English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

Introduction

This policy applies to both the Junior and Senior School.

'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)

Bootham School's mission is to provide a welcoming, integrative and personalised academic/pastoral programme for EAL students, in which the highest standards of achievement are encouraged and supported. Although the EAL students' ability to participate fully in the curriculum may not initially be evident, it is Bootham's policy to provide differentiated support to them in their journey toward fluency in English. The aim of the policy is to ensure that we meet the full range of the EAL students' needs, in line with both the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations Act (Amendment) 2007. It also addresses the ISI Regulatory Requirements (effective from September 2012).

Aims and Objectives

Our curriculum secures entitlement, for all students, to a number of areas of learning and gives them the opportunity to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes that are necessary for their self-fulfilment and development as responsible citizens. We promote many Quaker principles including fairness and justice for all, through the education that we provide at Bootham. The EAL Department liaises continually with the English and other departments at Bootham Senior School, and with the SENDCo at Bootham Junior School, to ensure consistent and individualised support is available as required for all of the EAL students in the school. Additionally, it emphasises the fact that "Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught." (SEN Code of Practice-DfES, 2001, 1.3).

- To welcome and value the cultural, linguistic and education experiences that students with EAL bring to the School.
- To implement school-wide strategies to ensure that EAL students are supported in accessing the curriculum.
- To help EAL students to become confident and fluent in English, in order to be able to fulfil their academic potential.
- To be able to assess the skills and needs of students with EAL and to give appropriate provision throughout the School.
- To equip teachers with the knowledge, skills and resources to be able to support and monitor students with EAL.

- To monitor students' progress systematically and use the data in decisions about classroom management and curriculum planning.
- To maintain students' self-esteem and confidence by acknowledging and giving status to their skills in their own languages.

Strategies

Before arrival at Bootham Senior School, EAL students are tested by Mark Forster, an experienced international EAL teacher/assessor, and a determination is made regarding their ability in English and their potential for success in accessing the Bootham curriculum. Younger students, such as in Schoolrooms, are prioritised according to need for EAL. Support can be provided in the form of small group lessons or in-class assistance. There is no extra cost for this.

Many students arrive in Lower Senior (Year 10) and, as the linguistic demands of the GCSE curriculum are quite high, it is important that the students have at least an intermediate level standard of English before enrolling. On average, it takes language learners about two years to acquire functional, social skills in another language. These are referred to as BICS or Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (Cummins, 1984). However, it takes five to seven years, or longer, for many bilingual learners to use their additional language in a decontextualized academic setting. CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) is what is actually expected at GCSE level. Thus, some of our EAL students struggle with the cognitive demands of their many subjects; they benefit greatly from patience, support and understanding.

Students also arrive in College (Years 12 and 13) and are supported by the EAL teachers in order to pass the IELTS (International English Language Test System) exam. All students who need a Tier 4 visa to study at university in the United Kingdom must meet the UK Visa and Immigration requirement for English language proficiency. IELTS is the most universally accepted proof of this. IELTS classes are offered to students for no additional cost. It is important that students begin to prepare for these exams early in order to achieve the scores needed to study their subjects of choice at their desired universities. Additionally, students should check the specific language requirements of the particular universities in which they are interested. The IELTS is valid for two years, so should not be taken before College One (Year 12).

- The School will monitor progress carefully and ensure that EAL students are set appropriate and challenging learning objectives.
- Students who receive assistance with EAL will be fully integrated into school life and will be provided with appropriate support as required.
- The School will ensure that:
  - All involved in teaching EAL students liaise regularly with key staff such as the EAL department, the student's tutor and/ or their Head of Year
  - Relevant information on students with EAL reaches all staff.
  - Training in planning, teaching and assessing EAL students is provided to all to staff, for example via INSET days
  - The effectiveness of the teaching of students with EAL is monitored and data collection is managed.
- All teaching staff can assist by:
  - Being knowledgeable about students' abilities and needs in English and other subjects.
  - Using this knowledge effectively in curriculum planning, classroom teaching and grouping.
  - Ensuring the student's name is pronounced correctly and that he or she is included as much as possible.

- If the School has reason to suspect that a student with EAL may also have special educational needs, the Parents and the School will refer to the sections in the Learning Support Policy.

In general, all teachers should aid in the language acquisition process by differentiating in their lessons. Something as simple as not using too many idioms (or explaining those one does employ) is effective. According to linguist and second language acquisition expert Stephen Krashen, meaningful conversations with sympathetic native speakers at a level just slightly above the learner's current one are very productive. Krashen formulated the input hypothesis, which states that learners progress in their knowledge of the language when they comprehend language input that is slightly more advanced than their current level. Krashen called this level of input "i+1", where "i" is the learner's interlanguage and "+1" is the next stage of language acquisition (Krashen, 1981).

With the above theory in mind, some practical strategies to use with EAL students are as follows:

1. Accept that there is often a 'silent period' in which language learners are reluctant to talk, but are engaging in learning through an accumulation of input rather than output. This period can last up to a year and learners should not be forced to speak until they are ready.
2. Contextualise the learning with artefacts, pictures, photographs, gestures and body language, such as Total Physical Response (TPR)-basically, acting things out.
3. Make lessons visual. Use graphs, maps, drawings and charts to introduce new vocabulary and concepts.
4. Link new information to prior knowledge and the students' personal, cultural and world experiences. Also, don't assume the students know even the basics of the new culture in which they are immersed.
5. Key words should be identified and reviewed periodically. EAL students need much more exposure to new terms, words, idioms and phrases than their English-speaking peers.
6. Use cooperative learning strategies. Working in small groups benefits EAL students who have an authentic reason to use academic vocabulary and discuss key concepts. Give EAL students a job in the group and monitor that they are participating.

Bootham Junior School

At Bootham Junior School, we accept children into school for whom English is a new or additional language. A register is kept of pupils who speak and or understand languages other than English and Louise Leaf (SENCo) ensures that staff can seek support for the children in their class, when necessary.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are immersed in rich language during their everyday play experiences and very quickly pick up new English vocabulary. They also have support from teachers and teaching assistants to extend their ability to communicate their needs to keep safe and healthy. We endeavour to learn basic phrases in the home language of the children in Nursery and Reception and we display helpful words and phrases throughout the environment.

Older children in school may receive support through one-to-one lessons covering basic vocabulary, through to extending specific topic-based language, alongside the daily interactions between staff and their peers. There are a range of dual language texts in the library for children to borrow.

Note – This policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis for matters of fact and process.

Date of last review:	September 2024
Person responsible:	Head of EAL
Approval Group	Education Committee
Review Group	Governors Meeting
Date of next review:	September 2027