



# MARATHON SCIENCE SCHOOL



## EAL POLICY

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Uzeyir Onur

Headteacher

**MARATHON SCIENCE SCHOOL**

## **Context**

Marathon School serves a wide range of communities and the intake may be at differing stages of English language fluency. The most proficient English learners are typically bilingual, that is more or less equally proficient in English and in their home language. Pupils may have arrived in the UK recently, their home language may be other than English or there may be other reasons why a pupil's English language skills have not developed sufficiently.

Marathon School is very proud to admit pupils of diverse heritages and languages and supports the development of their home languages as well as English. Competence in two or more languages opens the brain to different modes of thinking and so enriches a pupil's linguistic, cultural and intellectual development.

## **Aims**

At Marathon Science School we are committed to making appropriate provision of teaching and learning resources for pupils for whom English is an additional language and for raising the achievement of pupils who are at risk from underachievement. The school does its utmost to identify individual pupils' needs, recognise the skills which pupils bring to school and ensure equality of access to the curriculum.

Our aims for raising the achievement of EAL pupils:

- To ensure that the school (in its wider sense) is welcoming:
  - by including reflection on other cultures as a normal part of the curriculum
  - by promoting language awareness throughout the school
  - by being sensitive to cultural needs
- To assess individual children for cognitive ability, education background and linguistic repertoire
- To establish communication links with home and family and to identify cultural and religious background
- To monitor and assess progress regularly to check that pupils have the opportunity to achieve their full potential for learning
- To liaise with other phases of education when appropriate and feasible
- To keep all staff informed by providing opportunities for information sharing/gathering
- To ensure all staff will be made aware of the cultural needs of children
- Staff will disseminate relevant information gained through staff meetings and internal message system to all teaching, support and supervisory staff.

## **Linguistic needs (EAL) and Special Educational Needs**

EAL pupils are not children with SEN and our school recognises that most EAL pupils needing support with their English do not have SEN needs, but have linguistic skills and knowledge similar to those of monolingual English-speaking children, albeit in a different language. Their cognitive ability to access the full curriculum is often in advance of their communication skills in English.

Nevertheless, the school also recognises that some EAL pupils may have one or more special educational needs and in such cases pupils will have equal access to our SEN provision, in addition to EAL support.

EAL pupils with special educational needs will be identified as part of standard assessment procedures as outlined in our SEND Policy.

EAL pupils considered to be more able or to have an individual talent will be identified as part of ongoing assessment procedures.

## **Identifying the Needs of EAL Pupils**

The school uses various assessments and background information to accurately assess pupils EAL needs so that most appropriate provision can be put in place.

- Every new applicant takes CATs tests to provide valuable information about his English language standard.
- Informal interview of the pupil with parents to assess his oral language skills and home language as well as other relevant information.
- Application form background information on previous schools and levels of achievement
- Reference from previous school; information required on SEN and EAL needs.
- Initial school assessment, led by the SENDCO to diagnose EAL stages using the Bell Foundation EAL assessment framework.

## **Pupils Newly Arrived from Abroad and Who Speak no English**

Some strategies are:

- Getting to know new pupils and their background as this helps us to get to know pupils' individual needs and allows us to meet needs more efficiently and effectively such as admission test, interview, reference, etc.
- Nominating a friend/mentor from the class to support the pupil in finding his way around and to help with relationships
- Providing support for the essential language needs first - focusing on the basic English needed for survival.
- Providing translators when required.

## **School ethos**

- All members of the school recognise the pupil's mother tongue is a language
- The classrooms are socially and intellectually inclusive, valuing cultural differences and a range of individual identities.
- Opportunities are created to build the pupils' self-esteem
- It takes time to become fluent in an additional language, with a good command of the range of language needed for academic success.
- Literacy in a home or community language can support English literacy - there are cultural, social and technical variations in literacy in different contexts. Home language support is provided where possible to enable them to take GCSE in this language.

## **Identifying Pupils' Strengths**

- Pupils from other language backgrounds than English have a large variety of cultural, linguistic and educational experiences
- The cultural differences brought by the pupil to the class is a bonus and use this in teaching.

## **Expectations**

- We have high expectations of all our pupils - and expect all pupils to contribute in lessons and to give us more than one-word answers.
- Most bilingual pupils are capable of high achievement; those who are beginners in English too.
- The learning goals set in English are the same for all pupils

## **Key Principles for Additional Language Acquisition**

- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum.
- Effective use of language is crucial to the teaching and learning of every subject.
- The language demands of learning tasks need to be identified and planned for, with attention both to initial access and to extension.
- Access to learning requires attention to words and meanings embodied in each curriculum area. Meanings and understandings cannot always be assumed but need to be explored.
- All teachers have a crucial role in modelling uses of language.
- The focus and use of additional support time are best seen as an integral part of curriculum and lesson planning.
- Language is central to our identity. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of the importance of pupils' home languages and to build on their existing knowledge and skills.
- Many concepts and skills depend on and benefit from well-developed home language and literacy in home language enhances subsequent acquisition of EAL.
- All languages, dialects, accents and cultures are equally valued.

## **Teaching and learning strategies** (see further EAL strategies at the end)

- EAL pupils are set appropriate and challenging learning objectives.
- EAL pupils may need more time to process answers
- Talking about language and literacy with peers and adults is essential as it helps pupils to use their home language when talking about literacy, even when their goal is literacy in English.
- Allow pupils to use their mother tongue to explore concepts
- Give newly arrived pupils time to absorb English and be aware that a pupil may go through a 'silent period' when pupils understand much more English than they use. This period will pass as their self-confidence builds.
- Group pupils to ensure that EAL pupils hear good models of English, wherever possible
- Offer bilingual support from bilingual support teachers, professionals and volunteers, this is invaluable in supporting pupils learning EAL, to ensure that they understand the concepts and vocabulary
- Use collaborative learning methods to encourage pupils to work together in pairs and small groups, as this promotes language acquisition and learning for EAL pupils.
- Extra support can be provided through bilingual dictionaries, extra homework for catch-up and withdrawal support.

## **The Role of the Form and Subject Teachers**

The form teacher, wherever possible in consultation with the SENDCO, will ensure that EAL pupils are assessed in their home language to determine their cognitive level and linguistic repertoire. For all pupils, account will be taken of their wider educational background (home and previous schools). The subject teachers will ensure that differentiated work, appropriate to the pupil's cognitive ability is provided, being mindful of the particular standard of English usage the pupil has reached.

## **The Role of the SENDCO**

- School assessment procedures will be regularly reviewed to ensure they are not biased. The work of EAL pupils will be reviewed regularly to ensure that their progress is maintained and that suitable targets are set that reflect their cognitive ability. Whenever possible contacts with the

primary school or previous school will be arranged to exchange information about the pupil's linguistic and cognitive ability, what support has been given and how parental partnership has developed.

- The SENDCO is responsible for diagnosing the stage at which each EAL pupil is in the four strands of language (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in collaboration with subject teachers.
- The SENDCO is responsible for preparing a profile for each EAL pupil, to be reviewed every term or sooner if needed; and for recommending specific teaching strategies apart from those listed in this policy, if applicable
- The SENDCO is also responsible for supporting colleagues with specific teaching and learning tools if required to make the best possible provision for the pupil

### **Staff Development**

The school will enable all staff to undertake professional development to ensure that provision for EAL pupils is appropriately delivered and co-ordinated.

### **English Proficiency Grading**

#### **N: Not Yet Assessed**

- The school has not yet had time to assess proficiency

#### **A: New to English:**

- May use first language for learning and other purposes.
- May remain completely silent in the classroom.
- May be copying/repeating some words or phrases.
- May understand some everyday expressions in English but may have minimal or no literacy in English.
- Needs a considerable amount of EAL support.

#### **B: Early acquisition:**

- May follow day-to-day social communication in English and participate in learning activities with support.
- Beginning to use spoken English for social purposes.
- May understand simple instructions and can follow narrative/accounts with visual support.
- May have developed some skills in reading and writing.
- May have become familiar with some subject specific vocabulary. Still needs a significant amount of EAL support to access the curriculum.

#### **C: Developing competence/expanding:**

- May participate in learning activities with increasing independence.
- Able to express self orally in English, but structural inaccuracies are still apparent.
- Literacy will require ongoing support, particularly for understanding text and writing.
- May be able to follow abstract concepts and more complex written English.
- Requires ongoing EAL support to access the curriculum fully.

**D: Competent/diversifying:**

- Oral English will be developing well, enabling successful engagement in activities across the curriculum.
- Can read and understand a wide variety of texts. Written English may lack complexity and contain occasional evidence of errors in structure.
- Needs some support to access subtle nuances of meaning, to refine English usage, and to develop abstract vocabulary.
- Needs some/occasional EAL support to access complex curriculum material and tasks.

**E: Fluent:**

- Can operate across the curriculum to a level of competence equivalent to that of a pupil who uses English as his/her first language.
- Operates without EAL support across the curriculum.

## **EAL STRATEGIES**

**Sitting in front in classes/arranging a seating plan;**

This way pupils who have a low EAL level can benefit from more attention of the teacher and concentrate better without distractions.

**Buddying system**

The buddying system will be implemented by buddying two pupils with each other, preferably one with higher and one with lower EAL level so that the latter can benefit from his buddy.

**“Loud”- reading in class**

When focusing on lower EAL level pupils teachers should try to make them read aloud more when reading a textbook etc. This will improve pronunciation and confidence of pupils.

**Book reading targets (monthly/weekly)**

Tutors should set each pupil monthly or weekly reading goals such as finishing books or reading a certain amount of pages to improve reading skills and vocabulary. This should be prioritized in the low level EAL since these pupils are usually not in the “book reader” category.

**Welfare Plan**

The implementation of the pupil welfare plan will help pupils talk about their feeling in a “safe” environment and personalized tasks can be put into place and with the pupils agreeing upon and also trying more since they will be given an opportunity to state their own opinion and decide the tasks together with the teacher.

**Scaffolding/Differentiation (visual representation)**

Scaffolding refers to a method in which teachers offer a particular kind of support to pupils as they learn and develop a new concept or skill. In the scaffolding model, a teacher may share new information or demonstrate how to solve a problem. This can be made through visual representation.

**Dictionaries**

Giving pupils mostly second language English speaking pupil dictionaries for improvement of vocabulary and better understanding of texts.

**Roleplay**

Roleplays will provide a more relaxed atmosphere where the pupil will engage more with the task at hand and work with each other. May improve confidence, teamwork (getting along better with peers and confidence in English speaking in addition to planning strategies.

**Flash Cards**

Flash cards for low EAL pupils are a quick and easy way to improve vocabulary and understanding of words. This is also an engaging, enjoyable and entertaining task.

**Presentations**

Presentations again are an engaging activity where the pupil will first have to plan and then present and therefore speak in front of an audience. This can improve confidence, pronunciation and research skills for EAL pupils.