

Primrose Hill National School

English as an Additional Language

Policy Document

Introductory Statement

This policy was originally formulated in September 2010 by Mrs Elizabeth Butler (Principal), and the staff of Primrose Hill National School. It was reviewed and redrafted in by Mrs Caroline Flood (Principal), Ms Niamh Manning (Deputy Principal), and Mrs Tamara McCarthy (Assistant Principal II). It was made available for review by staff and parents prior to ratification by the Board.

Rationale

We, in Primrose Hill National School, promote and facilitate the inclusion of all pupils in our school. We acknowledge our pupils' diverse cultural backgrounds and languages. We acknowledge the right of children to communicate and socialise in the language of their home. The variety and diversity of the languages that the children bring to the classroom and to the school yard is respected.

We strive to enable pupils, whose primary language and language at home is other than English to develop their individual potential. We endeavour to support our pupils in developing their individual voice within the school context.

Aims

The language of the Revised Curriculum (1999) is English (and Irish, both in the individual subject and informally throughout the school). Primrose Hill National School deems that a standard of English language competency, comparable to that of a child for whom English is the spoken tongue in their own home, is desirable for the effective teaching of this curriculum. To this end, the overarching aim of our EAL provision is to successfully bridge any gap in fluency in English between children for whom English is the language of communication in all spheres of their life and those children for whom English is simply one of the languages of communication in their lives. We further aim:

- To improve the speaking and listening, reading, writing and understanding of children for whom English is an additional language.
- To provide any newly arrived children with a safe and welcoming environment.
- To gather accurate information about children's backgrounds and educational experiences and share this with all members of staff.
- To use all resources possible to raise the attainment levels of the children for whom English is an additional language.
- To make maximum use of opportunities to model fluent use of English and provide opportunities for children to practise and extend their use of English.
- To encourage and enable parental support in improving children's attainment.

Identification of pupils requiring language support and assessment of the language proficiency of pupils for whom English is an additional language.

- As part of the registration and enrolment process in Primrose Hill National School, parents/guardians will complete a form informing the school of the language of the home.
- The SET will liaise with mainstream class teachers at the start of the school year, to identify children who may need additional support in English language. When identified, parents will be given an Observation Window and Consent Form, authorising the school to carry out additional assessments and withdraw the child from the mainstream setting if appropriate, to access additional support in the English Language.
- All newcomer pupils must complete the 'Placement Test' of the Primary School Assessment Kit. Language support teachers will carry out initial interviews and relevant assessments and communicate the findings of these tests to guide the class teachers in their planning for the pupils.
- The Primary School Assessment Kit will then be used to create a profile of the pupil's proficiency across the four language areas (listening, speaking, reading and writing), as referenced in English as an Additional Language in Irish Primary Schools, NCCA Guidelines for Teachers (pp.51-59) and Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum, NCCA Guidelines for Schools.
- The language support programme is organised with reference to the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and the 13 units of work based on the Primary Language Curriculum as referenced in Up and Away pp. 36-56. The Primary School Assessment Kit (see Circular 0015/2009) set of tests, based on IILT's English Language Proficiency Benchmarks will be used to assess pupil progress through the three levels of A1 – Way Stage, A2 – Breakthrough, and B1 – Threshold. When a pupil has received level B1 in all language skills, i.e. receptive language skills of listening and reading and the productive skills of spoken interaction, spoken production and writing (Up and Away p.36), then the pupil has achieved the necessary proficiency to access the curriculum in the mainstream classroom.
- This language support programme includes 13 Units of Work which represent the strands of the primary curriculum. These units cover topics such as Myself, Colours, Shapes and Opposites and the Local and Wider 5 Community. The pupil will be guided through the units which include elements of understanding, speaking and writing within each unit.
- The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – Self-Assessment Grid will be used in this context to assess pupil progress.
- Allocation of additional support for pupils who require language support for more than two years is considered with reference to DES Circular 0015/2009.
- Pupil's progress will be monitored and assessed at appropriate intervals through completion of the Primary School Assessment Kit (see Appendix).
- The inclusion of EAL pupils in routine standardised testing in school is managed with reference to Circular 0138/2006, 'Pupils may be excluded from the test if in the view of the school Principal they have learning or physical disability which would prevent them from attempting the test, or in the case of newcomer pupils, where their level of English is such that attempting such a test would be inappropriate'. Any decision to exempt a pupil will be taken in consultation with parents/guardians.
- When completing the NNRIT in 2nd and 5th Classes, pupils in receipt of language support will also complete the Non-Verbal Reasoning Test (NVRT), if deemed appropriate.
- The Education Act 1998, places a statutory obligation on the Principal and teachers to 'regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students and their parents.'
- Communication is facilitated with parents/guardians whose mother tongue is not English through the use of interpretive/translation services (Google translate) where applicable. Written communication with parents/guardians will be facilitated by the use of similar means, as needed.

- During Parent-Teacher meetings, teachers will use pictorial representations of pupil progress, as needed. Samples of pupil's work will be shown.

Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

It is a collective responsibility that all staff identify and aim to remove barriers that prevent our EAL learners from succeeding and reaching their potential. The SEN Co-ordinator is responsible for co-ordinating, monitoring and maintaining an overview of this aspect of our school's work. Responsibilities include:

- Liaising with the teaching staff to identify and support pupils learning EAL.
- Support teaching staff in assessing the pupil's level of language where necessary on arrival.
- Managing and auditing resources to ensure effectiveness for class work, groups and home use.
- Supporting class teacher in the writing of Individual Language Plans where necessary.
- Monitoring the progress of pupils learning EAL in all aspects of Literacy including speaking and listening, reading and writing; as well as Mathematics.

All teaching staff will develop pupils spoken and written English by:

- Planning and delivering lessons that address the specific needs of EAL pupils/ bilingual pupils in their classes.
- Setting clear language learning targets to help develop vocabulary and language structures.
- Ensuring that vocabulary work covers the technical, e.g. language of problem solving as well as the meaning of everyday words.
- Modelling speaking and listening styles and the ways they are used for different purposes across a range of subjects.
- Ensuring that there are many opportunities for talking and collaborative work to support writing.
- Building on children's experiences of language at home and in the wider community, so that their developing uses of English and other languages support one another.

Organisation of English Language Support

Language support pupils are assessed regarding their level of proficiency in the English language. The SET, in collaboration with the class teachers, will arrange a timetable for pupils to receive language support, which will facilitate pupils' access to non-language based curriculum areas as far as possible. In line with best practice, there is flexibility within the delivery of language support with varying models of support delivered to best meet the pupil's needs.

The language support programme in Primrose Hill National School is organised in relation to the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and the 13 Units of Work based on the Primary Language Curriculum (Up & Away pp. 36-56).

It is recognised that children for whom English is an Additional Language acquire the language best through immersion and with sessions that are delivered on a daily basis, little and often is more effective than longer less frequent sessions.

Recording and Monitoring of Pupil Progress

With reference to Circular 0015/2009, all documentation in relation to the administration of standardised assessment tests is retained by the school for audit inspection purposes. The language support teacher will record and monitor pupil progress through:

- Teacher observation and questioning.
- Observations and progress are recorded in the Cuntas Míosúil. This informs future planning.
- This record is uploaded to the school's Aladdin database.

Success Criteria for Pupils

1. Pupils gradually gain access to the curriculum by becoming more proficient in English as an additional language.
2. Pupils are enabled to grow in confidence secure in their knowledge of the social norms of the school community, which is inclusive and intercultural.
3. Pupils achieve level B1.3 in listening, speaking, reading and writing of the English language as per the Primary School Assessment Kit.

Implementation Date

This current policy document will be ratified by the BOM of Primrose Hill National School in May 2022 and will be implemented thereafter.

Timetable for Review

This policy will be reviewed in the school year commencing September 2025. This future review will be coordinated by the ISM team in Primrose Hill National School.

This policy document has been circulated and communicated to members of the school community.



Chairperson, BoM



School Principal

Reference Section

Circular 0015/2009, Meeting the Needs of pupils learning English as an Additional Language (DES)
 Intercultural Education in the Primary school, Guidelines for Schools (NCCA, 2005)
 Primary School Assessment Kit (DES, 2007)
 Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School (2007)
 Up and Away (IILT, 2006)
 Intercultural Guidelines for Schools (INTO)
 Circular 138/2006 Supporting Assessment in the Primary School (DES)
 Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum, Guidelines for Schools (DES, 2007)

Created: February 2022