

# Learners of English As An Additional Language (EAL) Policy

February 2023

## Introduction

Bethany School welcomes pupils from all nationalities and ethnic backgrounds. We embrace the Biblical teaching that in Heaven all tongues will be represented and are therefore valuable:

*'After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"'. Revelation Ch 7 v 9-10*

Alongside our celebration of the diverse languages represented in our school, and the long term positive implications there are for a child to be bilingual/multilingual; we also acknowledge that a child who has English as an Additional Language (EAL) can be at a disadvantage in school because of their lack of proficiency in the language of instruction.

## Aims and Values

- To ensure that the language and learning needs of individual pupils are clearly identified and provided for.
- To enable pupils to gain full access to the Curriculum and develop strategies to overcome any obstacles that might prevent pupils from achieving their full potential.
- To raise achievement of pupils who have English as an additional language through a clear system of targeting, tracking and monitoring individual progress.
- To work in partnership with parents and support learning at home. To encourage positive interactions with parents by building relationships during our Wednesday afternoon activities, Parent meetings and school camp.
- To recognise and value the home language/s of pupils and when possible to plan for activities which celebrate the diversity of languages and cultures represented in our school.

## Identification of EAL pupils

Bethany School use the Department for Education's definition for a learner of English as an additional language (EAL):

*"A pupil is recorded to have English as an additional language if they are exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English. This measure is not a measure of English language proficiency or a good proxy for recent immigration." (DfE Schools, Pupils and their Characteristics July 2020)*

We use this definition to distinguish between an EAL pupil and a pupil who has exposure and knowledge of more than one language (bilingual/multilingual) but who has English as their first and dominant language.

Information is gathered for identification via the process of:

1. The Pupil Personal Detail (PPD) Form – On enrollment, Parents/Guardians are asked to identify the child's first language and the language/es spoken in the home.
2. If the PPD Form identifies a language other than English then further information is requested to establish whether the child has English as an additional language or is multilingual. This information is gained using our EAL New Starter questionnaire as its basis and includes finding out background information about the pupil and the parent/guardian's English language ability and experience (as well as the pupil's first language proficiency). This information is used to best understand their needs and the support they may require. The information gained will be shared with the pupil's class teacher and other relevant staff within school and where necessary with external agencies involved with supporting the child.

### **Determining Initial level of Competence**

Bethany School sees the importance of initially determining a pupil's level of competence so that appropriate targets can be set to promote learning. We therefore aim to do this in the first half term of being enrolled at the school.

This is achieved by using the information gained from the EAL identification process in addition to their presentation in the school environment and ability to access their learning as per the descriptors in The Bell Foundation EAL Assessment Framework (V2.0). These descriptors focus on what the pupil can do in the areas of:

- Listening (Understanding)
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

This detailed assessment system correlates to the DfE's national EAL learner Proficiency Bands A – E, allowing us to give pupils a 'best fit' overall level of competence. Although these DfE descriptors are no longer used by the government to provide data for the annual school census, they have become a recognised national method of coding EAL proficiency and therefore Bethany School will use them to give consistency with other settings and professionals. They are:

### **New to English [Band A]:**

Learners who are new to English (working Band A):

- Engage in highly scaffolded listening activities, learning basic classroom language and linking sounds to actions and meanings
- Show emerging competence in basic oral expression
- Demonstrate little or no knowledge of written English; taking first steps to engage with written and digital texts in English
- Demonstrate competence in managing basic, simple and isolated phrases.

Learners working at band A will require considerable support to access curriculum content.

### **Early acquisition [Band B]:**

Learners who are at the Early Acquisition stage (working at Band B):

- Show a developing autonomy in processing speech
- Show emerging competence in the ability to respond verbally in interactions with others
- Make sense of written text at word and phrase/sentence level, using visual information to help decipher meaning
- Demonstrate competence in producing simple sentences and paragraphs on familiar topics conforming to taught expectations

Learners working at Band B will still need a significant amount of EAL support to access the curriculum.

For pupils working in Band A & Band B, the expectation is that they would be working within these bands during the first 2 years of their learning. The focus for teaching these children should be on effective communication. Building fluency and confidence is more important than accuracy at this stage.

### **Developing competence [Band C]:**

Learners who are at the Developing Competence stage (working at Band C):

- Show developing independence in the use of basic listening skills needed to engage with learning
- Demonstrate emerging competence in spontaneous expression and communication
- Draw on growing knowledge of vocabulary and grammar to engage with curriculum-related texts and tasks
- Demonstrate competence in describing and narrating personal experiences with greater accuracy and beginning to experiment with more sophisticated writing in a variety of genres in different curriculum contexts

Learners working at Band C will require ongoing EAL support to access the curriculum fully.

At this stage, the focus for teaching and support should be about increasing range and accuracy of language use. EAL learners who are Developing Competence need to be encouraged to notice key features of English and self-correct.

### **Competent [Band D]:**

Learners who are at the Competent Stage (working at Band D):

- Apply listening skills over an increasing range of contexts and functions
- Demonstrate competence in producing more varied and complex speech in a wider range of contexts
- Engage with curriculum related reading activities independently and productively in different subject areas
- Demonstrate competence in controlling the content and structure of writing with greater accuracy and with a fuller range of vocabulary and grammar

### **Fluent [Band E]:**

Learners who are at the fluent stage (working at Band E):

- Demonstrate confidence in writing accurately and independently in a variety of genres

- Engage with curriculum-related reading activities independently and productively in different subject areas
- Show competence in fluent, creative use of spoken English
- Show an ability to understand and respond to spoken communication in classroom and school contexts with little or no hindrance

### **Providing for learner's Needs**

Appropriate targets and support strategies will be set and implemented according to a pupil's identified proficiency levels in the four areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Progress will be assessed, recorded and monitored using our EAL framework, managed by the SENDCO. We recognise that the majority of support should be provided by the teacher within the classroom setting as pupils will learn more quickly when socialising and interacting with their peers who speak English fluently and can provide good language and learning role models. In line with our SEND procedures and Policy, any additional intervention carried out in a small group/one to one setting will be specific, measured, target driven and time limited. When providing for an EAL pupil, school will always strive to work in partnership with parents and any other professionals involved in supporting the family.

When deciding the level of differentiation for a pupil in the classroom it is Bethany School's aim to maintain an appropriately high cognitive challenge for the pupil and to recognise that their conceptual thinking may be in advance of their ability to speak English.

### **Register**

All pupils who are identified as having English as an additional language will be recorded on the school's confidential EAL Register. This register is an internal record held to promote the effective monitoring and recording of such pupils. The register will hold a summary of the child's progress year on year, measured by the DfE codes of proficiency. This register may be used to generate statistics to be used by the School's Senior Leadership Team, and when necessary as a source of information on a specific pupil to share with outside agencies working with a pupil/family. The register will be held and managed by the SENCO.

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