Underhill School and Children's Centre

EAL Policy

Date Adopted: October 2021

Review Date:

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the school's approach to identification and meeting the needs of pupils who are classified as having English as an additional language (EAL).

Definition

An EAL pupil is a pupil whose first language is not English. This encompasses pupils who are fully bilingual and all those at different stages of learning English.
EAL pupils may be:
- Newly arrived from a foreign country and school;
- Newly arrived from a foreign country, but an English speaking school;
- Born abroad, but moved to the UK at some point before starting school;
- Born in the UK, but in a family where the main language is not English.

EAL pupils will need varying levels of provision.

Introduction

This policy sets out the school's aims, objectives and strategies with regard to meeting the needs and celebrating the skills of EAL pupils, and helping them to achieve the highest possible standards.

Background

Our pupils come from diverse backgrounds with a wide range of language skills. Underhill has at present 509 pupils on roll, of which approximately 52% speak English as an additional language. Altogether there are at least 45 different languages spoken at Underhill. A proportion of our pupils have arrived from other countries with no or very little understanding of English. A number of these pupils who have come from abroad have attended other schools before attending our school. We are constantly developing the partnership between staff and parents as we understand how important this relationship is to the children's learning.

Aims

- To give all pupils the opportunity to overcome any barrier to learning.
- To welcome and value the cultural, linguistic and educational experiences that pupils with EAL bring to the school whenever possible.
- To implement appropriate strategies to ensure that EAL pupils are supported in accessing the full curriculum.
- To help EAL pupils to become confident and fluent in speaking and listening, reading and writing in English in order to be able to fulfil their potential.
- To encourage children to practise and extend their use of English.
- To encourage and enable parental support in improving children's language skills.

Objectives of the EAL Policy

- 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.
- To develop staff expertise to ensure that all EAL pupils attain levels of achievement appropriate to their intellectual abilities.
- To develop rigorous monitoring, evaluating and review systems.

Our 5 Stage Model for Language Acquisition

A. New to English
A child may:
- Use first language for learning and other purposes.
- Remain silent in the classroom.
- Copy/repeat some words and phrases.
- Understand some everyday English expressions but have minimal or no English literacy.
- Follow day-to-day social communication in English.
- Begin to use spoken English for social purposes.
- Understand simple instructions and follow narrative/accounts with visual support.
- Develop some skills in reading and writing.
- Become familiar with some subject specific vocabulary.

A child at this stage needs significant support.

B. Early Acquisition
A child may:
- Participate in learning activities with increasing independence.
- Express themselves orally in English but structural inaccuracies are still apparent.
- Requires ongoing support in literacy, particularly for understanding text and writing.
- Follow abstract concepts and more complex written English.

A child at this stage requires support to access the curriculum fully.

C. Developing Competence
A child may:
- Developing oral English well, allowing successful engagement in activities across the curriculum.
- Read and understand a wide variety of text.
- Written English may lack complexity.
- Demonstrate evidence of errors in grammatical structure.

A child at this stage needs support to access subtle nuances of meaning, to refine English usage, and to develop abstract vocabulary.

D. Competent
A child at this stage can operate across the curriculum to a level of competence nearing that of a pupil who uses English as his/her first language. They may still make grammatical errors and need support to develop their linguistic skills.

E. Fluent
A child at this stage can operate across the curriculum to a level of competence equivalent to that of a pupil who uses English as his/her first language.

Assessment

The pupil's needs should be identified during the admissions process. The Admissions Officer will report/collect information about pupil's additional language needs; this will be passed to the teachers and EAL coordinator. A meeting with the pupil's teachers and the parent/carer begins the process of ongoing evaluation to meet the individual needs. An EAL proficiency assessment framework is completed for children graded A and B. Following the above, lessons will be planned appropriately. The teacher will keep a record of the pupil's progress and communicate this to the EAL coordinator at the end of each term.

Teaching and Learning

It takes 1-2 years to become fluent in everyday spoken English, but 5-7 years to develop proficiency in formal, written English. At Underhill, we aim for all EAL pupils to immediately feel part of the school, develop language in context, and experience their full curriculum entitlement. Staff can help pupils learning English as an additional language in a variety of ways:
- By planning differentiated work for EAL pupils if necessary.
- By setting appropriate expectations; encouraging pupils to contribute and give more than one-word answers.
- By monitoring progress carefully and ensuring that EAL pupils are set appropriate and challenging learning objectives.
- Recognising that EAL pupils may need more time to process answers.
- Ensuring that there are effective opportunities for talking, and that talking is used to support writing.
- Encouraging pupils to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another.

Staff to refer to document '10 ways to support EAL learners'.

Resources

Our school provides appropriate materials such as dual language textbooks, dictionaries, visual keyword lists, iPad apps and story props. Displays and resources reflect linguistic and cultural diversity.

EAL Role and responsibilities of the EAL Lead:

The Lead's role is to manage EAL effectively across the school, to develop the quality of provision for EAL pupils, to contribute to raising the educational achievement of pupils with EAL by working collaboratively with teaching and support staff, and to closely monitor progress and attainment of EAL pupils through pupil progress meetings, book looks, intervention tracking assessments and analysis of data. To achieve the above, the EAL Lead will:
• disseminate information and key messages effectively
• represent and promote the needs of EAL pupils
• advise teachers about the development of EAL strategies, planning and assessment
• actively contribute to the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the EAL policy
• keep up to date regarding EAL 'Good Practice'
• develop and maintain assessment procedures
• audit resources

• prepare and update the EAL action plan
• take part in monitoring of teaching, planning and books.

Parental/Community Involvement

At Underhill we encourage parental and community involvement by:
- Providing a welcoming induction process for newly arrived pupils and their families/carers.
- Use translators and interpreters, where appropriate and available, to ensure good links are made between the family and the school.
- Identify linguistic, cultural and religious background of pupils and establish contact with the wider community.
- Celebrate and acknowledge the achievements of EAL pupils.
- Recognise and encourage the use of first language for developing positive links between school and home.
- Support parents, so they can help their children at home.