



English as an Additional Language Policy

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1. Introduction

Hope House school is an independent special school that caters for pupils with a diagnosis of Autism and related Special Educational Needs. We therefore believe that the development of language and literacy skills is of the highest priority, as language is the main tool of learning and communication in all aspects of school life and the world beyond. In our school all our children are important, and this applies to all aspects of their education – their teaching and learning, their achievements, their attitudes and their well-being. We encourage all our children to aim for the highest possible standards, and we take account of each child's individual needs and experiences.

We celebrate children who are bi-lingual, and some multi-lingual children are able to participate fully in all areas of the curriculum and our schooling community. However, a number of children may join the school in various year groups from various parts of the world, for a variety of reasons and with a variety of levels of competence in English.

In this policy, the term 'English as an Additional Language' (EAL) refers to pupils whose main language at home is a language other than English.

Pupils with EAL will face various difficulties throughout their academic life. Pupils' aptitude for English will vary, but many will face barriers to learning, accessing the curriculum and reaching their full potential. Pupils with EAL must learn in and through another language. In addition, they may come from different cultural backgrounds to their peers and face different expectations of language, education and learning.

Research suggests that those new to English will acquire conversational fluency within two years, but will need five years or longer to achieve competence in academic English. In addition our pupils have special educational needs identified in their EHCP. This policy has been established to ensure all pupils with EAL at the school are given the best chance possible to reach their full potential.

We aim to:

- Welcome the cultural, linguistic and educational experiences pupils with EAL contribute to the school.
- Ensure strategies are in place to support pupils with EAL.
- Enable pupils with EAL to become confident, and to acquire the language skills needed to reach their full academic potential.

Our strategic objectives are to:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for newly arrived pupils with EAL.
- Assess the skills and needs of pupils with EAL.
- Gather accurate information regarding children's backgrounds, cultures and abilities.
- Equip teachers and support staff with the necessary skills, resources and knowledge to support pupils with EAL.
- Use all available resources to raise the attainment of pupils with EAL.
- Systematically monitor pupils' progress, and adapt policies and procedures accordingly.
- Maximise opportunities to model the fluent use of English.
- Link their EAL needs with their SEND to provide bespoke support for pupils
- Recognise some pupils may also present as 'non-verbal' and require a pictorial communication system to help them to access learning.

2. Staff responsible for pupils with EAL

The Deputy Headteacher is responsible for pupils with EAL and is supported by class leads. Their responsibilities include:

- The induction of newly arrived pupils.
- Coordinating the efficient timetabling of pupils with EAL.
- Overseeing the assessment and targeting of children with EAL.
- Ensuring the procurement and appropriate use of resources to support pupils with EAL.
- Aiding staff in effective communication with parents and finding translators where appropriate.
- Exploring various possibilities to ensure important information is shared with parents.



- Advising on strategies to support and include pupils with EAL.
- Providing advice regarding inclusive curriculum materials.
- Advising on ways to differentiate work for pupils with EAL.
- Encouraging and supporting pupils to maintain and develop their first language.
- Developing relationships between the school and parents of pupils with EAL.
- Securing and providing training to ensure staff development, including INSET courses.
- EAL students, where possible, will be given the opportunity to take formal examinations in their home language if appropriate.

3. The role of school staff members

All staff members have a responsibility to ensure the development of pupils with EAL.

They will meet this responsibility by:

- Ensuring all written work includes the technical requirements of language as well as the meaning.
- Providing a good model of spoken English.
- Where possible, using a variety of types of text to explore their subject and through the varied use of English.
- Ensuring the inclusion of pupils with EAL in their classrooms.
- Identifying pupils with EAL who are experiencing difficulties and ensuring intervening measures are taken to aid the pupil.

4. Support

Where a pupil with EAL is assessed as having little to no English, support will be provided in the form of bespoke lessons. These lessons focus on practical, everyday English, and will support the wide curriculum. In-class support and small group work is utilised as soon as the pupil can be successfully integrated into the classroom environment. The pupil may still spend time with their key worker as necessary.

5. Inclusion

The school utilises a strategy of inclusion, and the positive and effective use of language. The strategy includes the following principles:

There is an understanding throughout the school, for both staff and pupils, that a limited knowledge of English does not reflect a lack of ability or knowledge. Appreciating a pupil's ability to speak their own first language is essential for building their confidence and self-esteem.

- The language development of pupils is the responsibility of the entire school community.
- Diversity will be valued and classrooms will be socially inclusive.
- Teachers will be knowledgeable about pupils' abilities in English and use their knowledge to inform lesson planning.
- Schemes of work may be rewritten to accommodate low levels of English, whilst maintaining the subject content and level of challenge.
- Where large groups of pupils with EAL speak the same language, the school encourages wider integration to promote inclusion and to improve pupils' understanding of English.

6. Initial assessments

Arrangements will be made for children to be assessed using a recognised EAL assessment tool- the NASSEA EAL Assessment tool- if the initial observation of the pupil and family background indicate they have very little understanding and use of English. We also consider the background information gathered during the initial intake and other important factors that may impact on the child's learning and knowledge; e.g.

- Proficiency and child achievement in first language
- Prior schooling experience
- Trauma due to other factors
- Health, physical and other characteristics that may impact learning
- Involvement of parents and carers
- Family and cultural values



Children who are learning English as an additional language have skills and knowledge about language similar to monolingual English-speaking children. Their ability to participate in the full curriculum may be in advance of their communicative skills in English.

The assessment has its limitations. The use of the assessment will be considered on the individual basis depending on the SEN needs and the individual communication profile of the pupils.

7. Classroom practice

Teachers have high expectations of all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity, social background or English ability. Classroom activities will be matched to pupils' needs and abilities.

Teachers will consider common misconceptions and language barriers, such as reading '3 x 3', where 'x' is read as the letter and not a function, and clarify meanings accordingly

Where possible, the following practices will be utilised to improve pupils' literacy:

- Utilisation of the pupil's first language expertise.
- The provision of writing frames.
- The use of props.

Language skills will be developed through:

- Collaborative activities involving spoken communication.
- Feedback opportunities and conversations.
- Good models provided by peers and staff.

Active participation will be encouraged by:

- Grouping pupils in mixed ability groups to develop language skills.
- 'Expert' readers and writers present in each group to provide assistance and model language.

Assessment methods will allow pupils to show what they can do in all curriculum areas. Bilingual dictionaries and electronic translation devices are available to aid pupils with EAL. Visual supports are utilised where appropriate, e.g. posters, pictures, photos, objects, demonstration, use of gestures.

8. Access to the curriculum

The needs of pupils with EAL are considered by teachers when planning lessons. When planning lessons, teachers will ensure that:

- The language and learning demands of the curriculum are analysed and support is provided.
- Visual support is utilised to provide greater understanding of key concepts.
- There are opportunities for pupils to use their first language in the classroom.
- The support requirements of pupils with EAL are identified and the support is made available.

After an initial assessment (NASSEA EAL Assessment tool), if the initial observation of the pupil and family background indicate they have very little understanding and use of English, children will be assessed on the following scale:

1. New to English
2. Early acquisition
3. Developing competence
4. Competent
5. Fluent

Staffing levels will ensure that EAL pupils receive substantial individual support to make rapid progress in language and access all areas of the curriculum. EAL children's progress will be tracked throughout the school, in discussion with teachers and parents. This will take into consideration the therapeutic and communication needs of a child.



9. Working with parents and carers

Liaison with parents is vital to the creation of a strong home/school partnership, which can ensure the development of pupils with EAL. To aid this partnership, the school will:

- Actively seek to put parents at ease by providing a welcoming environment conducive to productive discussions.
- Provide interpreters for meetings when needed.
- Ensure the language used in letters to parents is clear and straightforward.
- Where appropriate, have teachers read through the letter with children before sending the letter home, to ensure the message is clear when appropriate.
- Where necessary, ensure translations of school documents are carried out and provided to parents of pupils with EAL.
- Encourage parents to attend parents' meetings and participate in school functions.

10. Special educational needs (SEN)

All pupils at Hope House School have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which identifies their primary Special Education Needs, aligned to the SEND Code of Practice 2014. A child is not regarded to have SEN solely because their home language is different from the language in which they are taught at school.

A proportion of pupils with EAL may have one or more types of SEN and it is imperative that this is identified at an early stage. This will be included in their EHCP. Any additional assessments of SEN of pupils with EAL will involve EAL specialists along with SEN specialists, where appropriate.

Where appropriate, the school will arrange an assessment in the child's first language.

11. Monitoring progress

The monitoring of pupils' progress is shared between all class leads, educational staff and professionals involved, i.e. Speech and Language therapist. One page pupil profiles are updated following assessments and reviewed on a half- termly basis to reflect the pupils current needs. Where students are deemed to be underachieving, interventions will be put in place to address this and impact measured



Appendix 1: Information from The Bell Foundation

Education Policy: Learners who Use EAL in England

The rich diversity of England's culture, society and language, which has evolved over centuries, is reflected in schools. Many pupils arrive at school already speaking more than one language, with English being their second, third or fourth language. This linguistic diversity is accompanied by pupils' diversity in prior exposure to English; prior experiences of schooling, their length of residence in England and their social circumstances. Official figures show a marked increase over the last two decades in the number of pupils who use English as an Additional Language (EAL). There are almost 1.6 million pupils who use EAL in maintained schools in England, a number which has more than doubled since 2006. This makes pupils who use EAL a key characteristic of student bodies in many schools.

National data on the numbers of pupils who use EAL in schools in England is gathered via the school census. The Department for Education (DfE) records a pupil as using EAL if 'they are exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English.' This means that if a pupil is identified as using EAL when they start school at 3-5 years old, they will continue to be recorded as an EAL user throughout their education and their life.

EAL in the National Curriculum

There is no specific EAL curriculum, instead the DfE expect that effective teaching and learning for learners using EAL happens through the National Curriculum: Teachers must also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Monitoring of progress should take account of the pupil's age, length of time in this country, previous educational experience and ability in other languages.

The ability of pupils 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 pupils develop their English and should aim to provide the support pupils need to take part in all subjects.

[Statutory Guidance, National curriculum in England](#): Framework for key stages 1 to 4, Updated 2 December 2014

Teacher Standards

The Teachers' Standards (2012) state that it is the responsibility of all teachers, whatever their subject, to "adapt their teaching to the strengths and needs of all pupils". Learners who use EAL are mentioned specifically in Section 5: 'Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils', but there is relevance to teaching and learning for EAL learners throughout the standards.

Standard 5 states that teachers should '...have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an Additional Language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.'

Standard 3, which expects a teacher to "demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject" also goes some way to addressing a need for explicit language teaching, but fails to recognise the unique needs of learners using EAL.

[DfE: Teachers' Standards Guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies July 2011](#) (introduction updated June 2013)

Education Inspection Framework

The revised [Education Inspection Framework](#) (EIF) from Ofsted, which came into effect in 2019, makes no reference to pupils who use English as an Additional Language (EAL) as a distinct group. Instead, the Quality of Education judgement focuses on a school's ability to offer high-quality, inclusive education and on the extent to which they construct a curriculum that gives all learners the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

See the Foundation's article in SecEd on the revised [Education Inspection Framework](#) (2019).



Appendix 2 – NASSEA EAL Assessment tool

EAL Assessment Framework

The Framework is a cross-curricular tool which helps practitioners to observe, document and accelerate the ways bilingual pupils start to use English as a tool for learning in school, then continue to develop their use of English through all their subject areas.

It describes the development of communicative behaviour in class and language for learning through listening, speaking, reading and writing. It also includes some aspects of personal development likely to be significant for bilingual learners, such as readiness to speak to others in the classroom.

It is important to note that the framework is not a tool to be used to assess other languages the pupil may speak. NASSEA supports the continuing use and development of pupils' other languages, and reference is made to using skills in these languages, but this tool is only for assessing English as an Additional Language. The Framework has been developed to help practitioners to become more aware of the progress of their EAL learners through formative assessment.

References

The Bell Foundation

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