

EAL POLICY (Children learning English as an Additional Language)

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Date of Next Review:	15 October 2024
Person(s) Responsible for Review:	EAL Co-ordinator and Head

Definitions of EAL

Ofsted defines a child who is learning EAL as a 'learner whose first language is not English'. The Government definition of EAL learners is wider and states that: 'A pupil is recorded to have English as an Additional Language if she/he is exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English.'

EAL learners are an extremely varied group. They may speak a language other than English at home (a first or home language) or have varying degrees of exposure to another language either at home or in their community. This being the case, EAL learners may join the school entirely new to English, or they may already speak English and be in the process of learning academic language. Other children may speak English to a similar level to that of a native English speaker. Children learning EAL therefore have varying needs for language support and this is recognised by the school.

Aims

At The Manor, we believe that all children should have access to inclusive, good quality education, irrespective of their knowledge or acquisition of English. We welcome pupils learning EAL to the school and value the cultural and linguistic diversity that all our pupils bring to school life.

The school recognises multilingualism as an advantage for pupils and an integral part of a child's identity. We encourage multilingual children to continue to develop their home language(s) as well as extending English language skills.

The school acknowledges that EAL learners may have distinct English language needs whether at beginner or advanced level. We therefore commit to support multilingual pupils, to enable them to access the full curriculum alongside their peers. We aim to develop our EAL learners' English language skills through a variety of strategies and in a number of settings, where possible building on their prior knowledge and linguistic competencies. Overall, our EAL support endeavours to ensure all pupils are challenged and cherished so that they achieve their full potential.

Key Principles for Second Language Acquisition in schools

Language-focused curriculum/ Whole-school approach to EAL

Learners of EAL make the best progress within a whole-school context where pupils are taught alongside their peers in mainstream classes. At The Manor, pupils benefit from a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum and our teachers support all children in extending their English language skills. Language development is a key focus across the school; vocabulary development and grammatical awareness are not limited to English lessons but are developed across the curriculum.

Connecting in-school and out of school learning

In delivering the curriculum, teachers seek to make links to prior knowledge to support learning. For EAL learners, it is beneficial for teachers to have an understanding of pupils' home language use, cultural and linguistic heritage and educational background in order to draw this into lessons. Pupils are encouraged to share learning and knowledge from home and from trips to home countries and the school welcomes the help of parents to make this possible, particularly for younger children.

Continued home language development

Multilingual pupils are encouraged to maintain their home language alongside their additional language skills. Continuing to develop a first language whilst adding another can convey intellectual advantages, and knowledge, concepts, understanding and skills can be transferred between languages. Furthermore, home languages may be vital in maintaining links with extended family and community. Some children may attend complementary schools to help support their home language development and it is helpful if parents are able to share their child's out of school learning with the class teacher, to ensure a fully rounded picture of their child's progress.

Development of English language skills

EAL learners face the challenge of learning English and accessing the curriculum through English to achieve academically. The school recognises that a child may be conversationally proficient in English, but may still be developing their academic language, which can take many years. Furthermore, multilingual children's conceptual knowledge may be more advanced than their English language skills can convey. With this in mind, teachers seek to assess EAL learners' language and learning progress fairly. Additional support is offered as a result of a range of assessments and in consultation with teachers and parents.

Parental involvement

Close collaboration and communication between teachers and parents ensures a fully rounded picture of an EAL learner's language and academic progress and provides a partnership to develop English language skills and learning. The Manor seeks to assist multilingual parents in supporting their children's learning at home. Formal feedback is provided at Parents' Evenings, but appointments can also be made with teachers to discuss language and learning questions and concerns.

Understanding that teaching methods and school systems can vary greatly from country to country, teachers are also available to offer advice and help to parents in supporting children in their homework.

Our Approach to Supporting EAL Learners in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

New Arrivals

When children join the EYFS their parents are asked to complete an 'All About Me' in which they are asked details of their child's language use at home and within their wider family and community. This forms the start of their Learning Journey. Where needed, the school aims to provide EAL learners who are new to English with support in their mother tongue to help them settle successfully. As the relationships with the staff develop and they appear more confident, this provision is gradually reduced.

Monitoring, observation and consultation

In Pre-Nursery, Nursery and Reception, learning through play and interaction enables multilingual children to develop their English language skills in a relaxed environment. Children have sufficient opportunities to reach a good standard of English language during the Early Years to ensure that they are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they join Year 1.

Staff observe the children in their play and learning, support and extend children as appropriate and monitor the development of their English language skills. Observations and progress are recorded on Target Tracker.

Any concerns about the progress of EAL learners are raised and discussed, and in consultation with the EAL Co-ordinator, new strategies and interventions are put in place. Where necessary, additional EAL support is offered within the classroom setting, or in small groups, recognising the importance of play and peer learning.

If a child does not have a strong grasp of English, The Manor, alongside parents, explores the child's skills and understanding in their home language and teachers may carry out an assessment to establish if there is a cause for concern about language delay.

Home Language Development

The Manor also seeks to support pupils and families in developing their languages at home and where possible, opportunities are provided to use home languages in play and learning at school.

Our Approach to Supporting EAL Learners Y1-Y6

New Arrivals

Wherever possible prospective pupils are invited to visit the school and to have a short time in class with potential peers. Where this is not possible, a remote meeting will be set up with the child in question, an accompanying adult and a member of the Manor staff. In order to help new children settle into the school quickly and confidently when they arrive, children are assessed in numeracy, literacy, language, social interaction and communication skills. Additional information on home language use and linguistic heritage will also be requested from multilingual families. Children who are new to English are assessed in their home language, where possible. During the first few weeks, further assessment takes place in order to establish whether additional EAL support would be helpful. The EAL Co-ordinator will discuss additional support with the parents and the class teacher.

Should additional language support be thought to be beneficial to any multilingual child joining the school, this is discussed with parents, where possible, prior to admission.

Monitoring, observation and assessment

The school's Multilingual Register records all multilingual pupils and their language background. The EAL Co-ordinator monitors the language progression of EAL learners through close links with class and subject teachers. Provision of additional EAL support is based not only on formal summative assessment, but also on teachers' ongoing formative assessment, lesson observation, parent discussions and in consultation with the EAL Co-ordinator.

Assessing language progression

If additional language support is thought to be beneficial in helping a pupil more fully access the curriculum or extend their language development, a language assessment will be carried out by the EAL Co-ordinator using the Bell Foundation's EAL Assessment Framework (see Key Resources) which indicates proficiency levels A-E in English:

- A – New to English
- B – Early Acquisition/Emerging
- C – Developing Competence/ Expanding
- D – Competent/ Diversifying
- E – Fluent

An EAL Learning Profile is subsequently produced, in which the key skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing in English are assessed and attributed a level A-E. From this, continuous assessment descriptors for each of these four key skills are identified and circulated to teachers to inform lesson planning.

This cross-curricular approach helps teachers to observe, document and accelerate the ways pupils use English as a tool for learning in school, then continue to develop their use of English through all subject areas. Teaching strategies pertinent to the EAL learner's level are also used by teachers (see Possible EAL Teaching Strategies for examples). The EAL Co-ordinator uses the descriptors as targets for in-class support and in planning for individual lessons.

EAL Learning Profiles are revised regularly to ensure targets accurately reflect the learner's current level. These revisions are carried out in consultation with the relevant teachers.

Tailored language support

Levels A-B (New to English/ Early Acquisition/Emerging)

If a child is assessed as level A-B in Years 1-6, a combination of one-to-one lessons and in-class support is recommended in order to ensure the child can access the curriculum. Group language support may also be offered. Where possible, this level of support will be agreed prior to admission. In-class support focuses on enabling the pupil to understand and participate in lessons. One-to-one lessons focus on basic English language development and pre-teaching key language content to assist the learner in accessing subject material.

Levels C-D (Developing Competence/ Competent)

If a child is assessed as level C-D in Years 1 to 6, they will be offered the opportunity of one-to-one lessons, in-class support or group language support, in discussion with teachers and parents. In-class support focuses on extending language and developing literacy. One-to-one lessons focus on English language and literacy development, pre-teaching and consolidating key language content to enable children to contribute more fully to lessons.

Levels D-E (Diversifying/ Fluent)

More advanced bilinguals are carefully monitored and may also be offered in-class support, one-to-one or group language support. Language support at this level focuses on vocabulary extension, grammar, reading comprehension skills, written English and study skills. Often support is short-term, offering a boost or attention to a specific area of difficulty.

In all cases, parents are frequently updated on their child's progress and next steps.

Possible EAL Strategies Across the School

In class:

- considering the language demands and the language opportunities of activities to ensure EAL children can access content and contribute to lessons

- placing EAL children with strong language peer models
- using speaking and listening to develop language - Talk Partners, pair and group work to build ideas, collaborative learning (whilst appreciating that those new to English may go through an extended 'silent period', where listening skills are more developed than speaking)
- scaffolding/supporting learning with writing frames, visual aids (including visual timetables), word banks to ensure work is accessible and cognitive challenge remains high
- building the field of knowledge through different media

Out of class support provided by the EAL teacher:

- pre-teaching vocabulary and concepts before lessons
- reviewing lessons to help build comprehension and consolidate learning
- building conversational English skills (individually or in group pods)
- providing homework support
- supporting study skills: reading comprehension, written English
- building higher order academic language
- working in partnership with class and subject teachers throughout the school to support language development of EAL pupils.

Support for home languages:

- 'survival words' in home languages and translators for new arrivals
- language clubs for home languages hosted by The Manor
- visits from parents and native speakers to share stories, songs and literature in home languages
- using home languages in displays (notices, posters, instructions, labels etc)
- where possible, the opportunity to discuss or form ideas in class in home language with a child or adult who shares that language
- pupils may be encouraged to take notes/write first drafts of work in their home language
- bilingual teaching assistant support
- using and writing dual language texts
- using a bilingual dictionary/ accessing online dictionaries using chromebooks in class
- teaching home language words and phrases to a peer or teacher
- acting as an interpreter or buddy to a newly arrived child
- The Languages Corner in the School Library contains dual-language books as well as books in home languages
- bilingual word banks

EAL resources

The EAL Co-ordinator teaches individual EAL lessons which are curriculum linked or focused on an identified area of difficulty to support a child's in-class learning. In-class support, group support and homework support is also offered by the EAL

Co-ordinator. Details of costs for additional language support can be obtained on request.

The EAL Co-ordinator is also available to discuss home language development, English language development and any language concerns or questions with parents.

The EAL Department is equipped with language resources, books and games to make language development fun and interesting for pupils.

Learning Support and Language Support

The Manor recognises that language needs and learning needs are distinct. Bilingual children may be offered language support to extend and develop their language competence. They also have access to Learning Support, where needed and/or may be identified as Gifted/ Talented.

EAL Reporting Lines

The EAL Co-ordinator reports directly to the Head of Learning Support and works across all school year groups. The Senior Leadership Team takes an active role in supporting the school's EAL provision. EAL is recognised as a distinct department within the school and contributes to the School Development Plan.

Key Resources

Department for Education (2021) Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage: setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five.

Department for Education and Skills (2007) Excellence and enjoyment: learning and teaching for bilingual children in the primary years.

Department for Education and Skills (2005) Aiming High: Meeting the needs of newly arrived learners of English as an additional language.

Ofsted Guidance for EAL: Inspecting English as an additional language

Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Early Years Development and Partnership, SureStart (2009) Identifying Children Who are Learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) and who may also have Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities.

The Bell Foundation (2017) EAL Assessment Framework.