**English as an Additional Language at The Priory Witham Academy**

**Background information and context**

Pupils learning English as an additional language share many common characteristics to those pupils whose first language is English. However their learning experience differs because they are learning in and through another language, and because they are from cultural backgrounds and communities that have different understandings and expectations of education, language and learning.

The percentage of EAL pupils within the Academy is 15.4% with Polish being the largest group at 7.5%.

**Aims**

* The aim of this strategy document is to ensure that we meet the full range of needs of those children who are learning English as an additional language. This is in line with the requirements of the Race Relations Act 1976;
* To welcome and value the cultural, linguistic and educational experiences that pupils with EAL bring to the Academy;
* To help EAL pupils to become confident and fluent in speaking and listening, reading and writing in English in order to be able to fulfil their academic potential;
* To encourage and enable parental support in improving children’s attainment;
* To be able to assess the skills and needs of pupils with EAL and to give appropriate provision throughout the Academy;
* To monitor pupils’ progress systematically and use the data in decisions about classroom management and Curriculum planning; and,
* To maintain pupils’ self-esteem and confidence by acknowledging and giving status to their skills in their own languages.

The progress and attainment of all EAL learners, including those who are advanced bilingual learners, will be closely monitored so they are doing as well as they can. The cognitive challenge will remain appropriately high and not be reduced because the English language demand has been reduced. EAL learners’ conceptual thinking may be in advance of their ability to speak English.

 All EAL learners have a right to access the curriculum and the Early Year Foundation Stage. This is best achieved within a whole school context. Pupils learn more quickly when socialising and interacting with their peers who speak English fluently and can provide good language and learning role models.

**Some Priory Witham Characteristics of EAL pupils**

* Schooling is highly valued by parents/carers; education has a high status and is seen as a vehicle for economic enhancement;
* Any additional support can be viewed negatively by parents/carers because of a misapprehension that interventions are for pupils with SEN or other learning difficulties;
* Pupils may have regular community and/or faith commitments after school and at weekends;
* Many EAL learners have abilities which they are unable to exploit because they lack fluency in the appropriate academic language;
* A consistent approach to teaching and learning is needed for the EAL learner; the pedagogy for tuition needs to reflect that of the whole school approach to teaching and learning for EAL learners;
* EAL learners require a particularly interactive approach to teaching and learning;
* Tuition may not be appropriate for those beginning to learn English; group interactive approaches such as talk partners may be more suitable;

In order to meet these specific demands The Priory Witham Academy support for EAL learners has the following features:

* Classrooms will be socially and intellectually inclusive, valuing cultural differences and fostering a range of individual identities;
* We will recognise the child’s mother tongue; boost the child’s self-esteem remembering that he/she has the potential to become a bi-lingual adult;
* We will identify the pupil’s strengths and encourage them to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another;
* We will recognise that pupils with English as an additional language will need more time to process and answer both orally and in written format;
* Extra time and support in tests and exams will be awarded if appropriate;
* Providing and targeting appropriate reading materials that highlight different ways in which English may be used;
* Allow pupils to use their mother tongue to explore concepts;
* Give newly arrived young children time to absorb English (there is a recognised ‘silent period’ when children understand more English than they use – this will pass if their self-confidence is maintained);
* Group children to ensure that EAL pupils hear good models of English;
* Use collaborative learning techniques;
* Ensure that vocabulary work covers the technical as well as the everyday meaning of key words, metaphors and idioms;
* Explain how speaking and writing in English are structured for different purposes across a range of subjects;
* Ensure that there are effective opportunities for talking, and that talking is used to support writing;
* Ensure parents/carers fully understand the purpose of tuition, we communicate in home languages when needed and encourage parents to observe sessions and/or ask the children to explain their school work;
* Where appropriate steps are taken to employ tutors/ staff fluent in the main languages used;
* Prior to tuition the EAL teacher will visit tutees in class, carefully explain the purpose and expectations of tuition and negotiate targets;
* The EAL teacher uses a variety of specialist assessment tools to assess and identify misconceptions arising from language barriers; and,
* Updates on progress are regularly shared with parents to celebrate success and maintain effective home/school links;

**Access and support**

* All pupils will follow the full school curriculum. The school will provide texts and resources that suit the pupils’ ages and levels of learning;
* Where appropriate, EAL pupils will be supported by a Pupils Support Assistant and/or the EAL Co-ordinator in the classroom to enable the pupil to complete tasks with understanding;
* Where necessary, for older children or for those who are functioning at one or more levels behind that which could be expected for their age and time in school, withdrawal support will take place for a set period of time to address specific language or learning focus.

**EAL Co-ordinator**

* Oversee initial assessment of pupils’ standard of English as necessary;
* Give guidance and support to set targets and plan appropriate work. Provide a Pupil Profile where appropriate;
* Contribute to monitoring standards of teaching and learning of pupils with EAL in conjunction with senior and middle leaders;
* Monitor progress and identify learning difficulties that may be masked by EAL and liaise with the SENCO;

**Class/subject teacher**

* Be knowledgeable about pupils’ abilities and needs in English and other subjects; and,
* Use this knowledge effectively in curriculum planning, classroom teaching, use of resources and pupil grouping.
* Monitor progress and identify learning difficulties that may be masked by EAL and liaise with the SENCO;

**Monitoring and Review**

This strategy document will be monitored by the SLT members with responsibility for EAL and the EAL Coordinator, in liaison with the Headteacher.

The Academy will monitor the attainment and progress of pupils who may be at the earlier stages of learning English. The academy will take steps to assess the learners’ proficiency and literacy in their first language and establish what prior subject knowledge and experience they have in other subjects. This will be shared with the subject/class teachers.

The progress of EAL pupils, along with all pupils, is monitored intensively by the Academy. The EAL Co-ordinator and SLT Data lead will extract the progress data of the EAL pupils and compare them with other groups and against the data for national progress. The analysis is reviewed by the Leadership team and Governors.

Opportunities will be created for the EAL voice to be heard, in addition, to the normal Academy Council route (see appendix 1)

**Appendix 1**

**Monitoring the impact of the EAL Strategy document**

**June 2016 External consultant discussion with 4 EAL pupils**

The meeting was to discuss existing practice of supporting EAL pupils and to meet EAL pupils to discuss their experiences at The Priory Witham Academy. The four pupils (3 Polish and 1 Latvian) had a good command of basic English and were able to note:

* Their parents were keen for them to learn English as quickly as possible and encouraged them to take every opportunity to improve, for example, extra classes at the end of school (although they were not over enthusiastic and wanted to be treated like “the other children”) and watching English, not Polish TV;
* They appreciated the use of specialist booklets provided in hard copy and by email to support some work in specialist subjects, but were particularly enthusiastic to praise the support of the EAL Co-ordinator. She clearly knew them well, was able to say which were supported in class and those who needed extracting from lessons. When asked what could help them more the responses focussed on; firstly, access to a translator for those occasions when specialist and difficult work needed to be explained in their early days in the UK; and, secondly, more time with the EAL Co-ordinator;
* They confirmed that whilst differentiation was difficult for classroom teachers, they did not want easier work than the other pupils (“I don’t want easy work”). Access to dictionaries was important, as was the time to use them. They felt that in-class support was generally available when they needed it;
* They felt integrated into the main Academy and only one had been the subject of some racial name calling which had been managed well by the Academy. Racism was not an issue and their friendships with other children was important to them – it was noticeable that they appeared to wonder why I would be asking a question like that, when they would obviously have good friends who were not Polish. One of the impacts, of course, of the strong inclusion was the quicker development of their use of English.
* The progress data for the pupils was not part of the discussion, however, the strategies used and the support put in place follows the EAL Strategy document and were having a positive impact on the pupils’ lives.