

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

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EAL Policy

1. Introduction

Definitions:

The Foundation: means the Mill Hill School Foundation. Cobham Hall School is one of the Foundation's Schools.

2. Rationale

The Foundation has many pupils, particularly at Mill Hill International School, for whom English is an additional or second language (EAL) to their native language. We are entirely committed to ensuring that EAL and/or international pupils at the Foundation are provided with the best opportunities to enable them to make progress in a British curriculum environment. This is the principal aim of this Policy.

This Policy applies only to Cobham Hall. The other Foundation schools have their own policies due to their different natures as EYFS, Prep, Senior and International schools.

The Foundation and its staff and wider pupil community value the cultural diversity brought by speakers of other languages. We take steps to ensure that pupils who speak other languages are integrated effectively into their school environment, both academically and pastorally.

EAL pupils are subject to all the normal procedures for learning, teaching and assessment that all pupils are, such as Progress Grades, subject levels and academic reviews.

It is our belief that all teachers are responsible for assisting EAL pupils in their language development. Activities which allow EAL pupils to work on tasks with peers who have English as a first language will enhance their language and social development.

3. Aims

Our main aim is for all EAL pupils to become confident in listening, speaking, reading and writing so that they can access the curriculum and communicate effectively with peers and adults.

We will identify individual pupil's needs; recognise the skills he/she brings to their Foundation school and ensure that he/she is able to access the curriculum to the best of his/her ability. We take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan. We ensure no pupil is discriminated against, contrary to Part 6 of the Equality Act 2010.

All teaching and support to pupils with EAL does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Whilst account is taken of EAL development, the Foundation aims to set appropriate and challenging targets for individual pupils which are reviewed on a regular basis.

We maintain an EAL register, similar to the SEN register, to ensure that we are tracking and monitoring our meeting of the needs of pupils with EAL.

Each Foundation School has specific aims regarding EAL, based on the age and needs of its pupils. At Cobham Hall, it is the aim of their EAL Department to enhance the learners' proficiency in the English language to enable them to access the curriculum and to pass examinations required to pursue further academic studies.

4. Key Principles

- Language develops best when it is used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum
- The main aim of EAL specialist support is to improve and extend the EAL learners' competence in English language so that they are able to access the curriculum across all subjects
- 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. Attention should be given 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
- Teachers have a crucial role in modelling uses of language
- A distinction is made between EAL and Special Educational Needs

In addition, each School has its own key principles based on the age and needs of its pupils:

Cobham Hall pupils will feel confident they can fully participate in learning, school life and communicate socially with their peers. EAL pupils will be enabled to pass IGCSE, IELTS and the Cambridge EFL examinations in support of their educational ambitions.

5. Monitoring and Assessment

- An initial identification of a pupil's additional language has been put in place through the admissions procedure of each Foundation School
- An initial assessment of an EAL pupil's ability in English is made when he/she enters the Foundation.
- Information is gathered about:
 - the pupil's linguistic background and competence in other languages
 - the pupil's previous educational and schooling experience
 - the pupil's family and biographical background
- All identified 'Learners of English' who have not been schooled in the UK or have been schooled in the UK for a limited number of years, are assessed in Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening within their first half term at their school
- Whilst account is taken of EAL development, the Foundation aims to set appropriate and challenging targets for individual pupils
- Staff have regular liaison to discuss pupil progress, needs and targets
- The school ensures that all EAL pupils have access to statutory assessments, making full use of special arrangements including first language assessment/support where appropriate

In addition, each Foundation School has its own monitoring and assessment processes. At Cobham Hall pupils undertake an English proficiency assessment, to determine whether they need to pursue the ESL iGCSE route or the mainstream English GCSE one.

6. Teaching and Learning

Each school within the Foundation shall provide programmes of teaching and learning for its EAL pupils appropriate for their age and ability. Further details of each school's EAL programme can be obtained from their school office.

7. Learning Difficulties, SEN and Gifted and Talented Pupils

- Whilst the Foundation recognises that most EAL pupils needing additional support do not have learning difficulties, should a learning difficulty be identified during assessment, EAL pupils will have equal access to their school's Learning Support provision.
- Similarly, the Foundation recognises that there may be EAL pupils who are gifted or talented even though they may not be fully fluent in English. Provision is made for them to fulfil their potential.

8. Parents and the Wider Community

- We provide a welcoming admission process for the induction, assessment and support of new arrival pupils and their families/carers
- We take account of parents' linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds through the admissions process and when communicating with them, by ensuring that our written and spoken communication with families is effective through the use of graded English
- We provide an opportunity for EAL parents to discuss their children's progress each term and/or as the need arises with the EAL Coordinator
- For pupils in year 3 and above, we provide an opportunity for EAL parents to attend an 'Informal Parents' Evening' to share good practice in supporting their children's learning needs
- For pupils in year 3 and above, we aim to work closely with members of the wider community to support our EAL pupils

9. Review

This Policy has been approved by the Academic Committee of the Court of Governors, on 3rd May 2023.

Date of Review: May 2023

Next Review: Autumn 2023