OAKWOOD SCHOOL

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

Implementation Date: September 2015
Date / Term of last review: 30th September 2026

This policy applies to the whole school including those in the EYFS.

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Approval:	Clare Bradbury, Headteacher
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1. Aims and objectives

1.1. At Oakwood School, we believe that the best way to support those children or pupils who do not have English as their first language is through complete immersion in their new target language. This 'total immersion' approach to the acquisition of a new language is not only one that is recommended by many leading authorities on language acquisition, but also one that we have found works best for the age range of our children and pupils.

1.2. The aim of this policy is to ensure that we meet the full range of needs for those children for whom English is an additional language, as required by the Equality Act and SEN Code of Practice (January 2015).

1.3. Our EAL curriculum policy aims are as follows:

- To support a pupil whose mother tongue is other than English;
- To ensure that all subject staff are aware of a child's difficulties and are teaching in a sympathetic and appropriate way, taking account of different learning styles (See Teaching & Learning Policy.);
- To differentiate teaching material to accommodate their language needs through simplified instructions and supportive illustrations; and
- To encourage effective communication between school, parents, and teaching staff.

1.4. Children and pupils joining the school are monitored by all teaching staff to ensure that their ability to speak and understand English is sufficient to enable them to both access the curriculum and benefit socially from the school environment.

2. Early Years Foundation Stage

2.1. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children with English as a second language, in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice, will have their abilities in the following areas considered by their Key Person or teacher:

- Ability to use and understanding of vocabulary (speaking and listening)
- Pronunciation
- Awareness of the sounds of the alphabet

2.2. Older pupils will be monitored to ensure that their command of both written and spoken English develops appropriately for their age and experience and is not preventing either access to the curriculum or progress.

3. Channels of Communication

3.1. There are various methods of communication available to staff, pupils and their families. The SENDCo attends all parents' evenings and is available to discuss the needs of any pupil.

3.2. The Oakwood School Admissions Policy describes the admission arrangements in relation to pupils with EAL requirements.

3.3. The following methods of communication are available at Oakwood School for staff, pupils and families of children where English is an additional language.

- Weekly staff meetings.
- Direct contact between staff or staff/parents. (Such discussions with parents are electronically recorded and stored centrally on Oakwood systems.)
- School reports.
- Parents' evenings.
- Parent/Teacher meetings - by appointment.

4. Guidelines

4.1. For a learner, the immersion phase in the language learning process can initially be difficult and it is not unusual for the pupil to feel overwhelmed while learning the language. However, after a period of exposure, particularly where the child or pupil is both fully supported at school (by either their key person or teacher and teaching assistants) and at home, words, phrases, conversations and expressions rapidly begin to make sense.

4.2. One of the benefits of our strategy is that the pupil sees and feels the language in its natural environment. In short s/he sees, hears, feels and 'lives the language', seeing expressions, words and phrases in context, complete with the physical movements, facial expressions, hand motions and tone of voice.

4.3. In the total language immersion situation, the language centre of the brain comes into play to learn the patterns and structure of a language. New neural pathways are created in the brain to 'make sense' of the complexities of grammar, the structures of language and the way sentences are constructed. Through combining the learning of the target language with structured tuition, our pupils who have English as an Additional Language accelerate their learning process and swiftly secure their understanding of their new target language.

4.4. The facility exists for children with English as an additional language to have 1:1 English lessons with a specialist teacher.

5. Formal Assessment of Progress

5.1. Appropriate to age, pupils sit age-standardised tests in English, Maths, Non-Verbal & Verbal Reasoning each year. Reading ages, comprehension and spelling ages are also assessed each year. Pupils who have English as an Additional Language will be monitored carefully to assess their suitability and capability of sitting such tests. In consultation with their subject teacher and SEND coordinator, modified methods of assessment such as practical activities which may be used to demonstrate appropriate levels of knowledge and understanding. Furthermore, additional time or use of a translation dictionary to complete the tests will also be considered.

6. Staffing and Resources

6.1. It is the responsibility of our SENDCo to ensure that the needs of the children for whom English is not their first language, are met within the school, to liaise with parents and external agencies when necessary.