

DOWNSIDE

SCHOOL

POLICY FOR TEACHING ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)

Language is one of the main activities of the mind and the mind is the main part of the personality.

Policy Statement

English as an Additional Language should aim to support and to develop pupils' abilities to communicate effectively in speech and writing in a language which is not their first language.

EAL should support and develop pupils' appreciation and knowledge of British culture, manners and behaviour while maintaining their indebtedness to their own.

EAL should enable pupils to undertake their studies in all subject areas successfully.

The EAL department demands the highest standards from teachers and pupils in keeping with the Headmaster's Statement of Purpose for the school and the Downside School teaching policy.

Aims and objectives

EAL provision is available, in principle, to all pupils whose first language is not English. In practice, many EAL pupils will neither need nor want language support. Additionally, the unit's ability to help individual pupils may be restricted by either available resources or timetable considerations.

Subject to the above we aim to:

- Advise on linguistic level of international pupils applying to the school when asked to do so.
- Assess proficiency in English of all EAL pupils new to the school and communicate this to the whole staff, together with any other relevant information as requested.
- Support EAL pupils in specific subjects they are having difficulty with.

- Support EAL pupils with more general study skills including recognition of key vocabulary, understanding of instructions and producing acceptable academic writing in the context of specific subjects.
- Preparation for International English Language Testing System (IELTS) for Upper Sixth pupils who may need it for university entrance or other purposes.
- Raising staff awareness of EAL issues as appropriate.

The department, though autonomous, works closely with the English Department and Learning Support Unit (LSU)

The department currently has one member of staff:
Julia Archibald M.A. Glasgow, P.G.C.E.

Identifying EAL pupils who may need academic help

Information on potential EAL pupils, including age, first language, level of English, whether they have studied previously in an English medium school or have special interests or abilities, is normally obtained by the Admissions Department in advance of a pupil's arrival. This is done on the basis of test results and reports from the pupil's previous school.

However, following their arrival at the school, the usual ongoing assessment of a pupil's academic progress may indicate a need for EAL support. In addition, requests at any time for EAL support from a pupil, their parents or by a pupil's teacher/tutor are always taken into account.

Once a potential EAL pupil is identified, further assessment takes place using the Oxford Placement Test and lessons as appropriate can then be arranged.

It may also be the case that a pupil referred for linguistic support has, in addition, other special educational needs and in such cases we involve the LSU.

Organisation of teaching groups and lessons

First, Second and Third Form international students whose first language is not English receive EAL lessons instead of Latin.

Fourth and Fifth Form Students receive EAL lessons during Activities and Games periods or during 'free periods'.

Sixth Form pupils arrange their lessons in their 'free' periods. Upper Sixth Form pupils may work towards IELTS and the emphasis is on developing academic skills and vocabulary within the context of examination preparation.

Lessons are either conducted on an individual basis or in small groups based on timetable constraints and pupil numbers.

Close informal links are kept with all subject departments and the LSU. Schemes of work and exam papers in all subjects may be used. We regularly discuss individual pupils and their academic needs with subject teachers and heads of departments in order to make support lessons as relevant and useful as possible.

Methodology

This is through necessity a very flexible department in order to take into account the wide range of different educational backgrounds and expectations of our pupils, different levels and abilities, different linguistic needs and the different dynamics of class, small group and individual teaching. We endeavour to ensure that our lessons maintain pace, variety and challenge, encourage active learning and are appropriately differentiated.

Resources

The department has a wide range of resources. These include reference materials – dictionaries, grammar and vocabulary books, EAL course books. In addition, we have a wide range of materials for different activities, listening materials, exam practice materials and a small number of professional books.

Correction policy

We follow the school correction policy to identify surface errors in our pupils' written work. We also include notations which are specific to EAL – e.g. "T" to indicate an error in tense use. An overall mark is given and a detailed evaluative comment at the end. This refers to content and organisation of work as well as range and accuracy of language, identifies strengths and weaknesses and gives specific advice on how to improve future work. Summative comments on examination practice exercises reflect exam marking criteria. These criteria as well as the specific comments made are explained to pupils.

Assessment and reporting

A register of each student's progress, a mark book, is kept. We follow the school's assessment policy reflecting achievement and commitment in terms of letters and numbers. Comments on individual pupils may be voiced at whole school assessment meetings. All EAL pupils have written termly reports which are sent to parents or guardians. These specify what work has been done, how much pupils have progressed, areas of strength and for improvement, a comment on attitude. Finally, we respond to requests at any time for individual progress reports from parents and guardians.

Staff Development

Staff are encouraged to participate in professional development course as appropriate. Membership of TEFLIS (Association of EFL departments of independent schools in the South West) is available.

Approved by the Board of Governors on:

Approved by Head Master on:

Reviewed on:

Appendix 1

Explanatory notes for staff: equivalents and ALTE (Association of Language Testers of Europe) can do statements

ALTE “can do” statements for studying

LEVELS	Listening/Speaking	Reading	Writing
C2 Level 5	CAN understand jokes, colloquial asides and cultural allusions.	CAN access all sources of information quickly and reliably.	CAN make accurate and complete notes during the course of a lecture, seminar or tutorial.
C1 Level 4	CAN follow abstract argumentation, for example the balancing of alternatives and the drawing a conclusion.	CAN read quickly enough to cope with the demands of an academic course.	CAN write an essay which shows ability to communicate, giving few difficulties for the reader.
B2 Level 3	CAN give a clear presentation on a familiar topic, and answer predictable or factual questions.	CAN scan tests for relevant information and grasp main point of text.	CAN make simple notes that will be of reasonable use for essay or revision purposes.
B1 Level 2	CAN understand instructions on classes and assignments given by a teacher or lecturer.	CAN understand basic instructions and messages, for example computer library catalogues, with some help.	CAN write down some information at a lecture, if this is more or less dictated.
A2 Level 1	CAN express simple opinions using expressions such as 'I don't agree'.	CAN understand the general meaning of a simplified text book or article, reading very slowly.	CAN write a very short simple narrative or description, such as 'My last holiday'.
A1 ALTE breakthrough level	CAN understand basic instructions on class times, dates and room numbers, and on assignments to be carried out.	CAN read basic notices and instructions.	CAN copy times, dates and places from notices on classroom board or notice board.

Appendix 2

What the Oxford Proficiency Test scores mean

OPT SCORE	ALTE	IELTS	CAMBRIDGE
190 - 197		8	
170 - 189	5	7.5	Proficiency
150 - 169	4	6.5	Advanced
135 - 149	3	5.5	First
120 - 134	2	4.0	Preliminary
105 - 119	1	3.0	
90 - 104			
80 - 89			
below 75			

Appendix 3

List of EAL Course Books currently in use.

English Worldwide Bk 2 CUP
English Worldwide Bk 3 CUP
Reward Pre-Intermediate Heinemann
Headway Upper Intermediate OUP
Knockout FCE OUP
Advanced English OUP
IELTS Master Class OUP

Essential Grammar in Use Elementary CUP
English Grammar in Use Intermediate CUP
Advanced Grammar in Use CUP
The Good Grammar Book OUP

Reading Tasks L Benitez et al
English in Context B Kirkpatrick
Build Your Vocabulary J Flower et al
Test Your Vocabulary P Watkins Jones

Oxford Elementary Learners Dictionary
Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary

Also: accompanying Listening Tapes, CDs Workbooks Test papers etc.

The Department has other schemes of work etc to choose from.

Policy reviewed August 2011 and confirmed as the current Policy

Dom Leo Maidlow Davis