



EAL Policy

Statement

At The Beeches Independent School, we are committed to ensuring that every child succeeds and reaches their full potential, irrespective of the barriers to learning that they may face. We are dedicated to raising the achievement and attainment of pupils with EAL, enabling them to maximise their progress and attainment within a positive, nurturing, secure and safe learning environment. Through quality first teaching based on experiences and talk, we aim to meet the language needs of our learners.

Context

Our student body is predominantly Looked After Children who are placed at The Beeches Independent School by a number of local authorities across the country. External students from the local area are placed at our provision on day placements through local education authorities.

Our children are from predominantly white backgrounds and have a range of learning disabilities, including those on the autistic spectrum, ADHD and chromosome disorders.

- The Beeches Independent School caters for a small number of students. Although our registration allows for up to 21 students, we currently have 12 students on roll.
- All of our students speak English as a first language although most experience communication difficulties at some level.
- We currently have two sibling students who speak a second language
- 100% of our current students are British and 25% have a black cultural heritage.
- Due to funding structures of our placements, we do not have any students who are entitled to free school meals
- 42% of our current students are in receipt of Pupil Premium monies

75% of our students reside within our company in either a residential care home or in supported living and are therefore not deprived in the economic sense. However, the majority of the day placements have a chaotic history which has led to them becoming Looked After by their local authorities.

We are aware of the importance of maintaining strong family relationships and therefore support and facilitate contact within families whenever and however possible in line with agreed parameters eg, telephone contact.

The school is proud of the close contact we have with the residential homes and the supported living provisions. We feel that we work together effectively to promote the needs and best interests of the young people in our care. We share information with ease through our electronic storage system and attend meetings to triangulate information and to share the aims and objectives for each young person.

Aims

As a school we aim to:

- Create a warm and welcoming environment in which pupils will learn most effectively.
- Provide support to pupils with EAL needs who will have accompanying learning difficulties.
- Plan and teach lessons using learning styles most appropriate to EAL learners.
- Provide an inclusive curriculum, personalised to meet the learning needs of each young person.
- Promote home languages across school and encourage and provide learning regarding the students' culture when appropriate
 - Assess pupils in class and set targets based on assessment of achievement of National Curriculum Objectives.
 - Ensure pupils are making progress and are able to access their school curriculum.
 - Support pupils to achieve the very best for their ability and to become independent
 - Celebrate students' achievements in school as well as any in extra-curricular activities eg, horse riding.

This policy aims to support our planning, organisation, teaching and assessment procedures and to support the use of resources and strategies, in order to meet the needs of pupils who have English as an Additional Language (EAL). Our goal is to promote language awareness and raise pupil attainment, progress and achievement.

What is EAL?

EAL means English as an Additional Language - when a pupil speaks a home language other than English. At The Beeches Independent School only two languages are spoken, English and French, and we aim to cater for all these pupils to whom English is an additional learning need.

We are committed to providing appropriate and personalised support for all pupils with EAL. Throughout their time at school, we provide pupils with the necessary means to access the curriculum. We give children the opportunity to improve their fluency in speaking, reading, writing and understanding English.

Definitions

EAL Learner :- "First language is the language to which the child was initially exposed during early development and continues to use this language at home and community. If a

child acquires English subsequent to early development then English is not their first language no matter how proficient in it they become” DFES Guidance 2007.

Bilingual Learner:- “ Bilingual here is taken to mean all pupils who use or have access to more than one language at home or at school- it does not necessarily imply fluency in both or all languages” DFES Guidance 2007

Advanced Bilingual Learner:- - “Advanced Bilingual learners are pupils who have had all or most of their school education in the UK and whose oral proficiency in English is usually indistinguishable from that of pupils with English as a first language but whose writing may still show distinctive features related to the language background” DCFS 2009.

Planning and Teaching for pupils with EAL needs

Teachers consider the needs of bilingual learners in their planning and teaching. In class, pupils are taught to learn using a variety of strategies. Pupils learn independently and through collaborative activities in small groups with a high teacher ratio. Children are encouraged to explore a range of learning styles - visual, auditory and kinaesthetic – and resources are prepared to reflect the needs of individuals across each class. Pupils will be actively encouraged to share languages with their peers.

At The Beeches Independent School, many of our students benefit greatly from the use of PECS or similar systems to assist communication. The use of visual support is implemented in signage, visual timetables and for teaching resources. These pictorial systems would hugely benefit an EAL learner, as they do for those for whom English is the first language, as they have a universal appeal.

Due to the personalised nature of our curriculum, the needs of an EAL learner can be accommodated through the addition of further English lessons within the school week and through carefully structured and fully supported small group activities and social time activities. Exposure to the functional forms of English in the local community through travel and in public places will allow for EAL students to understand the use of English in a valid real-life context.

A personalised and responsive programme of intervention would be in place for our International New Arrivals, and for those who speak English at an ‘early acquisition’ level, to support their access to the curriculum in class. Our senior leaders conducting assessments would liaise with teachers before planning and delivering sessions to ensure that the learning accommodates and negates as far as is possible both language and learning barriers.

Monitoring and Assessment

The class teacher is responsible for the assessment of all pupils in class. As outlined above, he/she liaises closely with the Senior Leadership Team to identify and address needs. The student’s Keyworker would work closely with Senior Leadership to review pupil progress and assessments, providing any further additions necessary to the curriculum.

Additional, targeted support, through our Pupil Premium would be applied where appropriate and this may be through specialist equipment, texts or therapeutic input as necessary eg, talking therapy.

Regular feedback to professionals involved with the care of the young person would be imperative to ensure a smooth transition. It would be vital to capture the voice and opinions of the student and therefore additional means may be needed eg, advocate speaking first language.

EAL Role and responsibilities

EAL Lead:- The Head of Education

The Lead's role is to manage EAL effectively across the school, to develop the quality of provision for EAL pupils and to contribute to raising the educational achievement of pupils with EAL by working collaboratively with teaching and support staff.

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 EAL action plan to respond to the needs of any EAL placement to the school
- Take part in monitoring of teaching, planning and books.

Resources

The Beeches Independent School would look to develop resources to include bilingual dictionaries, dual-language books, sight words in other languages, games and audio materials to accommodate the needs of any EAL learner.

The EAL Lead is responsible for ensuring pupils are given appropriate support in and outside the classroom environment and monitors the progress of this support.

Strategies for working with children new to English

- Provide lots of hands on experience so children can learn the new language through participating in activities that support cognitive development.
- Teach newly arrived child useful words and phrases (enabling language) and the routines of the classroom in order for them to communicate with their peer group.
- Additional visual support is provided regardless of communicative level e.g. Visual timetable, communication fans, gestures, pictures, photographs, posters, objects and demonstrations.
- Classroom activities have clear language and learning objectives, use of appropriate resources and support where available to enable pupils to participate and access the curriculum in all areas.

- Key language features are identified in all curriculum areas for e.g. language structures, key vocabulary and forms of text.
- Create a language rich environment through learning mats and wall displays
- Display positive images of people from ethnic minorities.
- Celebrate the young person's culture along with the SMSC education we offer through assemblies, trips and visits and through the curriculum.

