

Bedales School EAL (English as an Additional Language) Policy

INCLUDING EYFS

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Bedales School EAL Policy

This document describes Bedales School's English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy.

Introduction

At Bedales School we aim to develop inquisitive thinkers with a love of learning who cherish independent thought. We aim to enable all students to develop their talents to the full by educating the whole person, 'Head, Hand and Heart'.

Bedales School is a selective school. The selection process at the Prep and Senior Schools includes tests, interviews, and informal assessment during a short residential stay at the school, and review of application documentation. At the Pre-prep this is an informal assessment appropriate to the age of the child. The process is designed to allow the selection of students who it is believed will meet their potential at Bedales, within the support framework described in this Policy. For this reason, full disclosure of current or likely support needs at the time of application is crucial, and the school may not be able to retain a student if relevant information has been withheld.

It is recognised that all children have individual needs, and in most cases, these are met through good classroom practice. The support provided at Bedales is described in the sections below and is designed to meet the needs of students who can work independently in subject lessons, alongside their peers.

EAL Curriculum Policy Aims

The school's approach to EAL curriculum has the following core aims:

- To ensure that EAL students meet their full potential.
- To encourage EAL students to become confident, independent learners.
- To maintain high aspirations for EAL students.
- To promote equal opportunities for all students.

These core aims are developed as follows:

- All EAL students are entitled to a full programme of study at Bedales School, and all their 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 languages of all students should be recognised and valued. Knowledge and skills developed in learning the first language aid the acquisition of additional languages. Bedales School's teaching staff encourage parents to support First Language development at home, while providing opportunities at School to learn and make progress in English as an additional language.
- Although many students 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 requires continuing support. It must also be recognised that fluent spoken skills do not necessarily denote fluent written skills, which generally require more long-term support.
- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum. At Bedales EAL supports students in accessing the curriculum while simultaneously improving English language skills. In the Prep and Pre-prep visual support is provided for EAL students where necessary and in Prep subject teachers provide topic vocabulary for EAL teachers for pre-teaching ahead of lessons.

- The language demands of learning tasks need to be identified and included in planning. At the Prep and Pre-prep all EAL students receiving 1:1 EAL have an ILP (Independent Learning Plan) which is shared with all teaching staff to be taken into consideration when planning.
- Teaching and support staff play a crucial role in modelling uses of language.
- A clear distinction should be made between EAL and SEND.

Objectives

The department has the following objectives in how it operates:

- To identify students with EAL requirements as early as possible and ensure that their needs are met.
- To identify and focus attention on students' skills and talents and build self-esteem.
- To support students to manage their own emotional responses and develop emotional resilience.
- To operate a 'whole student, whole school' approach to the management and provision of support for EAL.
- To provide support and advice about EAL for all School staff.
- To encourage students to participate in the decision-making processes regarding their support needs.
- To be alert to learning issues, not related to linguistic needs, for example SEN and pastoral issues, and to pass this information on to relevant staff, for example the Head of Learning Support and pastoral staff.
- At Bedales, students regularly discuss their progress with their EAL teachers and identify targets for learning. At the Prep EAL targets in ILPs (Independent Learning Plans) are written in simplified language and shared with the student.
- To maintain and develop partnership with parents and guardians.
- To encourage a 'community within the community' for EAL students to encourage mutual support.

Induction

All EAL students at Bedales Schools are integrated with their peer groups from the outset. Additionally, the Bedales EAL department organises a welcome tea for all EAL students at the start of the school year. Further events such as school trips and a Christmas tea are held specifically for all EAL students to recognise their importance in the whole school community, to foster friendships with other EAL students and to provide opportunities to strengthen relationships within the department as a whole. A summer picnic is held at the Senior School, to which all EAL teachers and EAL students from both Senior and Prep schools are invited. This is particularly important to foster a positive whole school environment and to ease transition of students from Prep to Senior. student

Identifying EAL

The purpose of identifying a student's language requirements is to ensure that the student can make the best possible progress, attainment, and integration at School.

At Prep and Senior schools, each student's skills and levels of attainment are assessed prior to entry through formal examination and interview. Information is also gathered from parents/carers and previous schools, including school reports. A transfer meeting is held during the summer term with the Head of Learning Support at the Prep and Pre-prep and the Head of EAL at Bedales to support the transition from Block 2 to Block 3. After admission, further individual assessment is carried out by the EAL department.

At the Pre-prep EAL is identified on application and an informal assessment is done through observation of the child during a taster day. Parents also have an informal interview with the Head at the Pre-prep.

Any Year 3 EAL students moving up to the Prep from the Pre- prep will attend an informal meeting with the EAL teachers during a transition day in the summer term.

Subject teachers make regular assessments of the progress of all students, and this is discussed at review meetings (approximately half-termly). During these meetings teachers and tutors will note good effort or progress for congratulation and reward or will raise a concern regarding a student who is making less progress than expected. A concern can be characterised by progress which:

- is significantly slower than that of peers starting from the same baseline;
- fails to match or better the student's previous rate of progress;
- fails to close an attainment gap between the student and peers;
- widens an attainment gap.

At the Senior School, assessment also takes account of students' own self-evaluation and progress in areas other than academic attainment, for instance social skills. The cycle of assess-plan-do-review involves collaboration between the student, parents/carers, subject teachers, Academic Tutor, and Houseparents. Subject teachers assess progress in a variety of ways, including topic tests, formal internal exams in the summer term of Block 3, Block 4, and 6.1 and mock exams in the spring term for students sitting external exams in the summer term (Block 5 and 6.2). Subject teachers may also give 1:1 tutorial time with students to check progress. Academic tutors check on progress during weekly tutor time and on an individual basis fortnightly. This frequency increases with need. Following review meetings, the comments of subject teachers are discussed with the student and the student's parents/carers and are accessible to them online. The Academic Tutor initiates and manages this process and implements any actions decided upon.

Curriculum

At the Bedales Schools, EAL students follow the curriculum as set out in the School Curriculum Policies.

At the Pre-Prep and Prep EAL students follow the same curriculum as their peers, with visual support/topic vocabulary/ 1:1 EAL support provided where necessary, depending on the level of support required.

Block 3 – students will follow the normal curriculum. There is the opportunity for them to study one language fewer than other students, as appropriate.

Block 4/5 – students normally take 9 IGCSE/BACs. Under exceptional circumstances, the school may allow a student to take fewer subjects after discussion with the Tutor, the family and/or guardian, the Head of EAL and the Deputy Head Academic.

Students wishing to take examinations in their native language are able to do so where it is available. Normally, this qualification is in addition to the number of subjects they take at GCSE/BAC or A level.

All Sixth Form students can prepare for and take the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) test and will need to if their Higher Education conditions so require This will normally take place at some point in 6.2 to fully maximise the length of time for which the test is valid.

All new Sixth Formers who join the school are expected to matriculate from the School with an English qualification. If they do not have an English Language GCSE or IGCSE, an IELTS score will act as a suitable English qualification. (This may be required even if the student's first language is English). If students are intending to apply to a British university, students are expected to find out the level required to enter their chosen establishment. IELTS lessons are chargeable at the same rate as EAL lessons.

EAL Support

At the Pre-prep EAL concerns are only raised when children's learning attainment is not making expected progress.

At the Prep School only Level 2 EAL students are recorded on the register (those receiving 1:1 EAL lessons).

At the Senior School, there are two levels of EAL support reflected in the EAL Register: Level 1 is for students who have had a concern raised in respect of their language attainment and are consequently being monitored. Level 2 is for students receiving EAL lessons.

For those students on the Register at Level 1, progress is monitored, and further concerns are discussed with their Academic Tutor and individual teachers. Review meetings are particularly useful to help to monitor academic progress and highlight any general language concerns for students. If it is subsequently decided that a student needs EAL lessons to fulfil their potential, this is discussed with parents and the additional lessons will be chargeable as per the fees schedule.

For students on the Register at Level 2, EAL lessons are weekly, individual lessons which take place during private study periods and do not require students to be withdrawn from any other lessons. EAL lessons are charged at an additional fee as outlined in the fees schedule and the number of lessons may increase or decrease depending on student progress and needs. Parents will be alerted of any lesson and consequent fee increase. Individual EAL lessons will support students across the curriculum by providing specialist teaching of skills and strategies and giving opportunities for additional practice, reinforcement, and feedback. Curriculum work will often provide the context for this input, but EAL lessons will not seek to replace subject teaching. Subject teachers continue to be responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the students in their classes, but the EAL teacher or Head of EAL will provide written comments and attend review meetings, attend parents' meetings, liaise with subject teachers, and advise on supportive classroom strategies. EAL teachers carry out frequent in-class observations of students in learning situations, particularly when subject teachers alert the Head of EAL to concerns. It may consequently be appropriate to offer 1:1 in-class support for a limited period, so that the student can access the curriculum and make progress. Parents will be alerted to any additional charge. If agreed that EAL lessons are no longer required, the student will remain on the EAL Register at Level 1.

Concerns about progress may be raised by a student, parents/carers or School staff at any time and will be investigated initially via the regular review process outlined above. The Head of EAL co-ordinates the discussions and assessments, organises the appropriate support and updates the EAL Register accordingly.

Supporting Students and Families

Students and their families have easy access to this policy through a link on the school website. EAL teachers attend all parents' meetings for 1:1 discussion with parents/guardians and are available for remote calls should parents/guardians require.

The Bedales Schools' Admissions Policy describes admission arrangements in relation to students with EAL.

The Head of EAL is responsible for implementing Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) guidelines to ensure that students with EAL have appropriate access to internal assessments and public examinations through making 'reasonable adjustments' (e.g., having access to a bilingual dictionary). JCQ guidelines are updated annually. The Head of EAL works closely with the Exams Officer to maintain an up-to-date list of those students who require exam access arrangements. Subject teachers use this list to ensure that these arrangements are also in place for internal assessments.

At the Pre-Prep class teachers are responsible for transition to the Prep and from year to year.

At the Prep and Senior Schools, Tutors take the lead role in ensuring a smooth transition from class to class, across School years and to other schools and institutions. While at the Senior School, a student may well continue with the same EAL teacher for the duration of their time at the school. The Head of EAL is responsible for providing reports etc., as requested at transition points.

Training and Resources

The Head of EAL has input to the training of any staff undergoing School-based initial teacher training. The further professional development needs of teaching staff are identified during this process and also, for existing staff, by Heads of Departments during regular appraisal meetings. In-house or external training is provided during training days.

The Head of EAL attends the annual conference of BAISIS (British Association of Independent Schools with International Students) which helps to keep up to date with resources and developments in the field of EAL, particularly as they relate to the independent sector. The Head of EAL carries out staff appraisal for members of the EAL department, which identifies training needs in order to improve and update EAL teachers' skills and expertise in the field. Weekly EAL Department meetings allow time for discussion and dissemination of good practice. Annual meetings are arranged by the Pre-prep and Prep Head of Learning Support and Senior School Head of EAL.

NB: All School Policies are available to staff and can be found in SharePoint.