EAL Policy

English as an Additional Language Policy

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Introduction

The term EAL (English as an Additional Language) is used to refer to students whose main language at home is not English.

EAL students, from complete beginners to those with considerable fluency, will have varying degrees of difficulty in accessing the full curriculum and in achieving their full potential. Research has shown that those new to English will acquire conversational fluency in two years, but will need a minimum of five years to achieve competence in academic English. Such students will need language support if they are to reach their full potential. The provision of this support fulfils the requirements of the Race Relations Act of 1976 which seeks to promote Equality of Opportunity and to eliminate discrimination in the provision of education.

This policy sets out Park High's aims, objectives and strategies with regard to the needs and skills of EAL students.

Aims
- To welcome and value the cultural, linguistic and educational experiences that
  - students with EAL bring to the school.
- To implement school-wide strategies to ensure that EAL students are supported
  - in accessing the curriculum.
- To help EAL students to become confident and to acquire the English language
  - skills they need to be able to fulfil their academic potential.

Objectives

- To be able to assess the skills and needs of students with EAL and to provide for
- their needs.
- To equip teachers and teaching support staff with the knowledge, skills and resources to be able to support and monitor students with EAL.
- To monitor students' progress systematically and use the data to inform classroom management, curriculum planning and the setting of targets.
- To maintain students' self-esteem and confidence by acknowledging and giving status to their skills in their own languages.

Strategies
There will be a positive and effective language ethos:
- There will be an understanding that a limited knowledge of English does not reflect a lack of ability or a lack of literacy in a student's mother tongue.
- Appreciating and acknowledging a student's ability in her/his own culture is crucial for her/his self-esteem.
- The language development of all students is the responsibility of all teachers and teaching support staff.
- There will be liaison between mainstream and support departments to discuss language development within the structure of the lesson.
- Diversity will be valued and classrooms will be socially and intellectually inclusive.
- Teachers will be knowledgeable about students' abilities and needs in English and other subjects and use this knowledge to inform their curriculum planning, classroom teaching and student grouping.
- Support will be provided in various forms, including induction classes for complete beginners in English; the provision of in-class support as well as work in small groups where appropriate.

Teaching and Learning

In order to ensure that we meet the needs of EAL students, staff will:
- assess the student's fluency level as soon as possible
- show differentiated work for EAL students
- employ a range of strategies within each lesson to reinforce understanding and meaning so as to develop language in context
- have high expectations, expect students to participate in all classroom activities/tasks
- monitor progress carefully and ensure that EAL, along with all students are set appropriate and challenging tasks, including the setting of appropriate extended tasks not only for EAL students but all who require it
- recognise that EAL students need more time to process answers and to complete extended work
- allow students to use their mother tongue to explore concepts when appropriate
- give newly arrived students time to absorb English bearing in mind that there is a "silent period" when those new to the language understand more English than they use
- group students so that EAL students hear good models of English
- use collaborative learning techniques

Spoken and written communication between the students and teaching and non-teaching staff, and between the school and parents and the local community, will be positive and appropriate, including the use of students' home languages.

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