



New Horizons Children's Academy

PART OF THE THINKING SCHOOLS ACADEMY TRUST



Children first - Challenge - Aspire - Achieve

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE POLICY

Inception date: January 2025

Review Date: January 2026

NEW HORIZONS CHILDREN'S ACADEMY
English Additional Language Policy



New Horizons Children's Academy

New Horizons is an inclusive Thinking School that welcomes pupils of all races, cultures and beliefs and introduces them to British culture and values embedded in the school's ethos. At New Horizons we aim to transform life chances for all children and are proud to be a school that holds high expectations, makes learning irresistible and provides a nurturing and safe environment where each child strives to fulfil their potential.



Therefore, we identify and accept that children for whom English is not their first language may have additional linguistic and learning needs and we listen and respond with understanding and empathy to those needs.



We understand that all pupils need to feel safe, accepted and valued, in order to learn effectively and become successful members of society therefore we think flexibly about our EAL learners and the ways to approach their individual requirements.



For pupils who are learning English as an additional language, this includes recognising and valuing their home language and background and allowing them to apply their past knowledge into new situations.



As a school, we are aware that bilingualism can be a useful learning tool and that all EAL pupils can make a valuable contribution to the school community. We respond with wonderment and awe to the new learning and ideas that come from the diverse community of our pupils.

This Policy sets out the Academy's aims, objectives and strategies with regard to the needs of EAL pupils, to build upon their prior experience in order to give children the skills which will enable them to become analytical, flexible and independent learners, fulfilling their true potential.



Defining EAL

An EAL pupil is a pupil whose first language or the language spoken at home is not English. This encompasses pupils who are fully bilingual and all those at different stages of the English language acquisition. EAL pupils may be:

- Newly arrived from a foreign country and school with no English;
- Newly arrived from a foreign country but from an English speaking school;
- Born abroad, but moved to England at some point earlier in their childhood;
- Born in the UK, but in a family where the main language is not English.



Key Principles of additional language acquisition

EAL pupils are entitled to the full National Curriculum programme of study and all teachers have a responsibility for teaching English as well as other subject content. Access to learning requires attention to words and meanings embodied in each curriculum area. Meanings and understanding cannot be assumed, but must be made explicit. Language is central to our identity, therefore, the home language of all pupils and staff should be recognised and valued. Pupils should be encouraged to maintain their home language. Although many pupils acquire the ability to communicate on a day-to-day basis in English quite quickly, the level of language needed for academic study is much deeper and more detailed and can require continuing support for up to ten years. Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum. The language demands of learning tasks need to be identified and included in planning. Teaching and support staff play a crucial role in modelling uses of language. Knowledge and skills developed in learning the first language aid the acquisition of additional languages. A clear distinction should be made between EAL and Special Educational Needs.



Aims

The policy aim is to raise awareness and to support planning, organisation, teaching and assessment procedures, and the use of resources and strategies to meet the needs of pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL). We are raising pupil achievement and aspirations to:

- Welcome and value the cultural, linguistic and educational experience that pupils bring to the school.
- Provide all the pupils with opportunities to overcome any barriers to learning.
- Develop and implement a wide range of strategies to ensure that EAL pupils are supported in accessing the Curriculum, across all subjects throughout the school.
- Help EAL children become confident and fluent in English, in speaking, listening, reading and writing so that they can fulfil their academic potential.
- Encourage and enable parental support in improving pupils' attainment



Objectives

- To ensure an adequate assessment of the skills and needs of the EAL pupils in order to provide appropriate provision throughout the school.
- To provide staff with the knowledge, skills and resources needed to support and monitor the learning of pupils with EAL.
- To monitor pupils' progress systematically and fairly and use data as one of the aspects in curriculum planning and classroom management decision making.
- To boost and maintain pupils' self-esteem and confidence by creating a welcoming environment for pupils and their parents, acknowledging and giving status to their skills in their mother-tongue.



Strategies

We will fulfil our objectives through:

- Communicating with parents in their home language through bilingual members of staff or by using translating tools available in correspondence with them.
- Allowing pupils to use their first language to explore concepts and encouraging them to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another.
- Differentiated work for EAL pupils, planning according to their linguistic needs, but within class and Curriculum contexts.
- Regular monitoring of progress of EAL pupils, setting appropriate and challenging targets for them.
- Supporting children within the classroom to enable them to complete tasks set with understanding and to achieve learning objectives with support from teacher and teaching assistant
- Exposing children to good models of English
- When necessary, withdrawing children for a set period of time to address a specific language or learning focus.
- Making the school environment socially and intellectually inclusive, valuing cultural diversity and raising awareness about it - assemblies, bilingual displays and school projects.



Assessment

All EAL pupils are assessed in line with the school's assessment procedures within the first two weeks of their arrival to school.

Assessment in a first language will be carried out when possible or is necessary to establish pupils' ability in their home language and/or to eliminate/determine any other learning needs.

Staff have the opportunity to discuss pupils' progress, needs and targets via weekly planning meetings with SLT and EAL Lead. Assessment methods are checked for cultural bias which may cause results to be inaccurate and action is taken to remove any that is identified.

Consideration and sensitivity is given to the appropriateness of testing EAL pupils at the earlier stages of English acquisition.



EAL Pupils and SEN

A child has special educational needs if she/he has a learning difficulty. A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty (see Code of Practice and School Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy) solely because the home language is different from the language in which she/he will be taught at school.

While regarding bilingualism in a child as an advantage, the school recognises that the children with special educational needs will include a proportion of EAL pupils, and other pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school recognises the importance of, and the difficulties involved in, the early recognition of SEN in EAL pupils.

Assessment of SEN in EAL pupils will involve the teacher and the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. If appropriate, the school will try and arrange an assessment in the child's first language.

The nature of support for EAL pupils with SEN will be decided on an individual basis through consultation between the SENCo and class teacher. Provision of support will be jointly reviewed regularly. This support will take account of the child's needs as an EAL pupil.

Information on the Code of Practice in first language may be made available to parents at an early stage in the process.

The school will try to ensure that home language does not prevent the parents /guardians either from accessing information on their child's special educational needs, or from putting forward their point of view.



Responsibilities

