



# **St Laurence Catholic Primary School**

## **Policy for English as an Additional Language**

**(EAL)**

*Through God's grace, a community growing in knowledge and understanding*

## **Introduction**

All pupils need to feel safe, accepted and valued in order to learn. For pupils who are learning English as an additional language, this includes recognising and valuing their home language and background. As a school, we are aware that bilingualism is a strength and that EAL pupils have a valuable contribution to make. We take a whole school approach to promoting language awareness. Our shared Catholic faith is a common ground for pupils from other countries who have different cultures and languages.

## **Aims of this Policy**

- To ensure that we meet the full range of needs of those children who are learning English as an additional language.
- To welcome and value the cultural, linguistic and educational experiences that pupils with EAL bring to the School
- 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 academic potential.
- To encourage and enable parental support in ensuring EAL children have high levels of attainment
- To assess the skills and needs of pupils with EAL and to give appropriate provision throughout the School (with the support of Cambridgeshire Race, Equality & Diversity Service (CREDS) and other external agencies)
- To monitor pupils' progress systematically and use the data in decisions about classroom management and curriculum planning to raise EAL pupils' achievement.
- To maintain pupils' self-esteem and confidence by acknowledging and giving status to their skills in their own languages.

## **Context of school**

At St Laurence Catholic Primary School the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average and increasing. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also above average and increasing. Many languages are spoken by children at St Laurence.

Cambridgeshire Race, Equality & Diversity Service (CREDS) provide support for children new to English, from adults speaking the child's first language. St Laurence staff use this support in a number of ways, e.g. to provide key vocabulary translation, to support communication with peers/ encourage social interaction, to develop basic reading and writing skills and to boost the child's self esteem and confidence in the school environment by celebrating their strengths in their own language.

## **Key Principles of additional language acquisition**

- EAL pupils are entitled to the full National Curriculum programmes of study and their teachers have a responsibility for teaching English as well as other subject content.
- Access to learning requires attention to words and meanings in each curriculum area, meanings and understanding cannot be assumed but must be made explicit.
- Language is central to our identity. Therefore, the home languages of all pupils and staff are recognised and valued. Pupils are encouraged to maintain their home language and to use

- it, in the school environment, wherever possible.
- Knowledge and skills developed in learning the first language aid the acquisition of additional languages. Although many pupils acquire the ability to communicate, on a day to day basis, in English quite quickly, the level of language needed for academic study is much more complex, and can require continuing support for many years.
  - Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum. The language demands of learning tasks need to be identified and included in planning. Teaching and support staff play a crucial role in modelling uses of language. At St Laurence we are fortunate to have a number of bilingual staff, who are available to support our children.

### **Assessment, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The school registration form identifies pupils for whom English is their second language.

Information is gathered about:

- pupils' linguistic background and competence in other language/s (e.g. have any Speech and Language concerns been raised in the first language)
- pupils' previous educational experience (e.g. if they have attended another English speaking school or not)
- pupils' family and biographical background (including refugee/asylum seeker status)  
The information received is sometimes not accurate e.g. some parents write English as their first language and it is later discovered that other languages predominate at home.
- Within the first few weeks all children new to the school are assessed in aspects of English and Maths to provide a baseline assessment for our school target tracker.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Our first priority is to help children acquire sufficient language for basic communication.

- Classrooms are socially and academically inclusive, valuing cultural differences and fostering a range of individual identities
- Class teachers and support staff take every opportunity to boost the child's self-esteem.
- Staff identify the pupil's strengths and encourage them to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another
- Staff recognise that pupils with English as an additional language will need more time to process and answer both orally and in written format. Consideration and sensitivity is given to the appropriateness of the methods of testing EAL pupils at the earlier stages of English acquisition.
- Staff provide and target appropriate reading materials that highlight different ways in which English may be used.
- Staff allow pupils to use their mother tongue to explore concepts
- Staff give newly arrived young children time to absorb English (there is a recognised 'silent period' when children understand more English than they use –this will pass if their self-confidence is maintained)
- Children are grouped to ensure that EAL pupils hear good models of English
- Staff ensure that vocabulary work covers the technical as well as the everyday meaning of key words.
- Staff explain how speaking and writing in English are structured for different purposes across a range of subjects
- When planning the curriculum, staff take account of the linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds of families.

- Staff ensure that there are effective opportunities for talking, and that talking is used to support writing and use is made of drama techniques and role-play.
- Additional visual support is provided, e.g. posters, pictures, photographs, objects, demonstration, and use of gesture and scaffolding is provided for language and learning, e.g. talk frames, writing frames.
- Additional verbal support is provided, e.g. repetition, modelling, peer support.

**Headteacher ensures that:**

- Parents and staff are aware of the school's policy on pupils with EAL
- There is a member of staff with responsibility for EAL
- Relevant information on pupils with EAL reaches all staff
- Training in planning, teaching and assessing of EAL learners is available to staff
- The effectiveness of the teaching of pupils with EAL is monitored and assessed regularly

**Inclusion Manager with responsibility for EAL:**

- Oversees initial assessment of pupils' standard of English as necessary
- Liaises with previous schools if possible to establish prior attainment and progress.
- Gives guidance and support to other staff to set targets and plan appropriate work
- Monitors standards of teaching and learning of pupils with EAL (alongside the Deputy with responsibility for T&L)
- Liaises with CREDS teachers and additional adults to support those newly arrived in the English education system.
- Reports to the Headteacher and Governing Body on the effectiveness of the above and the progress of EAL pupils
- Monitors progress and identifies learning difficulties that may be masked by EAL, taking action to refer to the appropriate specialists and external agencies if necessary.

**Class Teacher:**

- Ensures those teaching strategies listed earlier in the policy are in place as a part of effective Quality First Teaching.
- Needs to be knowledgeable about pupils' abilities and needs in English and other subjects and to use this knowledge effectively in curriculum planning, classroom teaching, use of resources and pupil grouping.
- Liaises with the Inclusion Manager with responsibility for EAL and the Headteacher to raise any concerns and to celebrate the successes of those learning English as an Additional Language.

**Special Educational Needs and Able, Gifted and Talented Pupils**

At St Laurence a clear distinction is made between EAL and Special Educational Needs. Most EAL pupils needing additional support do not have SEN.

Staff are however aware that SEN may have already been identified in a child from an early age and if this is the case then learning English as an additional language may present an even greater challenge for this child.

Should SEN be identified, EAL pupils have equal access to school's SEN provision. If EAL pupils are identified as Able, Gifted or Talented, they have equal access to school's provision.

## **Parental/Community Involvement**

Staff strive to encourage parental and community involvement by:

- providing a welcoming induction process for newly arrived pupils and their families/carers, including a welcome to St Laurence booklet containing key information about the school and the child's class.
- using plain English and interpreters, or translated correspondence where appropriate and available, to ensure good spoken and written communications.
- identifying linguistic, cultural and religious background of pupils and establishing contact with the wider community where possible.
- celebrating and acknowledging the achievements of EAL pupils in the wider community, recognising and encouraging the use of first language.
- helping parents understand how they can support their children at home, especially by continuing the development of their first language.

Written by the Inclusion Manager with responsibility for EAL:  
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Ratified by the Governing Body:  
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