EAL Policy

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Contents

Context

The Lion Works School is an Independent special school. We are part of an ethical and progressive organisation that believes it can achieve real change for children, young people and their families.

The Lion Works School is situated within the BCP local authority. We offer an academic and vocational specialist learning provision across KS3, KS4 and Post 16 aiming to reduce barriers to enable successful learning experiences and outcomes. There are a variety of routes a student can take, which include GCSEs, BTECs and other accredited qualifications whilst building confidence, improving wellbeing, enabling self-regulation and increasing attendance. Our school is full of life and has a wealth of resources to spark interest and ignite that passion to achieve, equipping our students for everyday life and the opportunities that await them.

We adhere to the values of ARC:

Ambition
Resilience
Community

The Lion Works School operates within the SPELL framework. SPELL is The National Autistic Society's framework for understanding and responding to the needs of children and adults on the autism spectrum. It focuses on five principles that have been identified as vital elements of best practice in autism and emphasises ways to change the environment and our approaches to meet the specific needs of each person.

SPELL stands for Structure, Positive approaches and expectations, Empathy, Low arousal, Links:

Structure	Structure makes the world a more predictable, accessible and safer place. We can support people on the autism spectrum in creating structured environments using visual information.
Positive (approaches and expectations)	We must seek to establish and reinforce self-confidence and self-esteem by building on natural strengths, interest and abilities.
Empathy	We must try to see the world from the standpoint of the autistic child or adult, knowing what it is that motivates or interests them but importantly what may also frighten, preoccupy or otherwise distress them.
Low arousal	Approaches and the environment need to be calm and ordered in such a way so as to reduce anxiety and aid concentration.
Links	Autistic people, their parents or advocates should be seen as partners. Open links and communication will reduce the risk of misunderstanding, confusion or the adoption of fragmented, piecemeal approaches.

Statement of Intent

In this policy, the term 'English as an Additional Language' (EAL) refers to students whose main language at home is a language other than English. EAL encompasses all levels of bilingualism and any child learning and using English as an additional language. We understand that students may start at the school with differing levels of bilingualism and fluency in English. Partnership with parents is vitally important to a child's progress and we promote how valuable it is to continue speaking their first language.

Students with EAL will face various difficulties throughout their academic life. Students' aptitude for English will vary, but many will face barriers to learning, accessing the curriculum and reaching their full potential. Students 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. This policy has been established to ensure all students with EAL at the school are given the best possible chance to reach their full potential.

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. The school does not have a catchment or profile that leads to higher than average levels of students with EAL needs, but the school is mindful and proactive of being ready and prepared to meet this need when required. We promote equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices; differences are celebrated and any resulting needs are addressed (see Admissions and Equal Opportunities Policies).

Aims

We aim to:

- Welcome the cultural, linguistic and educational experiences students with EAL contribute to the school.
- Ensure strategies are in place to support students with EAL.
- To maintain a child's self-esteem by acknowledging and celebrating their individual culture and skill in their first language.
- Enable students with EAL to become confident, and to acquire the language skills needed to reach their full academic potential.

Our school EAL focused objectives are to:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for newly arrived students with EAL.
- Assess the skills and needs of students 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 students with EAL.
- Use all available resources to raise the attainment of students with EAL.
- Systematically monitor students' progress, and adapt policies and procedures accordingly.
- Ensure all children's languages, cultures and identities are represented in classrooms and throughout the school.
- Maximise opportunities to model the fluent use of English.
- Ensure students with EAL are acknowledged for their skills in their own languages.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy has been written with an understanding of the relevant legislation and guidance; this includes but is not limited to:

[Department for Education (ad hoc) guidance on English proficiency of Pupils with EAL](#)

[Independent School Standards 2014, part 6, clause 3/e](#)

[Department for Education Independent school standards guidance for Independent Schools 2019 clause 7.3](#)

Implementation

To support the above aims, staff members adhere to the following procedures:

- Gather and share information about the child's background (including the language/s the child speaks, religion, cultural customs and traditions and any dietary requirements).
- Let the parents know that we welcome and celebrate different languages and cultures.
- Establish consistent, simple, daily routines, checking that the child understands what to do and if necessary repeating explanations and directions on a one-to-one basis, adding visual prompts where needed.
- Use lots of visual support, gestures, pictures and objects to aid understanding and language development.
- Acknowledge children's attempts to communicate; children will often switch between languages and will often understand more than they can verbalise.
- Ensure that all staff model appropriate, correct language and grammar, using lots of repetition and positive interactions.
- Identify opportunities to teach and embed targeted vocabulary and key language structures and use these to plan for activities/interactions in the child's individual and class planning.

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- Plan for the consistent inclusion of children with EAL in small group activities which enable frequent meaningful episodes of interaction with peers, in activities which promote communication.
- Ensure an awareness that children with EAL often go through a 'silent period' or 'quiet period' before they are confident to speak English, or they may not want to use their home language for a variety of reasons.
- Providing a running commentary/talking through actions will model the use of language.
- Where a child with EAL speaks a home language which is also spoken by a member of staff, enable a good liaison between the two to provide support and manage linguistic challenges.
- Build on and interpret non-verbal responses as effective turns in conversation and provide an English translation.
- One-word and short phrase responses are paraphrased and extended to longer sentences.

We recognise the important role of parents and we strive to maintain quality partnerships with parents and carers to ensure every possible support is provided.

We recognise that the English language skills of a child with EAL will also develop as a result of their interactions with their friends and classmates. Staff aim to cultivate this opportunity in, for example, providing new children with EAL with a mentor or buddy and, where practical, linking a new child with EAL with a classmate prior to starting, with a view to organising holiday playdates.

On entry to the school, we gather information via our initial parent forms. This helps to inform us about the student's abilities in their home language/s and how best to support them.

Ongoing monitoring and support are set in place as needed on an individual basis, incorporating, where needed, the support of the parents.

Access to the Curriculum

The needs of students 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 students to use their first language in the classroom.
- The support requirements of students with EAL are identified and the support is made available.
- Staff training will be delivered annually to support delivery of the curriculum to EAL students.
- Assessment methods will allow students to show what they can do in all curriculum areas.

Teacher planning will include details of differentiation for EAL. This can take many forms including:
- Access to dual language texts, posters and displays;
- Access to word banks and bilingual dictionaries;

- Opportunity for visual literacy techniques such as reading pictures and drama;
- Provide opportunity for higher order thinking;
- Opportunity for discussion and cooperative learning;
- Opportunities to communicate in their first/home language with teachers and learning support assistants;
- Display artefacts and materials which reflect the children's home background;
- Encourage children to write their own dual texts, when appropriate;
- Participate in Black History Month, Refugee Week and Traveller History Month;
- Plan learning opportunities in lessons which reflect minority ethnic backgrounds.

All staff members have a responsibility to ensure the development of students 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 students with EAL in their classrooms.
- Identifying students with EAL who are experiencing difficulties and ensuring intervening measures are taken to aid the student.
- Classroom displays will reflect cultural and linguistic diversity.

Assessment

Assessment is undertaken as a partnership between the class teacher, Literacy Lead, SLT, teaching assistants, parents/guardians and student. Termly assessment of level of language acquisition will be carried out to ensure that challenging bespoke targets to accelerate progress are in place. Interventions are personalised, time limited and are monitored to ensure accelerated progress. In assessment of EAL children, competence in English is categorised on a five-point scale using the Department for Education's EAL classification codes:

A: New to English: 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.

B: Early acquisition: 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.

C: Developing competence: May participate in learning activities with increasing independence. Able to express self 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.

D: Competent: 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.

E: Fluent: 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.

N: Not Yet Assessed is also available for use where the school has not yet had time to assess proficiency.

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 students 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.
- Where necessary, ensure translations of school documents are carried out and provided to parents of students with EAL.
- Encourage parents to attend parents' evenings and participate in school functions.
- Invite parents to school to help with class activities, such as cooking, reading and class outings, where appropriate.
- Encourage parents to become involved with homework through shared reading schemes and language-based homework.
- Plan activities in a way that ensures they do not clash with religious/community commitments.

Monitoring Progress

The monitoring of students' progress is shared between all teachers. Individual student profiles are updated following assessments and reviewed on a termly basis to identify and address problems.

Students are also encouraged to set their own targets and objectives to bolster self-esteem and increase accountability.

Policy Review

This policy and information report will be reviewed by the headteacher annually. It will also be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year. It will be approved by the CEO with the guidance of the school board.

Links with other Policies

This policy links to the following documents:

- Admissions Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy
- SEND Policy

Appendix 1: EAL Register

Student Name:	Mother Tongue:	Level of English-Speaking Ability:	Support Provision in Place:

School/class ethos

Classrooms are socially and intellectually inclusive, valuing cultural differences and fostering a range of individual identities

Recognise the child's mother tongue; boost the child's self-esteem. Remember, he/she has the potential to become a bi-lingual adult

Identify the student's strengths and encouraging them to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another

Recognise that students with English as an additional language will need more time to process and answer both orally and in written format

Extra time and support in tests will be awarded if appropriate

Providing and targeting appropriate reading materials that highlight different ways in which English may be used

Ensure that vocabulary work covers the technical as well as the everyday meaning of key words, metaphors and idioms

Explain how speaking and writing in English are structured for different purposes across a range of subjects

Ensure that there are effective opportunities for talking, and that talking is used to support writing

Access and support

All pupils will follow the full school curriculum. The school will provide texts and resources that suit the pupils' ages and levels of learning

Where appropriate, EAL students will be supported by a Teaching Assistant in the classroom to enable the student to complete tasks with understanding

Where necessary, withdrawal support will take place for a set period of time to address specific language or learning focus.

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