their classmates.

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

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).

Interventions, where needed, are set and evaluated every term at pupil progress meetings.

Special Educational Needs and Gifted and Talented Pupils

We recognise that intelligence is not measured in the ability to speak English fluently.

Should Special Educational Needs and Disabilities be identified, EAL pupils have equal access to the school's SEND provision. EAL pupils identified as Gifted or Talented have equal access to the school's provision.

Parental/Community Involvement

At St Thomas the Martyr we encourage parental and community involvement by:

- Providing a welcoming induction process for newly arrived pupils and their families.
- Use translators and interpreters, where appropriate and available, to ensure good links are made between the Family and the school.
- Identify linguistic, cultural and religious background of pupils and establish contact with the wider Community.
- Celebrating and acknowledging the achievements of all EAL pupils.
- Support parents, so they can help their children at home.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Admissions and Arrangements Policy
- Anti-bullying
- British Values and Ethos
- Equality Policy
- SEND policy

Reviewed September 2026
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