

# **English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy**

Date Implemented: June 2015

Review Date: June 2018

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This Policy is concerned with learners of English as an additional language (hereafter referred to as EAL learners) at Digitech Studio School Bristol who have a home language other than English or Welsh and who are in the process of learning to use English as an additional language for educational purposes.

## **2. CONTEXT**

2.1 EAL learners in Bristol come from a range of ethnic backgrounds. Most are clustered in several schools in and around the centre of Bristol, with increasing numbers of isolated learners in ever growing numbers of schools across the LEA.

2.2 EAL learners in Bristol schools come from a variety of language and literacy backgrounds. Some have arrived at school having had a certain amount of exposure to the English language and the local culture; others are newcomers to both. Some have developed literacy skills in their home language; others are pre-literate. Some have comparable schooling to their age equivalent peers; others may have experienced interrupted or no previous education.

2.3 The majority of EAL learners' families have settled permanently in Bristol. The remainder may stay in the country for a period of anywhere between 1 and 3 years.

## **3. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK**

3.1 1994 Act.

3.2 1988 Education Reform Act.

3.3 1976 Race Relations Act.

3.3.1. The 1976 Act does not explicitly recognise the unequal status of different ethnic groups in society. It does, however, make provision for positive action by which it is not unlawful to provide persons of a particular ethnic group with special access to facilities or services to meet welfare or any ancillary benefits provided they have a particular need which is met by such provisions.

## **4. UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES**

4.1 All EAL learners are entitled to the full range of pre-school and statutory educational services

4.2 All EAL learners are entitled to equal opportunities of educational success.

4.3 Bilingualism/multilingualism/plurilingualism is an achievement which is educationally enriching.

4.4 Having a home language other than English or Welsh is not a learning difficulty. Special Educational Needs and the needs of bilingual EAL learners are not identical neither are they mutually exclusive.

4.5 EAL is a distinctive and specialist area of teaching. It differs from other subject areas, however, because of its cross-curricular nature.

4.6 There are no age-related average standards of attainment with EAL, so attainment cannot be graded in the same way as in subjects of the curriculum. The focus is to determine the extent of progress over time. Attainment in EAL cannot be judged in relation to age-related average standards.

4.7 Any withdrawal work should be firmly placed within the context of the national curriculum rather than consisting of de-contextualised language activities. Time limits for withdrawal work should always be set and outcome reviewed regularly.

## **5. LEA OBJECTIVES**

5.1. The City and County of Bristol aims to achieve the following objectives:-

5.1.1. To ensure that all EAL learners participate in and gain access to mainstream and National Curriculum provision.

5.1.2. To support bilingual EAL learners in their acquisition of English language skills across the curriculum.

5.1.3. To ensure that bilingual EAL learners attain National Curriculum levels appropriate to their intellectual ability.

5.1.4. To assess and monitor progress in the acquisition of English as an additional language for all bilingual EAL learners at both primary and secondary levels.

5.1.5. To promote partnership teaching and other appropriate methods of supporting bilingual EAL learners.

5.1.6. To provide training for subject/class teachers in strategies that will address the needs of bilingual EAL learners.

5.1.7. To support bilingual EAL learners through the home language(s) and offer interpreting/translating services to schools and parents of bilingual EAL learners.

5.1.8. To develop resources, including home language materials that will enhance the linguistic skills and conceptual understanding of bilingual EAL learners.

5.1.9. To develop home/school/community links.

## **6. PRINCIPAL'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

7.1 Principals of each school should ensure that the needs of EAL learners are identified and provided for.

7.2 Principals of each school should ensure that EAL learners are integrated into mainstream education.

## **7. ASSESSMENT**

8.1 It should be recognised that EAL learners can make rapid progress in acquiring English but also to be fully competent in the use of academic language for learning can take up to 10 years (**see Collier '97**). The level of competency (particularly of literacy) in the home language(s) directly affects the time taken to acquire English as an additional language.

8.2 Careful assessment should be undertaken by EAL staff to ensure that the learning needs of all bilingual EAL learners are met.

8.3. Assessment is carried out according to the National curriculum document 'A language in common' and is used to classify pupils according to competence in English. These identify need and contribute to defining the level of support provided for pupils.

8.4. Assessment in home language will be carried out by a Bilingual Support Worker, where deemed appropriate and where possible.

8.5. Other assessment should comply with procedures used for all other pupils in the school concerned.

8.6. Care should be taken to ensure that assessment is not culturally biased against pupils from particular ethnic groups or influenced by unconscious assumptions about relative abilities and characteristics of different ethnic groups.

8.7. Care should be taken when assessing EAL learners who might also have Special Educational Needs (SEN). The numbers of these pupils should be in the same proportion as found in the monolingual population.

8.8. There are no age-related average standards of attainment with EAL, so attainment cannot be graded in the same way as in other subjects of the curriculum. The focus is to determine the extent of progress (value-added) over time. Attainment in EAL cannot be judged in relation to age-related average standards.

## **8. CURRICULUM PLANNING**

9.1 All pupils have curriculum learning needs; EAL learners also have language learning needs.

9.2 Language is best learned in a meaningful context - the mainstream classroom.

9.3 EAL learners should be encouraged to use their home language in the learning environment.

9.4 The richness of linguistic diversity should be celebrated through the curriculum.

9.5 Knowledge and understanding of other cultures can be enhanced for indigenous pupils by drawing on the experiences of EAL learners and integrating it into the curriculum.

## **9. TEACHING PROCESS**

10.1 Specialist EAL teachers support EAL learners in their learning of English across the curriculum in partnership with subject /class teachers.

10.2 The partnership model adopted by EMAT is well researched, highly commended and complies with the 1976 Race Relations Act.

10.3 Whenever appropriate/possible support is provided through a pupil's home language by bilingual support workers.

10.4 In addition to the support provided by the EAL Department every subject/class teacher has responsibility for the language development of EAL.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

11.1 The best progress in language learning is made when subject/class teachers, EAL support teachers and bilingual support workers work closely together and with the co-operation of the pupils themselves and their parents.

11.2 It is evident that the progress of EAL learners is significantly influenced by the school and community ethos and by teacher attitude and expectation. It is therefore important that schools value and celebrate cultural and linguistic diversity.