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YORK STEINER SCHOOL

English as an Additional Language Policy Statement (EAL Policy)

Approved by:	Board of Trustees	Date: January 2024
Last reviewed on:	January 2024	
Next review due by:	January 2025	

Definition of an EAL learner:

The term “EAL” is used to describe a diverse and heterogeneous group of learners who speak English as an Additional Language. In England, such learners are defined as those who have been 'exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English' (Department for Education, 2019).

This policy supports the following rights, taken from the United Nations Convention of rights of the child (UNCRC):

Article 2 - All children have these rights, no matter what their age, gender, religion, disability, culture, or nationality is.

Article 3 - All adults should do what is best for children. Adults should think about how their actions affect children.

Article 7- All children have the rights to a name that should be officially recognised by the government and a right to a nationality (to belong to one country)

Article 22- All children have the right to a special protection and help if they are a refugee (if they have been forced to leave your home and live in another country).

Article 29 - Every child's education must develop their talents and abilities.

Article 30 - All children have the right to practise their own culture, language, and religion or any they choose.

Equality Impact Statement:

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people based on their age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

The Context of York Steiner School:

At York Steiner School, we recognise and value our pupil's home language, background, and the valuable contribution that pupils who speak English as an additional language bring to our school. Within the family homes, various languages are spoken (not including dialects). We recognise bilingualism as a strength, and we respond positively to a pupil's ability to speak other languages by building on a pupil's knowledge of other cultures and languages. We believe that cultural and linguistic diversity is a rich resource for the whole school.

We take a whole school approach, through our Ethos, curriculum and promoting language awareness across our school.

We aim to meet the full range of needs for those children who are learning English as an additional language, in line with the requirements of the 1976 Race Relations Act.

Aims and Objectives:

- To improve the speaking and listening, reading, writing and understanding of children for whom English is an additional language, with an aim of increased confidence and fluency.
- To be proactive in removing barriers that stand in the way of our EAL pupils' learning and success.
- To gather accurate information about children's backgrounds and educational experiences and share this with all members of staff.
- To use all resources possible to raise the attainment levels of the children for whom English is an additional language.
- To make maximum use of opportunities to model fluent use of English and provide opportunities for children to practise and extend their use of English.
- To encourage and enable parental support in improving children's attainment.
- To ensure that all children's languages cultures and identities are celebrated.

- To provide our EAL pupils with a safe, welcoming, nurturing environment where they are accepted, valued, and encouraged to participate.
- To encourage children to practise and extend their use of English;
- To provide ongoing communication about their progress with their parents.
- To maintain pupils' self-esteem and confidence by acknowledging and giving status to their skills in their own languages;
- Express themselves confidently in a range of situations, on a variety of subjects, to differing audiences;
- To work collegiately to be able to assess and monitor these children's needs and make any necessary decisions about classroom management and curriculum planning.

Key Principles:

To provide effective and personalised teaching and learning through early identification of the children's needs.

Roles and Responsibilities:

It is a collective responsibility that all staff identify and aim to remove barriers that prevent our EAL learners from succeeding and reaching their potential.

The EAL Co-ordinator is responsible for co-ordinating, monitoring and maintaining an overview of this aspect of our school's work.

Responsibilities include:

- Liaising with the teaching staff to identify and support pupils learning EAL.
- Support teaching staff in assessing the pupil's level of language where necessary on arrival.
- Managing and auditing resources to ensure effectiveness for class work.
- Monitoring the progress of pupils learning EAL in all aspects of Literacy including speaking and listening, reading and writing; as well as Mathematics.

All staff:

Will develop pupils spoken and written English by:

- Planning and delivering lessons that address the specific needs of EAL pupils/ bilingual pupils in their classes.
- Ensuring that vocabulary work covers the technical e.g. language of problem solving as well as the meaning of everyday words.
- Modelling speaking and listening styles and the ways they are used for different purposes across a range of subjects.
- Ensuring that there are many opportunities for talking and collaborative work to support writing.
- Building on children's experiences of language at home and in the wider community, so that their developing uses of English and other languages support one another.

Teaching and Learning:

Teachers and Teaching Assistants have high expectations of all pupils. We understand that pupils who are learning English as another Language are no exception and that their cognitive ability is in advance of their spoken English.

All our pupils learning EAL have the right to access the Steiner Curriculum and therefore taught lessons that are accessible and purposeful along with their peers in the classroom. We ensure lessons are planned to develop language skills and use talk as a tool for learning.

We also encourage the use of pupils' home language to support their learning and development of English. Staff consider how best to support the learning needs of a bilingual learner including various learning styles.

- Effective teaching strategies
- Classroom activities have clear learning objectives and use appropriate materials and support to enable learners to participate in lessons.

- Key language features of each curriculum area are identified.
- Enhanced opportunities are provided for speaking and listening and use made of drama techniques and role play as appropriate.
- 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.
- Use of collaborative activities that involve purposeful talk and encourage and support active participation.
- Scaffolding is provided for language and learning e.g. talk frames, writing frames.
- Using accessible texts and materials that support pupils' language/cultural needs e.g. bilingual books/ artefacts.
- Using accessible texts and materials that suit both children's ages and levels of learning.
- Ensuring that pupils are engaged through visual and interactive teaching.
- Providing support through ICT, translators.
- Use of buddy system.
- In grouping, pupils are given opportunities to work with pupils with similar cognitive ability, pupils who have developed a good age appropriate level of English and pupils who speak the same language in the group.
- Use of working wall to support learning of key vocabulary and key concepts.
- Using a range of resources like talk frames, paired activities, writing frames, sentence structure prompts, mind map, bilingual dictionaries, peer support, differentiated activities, key word lists.

Curriculum Access:

All children in our school follow the Steiner curricular requirements:

- Children with English as an additional language do not produce separate work but may have extra support linked to their class work from a Teaching Assistant where targeted support is required.
- Teachers will liaise with the TA to discuss small withdrawn target groups where required.

- The progress of these groups will be regularly assessed and the results and any concerns shared with the class teachers and SENCO.
- The EAL coordinator, SENDCO and the Headteacher work together to ensure that good practice is maintained across the school regarding EAL teaching and Learning.

Kindergarten:

The Kindergarten teachers follow the approach above and in addition they help EAL children to reach a good standard in English language by:

- Providing a range of opportunities for children to engage in speaking and listening activities in English with peers and adults.
- Providing class support, where possible, to extend vocabulary.
- Providing opportunities for children to hear their home languages as well as English.
- Providing opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning to support their language development at home.
- Building on children's experiences of language at home, and in the wider community, so that their developing use of English and other languages supports each other.
- Providing a range of opportunities for children to engage in speaking and listening activities in English with peers and adults.
- The children learn through song and repetition of the spoken word
- Teachers and assistants refrain from abstractly talking to children but instead talk about what is concrete and present that the children are experiencing;
- A gentle daily rhythm provides the children with predictability and security and minimises the need for complicated explanations/instructions about what they should be doing or what is happening next. A visual timetable supports with this too.
- The daily repetition of stories and rhymes in circle time offers time for the children to absorb a rich experience of spoken English.

- In Kindergarten the children experience free play, therefore they have more chance to 'just be' and assimilate the language. As they are of the age group that is naturally at the stage of imitation, they absorb language readily.

EAL Definitions of Development: (According to the Bell Assessment):

- **New to English [Code A]:** May use first language for learning and other purposes. May remain completely silent in the classroom. May be copying/repeating some words or phrases. May understand some everyday expressions in English but may have minimal or no literacy in English. Needs a considerable amount of EAL support.
- **Early acquisition [Code B]:** May follow day-to-day social communication in English and participate in learning activities with support. Beginning to use spoken English for social purposes. May understand simple instructions and can follow narrative/accounts with visual support. May have developed some skills in reading and writing. May have become familiar with some subject specific vocabulary. Still needs a significant amount of EAL support to access the curriculum.
- **Developing competence [Code C]:** May participate in learning activities with increasing independence. Able to express themselves orally in English, but structural inaccuracies are still apparent. Literacy will require ongoing support, particularly for understanding text and writing. May be able to follow abstract concepts and more complex written English. Requires ongoing EAL support to access the curriculum fully.
- **Competent [Code D]:** Oral English will be developing well, enabling successful engagement in activities across the curriculum. Can read and understand a wide variety of texts. Written English may lack complexity and contain occasional evidence of errors in structure. Needs some support to access subtle nuances of meaning, to refine English usage, and to develop abstract vocabulary. Needs some/occasional EAL support to access complex curriculum material and tasks.

- **Fluent [Code E]:** Can operate across the curriculum to a level of competence equivalent to that of a pupil who uses English as his/her first language. Operates without EAL support across the curriculum.

At York Steiner School, we assess EAL learners:

New to the Country:

Pupils who are new to the country can be a varied ability of EAL learner from New to English (code A) to Fluent (code E) as above in the Bell Assessment

New to English:

Pupils who have no English to developing English with developing skills (code A) to (code B) as above in the Bell Assessment.

Admission of EAL/New Arrival Pupils:

At York Steiner School, we collate as much background information as possible, through the admission pack including:

- Country of origin
- Date of entry into the UK
- Previous schooling
- Pupil's first language
- Other languages spoken at home
- Health issues

Admission information is emailed to the EAL Lead, classroom teacher, headteacher and SENCO.

Teachers and staff receiving EAL pupils after admission are given advance basic information on their background which the teacher can access on Schloarpack before a child starts.

Integration of EAL/New Arrival Pupils:

When a new pupil arrives in our school with little or no English the classroom environment can be an overwhelming place to be. Therefore, we create, to create an environment that feels safe, welcoming and stress-free; when possible. Please see our behaviour policy about our nurturing environment.

‘Buddies’ are used to support the new pupil in their first language (when possible) in class, at break times and around school.

School/Class Ethos:

- Classrooms are arranged to be socially and culturally inclusive;
- Teachers are aware of the child’s mother tongue, and support their strengths and allow the child’s self-esteem to grow, therefore enabling the child to become a bi-lingual;
- Staff acknowledge the time it takes to become fluent in an additional language, with a good command of the range of language needed for successful learning and participation in the class;
- We also recognise that support may be necessary beyond the time a child appears orally fluent.

Home School Links:

- We provide a welcoming admission process for the induction, assessment and support of EAL/new arrival pupils and their families/carers.
- We take account of parents /carers linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds when planning the curriculum and developing home school links.
- We ensure that translators and interpreters are provided as at when required.
- We aim to work closely with members of the wider community to support our EAL pupils.