EAL Policy

Policy Date: September 2023

Responsibility

Individual: Deputy Head Academic
Head of EAL

Council Committee: E&P

Review Cycle: (Annual)

Next scheduled review: September 2024

Last interim review: November 2023

Introduction

At King's College Taunton, we embrace language and cultural diversity as integral components of our education. We recognize that language plays a vital role in shaping students' identities and enhancing their understanding of the world. Our English as an Additional Language (EAL) policy reflects our commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment that acknowledges the value of students' own languages while providing them with the necessary support to access the curriculum and thrive academically. We aim to empower EAL students to become confident communicators in English while maintaining pride in their linguistic heritage. Our policy is designed to uphold the principles of diversity, equality, and inclusion throughout our school community.

General Aims

The primary aim of our EAL policy is to facilitate the successful inclusion of EAL students into the school community and to provide them with equal opportunities for academic achievement. We believe that every language holds intrinsic value, and we encourage students to embrace and celebrate their linguistic identities. Our language policy is intended to be used as a framework to guide teachers, support staff, and parents in effectively supporting EAL students' language development. It should be interpreted in a manner that promotes an inclusive and nurturing environment for all students, regardless of their linguistic background.

Context

King's College Taunton is situated in the South West of England within a Local Authority area that reflects a rich tapestry of language and cultural diversity. We welcome students from all over the world. EAL learners, as defined by the government, encompass students exposed to languages other than English in their homes, irrespective of their English language proficiency or immigration status.

Within our school, we have a diverse population with students representing a multitude of languages. We have learners who are new to English or in the early acquisition stages and require significant language support to access the curriculum. Additionally, there are students who are developing competence in EAL and need ongoing assistance in their language development. Furthermore, some students are competent or fluent users of EAL, requiring occasional support to fully access the curriculum.

Upon admission to King's College Taunton, potential EAL students will be assessed for their English language proficiency to determine the level of support needed. The assessment may involve standardized language tests, interviews, and previous school records. Based on the assessment results, the student will be placed in an appropriate level of EAL support within the school's curriculum.

Key Principles for Second Language Acquisition

Our EAL support program is designed to meet the individual needs of each student while fostering their English language development. The program aims to provide students with the language skills necessary for academic success, social integration, and overall confidence in using English.

Our EAL policy is built on key principles that guide our approach to language acquisition and inclusivity:

- **Additional Language Acquisition:** We believe that language acquisition is a gradual process that requires patience, support, and encouragement. EAL students will be provided with tailored language support that addresses their individual needs, ensuring a positive language learning experience.

- **Home Language Maintenance:** We recognize the importance of maintaining students' home languages and encourage them to use and celebrate their linguistic heritage within the school community.

- **An Inclusive Curriculum:** Our curriculum will be inclusive, recognizing and accommodating the diverse linguistic backgrounds of our students. We will provide resources and teaching strategies that facilitate equitable participation in all aspects of school life.

EAL Teaching and Learning

We will employ various strategies to support EAL students and facilitate their access to the mainstream curriculum, including:

- **Strategies for Supporting Access:** Teachers will use differentiated instruction, visual aids, and scaffolding techniques to ensure that EAL students can comprehend and engage with academic content.

- **Teacher Expectations:** Teachers will set high expectations for EAL students and provide positive reinforcement to build their confidence as language learners.

- **Classroom Organization:** Inclusive classroom practices will be promoted, fostering an environment where all students feel valued and supported.

- **Supporting Higher Achieving Learners:** EAL students demonstrating advanced language skills will be provided with opportunities to further develop their language abilities through enrichment activities.

- **Planning for Language Learning:** Lesson planning will incorporate language development goals, promoting language acquisition alongside subject content.

- **Use of EAL Assessment:** Regular assessment of EAL students' language proficiency will inform teaching strategies and individualized support.

Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation for EAL

We will implement a systematic approach to plan, monitor, and evaluate EAL support, including:

- **Target-Setting:** Setting curricular and linguistic targets to track progress and identify areas for improvement.

- **Observing, Tracking, Monitoring:** Regularly observing and tracking students' language development to inform intervention and support.

- **Record-Keeping:** Maintaining comprehensive records of EAL students' language proficiency and progress.

- **Curriculum Planning:** Incorporating language support into the broader school curriculum to ensure the needs of EAL learners are met.

Special Educational Needs and Gifted and Talented Pupils

Our school will differentiate between EAL and Special Educational Needs (SEN) to ensure that learners using EAL are appropriately supported. Pupils using EAL will have equal access to the school's provisions, and any additional support required will be based on language development needs rather than SEN status. Similarly, pupils using EAL will have appropriate representation in the Gifted and Talented program.

All pupils, regardless of language status, will be able to access SEN help where required. EAL pupils will undertake the same initial SEN screening as all other pupils.

Assessment and Record Keeping

We will utilize a range of assessment methods to support EAL students effectively, including:

- **Early Years Foundation Stage / National Curriculum Levels:** Assessing EAL learners' progress in alignment with established national standards.

- **First Language Assessment:** Recognizing the value of first languages and incorporating them in the learning process.

- **English Language Proficiency:** Assessing English language proficiency levels to tailor appropriate language support.

- **Initial Assessment of Learners Using EAL:** Conducting comprehensive assessments upon admission to gauge language development needs.

- **Appropriacy of Testing:** Ensuring that assessments used are culturally and linguistically appropriate for EAL students.

Resources

Our school will provide a range of resources to support EAL learners, including:

- **Dedicated EAL Teachers:** The school will have qualified and experienced EAL teachers who are trained to support the language needs of EAL students. These teachers will collaborate with mainstream subject teachers to ensure an integrated approach to language learning.

- **EAL Curriculum:** The school will offer a specialized EAL curriculum that focuses on English language acquisition, communication skills, and cultural awareness. The curriculum will be aligned with the school's overall educational goals and standards.

- **Small Group and One-on-One Sessions:** EAL students may receive additional support through small group sessions or one-on-one tutorials. These sessions will target specific language needs and offer personalized attention to accelerate language progress.

- **Language Support Materials:** The school will provide appropriate language support materials, such as bilingual dictionaries, language learning apps, and language resources, to aid EAL students in their language development journey.

- **Visual Support:** Utilizing visual aids and multimedia resources to enhance comprehension.

- **Peer Support** (e.g., Young Interpreters Scheme): Encouraging peer mentoring and support to enhance language development.

Parental Involvement and the wider community

Parents and guardians of EAL students are encouraged to actively participate in their child's language development process. The school will communicate regularly with parents regarding their child's progress, offer workshops, and provide resources to support language learning at home.

At King's College Taunton, we strive to create an inclusive and respectful environment where all cultures and languages are valued. We will organize multicultural events and activities to promote cross-cultural understanding and appreciation among our students.

Key Responsibilities and Staff Development

To ensure effective support for learners using EAL, we will:

- **Head of EAL:** Designate a Head of EAL responsible for overseeing the implementation of the EAL policy and coordinating support.

- **EAL Teacher/Support Staff:** Employ qualified EAL teachers and support staff who will deliver specialized language support.

- **Teaching Colleagues:** Provide training and professional development opportunities for all teaching staff to develop their expertise in supporting EAL learners.

- **Teaching Support Staff:** Offer relevant training and resources to teaching support staff to effectively support EAL students.

- **Other Support Staff:** Raise awareness among other staff working with these students.

Monitoring, review and evaluation of the policy

This EAL policy will be reviewed annually, and any necessary updates will be made to ensure it aligns with the changing needs of our student population and best practices in language acquisition and education.

King's College Taunton is committed to providing a nurturing and empowering environment for EAL students to excel academically and become confident communicators in English. We believe that language diversity enriches our school community, and our EAL policy reflects our dedication to ensuring every student's success.