

The St Michael Steiner School Early Years

English as an additional language (EAL) policy and procedures

At the St Michael Steiner School we want to ensure all children are ready to benefit from the opportunities that are available to them when they begin the kindergarten. For children with English as an additional language (EAL), teachers will explore the child's skills in the home language with parents and/or carers to establish whether there is a cause for concern about language delay. Having a home language other than English is not, by itself, a learning difficulty but rather, an advantage in life.

Our curriculum in kindergarten is rich in creative free play and opportunities for social and language development. We provide all children with EAL with experiences that allow them to develop and enhance their English language acquisition, while continuing to build upon and celebrate their own home language and culture, in a safe environment. (This is true regardless of the level of the pupil's competence.) We aim to offer an inclusive education in which the child's first language is acknowledged and encouraged to develop alongside their acquisition of English.

We will assess, monitor and support all children with EAL in their acquisition of English language skills. We provide opportunities to develop and use their home language in play and learning, if possible, and we also ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and develop their English language during their time in kindergarten. We recognise the importance of the role of parents and work with them in supporting the child's acquisition of English.

We aim to ensure that children with EAL will:

- Develop in their acquisition of and the use of English during their time with us.
- Use English as a means of learning across the curriculum.
- Build on knowledge they already have of other languages and cultures.

Our aims will be achieved by:

1. Collecting relevant background and cultural information when a child arrives in kindergarten
2. Ensuring children with EAL access the curriculum by:
 - a. Providing a welcome ethos in kindergarten
 - b. Valuing their first language by learning some of the key words from play, activities and stories, simple picture books with language/script of first languages where possible
 - c. Providing parents with copies of text we use (stories and songs) to take home and share with the child whenever this is possible

- d. Providing appropriate cultural resources where possible (celebrations of different festivals), toys, i.e., a variety of cooking equipment reflecting children's homes in the 'home corner' area
- e. Ensuring that tasks are well supported with gestures, body language and/or printed images
- f. Differentiation in weekly planning
- g. Staff being aware that children with EAL learn most efficiently working in collaborative groups with able and fluent English speakers

Monitoring:

Progress of children with EAL is monitored termly by the teacher based on an individual EAL support plan. Not all children with EAL have an individual support plan in place. The school SENCo may support the kindergarten teachers with the coordination of EAL support plans and reviews.

A list of children with EAL is reviewed termly, tracking their level of English on the basis of five categories (new to English, early acquisition, developing competence, competent, fluent).

Success Criteria:

Evidence from observations (termly reviews of EAL support plans, if in place) that children with EAL are making expected progress.