

SLADEFIELD INFANT SCHOOL

English as an Additional Language Policy

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Sladefield Infant School

EAL Policy

Introduction

All pupils need to feel safe, accepted and valued in order to learn effectively and develop as individuals. For pupils, who are learning English as an additional language (EAL), this includes recognising and valuing their home language and background. As a school, we are aware that bilingualism is a useful learning tool and that all EAL pupils make a valuable contribution to our school community. We take a whole school approach to meeting the needs of our EAL learners. We provide our EAL pupils with a safe, welcoming, nurturing environment where they are accepted, valued and encouraged to participate.

Equality and Diversity

Equality

We aim to be proactive in removing barriers that stand in the way of our EAL pupils' learning and success, as we do for all of our pupils.

Diversity

We strive to meet our responsibilities to EAL pupils by ensuring equal access to the National Curriculum and the achievement of their educational potential.

Belonging and Cohesion

Sladefield Infant School provides equal entitlement for all children irrespective of ethnicity, gender, social background or additional need. As part of this commitment, the provision for EAL aims to deliver effective learning opportunities for targeted pupils to achieve high standards of success in their learning.

The statutory inclusion statement sets our three principles which we strive to follow by:

- Setting suitable learning challenges by differentiating teaching content to match ability levels.
- Responding to pupil's diverse learning needs by being aware of race*, gender and disability issues and taking specific action to respond to diversity.
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups by supporting pupils with special educational needs; pupils with disabilities* and those for whom English is an additional language.

* See Equality, English and Special Educational Needs Policies for details

Aims of the EAL Policy

This policy aims to raise awareness and to support the planning, organisation, teaching and assessment procedures for EAL learners. It also documents the use of resources and strategies to meet the needs of pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) and so to raise pupil achievement and aspirations.

How do we know if a child is EAL?

Below are the official definitions of EAL from the DFE and OFSTED.

EAL - The Department of Education definition

A pupil's first language is defined as any language other than English that a child was exposed to during early development and continues to be exposed to in the home or community. If a child was exposed to more than one language (which may include English) during early development, a language other than English should be recorded, irrespective of the child's proficiency in English.

EAL - The Ofsted definition

English as an additional language (EAL) refers to learners whose first language is not English.
These definitions therefore cover the following:

- Pupils arriving from other countries and whose first language is not English
- Pupils who have lived in the UK for a long time and may appear to be fluent, but who also speak another language at home. These pupils are often not entirely fluent in terms of their literacy levels.
- Pupils who have been born in the UK, but for whom the home language is not English (e.g. Bengali children who are born in the UK, but arrive at school with very little English due to having spoken only Bengali at home and within the community)
- Pupils who have a parent who speaks a language other than English and the child communicates with in that language (ie. bilingual children)

It is important therefore to recognise that:

- Children who have British citizenship can still be EAL.
- If parents write on their child's admission form that the child speaks English as a first language, when it is clear that one or both of these parents is a speaker of another language, the child is very likely in fact to be EAL, and it will be necessary to check this.
- Accurate and robust data collection during admission is essential.

School Context

Sladefield Infant School is in Ward End about 5 miles east of Birmingham city centre. The school's EAL Co-ordinator is Mrs Lynette Donohue.
Based on parental information (Jan 2025), 63.6% of our pupils have English as a First language and 18.6 % have English as home language. This means that 81.4% of our pupils are identified as having EAL.
The languages spoken or heard, as stated by parents are:- English, Arabic and Arabic (Sudan), Bengali/Sylethi, Kurdish, Pahari (Pakistan), Pashto, Urdu, Panjabi (including Mirpuri and Pothwari), Pashto/Pakhto, Romanian, Somali, and Romany/English Romanes. Panjabi is the language that the majority of our EAL children hear at home at 38%, followed by Urdu at 31%. This is the same as the previous data collection in 2023.

How do we support EAL pupils at Sladefield?

Planning and Organisation

- Opportunities for developing speaking and listening skills are identified in all curriculum areas and all staff are encouraged to provide a language rich environment for our pupils.
- Areas in the school are clearly labelled using both text and symbols and staff are encouraged to use visual reinforcement throughout the day, such as visual timetables and now/next boards.
- All new pupils are welcomed to the school by the EAL coordinator so that an immediate, informal assessment of needs can be made. A tour is given, showing the child where important rooms are and introducing them to key members of staff and new friends.
- For newly arrived pupils, language groups start straight away and are tailored to their level of spoken English. If a child has very limited spoken English, we use 'Racing to English' to build up a bank of 'survival language'.
- Staff receive regular training on ways to develop the speaking and listening skills in general, and sue to age and stage of our children, these work very well for EAL learners. Strategies

covered previously have included managing talk, modelling and rehearsing language, questioning techniques, talking partners, using props and puppets and ways to meet the needs of Newly Arrived children. Our school focus on Oracy supports our EAL pupils very well.

We hope that by implementing the above we will meet the following objectives:-

- To assist all EAL pupils to become fluent English speakers as quickly as possible.
- To assist and support all EAL pupils in their acquisition of English language skills for both Receptive and Expressive language.
- To develop staff expertise to ensure that all EAL pupils achieve and thrive at Sladefield.
- To monitor, evaluate and review provision.

Resources

The majority of these resources are stored in the Language Resource Room.

- CDs, dual-language books, bilingual dictionaries
- Photograph and picture card sets
- Language games, props and activities
- Resources for newly arrived children
- Dual-language dictionaries and phrase books in the school's main community languages
- Fine motor resources

In addition classrooms have a selection of dual-language books.

Assessment and Recording

The majority of our children are bilingual and are learning English as an additional language. It is important for us to recognise that their speaking and listening skills are developing at different rates in two or sometimes three languages. Regular assessment and monitoring of language intervention groups ensures early identification of any additional needs, which can then be followed by appropriate action.

Early Years: Following information gleaned from observations and nursery records, children who are at the early stages of English are assessed using the Wellcomm screening tool. Their progress is then tracked using the bands and against the ELG or equivalent at the end of the year.

KS1:Speaking and listening skills of all children at the early stages of English are assessed using the English National Curriculum Descriptors and where there is a concern, a more detailed assessment is carried out using the Wellcomm screening tool. If needed, we would also use The EAL assessment profile, designed by Pupil and School Support (See Appendix 1) with a view to setting very specific targets to support attainment.

Despite receiving additional support, some children continue to experience difficulties in learning English. In such cases, children are assessed in other areas of learning sometimes in their first language. After consultation with class teachers, outside agencies and the SENCo, further learning support may be provided as part of the school's SEN provision if this is deemed appropriate. We recognise that a child who is new to English can take 5-7 years to 'catch up' with their peers so an identification of SEN for an EAL child is always done with caution and after seeking advice from Outside Agencies and working closely with the child's family.

ICT

Many of the school's IT programmes promote talk and develop listening skills. Working with a partner or buddy is also promoted as an opportunity for talking, negotiating and developing other key language skills.

There are a number of dual-language stories on CD for children to listen to. In addition there are simple bilingual dictionaries for beginners on CD format.

An IT programme for the acquisition of spoken English for newly arrived children is on our computer system.
Small recordable devices have been purchased for children to use independently.

Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to develop their child's first language. This also helps children in the development of English. We understand that Parents who have EAL themselves may lack confidence when coming into school for Parent Meetings. We are happy to provide an interpreter for any parent who requests one. This may be provided by bilingual staff in school or by purchasing an interpreter to communicate via speakerphone or to attend a meeting in school.

Staffing

Sladefield Infant School recognises that all staff working with our children have a responsibility to promote language development in our predominantly EAL context. While Mrs Donohue is the EAL coordinator and oversees the provision, all staff have responsibility for pupils in their class and should meet their needs through Quality First Teaching, intervention groups and differentiation within lessons.

General Principles of EAL Teaching and Learning

Speaking and Listening

The Bilingual Learner: underlying principles

The majority of children at Sladefield Infant School are bilingual learners, at the early stages of learning English as an additional language (EAL). All adults working with our children should consider the following:

- Many of our children are acquiring a new language and this should be openly acknowledged. Languages spoken by children and adults should be identified and as a school, we recognise that language is not necessarily linked to ethnicity or religion.
- Parents should be encouraged to help their children to develop their first language as this enables English to be developed more proficiently. Using home language is important for learning and for promoting self-esteem.
- Children in the early stages of learning English may wish to remain silent. Living in a new language is extremely tiring and frustrating. For some children a lack of understanding will be due to early English language skills rather than a genuine lack of understanding or concept development.
- Children learning a new language require specific support strategies such as the use of home languages in learning and comprehensive input (using artefacts, props, visual aids, gesture, role play, contextual support). They will then need to process and use the new language in conceptually challenging situations. Eventually our children should be able to work in the abstract and require less support.
- Children need exposure to good models of language but this is not enough to promote the acquisition of new language. Their attention has to be drawn to the way English is structured and they will need opportunities to practise in meaningful situations. Modelling the language in context will enable learners to hear the form, which they will then begin to internalise. Ultimately it is the need to interact that triggers the use of language.
- Repetition gives the learner the opportunity to take part in activities, practise sounds and words and consolidate learning in a meaningful context.
- Through collaboration, children build on each other's talk, extend their range and learn how to negotiate meaning.

Reviewed by L. Donohue (Inclusion Manager)
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