Our Lady of Lourdes National School EAL Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy was devised following a consultative process with all interested parties and is guided by the relevant Department of Education & Science publications and circulars. (DES Circulars 07/2012, 0056/2011 & 0015/2009, Primary School Assessment Kit- DES 2007, Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School-2007, Intercultural Education in the Primary School- Guidelines for schools, NCCA 2005 and Up and Away IILT 2006)

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to school staff on the delivery of English as an additional language and also on how best to accommodate and fully include EAL pupils who now form a significant part of our school population.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

In keeping with the inclusive ethos espoused by Our Lady of Lourdes N.S., EAL policy wishes to recognize, affirm and in so far as possible provide for cultural diversity.

Aims

Our Lady of Lourdes National School ideally hopes to achieve the following by introducing this policy

• To enable pupils of ethnic minorities to have a sense of belonging.
• To provide a framework for supplementary teaching and additional support and resources for those pupils for whom English is an additional language.
• To promote EAL pupils' development of English Language proficiency so that they can gradually gain access to the curriculum.
• To maximise the progress, academic attainment and personal achievement of EAL pupils.
• To promote a recognition of and respect for ethnic and cultural diversity in the school thus ensuring that EAL pupils feel valued and affirmed.
• To promote effective home school links and increase parental involvement among parents of EAL pupils.

Organization of EAL Language Support

Recent Department of Education & Science Guidelines have directed that specific Language support if provided be subsumed within general resource allocation. "Schools now have the autonomy on how to deploy resource between language support and learning support depending on their specific needs". (Circular 07/2012). Decisions regarding language tuition for EAL pupils will be made on a yearly basis with due regard being given to the needs of EAL pupils and the availability of resource time. All options to maximize benefits

of support time while also catering for language needs of EAL pupils will be considered. In allocating support time particular attention will be paid to the needs of Reception Classes where very many International pupils have no command of English and also older pupils arriving with little or no English. Support may take the form of in-class or withdrawal, whichever is deemed most beneficial. Support time may be used initially for in class support in reception classes to assist international pupils in becoming familiar with routine of school day, school and classroom rules, layout of school, staying within yard etc,. Equally time may be allocated to older newcomer pupils to assist with introduction to school, help with timetabling, books, basic English to make needs known etc.,

Our Lady of Lourdes N.S. operates a streamed Literacy and Numeracy model thus ensuring that all pupils are working at a level commensurate with ability for core curricular subjects. Where EAL pupils are not in receipt of specific Language instruction, language needs are catered for within these streamed Literacy & Numeracy groups and generally in class for the rest of curricular subjects. All pupils falling under the tenth percentile as measured by standardized testing either receive additional support or are included in smaller Literacy or Numeracy Groupings, this is also the case for EAL pupils. EAL is therefore the responsibility of Support Teachers with specific language groups and all Class/Support Teachers with EAL pupils in their streamed/class groups.

All teachers with responsibility for EAL pupils will endeavor to promote the development of English Language proficiency.

Teachers of EAL pupils will therefore

• encourage EAL pupils to speak English at all times while in school
• be aware of the language demands of the Curriculum, including subject specific vocabulary in subjects such as Maths, Geography, History & Science
• be aware of the necessity to explain vocabulary whose meaning is not immediately apparent from context.
• differentiate planning and teaching (outside of streamed work) to take into account the Learning needs of EAL pupils
• provide opportunities to engage in pair/group work with English speaking peers who will provide useful role models
• where necessary support understanding through the use of gestures, visual clues etc.,
• use concrete materials to promote the understanding of mathematical concepts and be aware of the need to constantly reinforce the language of Mathematics
• speak clearly and at a steady pace to ensure that EAL pupils can follow directions and material being taught, with repetition if required
• provide constructive and affirmative feedback for all work as is good practice

• use every opportunity to impress upon parents of EAL pupils the importance of developing English language skills for success in an English based curriculum

The school has recognized and is attempting to resolve issues of concern relating to EAL pupils:

• disparity between test results in Literacy and Numeracy related to poor language skills
• difficulty with understanding word problems especially at middle and senior levels with resulting poorer test scores in numeracy not reflective of mathematical ability
• difficulties with more in-depth comprehension of reading material related to poor understanding of vocabulary
• difficulties with understanding subject specific vocabulary
• difficulties with sentence composition directly related to limited exposure to spoken English
• difficulties with spelling resulting in part from confusion with first language spelling

There is also some concern regarding the difficulty in ascertaining if pupils have a specific learning difficulty e.g. Dyslexia/Dyscalculia, or if poor performance is related solely to poor language acquisition.

 Current interventions to assist EAL pupils include;

• Induction language programme for Junior Infant EAL pupils with emphasis on basic vocabulary needed to function in school surrounds
• A Language and Literacy Programme at Senior Infant Level, HSCL to do some Language work in Senior Infant Club (after school club for Support pupils at S.Inf level)
• Interventions to assist with language acquisition will vary yearly depending on success rates and available resources.

Additional interventions which may be provided include:
• buddy system pairing English and non English speakers
• language classes for parents of EAL pupils
• language through literacy programme (1st/2nd Classes onwards).

EAL pupils will also be advised to use internet websites to help with vocabulary acquisition (sites listed under Resources for Students- Appendix 1), also to use Google Images and purchase a good Dictionary.

The school acknowledges that achieving English Language proficiency where pupils are also committed to acquiring first Language skills presents a considerable challenge. It is also acknowledged that many pupils at Junior Level are only in the initial stages of assimilating a second language and though they exhibit varying levels of understanding may not be at a stage of readiness to produce coherent speech. Depending on the child's level of English competency teaching resources may be provided. Literacy skills of reading

and writing are seen to assist pupils with sentence structure, understanding of vocabulary etc., and generally help to scaffold language learning, these are therefore introduced at Infant level as is the norm for English speaking pupils.

Irish Exemptions "There is no evidence that younger children have any problem with learning Irish with their peer group", (Up and Away pg 9). The normal criteria for Irish exemptions apply to EAL pupils. According to the Department of Education and Skills, children aged 11 years or over coming to Ireland whose education was received outside Ireland are entitled to an exemption in Irish.

Standardized Testing

All EAL pupils are expected to sit the yearly standardized tests.
In reference to Circular 0056/2011 "Students may be excluded from standardized testing if in the view of the school principal they have a learning or physical disability which would prevent them from attempting the tests or, in the case of migrant students, where the level of English required in the test would make attempting the test inappropriate". As Education Act 1998 entitles each pupil to some form of assessment those who are unable to participate in standardized testing at their class level may avail of testing at lower levels. It is generally accepted that pupils who have not reached level A1.3(see PSAK guidelines) of the language proficiency benchmarks may not be tested with standardized test.

Interculturalism

Cross curricular guidelines on how best to create an intercultural and inclusive school as provided in Intercultural Education in the Primary School(NCCA, 2005), Information as provided by IILT (Integrate Ireland Language & Training) publications and guidelines from 'Up and Away' language programme are used to inform the schools efforts to foster appreciation of inter-culturalism and promote integration of EAL pupils.

Signs at gate and Reception area are in English and Polish. EAL pupils are invited to read prayers/sing in first language at school gatherings. Other countries and cultures are studied during SESE time slot. Every effort is made to make EAL pupils feel welcomed and valued.

Communication with Parents

Our Lady of Lourdes acknowledges the importance of communication with and involvement in school of parents of EAL pupils. School efforts in this regard are once again informed by IILT publications and 'Up and Away' language programme.

A welcoming school environment facilitates parental contact with the school.
Appointments can be made to speak with Principal, Class/Resource Teachers. Parents are

aware that HSCL is available to help resolve any school related issues. HSCL is also available to newcomer parents to assist with 'settling in', a 'visual' report of child's progress can be given in the absence of an interpreter (see Appendix 2). Parental involvement in school events is sought and appreciated.

See also Reporting to Parents and Programme Planning for discrete language tuition time as outlined below.

Where discrete EAL Language Support is provided

Role of the language support teacher:

"In collaboration with parents and mainstream class teachers, support teachers identify pupils requiring additional language support, assess pupils' proficiency in English using the assessment materials, devise appropriate language programmes, deliver the programmes and record and monitor pupils' progress. They share their expertise with mainstream class teachers and assist in developing and disseminating good practice to support the development of students' English language proficiency." Circular 0015/2009. The responsibility of the support teacher is to deliver a programme of English language tuition which is based on the primary curriculum and which prepares and supports the child in accessing classroom learning and in socializing with peers. "The principal objective of the language support programme is to integrate the pupil as quickly as possible into all mainstream learning and activities of the school."   (Up and Away p. 20)

Collaboration between the EAL support teacher and the class teacher

Support teacher and class teachers collaborate in observation of pupils for assessment purposes, identification of pupils in need of language support, compiling IPLP to cater for the specific needs of the child and programme implementation.

Identification of pupils requiring language support

Mainstream class teachers if requested monitor the EAL pupils' progress in the mainstream setting using the following IILT checklists:

• Checklist for observing engagement and progress during the silent period (where applicable)
• First feedback from class teacher shortly after arrival of new language support pupil
• Initial interview assessment for new pupils with interpretation based on the language proficiency benchmarks (Up and Away page 21)
• Initial needs analysis for language support pupil
• Ongoing needs analysis for language support

• Mainstream Classroom observation of language support pupil's progress.

Assessment of the language proficiency of pupils for whom English is an additional language

• Formal testing of the pupil using the Placement Set of the Primary School Assessment Kit takes place at least six weeks after pupils have begun language support (Placement Tests are intended for use with pupils who have just arrived in school as the content is not dependent on any curriculum learning)
• The EAL support teacher may use Set 2 of the PSAK to assess progress when the first six units of work from the Up and Away Programme have been covered; Myself, Our school, Food and clothes, Colours, Shapes and opposites, People who help us and Weather.
• The Language support teacher may use Set 3 of PSAK to assess progress when all thirteen units of work from the Up and Away Programme have been covered: Myself, Our school, Food and clothes, Colours, Shapes and opposites, People who help us, Weather, Transport and travel, Seasons, holidays and festivals, The local and wider community, Time, People and places in other countries, Animals and plants and Caring for my locality
• Formal assessment takes place in October and again in May/June.

Programme Planning

Mainstream classroom teaching themes are where possible aligned with the thirteen units of work of the EAL 'Up and Away' Language programme.

 These units are:

1.   Myself
2.   The local and wider community
3.   Time
4.   People and places in other areas
5.   Animals and plants
6.   Caring for my locality
7.   Seasons, Holidays and Festivals
8.   Our school
9.   Food and clothes
10.   Colours, Shapes and opposites
11.   People who help us
12.   Weather
13.   Transport and travel

Alternatively teachers may wish to use Folens, 'Wonderland Oral Language Development Scheme'. Units of work from this programme are as follows:

1.   Clothes

2.   Hobbies

3.   Toys

4.   Shopping

5.   Transport

6.   Food

7.   Size

8.   House

9.   Games

With older children EAL support time may be used to introduce classroom work at a slower rate thus enabling the EAL pupil to engage more fully when material is covered in class.

Reporting to parents/Programme Planning

Following on observation and formal assessment an individual IPLP is compiled, objectives are based on level of proficiency indicated by PSAK testing, IPLP is signed by EAL support teacher and class-teacher. Parents are invited to discuss test results and programme of work for year at November PT meetings and are asked also to sign IPLP. A copy of IPLP is stored in school files, a further copy is given to class–teacher for her records and a copy posted to parents. Results of initial testing and testing in May /June are recorded on IPLP and scanned to school files. Parents are very welcome to discuss language instruction with EAL teacher outside of designated PT Meeting should they wish to do so. The language support programme currently in use is 'Up and Away'. Teachers may also use Folens 'Wonderland Oral Language Development Scheme' or other schemes considered appropriate. These may also be supplemented by material from resources listed in Appendix 1. The programme is divided into proficiency benchmarks: A1,A2,B1. When a pupil has achieved level B1:3 (also known as threshold level) in all language skills i.e. the receptive language skills of listening and reading and productive skills of spoken interaction, spoken production and writing (Up and Away P.36), then he / she is deemed to have achieved the minimum level of proficiency to access the curriculum in the mainstream setting.

Outside of discrete language work, for EAL pupils in class/streamed/resource groups, language proficiency will be commented on at PT Meeting and in end of year report if teacher feels it is impacting on learning.

Resources

 Teachers in collaboration with the school principal make decisions regarding purchase of resources, books and materials for use in language support work.

An inventory of specific language support resources available in the school has been compiled (See Appendix   1).

Class /Resource group Teachers/SNAs may request additional resources to cater for the specific needs of EAL pupils.

Staff may also request leave to attend Courses of relevance to the teaching of EAL pupils, this will be accommodated if possible.

Recording and monitoring of pupils' progress

With reference to Circular 0015/2009: All documentation in relation to the administration of tests must be retained by the school for audit/inspection purposes.

Where pupils benefit from discrete language tuition PSAK assessments results are recorded on individual IPLPs with actual tests stored by EAL support teacher. Individual IPLPs are retained by Support Teacher, scanned to pupil files on School System and as already indicated posted to parents yearly/twice yearly where appropriate.

With regard to EAL pupils in Streamed/Resource/Class settings, recording and monitoring of progress will follow school policy for other non-EAL pupils in these groupings.

Individual teacher planning and reporting

Where there is discrete Language time allocated EAL support teacher will maintain a weekly / fortnightly teaching plan and a monthly progress record detailing work covered from 'Up and Away' / alternative Programme. An overall yearly plan for this class will also be completed.

Teachers with responsibility for streamed /resource groups will detail work on a weekly/fortnightly and monthly basis also with an overall yearly scheme specifically catering for the needs of their target group including EAL pupils.

Class-Teachers of non-streamed subjects will include where necessary differentiated work for EAL pupils in planning.

Success Criteria

- Level of inclusion of EAL pupils in Our Lady of Lourdes N.S.
- Knowledge of and respect for cultural, ethnic & linguistic diversity
- Academic progress of EAL pupils: Standardized and Diagnostic test results
- Feedback from school principal, teaching staff, SNAs, parents, DES inspectors

Roles and Responsibility

The school principal will monitor implementation of the plan. All teachers, SNAs and ancillary staff who have contact with EAL pupils will be responsible for implementation of the policy

Implementation Date

This policy will be implemented from 10th February 2015

Timetable for Review

This policy will be reviewed during June 2015. The review will be initiated by school principal and undertaken by the Support Team.

Ratification & Communication

The Policy was ratified by BOM on 9th February 20145 and circulated to all school personnel with responsibility for EAL pupils.

Reference Section

- Circular 15/2009 Meeting the needs of pupils learning English as an Additional Language, DES
- Intercultural Education in the Primary School, Guidelines for schools, NCCA, 2005
- Primary School Assessment Kit, DES, 2007
- Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School, 2007
- Up and Away, IILT, 2006
- Intercultural Guidelines for Schools, INTO
- Circular 0056/2011: Initial Steps in the Implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, DES
- Circular 07/2012 Combining General Allocation and Language Support

Appendix 1:   Resources for EAL

For the Student

• My Language Passport

• European Language Portfolio 1st- 6th Primary (Learning the Language of the Host Community)

• My First English Book - Very Young Learners, Junior & Senior Infants

• Websites: Vocabulary Exercises:

www.englishvocabularyexercises.com(more advanced, requires supervision)

www.esl.fis.edu/vocab(senior

www.english-hifen.de/en/exercises

www.learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org

www.learnenglishfeelgoog.com/vocabulary

For the Teacher

• Up and Away, A Resource Book for English Language Support in Primary Schools 2006

• Wonderland, Oral Language Development Programme, Folens

• Primary School Assessment Kit, Dept of Education & Science

• IILT- Using school texts for language support in primary schools, Methodology and Implementation

• IILT- A Resource book for Language support in Primary schools 2006

• IILT- The productive skills, speaking & writing, English as a second language

• IILT- English Language Teaching materials based on units of work of the Primary curriculum

• IILT- Changing Faces, Changing Places- A Guide to Multicultural Books for Children buiBby IRELAND

Resources for Intercultural Activities

• Celebrating Difference, Promoting Equality, Curriculum Development Unit, Mary Immaculate College of Education

• Cross Curricular Guidelines on Multiculturalism on www.ncca.ie website

• Intercultural Education in the Primary School (NCCA 2005)