

# EAL Policy



Little Lambs  
NURSERY



SUTTON VALENCE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

This Policy applies to Sutton Valence Preparatory School (including, as the context requires, the Little Lambs Nursery, the Pre-Preparatory School and the Preparatory School).

## **Policy for pupils for whom English is an Additional Language**

### **Introduction**

Sutton Valence Preparatory School has a small proportion (less than 10%) of children for whom English is not their native tongue. We value cultural diversity and regard pupils from diverse cultural backgrounds as an enrichment of our school life and community. Their presence can open the eyes of our British pupils, from a young age, to other languages, ethnicities, cultures and countries. We aim to provide them with the best education we can offer, just as we do with all our pupils, but they obviously have different needs- hence EAL.

### **Who are the pupils?**

**English** as an Additional Language is a term used for those who do not speak **English** as their first and home language. Children and families who have **EAL** may be bilingual and speaking two languages or multilingual and speaking more than two languages. Some of our EAL pupils at SVPS speak in one language with one parent and in English to another.

Our EAL pupils may arrive at any stage, Little Lambs Nursery, Pre Prep and Prep, throughout the school year. They may attend as result of parental movements due to work commitments whilst others may have recently settled within the area on a longer or permanent basis.

Languages spoken tend to be mainly European in origin including French, Italian, Bulgarian and Polish. Some other native languages have been of an Asian origin or Russian.

### **Challenges faced by EAL pupils, which all teaching staff must bear in mind:**

Sub-standard English is a problem for all non-native speaking pupils. This can take various forms. Some are equally weak in all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) while others are good, or seemingly good at, say, listening, speaking, while writing remains rather poor. Language learners invariably pretend to understand more than they do. Vocabulary and idioms are problems for almost all. They become adept at learning a limited stock of words and structures and find it hard to learn more. Some keep quiet for fear of making mistakes and utter only a tiny fraction of what they would say in their native tongue. We may entirely misjudge their character, and even their abilities, as a result (e.g. we may think they are incapable of a task, which they would be able to do easily if they were set in their own language);

If children have attended a school in their native country, our classroom interactions at SVPS may be very different from their expectations. They may not be used to asking questions or requesting individual help;

The EAL children may not be used to discussions or open ended questions. They may be expected to conform to the 'correct' answers;

Listening, understanding tasks and instructions and taking part in discussions are hard for linguistic reasons;

Homework may be difficult to access and tasks with a creative element may be unfamiliar or unvalued;

Sound Production of our phonemic code may be challenging for some children.

### **How are children with EAL supported?**

Each child and his/her needs are considered individually. We welcome transparency from parents regarding languages spoken at home and any exposure to English before arrival to SVPS to facilitate understanding of language needs and interventions.

Some pupils may be

- a) beginners in English
  - b) pupils whose English has not yet fully developed
  - c) pupils who speak English fluently but may not be achieving their full academic potential.
- 1) A meeting with parents is made, at an appropriate time, with the Head of Learning Support/Academic Deputy/ Head of Pre Prep and Room Leaders of Little Lambs to discuss the child and relevant schooling experience and cultural background. This may be on arrival to the school or after a settling in period depending on individual need. School procedures and the open door policy are explained. It is recognised that the early development of the home language is essential in early years and the fluency in the home language is likely to enhance the acquisition of an additional language. Parents are therefore informed of their vital role.
  - 2) Newly arrived children are given a 'silent period', if needed, to absorb English, which will usually pass once their self-confidence has increased.
  - 3) Accessing the curriculum is fundamental and is sought as soon and as effectively as possible, in parallel with gaining language skills useful in both social and academic life. Competence in English in comparison to his/her peers and individual progress is therefore monitored closely.
  - 4) If language development and therefore progress proves limited, assessments will be undertaken to ascertain underlying language skills and understanding.
  - 5) Advice may be sought from the EAL Department at SVS or the Inclusion Support Service at KCC.
  - 6) Where English as an additional language presents as a key factor in affecting progress and access to the curriculum, appropriate additional specialist teaching support may be sought and offered within a group or on an individual basis (latter would be parent funded), alongside appropriate and additional resources and strategies for the classroom. A TA may also be introduced in a temporary capacity during the settling in phase, if needed. (This is funded by parents). Assessment results, intervention and strategies are discussed and agreed with parents and targets set. A Speech and Language Therapist may be also involved if progress in language development is not as expected.
  - 7) Effective communication with parents is important to maximise progress and integration for the child. Should language act as a barrier, a translator would be sought. The use of an app or iPad may also be employed to facilitate communication and learning of vocabulary. Written forms of communication would be translated using technology.

- 8) Some EAL pupils may require additional support due to hearing or visual impairment, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, learning difficulties or other special needs. These needs are identified according to the procedure outlined in the LS Policy, after a sufficient time period and depending on the SEN. Progress is monitored by school and LS assessments, taking consideration of cultural and language factors. The provision of a reader/ translator may be appropriate depending on the purpose of the assessment.
- 9) Pupils with EAL are viewed differently to those with SEN (and are not recognised as SEN on the school's Learning Support List); pupils with EAL may also be recognised as Gifted and Talented if appropriate.

### **Tasks of the School as a Whole**

SVPS acknowledges and celebrates pupils with EAL wherever possible. We show the children that we value them and their home cultures and take an interest in both. This is done within the classroom and whole school setting. We aim to communicate that English is not the only language of value and the Anglosphere is not the only world that counts.

Opportunities to boost self-confidence are utilised fully throughout the school.

### **Recommended Strategies for the Class Teacher**

- Learning key words in the child's mother tongue by staff, providing clear routines and using visual support will aid communication and help the child with EAL settle more easily, especially when English remains non-existent or is very limited;
- EAL pupils with weak English should sit with a native English-speaking neighbour. This will help the EAL pupils to understand instructions, encourage integration and provide more need to speak English;
- Lessons need to be multi-sensory and include many repetitions. Written information should be provided when possible and when appropriate; the use of pictorial cues/pictures linked with instructions and new vocabulary is also valuable;
- When possible, pupils should answer questions in pairs before class feedback. This gives all pupils a chance to think about a question and gives pupils with EAL more confidence to speak;
- When speaking to a pupil with EAL, staff should aim for 'one to one' as much as possible, as they understand better with direct eye contact and speech aimed personally at them;
- Pair children with the same native language on occasions, and briefly, as this can help understanding;
- Avoid asking 'Do you understand?' as children with linguistic needs will say that they do when they do not. Use questions which confirm understanding;
- Ensure that key words are seen in written form as well as the spoken word (if age appropriate). When possible, it is important to check correct pronunciation;
- Not all errors should be marked in written work;
- EYFS pupils should be provided with opportunities to use and develop their home language in play and learning along with sufficient opportunities to reach a good standard of English language.

## **Aims of the LS Tutors**

Lessons may incorporate all or some of these aims.

- To equip non-native English speakers with the language skills they need to enrich their current and future lives, especially as they study and work in English speaking environments;
- To provide a flexible teaching programme tailored to individual needs;
- To encourage pupils to work independently and take responsibility for their own learning;
- To provide support, encouragement and affirmation;
- To help pupils to understand and adapt to the British Culture;
- To help the EAL pupils to integrate into the school community.

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