



LEARNING SKILLS & ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) POLICY

Policy Statement

- The School wishes to support all of its pupils to become effective, independent learners and thereby to achieve their maximum potential.
- The policy takes cognisance of the SEN Code of Practice which recognises that pupils have a linguistic rather than a learning or cognitive difficulty.
- The English as an Additional Language Teacher is the Head of Learning Skills.
- This should be read in conjunction with the Equal Opportunities, the Differentiation, the Admissions, Learning Skills & SEN and the Outstandingly Able Policies.

Aims

- Downe House aims to meet the needs within the mainstream of any pupil in the school including those who have English as an additional language (EAL) needs.
- Pupils with EAL needs will be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education which will not discriminate against them.
- Pupils will be assisted to become more proficient in English and, as their progress develops, the attainment gap between themselves and their peers will diminish.

Objectives

To ensure that:

- The EAL Teacher promotes the strategic direction of the SEN policy which accepts that pupils with EAL needs do not necessarily have a learning difficulty.
- The School admits pupils with EAL needs who fulfil the admission requirements (refer to the Admissions Policy). EAL lessons may be offered as a condition of entry.
- Any information regarding the history of an EAL pupil's English language learning is passed on to the Head of Learning Skills and disseminated.
- All new pupils are screened diagnostically on entry by the EAL Teacher to ascertain their level of listening, reading, writing and speaking skills.
- All staff (academic, pastoral and medical) are familiar with the SEN Policy and are aware of their role in implementing the policy. *6.2 All teachers are teachers of pupils with special educational needs. Teaching such pupils is therefore a whole-school responsibility, requiring a whole-school response. SEN Code of Practice (2001)*
- There is collaborative working with academic and pastoral staff and the Head of Learning Skills to support the English needs of a pupil as effectively as possible in order to narrow the attainment gap between EAL pupils and their peers.
- There is regular monitoring during a pupil's school life to ensure that difficulties in achieving their potential are detected as soon as possible. *6.3 Central to every class and every subject is a continuous cycle of planning, teaching assessment and evaluation that takes into account the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of the pupils. SEN Code of Practice (2001)*
- Specialist EAL teaching is provided based on a programme of individual lessons relevant to the school's curriculum. The lessons may follow an appropriate external examinations course to enable them to attend university.
- The pupil develops positive self belief through encouragement and guidance.

- There is ongoing support for a pupil when a programme of EAL lessons has ceased.
- The importance of the pupil's first language and the additional experience and perspective that this brings to the school is recognised and valued.
- Parents are kept fully informed about the EAL progress of their child.

Strategies for Achieving the Aims and Objectives

- Facilitate regular meetings and communication between the SENCO, LT, Medical Centre and teachers to review the strategic direction of the SEN policy and provision.
- Liaise and work closely with the Registrar and LT regarding the information available on new EAL girls in order to plan a programme of individual EAL lessons, as and if required.
- Make use of all baseline school data (for example MIDYIS, YELLIS, ALIS) and internal examination results for screening, diagnostic purposes and for shaping pupils' individual programmes.
- Make test results, including the results of EAL tests, available to staff to aid their support of EAL pupils.
- Offer guidance to staff (including via Merlin) on effective in-class differentiation and flexible teaching to help them cater for the learning styles and English language level of an individual pupil as outlined in the Differentiation Policy.
- Facilitate face to face meetings between all appropriate staff including English, House Mistresses and Head of Learning Skills, in order to review and evaluate girls' English progress and support those having difficulties accessing the full curriculum.
- Facilitate face to face meetings between House Mistresses and the EAL Teacher to support girls experiencing cultural changes and differences.
- Provide whole-staff training on supporting EAL pupils, when requested by LT.
- Ensure that EAL information (e.g. common 'Chinglish' errors) is accessible via the school systems including Merlin and SharePoint.
- Ensure that there is an effective system of communication between the Head of Learning Skills and the Examinations Officer on issues concerning Access Arrangements (e.g. the use of a bi-lingual dictionary) for external and internal examinations.
- Employ teachers of EAL/EFL to teach those with EAL needs and to provide suitable in-service training to maintain their up to date knowledge and skills in these areas.
- Regularly review the effectiveness of any girl's EAL programme with LT and allow for flexibility in teaching to respond to a pupil's immediate English language or learning need.
- Request from academic staff relevant material (e.g. glossary of geographical words, English examination papers, etc.) to support the EAL programme.
- Communicate with parents, either by telephone or email, any important matters relating to their child's EAL support. This is in addition to the whole school systems, such as Parents' Meetings and the reporting process.

Charging

- The school will charge all girls who have a programme of individual specialist teaching.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Mistress and the Learning Skills Department with recommendations made to the Headmistress for amendment.

Review Leader: Senior Mistress
 Reviewed: January 2010
 Next Review: January 2011