



ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) POLICY

AIMS

At VLC, we are welcoming and committed to high quality, inclusive teaching and learning to raise standards of achievement for all our pupils to support their wellbeing. We believe in the 'stage or age' approach to learning and embracing and celebrating individuals' needs from all cultural and diverse backgrounds.

We aim to:

- Create a safe, happy and inclusive learning environment that allows each young person to discover who they are and what they want to be
- Fulfil the academic potential of our young people in a supportive and caring environment
- Nurture/Instil the values, skills, attributes and character of our young people, so they may navigate the challenges ahead and make a positive contribution to their communities, now and in the future.

EAL students' aptitude for English will vary, but VLC endeavours to embrace bilingualism as a positive and life enriching asset. While some may face additional barriers to learning in English, the role in which their first language and cultural identity can play in engaging in learning and enhancing the community will be celebrated as defining elements of their academic and personal success.

This policy has been established to ensure all students with EAL at VLC are given the best chance possible to reach their full potential. We seek to embrace this ethos when implementing support for our EAL community:

- VLC seeks to recognise and identify our EAL cohort and be aware of their backgrounds, culture and attainment
- VLC will ensure that all pupils are enabled to have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum
- VLC will equip teachers and support staff with the necessary skills, resources and knowledge to support students with EAL

- School stakeholders will embrace that English is best learned through the curriculum and EAL pupils should be encouraged to play a full part in all learning opportunities in a wholeschool context with their peers
- VLC will implement and monitor regular assessment to ensure the needs of EAL pupils are well-supported
- Where additional support and intervention is required, it will be provided to ensure all pupils can reach their potential
- The VLC learning environment will promote language development through a reading-rich curriculum and good oracy
- Our VLC school structure, pastoral care and overall ethos helps EAL pupils integrate into the school setting whilst valuing diversity
- Bilingualism will be viewed and championed as a positive and life enriching asset
- Parents and prospective parents will be provided with the particulars of our EAL provision and supported with home communication where necessary

DEFINITION OF 'EAL'

'A pupil is recorded to have English as an additional language if they are exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English. This measure is not a measure of English language proficiency or a good proxy for recent immigration.'

(DfE Schools, Pupils and their Characteristics July 2020)

This encompasses pupils who are fully bilingual and all those at different stages of learning English.

EAL pupils may have/been:

- Newly arrived from an international country and school;
- Newly arrived from an international country, but an English-speaking school;
- Born abroad, but moved to the UK at some point before starting school; or
- Born in the UK, but in a family where the main language is not English. EAL pupils will need varying levels of provision.

EAL is not a Special Educational Need and should not – and is not – defined as so at VLC. A pupil may of course be both EAL and SEND.

DFE GUIDANCE

The DfE expect that effective teaching and learning for learners using EAL happens through the National Curriculum¹:

4.5 Teachers must also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Monitoring of progress should take account of the pupil's age, length of time in this country, previous educational experience and ability in other languages.

¹ DfE: *The National Curriculum in England* December 2014

4.6 The ability of pupils for whom English is an Additional Language to take part in the national curriculum may be in advance of their communication skills in English. Teachers should plan teaching opportunities to help pupils develop their English and should aim to provide the support pupils need to take part in all subjects.

TEACHER STANDARDS

The Teachers' Standards (2011)² state that it is the responsibility of all teachers, whatever their subject, to “adapt their teaching to the strengths and needs of all pupils”. Learners who use EAL are mentioned specifically in Section 5: ‘Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils’, but there is relevance to teaching and learning for EAL learners throughout the standards.

Standard 5 states that teachers should: ...have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an Additional Language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.

Standard 3, which expects a teacher to “demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher’s specialist subject” also goes some way to addressing a need for explicit language teaching, but fails to recognise the unique needs of learners using EAL.

THE ROLE OF CLASS TEACHERS IS TO:

- develop consistent approaches to teaching and learning in literacy and to build increased awareness of the existing language knowledge and understanding that pupils bring to lessons
- use speaking and listening strategies to develop subject learning
- plan for teaching and learning of subject-specific vocabulary
- develop active reading strategies to increase pupils’ ability to read for a purpose and engage with a variety of texts.
- model writing for key text types within their subject.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY EXPERIENCES OF EAL LEARNERS

- Some pupils already have good language and literacy skills in two or more languages
- Some pupils who are beginner EAL learners, have never learnt to read or write in any language.

² DfE: *Teachers’ Standards Guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies, July 2011*

- Some pupils have missed some or all of their education and have not fully developed the language and literacy skills needed for school
- Some pupils have SEN with language or literacy needs

All these diverse groups benefit from teaching that develops their language and literacy so they become fluent in the academic language of the primary curriculum which is the key to academic success.

As pupils progress through school, the language and literacy demands of the curriculum **increase** and pupils need to develop a wider range of language skills, in particular making the transition from spoken to written forms. They also need to be able to adopt different styles (genres) to meet different purposes and audiences which need to be explicitly taught.

BEGINNER EAL LEARNERS

It takes 1-2 years to become fluent in everyday spoken English, but 5-7 years to develop proficiency in formal, written English. Pupils who are new to English will benefit from being integrated into mainstream teaching and learning experiences most of the time.

This enables them to:

- develop oral fluency quickly
- immediately feel part of the school
- develop language in context
- experience their full curriculum entitlement

Additional support in class and some small group literacy teaching will be beneficial in the early stages, although pupils should not necessarily be withdrawn from Maths, Modern Languages or practical subjects where they can usually make good progress whatever their language level in English.

TEACHING STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT EAL BEGINNERS

- Provide a classroom rich in oral experiences
- Enable pupils to draw on their existing knowledge of other language/s
- Encourage and use bilingual support from other students and staff
- Use translated materials and bilingual dictionaries
- Allow students time to practise new language
- Use visual support of all kinds (diagrams, maps, charts, pictures, realia)
- Develop card sorting, sequencing and matching activities

DEVELOPING LANGUAGE AND LITERACY SKILLS

In order to be fully literate, pupils need to be able to understand how we adapt our everyday speech into formal, written texts.

Learning through talk

- Using speaking to clarify and present ideas
- Using active listening to understand a topic
- Hypothesising, evaluating and problem solving through discussion

Teaching strategies

- Provide pre and post listening activities such as listening frames
- Use information gap and other collaborative activities
- Allow students to do some assessment orally
- Ask students to rehearse answer with partner before answering
- Use additional adults to support discussion groups

Learning from text

- Reading for meaning – inference and deduction
- Understanding how subject specific texts are organised
- Developing research and study skills

Teaching strategies

- Make the purpose of reading explicit
- Read aloud to pupils
- Teach pupils how to find their way around text books and use index, contents, etc.
- Show pupils how to write questions before starting research
- Help pupils decide whether to scan or skim read or close read
- Ask pupils to transfer information from text to diagrams
- Encourage and show pupils how to use the library for research and pleasure

Learning through writing

- Using writing to think, explore and develop ideas
- Structuring and organising writing to link ideas into paragraphs
- Developing clear and appropriate expression at sentence level

Teaching strategies

- Make sure pupil are clear about the purpose and audience for their writing
- Point out the differences between speech and writing
- Help pupils use appropriate level of formality
- Give pupils model texts before asking them to write
- Show pupils how to organise writing using planning frameworks, graphic organisers,
- Support extended writing with frames and key connectives to link ideas.

- Ask pupils to evaluate, correct and redraft their writing

Parents/Carers

VLC welcomes and encourages parents/carers to support students' learning, building on a good home school rapport.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

EAL is the responsibility of all stakeholders, in particular:

Core Leadership Team

- There will be a dedicated member of Core Team responsible for EAL across the whole-school (Joanne Price, Head of SEND/ SENDCo) who will ensure the identification of EAL pupils, and that their needs are provided for and support is implemented; they will line-manage the Specialist Practitioner and lead the implementation and evaluation of EAL strategies and policy. They will be responsible for home communications to VLC's EAL community and the accessibility of translated key information
- Any adjustments to pupils' curriculums or setting will be decided by the EAL lead alongside the respective Core Team, Stage Leads and with the appropriate data and information to inform any decision
- The Core Team lead will also ensure that EAL information is regularly shared with staff and that opportunities for EAL CPD (externally or internally) is provided and accessible
- The SENDCo will ensure that any additional SEND assessment and support is provided where a pupil may have both EAL and SEND needs

WHERE SEND NEEDS ARE ALSO EVIDENT...

- Use assessment, screening and data to identify special educational needs beyond the additional EAL needs of pupils, where evident
- Work with regard to the SEND Code of Practice where applicable
- Use the Bell Foundation's EAL and SEND: a Framework for Integrated Provision in Schools to determine interventions specific to EAL needs, and where necessary additional SEND needs