



## English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

<b>Status and Review Cycle:</b>	Statutory / Annual
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<b>Governor Lead:</b>	Derry Wiltshire
<b>Policy Holder:</b>	Esther Ford

## English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

*'For humans, language, thinking and learning go hand in hand.'*

T Lucas, 2011

### Introduction / Mission statement

Sevenoaks Preparatory School (The Prep) is an independent preparatory school on the outskirts of Sevenoaks, Kent with approximately 400 pupils between 2 and 13 years of age. Our families are varied, and represent the local, national and international communities. We have and have had families with more than 25 languages spoken between them. Currently, around 20% of pupils at The Prep are learners with EAL.

The Prep is committed to providing an education to all pupils which acknowledges and is enriched by the diversity of ethnicity, culture and religious backgrounds of those pupils and their families. We believe that the curriculum should aim to reflect this diversity and that successful education is achieved by sharing the experiences and cultural backgrounds of all pupils. It is important to recognise pupils with more than one language in their lives and to encourage them and their families, where possible, to express themselves in these languages. Learning any language is a lifelong process and is greatly enhanced by the opportunity to hear and use each language at the appropriate developmental level. We also recognise that it is important to distinguish between social and academic language, and we are keen to encourage children to become fluent in both.

We aim to support families in maintaining the non-English language at home with their (extended) families, as this serves to preserve the cultural identity of the child and it offers the child the best start to being a global citizen.

Equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, is supported by Quality First Teaching in the classroom. Quality First Teaching involves good planning of well-sequenced and manageable lessons coupled with effective pedagogical choices and effective and robust assessment for learning. Lessons are clearly structured and learning objectives are made clear to the pupils. Teachers employ interactive and multi-sensory teaching methods and ensure that time is spent in collaborative group work. Teachers promote active and independent learning enabling pupils to think for themselves and to begin to have some level of autonomy within their learning. They differentiate their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with EAL, Higher Learning Potential (HLP) and SEN. This policy is a whole school policy and applies to all children in Sevenoaks Prep School, including the Pre-Prep and EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage).

Where necessary, direct language support from the EAL Co-ordinator is provided for those pupils who may benefit. Additionally, the EAL coordinator offers ongoing support and guidance to staff. The Prep is keen that parents, teachers and pupils work together collaboratively to ensure that children are fully supported in their acquisition of all languages in their lives.

The Prep follows guidance from the Department for Education when determining whether a child's experience can be described as EAL:

- A child is deemed to have EAL if her or his first language is any language other than English. If a child was exposed to more than one language (which may include English) during early

development (first year of life), a language other than English will be recorded as first language, **irrespective** of the child's proficiency in English.

This definition therefore covers the following:

- Pupils arriving from other countries and whose first language is not English
- Pupils who have lived in the UK for a long time and, in many cases, are fluent speakers of English, but who also speak another language at home. These pupils may or may not be entirely fluent in terms of their literacy levels.
- Pupils who have been born in the UK, but for whom the home language is not English (e.g. Bengali children who are born in the UK, but arrive at school with very little English due to having spoken only Bengali at home and within the community)
- Pupils who have a parent who speaks a language other than English and the child communicates with him/her in that language (i.e. bi-lingual children)
- Children who have British citizenship can still be EAL. If one or both of parents is a speaker of another language, the child is very likely to be EAL. It is for this reason that it is our aim to collect accurate and robust data collection on admission, and offer families the opportunity each year to update this information.

Our intention is to encourage our pupils with EAL to develop and maintain all the languages in their lives at a level appropriate for their age, wherever possible. Whilst English is the dominant language used for teaching and learning at The Prep, we are keen to include opportunities for our multi-lingual pupils to use, share and/or improve acquisition of all their languages. We are very supportive of families who offer their children the opportunity to learn their other language(s) outside school, as we recognise that it is important to support our families and their children to maintain their family and community links.

### **Planning, monitoring and evaluation of pupils with EAL**

All children with EAL are identified on entry and their language development is closely monitored. An annual EAL list is produced and shared with all teaching staff. Parents are also given the opportunity to regularly update the language information regarding their child(ren).

All pupils on the EAL list are assessed twice a year, using the Bell Foundation DfE Proficiency Scale (A to E) for EAL learners. A sample of pupils will also be assessed through the more detailed NASSEA EAL Assessment Framework. The results of these assessments will inform future learning/teaching targets as part of 'Quality First' teaching, by using the descriptors set out in the assessment document.

Pupils will learn alongside their peers in the classroom, thus providing an integrated language, content and cultural environment, aimed at motivating and meeting the distinctive needs of EAL learners. It may still also be necessary to withdraw pupils from the mainstream class to work on specific targets that will be linked to class or subject work.

EAL pupils' test results are compared as a cohort, with the cohort as a whole, as part of formal feedback on test results and targets are set for progress. Target-setting, curricular and linguistic, is to be implemented by the class or English subject teachers, with support from the EAL coordinator.

The EAL coordinator is responsible for supporting and monitoring curriculum planning and Schemes of Work with regard to provision for EAL pupils.

## **EAL teaching and learning**

The Prep EYFS Department recognises that in the Early Years conceptual and linguistic knowledge is acquired simultaneously and staff modify their interactions to encourage language development, both in English and in their home language.

Children of all ages, including EYFS, are encouraged to learn to read and write and speak in their own languages as well as mastering English. The timing of learning to read and write in English will need to take into account their learning journey in their home language.

Expectations of EAL pupils are high and The Prep fosters an understanding and philosophy that children with EAL have a strength in their lives which they are encouraged to build on, rather than a difficulty. All teachers involved with EAL pupils' learning are involved in the planning, monitoring and reviewing of EAL pupils' needs and achievements. The EAL coordinator has responsibility for coordinating the needs of the pupils and is responsible for evaluating the school policy for pupils with English as an Additional Language.

It is recognised that each pupil with EAL will have their own specific profile of language needs which is determined through observation, informal assessment and formal assessment (Renfrew Action Picture Test for pupils up to 7 years), and supported with targeted intervention where necessary. Examples of these **additional** interventions are:

- Phonics for younger pupils or pupils (nearly) new to English
- Comprehension/writing support through exposure to challenging language and writing structure/key phrases/graphic organisers for older pupils.

## **EAL, Higher Learning Potential (HLP) and Special Educational Needs (SEND)**

At The Prep, a child is not regarded as having a learning difficulty simply because the language or form of language of the home/extended community is different from the language in which she or he is taught at school. The EAL coordinator is available to offer assessment or advice, should there be concerns about a child's language development, and support by the EAL coordinator and/or the Learning Support department are available at any stage of a child's time at The Prep.

Where required, the EAL coordinator and the HLP coordinator will liaise and offer guidance for EAL pupils who are also HLP.

The EAL coordinator fosters a whole-school approach of high expectations of children with EAL.

## **Assessment and record keeping**

At all levels/ages of the pupils' time at The Prep, EAL pupils are identified as such, as per the DfE guidance. First language assessment rarely takes place formally. Information on this is gathered from parents. English language proficiency information is collected through teacher assessment as well as formal testing, although The Prep EAL coordinator is aware that English standardised tests are not necessarily appropriate to determine the attainment of an EAL pupils. Initial assessment will not be rushed.

## **Resources**

The Prep employs a dedicated EAL coordinator for 1.5 days a week. The EAL coordinator's responsibilities include (but are not limited to) supporting EAL pupils through supporting the staff and their families; offering 1:1 support, being available for consultation by staff. Staff support is in the form of offering CPD, offering feedback on further training, sourcing visuals, dual language materials (including dictionaries). At this stage, pupil peer support is offered informally.

**Parents/carers and the wider community**

The Prep reaches out to parents of EAL children and seeks to forge strong bonds with EAL families in order to encourage and reassure parents that The Prep supports their home language(s).

Community events are organised with specific focus on multilingual families, e.g. themed days (A Taste of Languages at The Prep, International Day), outreach to EAL parents (Multilingual Families' Coffee Morning) and other activities where a multilingual response is encouraged. Additionally, the EAL coordinator is available for conversation with and guidance/encouragement to multilingual parents.

**Staff development**

The EAL coordinator, supported by the SMT, has the responsibility to offer regular guidance/training to staff, through Twilight/Staff Briefing meetings and feedback from training/webinars/conferences attended.