

St. James the Great Roman Catholic Primary and Nursery School



English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

Date Created: Spring 2015

Rationale

At St. James the Great, approximately 42% of pupils have been identified as learning English as an Additional Language (EAL). Twenty different languages are spoken and we celebrate how the multilingualism of our EAL pupils enriches our school and our community.

All pupils (and staff) must feel accepted and valued. For EAL pupils, it is important that we recognise and respect the role and importance of that primary language while also enabling them to use English as their main vehicle of learning at St. James the Great.

This EAL Policy aims to promote awareness of and support the procedures to be considered in meeting the needs of our EAL pupils and thereby to raise their achievement.

Aims and Objectives

Whilst being clear that EAL is not SEN or a 'learning difficulty', the school acknowledges that pupils with EAL often have an additional need in terms of accessing the language used by staff and peers and related learning issues. Therefore we will endeavour to:

- Ensure EAL pupils have full access to the curriculum (and other school opportunities).
- Be proactive in removing any barriers that stand in the way of our EAL pupils fulfilling their potential.
- Promote ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity, for example, in the curriculum, assemblies, displays, resources and dual language texts.
- Provide our EAL pupils – particularly New Arrivals – with a safe, welcoming environment where they are accepted, valued and encouraged to participate.
- Seek opportunities to extend and develop links with minority ethnic parents.
- Recognise that EAL pupils will have potential strengths as well as additional needs.

Teaching and Learning

EAL pupils 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.

Teachers will encounter pupils from other countries who will often have very different educational experiences in terms of length and focus and style of previous learning. To be successful, we will have to teach children how to learn.

Language is central to identity. Therefore, the primary language of all pupils (and staff) should be recognised and valued. While pupils will be encouraged to practice their English during class learning time, they should not be discouraged from maintaining their primary language at other times within school. Likewise, while children will be given specific English homework, use of their primary language at home should be encouraged. Many concepts and skills depend on and benefit from a well-developed home language; and literacy in the home language enhances subsequent acquisition of EAL.

We implement the follow best practice guidelines:

- EAL pupils are best placed in groups with fluent English speakers who will provide them with good models of language.
- EAL pupils should be placed in groups/sets in line with their intellectual/cognitive abilities first, language and literacy skills second.
- EAL pupils should not be automatically placed with Learning Support Assistants / SEN pupils for reasons of LSA support or smaller groups.
- Key language features of each curricular area, key vocabulary, uses of language, forms of text etc. should be identified within classrooms.
- Enhanced opportunities should be considered to provide for speaking and listening.
- Additional visual support should be considered – posters, pictures etc.
- Additional verbal support should be provided – repetition, peer support, etc.
- Use should be considered of collaborative activities that involve appropriate talk and which encourage participation.
- Support should be provided for language and learning – writing frame, pre-teaching etc.
- Teachers should allow EAL students to use their first language as appropriate when it will be beneficial to their learning and communication needs.
- Further support for pupils’ language development should be provided outside the formal curriculum e.g. in assemblies and school clubs.

Planning

Well planned, mainstream lessons in appropriately organized classrooms provide the best environment for acquisition of English by EAL pupils.

Although many pupils will acquire the ability to communicate on a daily basis in English quite quickly, the level of language needed for academic study is much more complex and can require continued support for a lengthy period.

Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum. When planning lessons the language needs of EAL pupils need to be identified and appropriate support identified.

Targets for EAL pupils must be appropriate, challenging and reviewed regularly and may incorporate both curricular and EAL specific objectives.

Schemes of work must take account of the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of pupils and their families.

Assessment

Progress in English should be regularly assessed and monitored in line with the whole school assessment policy.

Sensitive consideration must be given to the appropriateness of testing EAL pupils in the early stages of English acquisition. Teachers should see the EAL Coordinator for specific assessment tools for recording the progress of New Arrivals and those at the early stages of English acquisition.

Data analysis is carried out to monitor the progress of EAL pupils and to target support effectively.

Inclusion

At St. James the Great we recognise that most EAL pupils needing support with their English language development do not have SEN needs. However, should SEN needs be identified during assessment, EAL pupils will have equal access to appropriate provision in line with the SEN Policy.

Similarly EAL children identified as more able, gifted or talented will have the same rights of access to such programmes and opportunities as identified in the More Able, Gifted and Talented Policy.

Resources

A range of resources to support pupils' English language skills, including bilingual dictionaries, dual language texts, key word lists and visual cues, are located within classrooms or within the school's Inclusion Room.

The school has an EAL Learning Support Assistant who is timetabled to provide support as appropriate in the form of in class support or withdrawal for pre-teaching and other intervention programmes. The school also has a Polish Learning Support Assistant available to offer in class support.

New arrivals will be supported with an Induction/Welcome pack overseen by the Inclusion Manager and EAL Learning Support Assistant.

The Role of the EAL Coordinator

While there is a collective responsibility held by all staff to identify and remove barriers that stand in the way of our EAL pupils' learning and success, the school has an Inclusion Manager with the following responsibilities:

- To monitor standards of teaching and learning of EAL pupils.
- To liaise with class teachers to identify and support EAL pupils.
- To identify areas for development and actions for enhanced provision.
- To analyse school data in relation to EAL pupils for improvement purposes.
- To identify EAL pupils with SEN or who are more able, gifted and talented.
- To consult with external agencies.
- To deploy LSA support appropriately and monitor its effectiveness.
- To manage resource materials and equipment to ensure sufficiency and adequacy.
- To liaise with the CPD leader to identify staff training needs.
- To keep up-to-date with the latest best practice advice in relation to support for EAL pupils and disseminate as appropriate.

Parental and Governor Involvement

At St. James the Great we recognise the importance and value of the partnership with parents and carers. We aim to:

- Provide a comfortable and welcoming environment where parents/carers can discuss any concerns.
- Ensure shared knowledge and support via parent evenings and parent workshops.
- Take into account parents' knowledge, views and attitudes.
- Provide and use information techniques that ensure communication is clear and effective, providing translators and interpreters where appropriate and available.
- Help parents and carers to understand how they can support their children at home.
- Recognise and encourage the use of the primary language to support the integration of pupils into the life of the school and to celebrate the languages we speak at every opportunity.

The school has a Link Governor with responsibility for EAL. They carry out school visits in line with the Governor Visits Policy and work closely with the EAL Coordinator to provide support, ensuring that policy is put into practice.

Linked Policies

Equal Opportunities

Race Equality

SEN

More Able, Gifted and Talented

Next Policy Review Date: Spring 2017