



HOLMEWOOD HOUSE SCHOOL

'Kindness, aspiration & self-belief'

Policy Holder	SENCO and Deputy Head
Date Approved	April 2024
Approval	SLT
Date for next review	April 2025

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE POLICY

Aims

It is the School policy that all pupils, from early years to year eight, with English as an additional language are fully integrated into the school, to ensure that they make the best possible progress.

The School has significant experience of successfully addressing the needs of children with English as an additional language.

The Learning Strategies department has responsibility for overseeing and monitoring pupils with an EAL co-ordinator.

Teachers, support staff and parents work in partnership to take the necessary steps towards making appropriate provision for the pupils in our care for whom English is an additional language.

Objectives

The general objectives of the EAL policy are as follows –

- to identify EAL pupils and ensure that their needs are met
- to promote full inclusion of children with EAL in all the activities of the school
- to ensure that all learners make the best possible progress
- to ensure parents are informed of their child's EAL provision and that there is effective communication between parents and school

- depending on the age of the pupil, to encourage learners to express their views and to be involved in the decisions which affect their education

Our multi-lingual community

Holmewood House has a number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Usually, these children are bilingual or multilingual, having regular contact with more than one language for the purpose of daily living. Their competence may be in one or all of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in any of these languages, and is likely to be at varying levels.

The EAL register lists all such pupils with information on their levels of competence in each language, brief family details and the degree of support currently given (if any). It is produced annually and updated regularly and is available in HHSDR for all staff to access.

For pupils at Holmewood, English is the main language and medium of instruction, but it is recognised that EAL pupils' first/community language will remain a crucial dimension for their social and cultural identity. The school community recognises that cultural and linguistic diversity is a rich resource for the whole school and that knowledge of additional languages is a strength. We also recognise that pupils' achievement is linked to a welcoming environment in which they feel valued, safe and confident. All pupils are encouraged to be fully involved in class and lesson activities, as this is the best way to develop fluency and accuracy in English, as well as helping pupils to increase their vocabulary and maximise their achievement. It is also recommended to parents that some English is learnt at home if possible, especially during the school holidays, so that pupils can continue to make progress.

Identification and assessment

The first point of identification is at the entry point to the school. All prospective students are invited to attend a welcome day, and complete initial assessments in the form of a CATs test. Prospective students are also invited to complete a short pastoral interview with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Where EAL needs are suspected, there is also a screening with the EAL Co-ordinator who asks some key questions informally to gain an initial understanding of need. This may be carried out online or in person.

The identification and assessment of the educational needs of children whose first language is not English requires particular care. Where there is uncertainty about an individual pupil, teachers will look carefully at all aspects of a child's performance in different subjects and if necessary, refer to the Learning Strategies department for assessment. This will indicate whether problems they may have in the classroom are due to limitations in their command of English or arise from special educational needs. Learning an additional language may present challenges to curriculum access but must not be confused with learning difficulties.

Accessibility and differentiated teaching

All teachers are required to differentiate their planning and delivery to ensure that all children gain access to a broad and balanced curriculum. It is therefore the class teacher/subject teacher's responsibility to meet the child's needs through differentiation. All teachers are responsible for building strategies into planning to support the language development of EAL pupils.

Access to learning requires attention to words and meanings embodied in each curriculum area and language develops best when used in a purposeful and relevant context. EAL learners may have abilities which they are unable to exploit because they lack fluency in the appropriate academic language. Additional visual support may be needed in the form of wall charts, objects, demonstration and gesture. Additional verbal support may include group interactive approaches such as talk partners, modelling, repetition, peer support and the opportunity to use dual language dictionaries. Use of IT may include symbol generation software (Widgit online), translated parallel texts, Google Translate and Images. Where appropriate and feasible, pupils may be allocated to a class where there is a 'buddy' who speaks the same language. Pupils should be encouraged to use their home language to facilitate learning. They may prefer to make some contributions in the form of pictures, gesture or diagrams if this is more effective than writing or speaking. Use of a scribe for written tasks may also be helpful.

If it is felt that a pupil would have difficulty understanding lessons and accessing the curriculum due to their level of English, then in-class support and/or specialist EAL tuition will be recommended by the Learning Strategies department, with suitable assessment. Individual one to one lessons or small group lessons may be offered depending on the pupil's needs. These lessons may be subject to an additional charge. The aim is to give the pupil a boost so that they can be fully integrated in class and these lessons would only be continued as long as the pupil needs the extra help.

Promoting Use of Native Language

We recognise that being bilingual is a huge asset and seek to support our pupils with not only learning English but recognising their native language as a superpower.

We are eager that our EAL students have space to use their native language where possible. This is informal, insofar as teachers asking students to translate key words into their native language and share with the class. Where possible, pupils in a lesson who speak the same language are welcome to work together using their native language.

Our EAL department also work closely with EAL students to generate helpful translations and guides for new students.

Meeting Pastoral Needs

Staff are acutely aware that support for our EAL students goes beyond the taught curriculum. As such, we monitor students closely to ensure that they are able to make friendships and communicate. When it has been felt that a student is unable to integrate with their class due

to additional English needs, we have set up interventions for conversational support. The intention is not to segregate, but to support our students in developing their conversational language habits and prepare them for key terms and vocabulary.

Once needs have been identified, we monitor students closely to ensure that they are supported socially and pastorally.

Monitoring

The child's progress is monitored continuously through the normal school procedures of assessment, evaluations and examinations (as laid out in the school assessment policy). In addition, EAL pupils who receive individual support are monitored by twice-yearly assessment and appropriate support given until they are fully competent in English. The EAL Pupil Development checklist is used to track the pupil's progress. The EAL support teacher has regular meetings with the Head of Learning Strategies. During these meetings, both EAL and SEN pupils are discussed and thereby an important link between EAL and SEN is maintained.

Parental engagement

Parents of EAL pupils are encouraged to take an active role in the life of the school and to feel confident in approaching the school and asking for clarification and information if necessary. Parents are kept informed of their child's progress through parent consultations and reports. In addition, on an informal basis parents are encouraged to contact the Learning Strategies department, class teacher or department head if they have any concerns at any time.

References and further information

There is a wealth of reference material regarding the teaching and support of EAL pupils. We are committed to sharing information and supporting colleagues to find increasingly creative solutions to the teaching of multi-lingual pupils. We recognise the linguistic diversity and richness of culture such pupils bring to our community.

Further information can be found via:

National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum (NALDIC)

British Council

Department of Education

Kent County Council

Revised annually in conjunction with EAL Coordinator