St John and St Nicolas Schools Federation

For the good of all through curiosity, creativity and love

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St John and St Nicolas Schools Federation
English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

This policy is a statement of our federation's aims and strategies to ensure that all EAL pupils fulfil their true potential.

1: Introduction
Our federation vision is 'For the good of all – through curiosity, creativity and love'. All pupils need to feel safe, accepted and valued in order to learn effectively and become successful members of society. For pupils, who are learning English as an additional language, this includes recognising and valuing their home language, culture, values and background. This aspiration links explicitly to our federation vision.

2: Aims of the EAL Policy
The policy aims to raise awareness and to support planning, organisation, teaching and assessment procedures, raising pupil achievement and aspirations.

Equality
To be proactive in removing barriers that stand in the way of our EAL pupils' learning and achievement, both academically and personally.

Diversity
To meet our responsibilities to EAL pupils by ensuring equal access to the National Curriculum and the achievement of their educational potential.

Belonging and Cohesion
To provide our EAL pupils with a safe, welcoming and nurturing environment where they are accepted, valued and encouraged to participate.

3: Objectives of the EAL Policy

- To assist all EAL pupils to become fluent English speakers as quickly as possible
- To assist and support all EAL pupils in their acquisition of English language skills
- To develop staff expertise to ensure that all EAL pupils attain levels of achievement appropriate to their intellectual abilities
- To develop rigorous monitoring, evaluating and review systems

4: The Context of our Federation

Across our federation, there are approximately 28 languages spoken in the family home (not including dialects).
On entry to the schools, information is gathered about pupils' language background, and where appropriate an assessment of children's language skills is made as soon as possible (this is not usually before Year 1).

EAL pupils are entitled to the full National Curriculum programme of study and Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum for those in Nursery and Reception.

Our federation uses the local authority service EMTAS (ethnic minority and traveller advisory service) to assess children at the end of foundation stage or on arrival to the schools.

Access to learning requires attention to words and meanings embodied in each curriculum area. Meanings and understanding cannot be assumed, but must be made explicit.

Language is central to our identity. Therefore, the home language of all pupils and staff should be recognised and valued.

Although many pupils acquire the ability to communicate on a day to day basis in English quite quickly, the level of language needed for academic study is much deeper and more detailed and can require continuing support for up to ten years.

Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum. The language demands of many learning tasks need to be identified and included in planning. Teaching and support staff play a crucial role in modelling uses of language. Knowledge and skills developed in learning the first language aid the acquisition of additional languages. A clear distinction should be made between EAL and Special Educational Needs.

5: Language Acquisition - 4 Stages

New to English (Beginners)

A child may:

- Use first language for learning and other purposes
- Remain silent in the classroom
- Copy/repeat some words and phrases
- Understand some everyday English expressions but have minimal or no English literacy
- Follow day-to-day social communication in English
- Begin to use spoken English for social purposes

- Understand simple instructions and follow narrative/accounts with visual support
- Develop some skills in reading and writing
- Become familiar with some subject specific vocabulary
- A child at this stage needs significant support.

Developing Competence (Intermediate)
A child may:

- Participate in learning activities with increasing independence
- Express themselves orally in English but structural inaccuracies are still apparent
- Requires ongoing support in literacy, particularly for understanding text and writing
- Follow abstract concepts and more complex written English
- A child at this stage requires support to access the curriculum fully

Competent (Advanced)
A child may:

- Develop oral English well, allowing successful engagement in activities across the curriculum
- Read and understand a wide variety of text
- Written English may lack complexity
- Demonstrate evidence of errors in grammatical structure
- A child at this stage needs support to access subtle nuances of meaning, to refine English usage, and to develop abstract vocabulary.

Fluent
A child at this stage can operate across the curriculum to a level of competence equivalent to that of a pupil who uses English as his/her first language.

6: Assessment/Planning/Monitoring
All EAL pupils are assessed in line with the school's assessment procedures. Progress in the acquisition of English is regularly assessed and monitored. Targets are set for EAL pupils which are appropriate, challenging and frequently reviewed. At St Nicolas School, a resource for EAL learners called Flash Academy.

7: Parental/Community Involvement
In our federation, we encourage parental and community involvement by:

- Providing a welcoming induction process for newly arrived pupils and their families/carers
- Using translators and interpreters, where appropriate and available, to ensure good links are made between the family and the schools
- Identifying linguistic, cultural and religious background of pupils and establishing contact with the wider community
- Celebrating and acknowledging the achievements of EAL pupils
- Recognising and encouraging the use of first language for developing links between school and home
- Supporting parents, so that they can help their children at home.