

Fiveways School



English as an Additional Language Policy



Policy Review

Review Cycle	Date of Current Policy	Author(s) of Current Policy	Review Date
3 Yearly	September 2024	Swavek Nowakiewicz	2027

Policy Ratification

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of Governors	Malcolm Gulliver		20.09.24
Head Teacher	Swavek Nowakiewicz		20.09.24

Details of Policy Updates

Date	Details
24.06.22	New policy
20.09.24	Policy reviewed; no changes made

English as an Additional Language Policy

Introduction

A number of our pupils and their families have English as an Additional Language (EAL). As is documented across all educational settings, the proportion of pupils and families with EAL continues to grow and the range of home languages spoken by pupils in the UK or their families is increasingly diverse. This diversity is viewed positively by all at Fiveways School as an opportunity to open up pupils, staff and families to new cultural experiences and break down social barriers. We recognise the additional support needs that may exist for pupils and families with EAL and aim to address these proactively.

Our Key Principles:

1. All pupils are entitled to equal access to the curriculum
2. Forming and maintaining strong links with parents is fundamental to our pupils learning and development
3. Learning and using more than one language is an asset and opens up a learning opportunity for our pupils and staff
4. Promoting development in a pupil's home language will have a positive impact on their development in other languages

Potential difficulties when working with pupils with EAL and autism/PMLD and SLD

1. Distinguishing English language difficulties that are consistent with typical EAL development from those that represent disordered communication development. Whether or not they have EAL, all pupils at Fiveways School experience some form of communication impairment, consistent with their diagnosis. Accurate assessment of a pupil's receptive and expressive language skills must take into account EAL status and good practice guidelines.
2. Supporting pupils with complex communication needs and EAL to understand the language of the classroom and express their wants, needs, feelings and opinions. Pupils who are EAL may have English language difficulties that impact on their ability to understand instructions, information or conversation and to express themselves clearly to English speaking or signing adults and peers. All of our pupils have PMLD/ASD or autism and related communication difficulties which may be compounded by learning EAL. Many of the methods used to develop communication skills across the whole school will support those pupils with EAL.
3. Families of children with additional needs may have come across outdated advice regarding stopping use of the home language. All staff at Fiveways School must reassure families that current guidance says families should provide the best language model by speaking the language in which they are most fluent.

4. Establishing strong links with families in spite of a language barriers. A child with PMLD/ SLD or autism is best supported when families and school work together and the school is constantly striving to maintain, develop and strengthen our links with families. When working with families with EAL, existing language barriers must be addressed in order to optimise the pupil's progress.

How we will support our EAL families and pupils

Data Gathering

As part of the entry procedure to Fiveways School, parents/carers are asked to disclose their child's ethnicity, home language, first language and religion. This enables the school to support families and the pupil to the best mean possible.

Respecting Diversity

Fiveways School places huge value on a child developing as an individual according to their religious, cultural and personal beliefs and aims to work with children and their families to support this. Fiveways School can develop understanding of awareness their own and other pupils' linguistic and social cultures through a range of events including:

- Cultural theme weeks in school.
- Culturally diverse assemblies.
- Trips to culturally related places in the community (e.g.: local temples, synagogues, mosques etc.).
- Working closely with parents of pupils to understand their perception of SEND in their culture.
- Displaying work done by pupils in theme weeks so learning about different languages and social cultures is constantly showcased in the School.
- Ensuring resources used in class activities reflect a range of ethnicity where required (e.g.: ensuring the library has a range of books in various languages).

Recruitment

The school employs staff irrespective of their home language and staff are not required to disclose their home language. All staff are interviewed prior to employment at which point it is ascertained whether their proficiency in English is suitable for the post. Some staff are using EAL and may be able to converse with a child/family in a different language if needed. They can act as positive role models for children who may be self-conscious that English is not their first language.

Translators and translation services

If required Fiveways School can access translation services.

When a pupil with EAL joins Fiveways School resources will be developed as appropriate which may include a range of leaflets in pupil/s language and utilise the schools total communication approach.

Parents/carers will also be welcomed to involve personal translators (either professionals or friends/family members) in the support of their child. Often personal translators may

accompany families to annual reviews and parent's gatherings to support the communication between parents and school.

Supporting children with PMLD/ SLD and Autism and EAL on a daily basis at Fiveways School

In terms of supporting children who are developing English as an additional language within the classroom, many of the strategies recommended by advisory bodies are similar to that of good SEND Practice. The Department of Education have produced comprehensive working documents on how best to support pupils for whom English is an additional language. The documents series of strategies to teach language meaningfully, moving from the early stages of language development through to complex linguistic concepts. The themes throughout both documents are in line with the strategies used in Fiveways School as part of the daily planning and delivery.

Examples of the recommended strategies:

- *Use gesture/visuals/object:* At Fiveways School a range of appropriate visual supports are used to enhance pupils' understanding and learning. Visual systems are in place throughout the school using both symbols and photos which do not rely on a child's understanding of a specific language.
- *Modelling social conventions:* Social skills are focused on as part of a pupils' daily experience at Fiveways School. Teachers pro-actively plan for social learning opportunities in their lesson plans and all staff capitalise on naturalistic events to make social learning ongoing and meaningful for the pupils. Social Stories are also created and used with individual pupils or groups of pupils to further develop understanding of social rules.
- *Differentiate lessons to each pupil's language capability:* Due to the wide range of cognitive and communicative needs of our pupils, all staff at Fiveways School are actively encouraged to differentiate a lesson for all pupils in their class through planning. As experienced SEND practitioners, teachers at Fiveways School are specifically skilled at using a range of multisensory learning to enable a pupil to access a lesson through other means than verbal language. This is not only good SEND practice but provides effective support for pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

For further strategies please refer to the document strategies for supporting pupils for whom English is an additional Language, "Supporting children learning EAL" (2012) by the Department of Education