



King's College  
*The British School of Murcia*

## **English as an Additional Language Policy**

This policy document provides a full and detailed account of the aims and strategies of King's College, the British School of Murcia (KCM) to ensure that all students entering the EAL programme fulfil their potential and reach the required level of competence in English that enables them to participate fully in the school curriculum. The policy highlights the school's obligations in terms of planning, organisation, teaching, assessment and reporting procedures, formalising the requirements necessary to meet the needs of all pupils who have English as an additional language and to raise pupil achievement.

### **Introduction**

Many pupils entering KCM will regularly speak a language other than English. The role of the EAL department within the school is to ensure that all pupils are supported in their development towards becoming both competent and confident speakers and writers of English. The EAL department works in close harmony with the rest of the school to ensure that each pupil's needs are met both within the specialist EAL support classes and the mainstream classroom ensuring maximum access to the school curriculum.

KCM recognises the importance of valuing each student's home language, particularly in light of the fact that the more developed the literacy skills in the home language and the more support for that language there is, the easier a student finds it to progress in an additional language. At KCM, we value bilingualism and, whilst we encourage all students to speak English within the classroom setting, pupils are encouraged to maintain their home language and use it in the school environment if and when this is necessary or beneficial to their learning.

### **Aims and Objectives**

In order to be able to participate fully in the mainstream class and have equal access to the school curriculum, each pupil in the EAL programme needs to learn and be able to competently use:

- the sounds of English;
- the grammatical structures and conventions;
- the meaning of words and phrases;
- contextual comprehension.

Whilst in the initial stages, much of the focus of the IE classes is on oral communication, it is a fundamental part of the IE programme that each student can successfully assimilate the four language modes – speaking, listening, reading and writing. Typically, students demonstrate an uneven profile in language acquisition and it is crucial that time is provided for them to develop each of the four modes adequately. Each student takes different amounts of time to acquire these skills and therefore the duration of the classes is dependent on individual needs. The learning undertaken in the EAL classroom is inter-related across the four modes of language ensuring that focus in one area supports development in another. In addition to this, the mainstream classroom provides an environment where EAL pupils can work with fluent English speakers, putting into practice newly acquired skills in a more typical setting.

### Curriculum and Planning

The EAL department is responsible for the specific learning objectives of each individual student. The curriculum content is carefully planned to ensure that students are able to meet the objectives as set out above, enabling them to have full access to the mainstream curriculum as quickly as possible. Whilst to some extent this will be specific to learners of English as an Additional Language, it is important to stress that the EAL curriculum is based broadly on the wider National Curriculum goals for English with a strong focus on grammar. Evidence suggests that young learners of English as an Additional language go through a similar process of ‘sorting out’ English grammar as children brought up in an English language-only environment. They demonstrate very similar development errors such as in their use of the past tense and both negative and question forms. This highlights the importance of long term planning, with National Curriculum expectations set as the eventual target for learners of EAL. Similarly, for older pupils, research suggests that a clear goal of attaining age appropriately at KS2 should be set and worked towards by EAL department. The achievement of this level signifies a student has assimilated all four language modes and reached the required level of competence to participate fully in the school curriculum. The

time taken to reach these levels is individual to each student, though generally an absolute minimum of a year is required in the EAL programme with this being significantly longer in many cases. The crucial point is to ensure equal access to the mainstream curriculum for all children and a pre-emptive exit may jeopardise this objective.

Curriculum development by the EAL department needs to reflect the objectives of the National Curriculum. However in the initial stages, planned lessons will focus on the need for 'real-world communication' stressing functions such as asking for and giving personal information, describing physical appearance, following simple instructions and learning the vocabulary of the classroom. Medium term plans are written specifically for each group of students, with short term plans written on a weekly basis aimed at addressing any areas in need of particular reinforcement.

### Teaching and Learning

Whilst this policy document is specific to EAL, it should be noted that many of the strategies used by the EAL department are widespread across the school as fundamental tools in assisting children to develop their skills in English as an Additional language. A wide range of teaching strategies are utilised to address a variety of different learning styles and to engage the children in the learning process as actively as possible:

- All classroom activities have clear learning objectives that are set out at the beginning of each lesson, addressed throughout and revisited at the end of each session to ensure that students are fully aware of and involved in what they are learning;
- All IE classroom activities are differentiated according to the needs of the individual student. Differentiation may take several forms dependent on the activity in question but will be either by task, outcome, resources or teacher/peer support;
- The key language features of each curriculum area are identified clearly. These may include the grammar focus, key vocabulary, uses of language, forms of text etc;
- Each lesson provides enhanced opportunities for speaking and listening with students participating in role play, presentations, discussion and story/experience recounting etc.
- Additional verbal reinforcement and correction by the teacher is consistently provided in the form of repetition and modelling;
- Collaborative activities play an important role in the IE classroom as a means of encouraging and supporting active participation;
- The IE classroom provides an environment rich in additional visual support e.g. posters, pictures, computer images, description and use of gestures;

- Reading and writing activities in the IE classroom involve discussion before, during and after the activity;
- Each IE class involves the provision of scaffolding where required. This may take the form of talking or writing frames, sentence starters, or word mats etc. More able pupils are encouraged to use their full imagination to create personal accounts and interpretations of the assigned tasks;
- Where possible, the IE teacher will ensure that learning progression moves from the concrete to the abstract to confirm that the learning objectives have been met;
- Spanish may sometimes be used in the EAL classroom to assist understanding and learning.

### Organisation and Resources

Each IE class is taught by a specialist IE teacher who withdraws pupils from the mainstream class. Pupils are grouped according to age and ability and have access to EAL support at least 3 times a week in small groups or individually. Lessons are conducted in a specially appointed room where pupils and the teacher have access to a wide range of resources including both EAL specific and non EAL specific books, games and flashcards. New resources are created, researched and updated regularly according to requirements.

### Assessment

During the initial admittance process for every non-native English speaker, an interview will be conducted with the parent or guardian to ascertain the degree of previous exposure of the child to English as an Additional Language. This assessment process will involve a structured oral interview with the student and written age appropriate piece narrative or personal writing. The results of these will be analysed and the specific needs of the child will be collated and distributed to all stakeholders.

Once in class, the IE teacher continually assesses the pupils informally during lessons to check their progress and make informed decisions regarding subsequent planning. Written or verbal feedback is given to the pupils who are also encouraged to give peer reviews of work. Further to this, all EAL pupils will be formally assessed throughout the school year in mainstream class assessments as required. The EAL department works in conjunction with the mainstream school in assessing a student's readiness for exiting the EAL programme, but it should be noted that until a National Curriculum age-related expectation level is achieved in English, it is unlikely that a student of Year 6 or above will be able to fully join the

mainstream class. All assessment of EAL students is carried out in a sensitive manner particularly with regard to mainstream assessment as it is crucial that self-esteem is not compromised in the process. Whilst EAL students will initially attain mainstream assessment results below their peer group, King's College Murcia EAL department provides feedback to the student in a broader learning context than the assessment alone accounts for. Each EAL pupil at King's College Murcia needs to gain recognition for what they can do and for the progress they have made.

### Reporting to Parents

EAL students are given three full school reports a year. In addition to this, parents are kept informed of any day to day issues concerning their child. Parents are welcome to schedule appointments with the IE teacher as they require throughout the school year and there will be three whole school parents' evenings where parents may discuss the progress of their child with the class/subject teacher.

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