

# Thomas A' Becket Infant School



## English as an Additional Language Guidance & Policy (EAL)

### INTRODUCTION

As part of our policy on inclusion, we are committed at Thomas A Becket Infant School to giving all children every opportunity to achieve their full potential.

A number of our children have particular requirements with regard to learning and assessment, and these are linked to their progress in learning English as an additional language.

Children who are learning English as an additional language have linguistic skills similar to those of monolingual English-speaking children. Their ability to participate in the full curriculum may well be in advance of their current ability to communicate in English.

Being a speaker of more than one language is no disadvantage to educational achievement; indeed, multilingualism is associated with success. We recognise the importance of community languages in their own right, and the ability of their speakers to acquire other languages.

### THE CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

Thomas A' Becket Infant School is situated in Tarring, on the outskirts of Worthing. There are 540 pupils aged 4 to 7 years, in three year groups: Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. The housing in the area is mixed and the profile of the school has changed considerably over the past 5 or more years. The children come from a variety of backgrounds and parents are very supportive of the school. Close contact with parents is maintained, with many helping in classes. Parents are encouraged to voice any concerns about their children's welfare and learning.

The majority of pupils at the school have English as their first language. Amongst the families, there is knowledge of several different European, African and Asian languages spoken and/or understood. We currently have 29 different languages including English spoken amongst our families.

### DEFINITIONS

In this policy, the term 'English as an Additional language' (EAL) is used for pupils who are in the process of learning English in addition to their first language and are adding to their existing linguistic skills. The term 'bilingual' is used for those pupils who are equally proficient in two or more languages, including English.

The process of learning English as an additional language is a gradual one. For a learner of EAL it can take two years to develop competence in English at a social level and from five to seven years for full academic competence in speaking, listening, reading and writing. The stages of language acquisition begin with the development of oracy skills (listening and speaking) and progress to the development of literacy skills (reading and writing).

## **AIMS**

We aim to ensure that all EAL pupils are able to:

- use English confidently and competently;
- use English as a means of learning across the curriculum;
- where appropriate, make use of their knowledge of other languages.

We will do this by following the key principles and strategies for children with EAL set out below.

## **KEY PRINCIPLES FOR EAL**

- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum.
- Effective use of language is crucial to the teaching and learning of every subject.
- The language demands of specific tasks need to be identified and planned for, with attention both to initial access and to extension.
- The vocabulary embodied in each curriculum area needs to be understood. Such understanding cannot be assumed and should be assessed.
- Teachers have a crucial role in modelling uses of language.
- The focus and use of additional support time are best seen as an integral part of curriculum and lesson planning.
- All pupils have entitlement to the National Curriculum.
- There is a clear distinction between EAL and Special Educational Needs.
- Language is central to our identity. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of the importance of pupils' home languages and to build on their existing language knowledge and skills.
- Many concepts and skills depend on and benefit from well-developed home language; proficiency in home languages enhances subsequent acquisition of EAL.
- All languages, dialects, accents and cultures are equally valued.

## **STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING PUPILS WITH EAL**

### **General Strategies**

In order to support EAL pupils we:

- develop new language through familiar contexts and new concepts through familiar language;
- bear in mind that pupils may not wish to use their new language at first and should be given time to gain confidence;
- encourage pupils to use their first language in class and around the school;
- show recognition of use of more than one language and promote a positive school and classroom environment; celebrate cultural diversity, make pupils aware that their home languages(s) and culture have a place in the school;
- ensure that the school environment reflects the fact that we live in a multicultural, multilingual society;
- avoid tokenism by ensuring that the whole curriculum reflects multiculturalism and multilingualism.

### **Specific Strategies**

Teachers may provide some or all of the following:

- collaborative group work;
- enhanced opportunities for speaking and listening;
- role play;
- modelling of effective language use;
- additional verbal support:
  - repetition, alternative phrasing, peer support;

- additional visual support:
  - posters, objects, non-verbal clues, pictures, demonstration, use of gesture, word banks, writing frames,
- other general classroom strategies
  - pictorial, visual timetables/instructions/labels;
  - discussion before and during activities;

## **ASSESSMENT**

The assessment of pupils with EAL should follow the same principles of effective assessment of all pupils. It should:

- recognise what pupils can do and reward achievement;
- be based on different kinds of evidence;
- be a valid reflection of what has been taught or covered in class;
- be reliable in terms of enabling someone else to repeat the assessment and obtain comparable results;
- be manageable, both in terms of the time needed to complete the task and in providing results which can be reported or passed on to other teachers.

In addition, teachers assessing pupils learning should:

- be clear about the purpose of the assessment, distinguishing summative, formative and diagnostic aims;
- be sensitive to the pupil's first or main other language(s) and culture;
- take account of how long the pupil has been learning English;
- assess in ways that are appropriate for the pupil's age;
- focus on language, while being aware of the influence of behaviour, attitude and cultural expectations;
- recognise that pupils may be at different levels of attainment in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

In assessing the progress of pupils with EAL, teachers should avoid penalising subject knowledge because of lack of competence in English. Where possible, opportunities are given to children to show their knowledge in ways that are not dependent on reading and writing.

Assessment can be made using evidence from other curriculum areas, where the child in question might be more willing to speak or write. An EAL child may be assessed as being gifted or talented and will need to be given appropriate extension activities. Where appropriate the (EMAT) team will be contacted to support the assessment process and parent liaison.

Use of the NASSEA document including the assessment tools and strategies within the document are available to support assessment.

Assessment of a child's understanding of English will be completed during their first year at the school and the information shared with class teachers.

Where an assessment of a child's English suggests that they might have an underlying difficulty with language, it is important to cross-check with the advisory teachers through EMAT, and then if necessary with the school's SENDCO/Inclusion Manager to look at appropriate interventions.

Examples of pupils' attainments in English may take the form of:

- recordings of children's talk as evidence of language acquisition;
- notes on observations of children's progress in listening;
- notes on children's reading;
- examples of children's writing.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Thomas A' Becket Infant School will create and maintain an environment where the multicultural and multilingual nature of society is valued and represented in teaching and learning and where knowledge of more than one language is recognised as a strength and an achievement.

### **EAL and INCLUSION**

In our school, we value each child as a unique individual. We strive to meet the needs of all our children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to inclusion.

We will arrange to meet all new parents upon entry to Thomas A Becket Infant School in order to consider preferences and cultural/religious perspectives. We will share information confidentially with the class teacher in order to ensure that we can meet individual needs in the best way possible.

All children in our school follow the requirements of the National Curriculum.

We provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. Children are supported in small groups and through whole class teaching.

Support including the use of interpreters can be made available to parents when required to ensure that our communication with all parents is effective.

### **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- there is regular and effective liaison between everyone involved in teaching EAL learners;
- information on all pupils' performance in national curriculum tasks and tests is collected, tracked and acted upon.

### **The Governors**

The governing body, working with the Headteacher, will ensure that:

- parents/carers of EAL learners are fully informed about school life;
- the school has in place an EAL policy which is understood by all staff;
- there is consideration of issues relating to special educational needs, including those pupils who are also EAL learners;
- challenging targets for pupils learning EAL are set and met;
- training in planning, teaching and assessing EAL learners is available to all staff.

### **The SENDCo/Inclusion Manager**

The SENDCo/Inclusion Manager will be responsible for:

- identifying resourcing needs and ensuring that books, software and equipment ordered include the provision of appropriate support for EAL pupils;
- identifying, revising and monitoring the languages represented in the school;
- identifying the need for staff development
- giving advice and support to teachers;
- liaising with EMAT for further guidance.

### **Class Teachers**

Class teachers will:

- be knowledgeable about pupils' abilities and their needs in English and other subjects;
- use this knowledge effectively in curriculum planning, classroom teaching and pupil grouping;

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Gifted and Talented Pupils (G&T)**

Thomas A Becket Infant School recognises that most EAL pupils do not have SEND. However, should SEND be identified during assessment, EAL pupils will have equal access to school SEND provision. Similarly, the school recognises that there may be EAL pupils who are gifted or talented even though they may not be fully fluent in English.

### **Sources**

*Developing a Whole School EAL Policy*, Ethnic Minorities Advisory Service, Essex  
*Raising the Achievement of Ethnic Minority Pupils*, Ethnic Minorities Advisory Team, West Sussex  
*A Language in Common: Assessing English as an additional language*, QCA

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Signed by</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Full Governing Body</b>	<b>Chair – Andrew Markwell</b>	<b>18 Sept 2023</b>

<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Spring 2025</b>
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