



Ark Bentworth Primary Academy

EAL POLICY



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This statement details our vision to identify and meet the needs of those students at Ark Bentworth classed as 'English as an Additional Language' (commonly referred to as 'EAL') learners. That is, students who have a first / home language other than English and who are in the process of learning and using English as an additional language through the curriculum and the broader life of the school.

1. Aims

Ark Bentworth is committed to meeting the needs of students with English as an Additional Language.

Whilst being clear that EAL is not a SEN ('special need') or a 'learning difficulty', the school acknowledges that students with EAL often have an additional need in terms of accessing the language used by staff and peers, and related learning issues, which can lead to underachievement and isolation.

Therefore we will endeavour at all times to:

- Ensure EAL students have full access to the curriculum (and other School opportunities).
- Be proactive in removing any barriers that stand in the way of our EAL students fulfilling their potential.
- Provide our EAL students – particularly those who are International New Arrivals - with a safe, welcoming environment where they are accepted, valued and encouraged to participate.

2. Terminology

- **EAL** is an umbrella term that refers to any student learning and using English as an additional or second language.

- Within this, there is a more vulnerable group of students we term as ‘**International New Arrivals**’ → abbreviated as **INA**. This refers specifically to students who have entered the UK within the past two years.
- There are also a number of terms that can be useful when describing the background of EAL students:
 - ‘first generation’ – meaning they were born in another country and have since resettled in the UK with their family.
 - ‘second or third generation’ – meaning they were born in the UK into a migrant or ‘dual-heritage’ family.
 - ‘migrant worker’ – those who have moved for economic betterment.
 - ‘asylum seeker’ / ‘refugee’ – those who have moved to escape famine, persecution and other tragic events.

3. Context

As of July 2018, 39% of students at Ark Bentworth are identified as ‘EAL’ and speak a language other than English as their ‘first’ or ‘common’ language.

A variety of first languages, other than English, are spoken by students in our School. Two of the most common languages are Arabic and Somali languages. There is also a high frequency of students from who have direct lineage to African countries where English is the official language but localised languages / dialects are commonly used. These students are typically ‘first generation’ children of either EU migrant worker families or African refugee families who have moved to the United Kingdom in the previous decade. Their educational background is varied in terms of length, focus and style of teaching & learning.

4. Key Principles

For citizens and residents of the UK, acquisition of the English language is crucial to the fulfilling of academic potential / raising of economic prospects and being included in the daily life of the school community, and wider public society. As an Ark school, we view the fulfilment of this amongst EAL students to be a fundamental part of our sense of mission.

- EAL students will take approximately 5 – 7 years of English-speaking education to acquire academically-fluent English. This will occur naturally through a nurturing immersion rather than segregated intervention. The rate of acquisition can be maximised but not necessarily accelerated.
- EAL students have a temporary additional need which is primarily language acquisition – it is separate / distinct from typical additional needs but with crossover points. EAL

students are not automatically SEN or 'special educational needs', and should not be labelled / treat in this way.

- EAL students are not automatically 'lower ability' – and should not be labelled / treat in this way.
- EAL students will have potential strengths as well as additional needs.
- There is a social-emotional and cultural dimension to catering for the needs of EAL students

5. Roles and Responsibilities

There is a collective responsibility, held by all staff, to identify and remove barriers that stand in the way of our EAL students' achievement and inclusion. Currently the designated 'EAL Co-ordinator' is the SENCo who oversees development and day-to-day coordination of EAL provision.

Responsibilities of the designated 'EAL Coordinator' include:

- Identifying incoming EAL students, with support of the Staff Team.
- Bringing the presence and needs of current EAL students to the attention of colleagues.
- Responding to requests for information about EAL students.
- Ensuring that EAL students are integrated into classes and have full access to the curriculum.
- Maintaining a register of EAL students.

6. Approach to Teaching & Learning

- Every teacher will encounter students who do not use English as their first language. To be successful, we will have to nurture language development - as well as teaching our subject.
- Every teacher will encounter students from other countries who will often have very different educational experiences in terms of length & focus and style of previous learning. To be successful, we will have coach students in how to learn - as well as teaching our subject.
- Potentially, every teacher will encounter students who having moved countries – are undergoing the challenge and stress of social integration. To be successful, we will have to build stable and productive social groups – as well as teaching our subject.

7. Placement

We recognise that EAL students, who may be new to English and to the UK, need support and stability as they start school. We therefore aim to make an early informed decision about timetable content & setting before a student starts at school, and will maintain it unless we discover the student is seriously misplaced.

Without exception, we recognise that EAL students:

- Have a right to a full timetable, with equal access to the whole curriculum.
- Are best placed in groups with fluent English speakers who will provide them with good models of language.
- Should be placed in sets in line with their intellectual/cognitive abilities first, language and literacy skills second.
- Are not automatically placed with Learning Support / SEN students for reasons of LSA support or smaller groups.
- Are not placed in teaching groups based on one standalone test / assessment.

INA students will require, as a priority, calm supportive classes to meet their social-emotional needs during the first 6 to 12 months of education. This should take precedence over educational issues.

8. Admissions, Identification and Tracking

- The School recognises that background information on EAL students can often contain gaps and be inconsistent – it can also be a sensitive issue for some families. However, the building up of ‘learner profiles’ on EAL students’ linguistic background and previous educational experience is crucial in planning future support. This can also be said for information on reasons for moving countries and any possible past traumatic experiences.

9. Special Educational Needs and students working at a high level of attainment

The School recognises that most EAL students needing support with their English language development do not have SEN needs. However, should SEN needs be identified during assessment, EAL students will have equal access to appropriate provision in line with the *SEN Policy*.

Similarly, the School recognises that there may be EAL students who are working at a high level of attainment even though they may not be fully fluent in English.

10. Resources

A range of resources are required to support students’ English language skills including bilingual dictionaries (where students are literate in first language), key word lists, visual cues and a range of language & literacy interventions. This is currently an area for development for the SENCo.

11. CPD

The School will ensure that all staff are provided with a minimum of annual access to CPD sessions focused on supporting EAL across the curriculum. These will be coordinated and delivered primarily by the SENCo.

The School will ensure those staff carrying out specific EAL roles access appropriate CPD programmes to develop their knowledge and skills. Training needs will be identified through Performance Management and Liaison Meetings.

12. Review and Evaluation of Policy

School data will include relevant information on ethnic minority/EAL students and this will enable the School to monitor targets.

This evaluation process will serve as the basis for planning programmes of action and targeting time, support and resources.

Links to other policies:

SEN Policy
Teaching & Learning Policy
Equality Policy
Admissions Policy

Policy Review Date: September 2019