



# Southfields Primary School

## English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

**Date agreed: September 2022**

**Review Date: September 2024**

This policy, having been presented to, and agreed upon by the whole staff and Governors, will be distributed to:

- All teaching staff
- School governors

A copy of the policy will also be available in:

- The Staffroom
- The Head's office
- School web site

This will ensure that the policy is readily available to visiting teachers, support staff and parents.

Southfields Primary is totally committed to social justice and improving life chances for potentially vulnerable children. It is dedicated to sharing its work and findings beyond the school to improve outcomes for as many children as it can reach and has a particular specialism in Speech and Language development.

**Teaching at Southfields Primary School is ‘Learning Centred’, meaning that each element of whole school and classroom practice is designed with an understanding of how children learn best at its heart.**

**At Southfields Primary School we believe children learn best when:**

1. Learning activities are well planned, ensuring progress in the short, medium and long term
2. Teaching and learning activities enthuse, engage and motivate children to learn, and foster their curiosity and enthusiasm for learning
3. Assessment informs teaching so that there is provision for support, overlearning as well child-initiated extensions to apply learning for each child, at various levels.
4. The learning environment is ordered, the atmosphere is purposeful and children feel safe
5. There are strong links between home and school, and the importance of parental involvement in their children’s learning is recognised, valued and developed

Children learn best when learning activities are well planned, ensuring progress in the short, medium and long term. This is interwoven with our EAL practises, ensuring planning meets their needs and ability.

### **Aims of Policy**

This policy aims to raise awareness of the school’s obligations and to support the planning, organisation, teaching and assessment procedures, and the use of resources and strategies to meet the needs of pupils who have EAL and so to raise pupil achievement. **“Learning another language is not only learning different words for the same things, but learning another way to think about things.” – Flora Lewis. We believe that language is at the heart of what we do, and we want to make learning and the amazing opportunities we have at Southfields Primary School accessible to all.**

### **Introduction/Mission statement**

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 recognise that the potential among EAL learners for bilingualism is particularly important, as it increases mental ability such as problem-solving, creativity, and memorisation. Bilingualism gives EAL learners a fantastic advantage when looking for a job later on, too. Teachers therefore consider the role of learners’ first language and be aware that the acquisition of a new language goes hand-in-hand with cognitive and academic development We take a whole school approach, including ethos, curriculum, education against racism and promoting language awareness.

We were very proud to have been given the EAL Bronze Quality Mark in recognition of our hard work towards supporting the needs of children with English as an additional language and have continued to build on this good practice.

## 1. Who are our EAL pupils?

Pupils who are learning English as an additional language (EAL) are those who, during their early development, had exposure to a language other than English. Equally they might have been exposed to more than one language (one of which might have been English).

Examples of EAL pupils include:

pupils arriving in the UK accessing schooling for the first time through the medium of English;

pupils new to the UK who may have learnt English as a school subject in another country;

pupils born in the UK into households where carers and/or extended family members speak a language(s) other than English.

New arrivals, that is EAL learners who have been in the UK for less than two years, may initially join in activities with other children, but not speak. As they gain experience, they begin to reproduce words and phrases of the classroom and may be willing to talk and/or write in their first language. However, not every pupil is the same and how quickly they settle in and begin to make progress in UK schools will vary according to their previous experience and the levels of literacy they have previously acquired as part of their previous schooling.

The British Council suggests there are now more than 1 million learners in UK schools with EAL. This makes up more than 15% of children and highlights to everyone how important it is that we consider the needs of these children.

### 1.1 Local context

In Peterborough, the number of children learning EAL is growing. The main languages spoken are Punjabi, Polish, Lithuanian, and Portuguese, but there are increasing numbers of speakers of Latvian, Czech and Slovak speakers. These EAL learners come from a variety of backgrounds:

- Some are from well-established communities, while others are new to the language and culture of this country.
- Some EAL learners are isolated learners and may be the only speaker of their language in their class or school, while others belong to much larger language communities.
- Some pupils have attended school and are literate in their home language on arrival whereas others may have had no previous formal education.
- They have differing levels of competence in English:
  - some pupils are new to English
  - some have developed conversational fluency, but still require support with the more academic demands of the curriculum
  - some have very well-developed skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing in English, and do not require additional support.
- Some children may have experienced trauma, which will have an impact on their learning. The countries of origin for most newly arrived pupils in

Peterborough include the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Afghanistan and Guinea Bissau. Children speaking Punjabi, Urdu, Polish, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Slovak, Latvian, Czech and Russian are in the majority not new arrivals; they include members of settled communities and most will have been born in the UK.

## **1.2 Context of school**

Currently in our school (2022-23):

- 176 pupils (30.5%) are EAL
- 45 languages are spoken, including Polish, Urdu, Latvian, Lithuanian, Tamil (Indian), Hungarian, Slovak, Albanian, Hindi, Luganda, Pahari, Romanian, Portuguese, Russian, Bengali, Wolof, German, Marathi and Telugu.
- 109 pupils (18.9%) are from minority ethnic groups

Information is gathered about:

- pupils' linguistic background and competence in other language/s
- pupils' previous educational experience
- pupils' family and biographical background

## **2. Key principles of additional language acquisition**

- EAL learners are entitled to the full National Curriculum programmes of study and all their teachers have a responsibility for teaching English as well as other subject content.
- Access to learning requires attention to words and meanings embodied 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 should be recognised and valued. Pupils should be encouraged to maintain their home language and use in the school environment wherever possible.
- 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 higher and more complex, and can require continuing support for up to ten years.
- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum.
- The language demands of learning tasks (vocabulary, structures and textual organisation) need to be identified and included in planning.
- Teaching and support staff play a crucial role in modelling uses of language.
- Knowledge and skills developed in learning the first language aid the acquisition of additional languages.
- A clear distinction should be made between EAL and Special Educational Needs.

### 3. Teaching and learning

We have a clear, school wide procedure in place to ensure teaching, learning and assessment all support the development of EAL learners.

This includes clear aims to accelerate all pupils' progress, including that of the most-able, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils who speak English as an additional language and disadvantaged pupils by:

- Improving teacher's use of assessment information to identify accurately appropriate next steps in the learning of pupils
- Further raise expectations of staff about what pupils should be achieving, most notably in mathematics and English
- Providing pupils with more opportunities to develop their writing skills for different purposes across the curriculum
- Ensuring that teaching supports pupils over time to have the confidence and skills to undertake more challenging questions and tasks independently.

This is achieved by ensuring:

- Classroom activities have clear learning objectives and use appropriate materials and support to enable pupils to participate in lessons.
- Key language features of each curriculum area, e.g. key vocabulary, structures and text types are identified.
- Enhanced opportunities are provided for speaking and listening, including both process and presentational talk, and use made of drama techniques and role play. Pupils have access to effective staff and peer models of spoken language.
- Additional visual support is provided, e.g. posters, pictures, photographs, objects, demonstration, use of gesture.
- Additional verbal support is provided, e.g. repetition, modelling, peer support.
- Use is made of collaborative activities that involve purposeful talk and encourage and support active participation.
- Where possible, learning progression moves from the concrete to the abstract.
- Discussion is provided before, during and after reading and writing activities.
- Scaffolding is provided for language and learning, e.g. talk frames, writing frames.
- Partner talk is used for oral rehearsal before writing.
- Prediction is used before reading.

### 4. Planning, monitoring and evaluation

- Targets for EAL learners are appropriate, challenging and reviewed on a regular basis.
- Planning for EAL learners incorporates both curriculum and EAL specific objectives.
- Staff regularly observe, assess and record information about pupils' developing use of language.
- Staff plan for the acquisition and development of language, using blooms questioning, blank level questions and encouraging the use of all these features across all subjects: Identifying, Naming, Listing, Describing, Classifying,

Comparing, Contrasting, Explaining, Generalising, Deducing, Predicting, Interpreting, Summarising, Analysing, Evaluating, Hypothesising, Justifying and Designing.

- When planning the curriculum, staff take account of the linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds of families.

## **5. Assessment and record-keeping**

As a school Southfields Primary follows the Bell Foundation Guidance on assessment for EAL pupils, as recommended by the Peterborough Handbook for English as an Additional Language.

- All EAL learners are entitled to assessment against the EYFS profile or National Curriculum steps and statements.
- A baseline assessment may take place a few days after settling in, in English and in the mother tongue where possible. Observations, discussions with buddies and bilingual Teaching Assistants and Teachers will also be utilised.
- EAL learners operating below their age are assessed against the Bell Foundation and other in school assessments.
- Progress in the acquisition of English is regularly assessed and monitored through observation, tracking and analysis of language samples.
- Consideration and sensitivity is given to the appropriateness of testing EAL learners at the earlier stages of English acquisition.

## **6. Basic Skills**

Basic skills are a key area of focus for all children in Southfields, particularly those with EAL. We ensure all spelling, grammar and tense mistakes are corrected at the appropriate time to ensure children have a strong grasp of the basic skills which make them a good writer.

We ensure they are fluent in Mathematics by practising in a range of ways, and supporting additional learning which may take place.

## **7. Resources**

EAL learners have access to appropriate materials such as dual language text books, dictionaries and key word lists. We recognise the value of visual support (e.g. websites, videos, maps, visual timetables, ICT and story props) and build this into our planning. While pupils are principally supported within the curriculum through quality first teaching, Pupil Premium funding is used to provide additional support, both in-class and through intervention groups.

A buddy system is in place making the most of the CARES children and the new 'World Aware' group, to provide the child with a buddy who speaks their mother tongue to

support for as long as needed. This also works for translations, tours of the school and support with work while celebrating the mother tongues and skills of other children, helping them to feel valued and needed in the school community.

## **8. Special Educational Needs and Gifted and Talented Pupils**

- Most EAL learners needing additional support do not have SEN.
- Southfields considers and understands there may be other potential barriers to an EAL child's learning and understanding at the point of entry to our school and will consider previous schooling and attitudes to school and will firstly address any issues with Inclusive Quality First Teaching.
- Further intervention will be considered if the intervention is as good as or better than the lesson which the child will be missing. Such examples may include pre-teaching of vocabulary or catch up sessions for missed schooling.
- Should SEN be identified, EAL learners have equal access to the school's SEN provision.
- If EAL learners are identified as achieving the mastery objectives, they have equal access to the school's provision.

## **9. 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.
- using plain English and translators and interpreters, where appropriate and available, to ensure good spoken and written communications.
- identifying linguistic, cultural and religious background of pupils and establishing contact with wider community where possible.
- celebrating and acknowledging the achievements of EAL learners in the wider community.
- recognising and encouraging the use of first language.
- Helping parents to build communities and support networks through school with coffee mornings in school. Parents also have the chance to speak to staff members who speak their language and consequently clarify and issues or questions they may have about school/work/expectations.
- helping parents understand how they can support their children at home, especially by continuing the development of their first language.

## **10. Social, Emotional and Mental Health**

A large part of our EAL policy and ethos is that we celebrate differences, cultures, languages and beliefs held by others, to ensure the whole child is loved and respected. Class teachers are specifically aware of every child's heritage, background and culture and works hard to incorporate that into daily planning, lessons, displays and the

learning environment around the school, celebrating not only the languages of the child but their background as well.

Southfields Primary school adheres to the GDPR Principles - data is collected with these principles in mind:

- Lawfulness, fairness and transparency
- Purpose limitation
- Data minimisation
- Accuracy
- Storage limitation
- Integrity and confidentiality
- Accountability

We follow all the key principles set out in the new General Data Protection Regulation guidance.