GEORGE SALTER ACADEMY

Languages Policy (EAL)

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Language Policy

A) Overview

Introduction

The command of language is vital to a good education, life-long learning and a happy, productive life. Language is also central to every individual's identity. Therefore, this policy will incorporate the Academy's approach to English as an Additional Language (EAL) since both home and additional languages are to be valued.

George Salter Academy has a long-standing inclusive ethos, which celebrates diversity: 'One World in One School'. Equality is also important; all students, including EAL students, are entitled to the full National Curriculum programmes of study and therefore all teachers have a responsibility for teaching English as well as other subject content. However, limited, targeted withdrawal from lessons to allow bespoke support (such as one-to-one coaching or work in small groups) is a useful strategy, especially for Newly Arrived Pupils (NAPs).

The Academy is committed to all students, including EAL students, having a confident command of language and acquiring the English language skills they need to be able to fulfill their academic potential. Some groups of students, which may include newly arrived pupils, will require support to establish positive relationships with both peers and adults.

Context

Sandwell has high levels of diversity and has a large Asian population. This is also true at George Salter where Punjabi, Urdu and Bengali languages are predominant. 50.5% of students at George Salter Academy are defined as EAL – that is, "pupils who use or have access to more than one language at home…it does not necessarily imply full fluency in both or all languages"(DfES,2003)

There are 53 different languages, which GSA students consider their 'home' language. English (49.5%), Panjabi (10.5%), Bengali (9.7%) are by far the most common, with no other language representing more than 6% of the school population.

Key Principles

Literacy is the key component of accessing a good education. Reading is often considered the principal factor (*i.e. a reading age of 9 being required to access the secondary education*), although writing (including handwriting), speaking, listening and group work ('oral literacy') are also vital aspects, identified by experts such as Geoff Barton which are used to support language development.

All teachers should have a clear focus on planning for, and marking for, literacy as well as other subject content. All teachers follow the literacy policy of the school.

Labelling a student as EAL is not useful in itself. The local community has many second- and third-generation immigrant families, many EAL students may be comfortably bi-lingual. In fact, EAL students at the Academy tend to outperform native speakers in terms of attainment and progress. Nevertheless, it is good practice to support these students with their academic language and wider reading.

Newly Arrived Pupils are often (though not always) the students in need of focused support, both academically and socially. Upon arrival, NAPs should be assessed initially in the student's own language if possible. If possible, a peer 'buddy' should be assigned to aid socialisation.

The Role of the EAL Co-Ordinator

The EAL Co-Ordinator liaises with the admissions team and organises the NAP coaching timetable. They provide resources and advice for the teaching of EAL students, contributing to the training of staff on EAL issues. The EAL Co-Ordinator maintains the central record of assessments which monitor EAL students' acquisition of English. At present, we use EAL Profile of Competence: Secondary.

B) General Literacy Strategy

There are strands to the Academy's drive to improve students' literacy. The following is a summary of the Academy's systems and expectations.

1. **Definition and Expectations**

Literacy is defined as how a student communicates – it is not just reading and writing but also Oracy. Every teacher is a teacher of literacy alongside their subject specialism. They are expected to support their students' literacy in their lessons by providing opportunities to develop their skills, as well as giving specific feedback (including marking for literacy).

2. **Whole-School Systems**

- All staff at KS3 and 4 mark for literacy using the Literacy Marking Symbols which should be shared with students. There is an accompanying guidance sheet for staff to support their use of literacy marking symbols.
- All staff should reinforce expectations for the presentation of written work.
- Each department or faculty has developed expectations for written work in their subject; staff should ensure this poster is visible in the classroom, and it is good practice to refer to these expectations as appropriate in the marking of written work.
- Each department or faculty also has expectations for speaking and listening in their subject; staff should ensure these posters are visible in the classroom, and it is good practice to refer to them as appropriate in lessons.
- Each year the Academy will distribute centrally-set literacy targets for the new cohort (Year 7) to assist teachers' initial marking for literacy; marking should therefore refer to these targets.
- Tier Three subject specific vocabulary lists are shared with students. Staff use a range of strategies e.g. Frayer model to support with the explicit teaching of new vocabulary
- ·The acquisition of Tier Two words is supported through 'Word of the Week' (introduced during form time and then used throughout the week by all staff).

- All staff receive CPD on how to support our 'weakest readers'. Strategies are shared and used include: guided reading, dual coding, comprehension-based questioning, wider reading for homework and explicit vocabulary instructions.

- Opportunities for reading are identified and signposted on curriculum maps. Subject specific wider reading lists to develop cultural capital and reading for pleasure have been created.

- All staff have received CPD to develop oracy in the classroom. 'Talk before writing' is used via 'structured paired discussion' in most disciplines. Sentence stems as scaffolds for whole class/ group discussions are regarded as good practice.

3. Scheme of Work Requirements

- All schemes of work should identify key vocabulary for that topic or area. It is good practice to explicitly teach these spellings and meanings in context. In dedicated classrooms, it may be useful to have them on display.

- All schemes of work should provide opportunities for reading, ideally both in class and as homework ('flipped learning' may be an option).

- All schemes of work should provide opportunities for extended writing.

4. Supporting Reading

Teachers are role models and opportunities to encourage reading should be taken where possible.

- It is good practice for staff should have a 'favourite read' poster in their classroom or on their office door.
- Please take advantage of the library as a resource, both for physical books and e-books, which are cost effective and can be ordered through the Academy librarian.
- GSA use Bedrock (in Year 7) to support reading.
- Students in year 7-9, with a lower than average reading age take part in a 10 week programme called 'Reading@Secondary'. This is delivered by specially trained LSAs. The Reading@Secondary Co-ordinator/SENCO oversees this programme. The outcome of this programme is that the targeted student makes 2 years progress in that 10 week period.

7. Staff CPD

It is good practice to offer regular development opportunities for the teaching and learning of literacy. The Literacy and EAL Co-Ordinator should endeavour to offer at least one literacy-related, and one EAL-related, training session in each Academy CPD cycle. ECTs should receive additional support for the teaching and learning of literacy and EAL as part of their development programme.

C) EAL and NAP Considerations

Summary

Students who are newly arrived in the UK (NAPs) and upon initial assessment are found to be in the early stages of developing English will receive specialist small-group English coaching and may have an adapted timetable to facilitate this. However, all students are entitled to the full National Curriculum programmes of study and therefore the vast majority of learning is accommodated in mainstream lessons, although resources may be personalised (see below). Newly Arrived Pupils' language development benefits hugely from this exposure to conversational English. Therefore, all teachers have a responsibility for teaching English as well as other subject content.
All teaching staff receive EAL training. A dedicated EAL Co-Ordinator supports the progress of EAL students. Newly Arrived Pupils feel supported and included.

Additional Key Points

• The EAL label alone is not useful. Many students may be comfortably bi-lingual. However, such students still require support with the demands of academic language and their wider reading.

• Assess NAPs initially in the student's own language if possible. Assign a peer 'buddy' to aid socialisation.

• Assume a student is academically able until there is evidence otherwise. The EAL Co-0rdinator should liaise with the students' Progress Leader as to where it is best to place a child. The teacher should monitor the student and if necessary, a change of set/ group may be appropriate.

Support for NAPs

- For students in the early stages of developing English (typically Newly Arrived Pupils) the EAL Co-Ordinator delivers one-to-one or small-group language coaching sessions. For these sessions, it is good practice to withdraw only from subjects without high social interaction, unless unavoidable. Students are typically withdrawn from one or two lessons per week, although additional learning opportunities, such as flexible learning time and summer school, may also be taken.
- The EAL Co-ordinator will plan work, which broadly approximates the content being delivered in the lesson that the student has been withdrawn from, e.g. Geography. However, NAPs often benefit from cultural as well as linguistic immersion and consideration should be taken in setting work, which supports cultural and social understanding of the United Kingdom.

EAL students in mainstream lessons

- The best, and most sustainable, practice is for teaching staff to differentiate work for EAL students themselves, after advice and guidance from the EAL Co-Ordinator, who will share exemplar work. Occasionally the EAL Co-Ordinator may directly cooperate with a department in developing EAL resources or a differentiated scheme of work.
- In almost all circumstances EAL students should follow the same courses of study as the rest of the class, although occasionally there may be a good reason for a student to complete different work

(for example, in a subject, which is not continuing if an NAP, joins at towards the end of the academic year). In that case, the EAL Co-Ordinator's opinion should be sought.

Developing Academic Language

Teachers cannot assume that students understand academic language even if it's the student's home language, or where EAL students seem comfortably bi-lingual. We have to teach and model these terms. Academic language may include subject-specific terminology, more advanced vocabulary and exam-style 'command words' such as: analyse, argue, describe, explain, evaluate, interpret and compare.
Good practice may include:

- Using visual prompts
- Giving students access to word definition
- Suggesting alternatives (synonyms)
- Use acronyms
- Model responses (exam boards have lots of resources) and where possible use the work of students

All students in a class will benefit from a specific focus on academic language.

D) **Pastoral Considerations**

As this is a language policy, further details on pastoral support generally, and especially for EAL, NAP and other students with low literacy, can be found in the relevant pastoral and SEN policies. However, three key principles are relevant to this document:

- Admissions and Setting: the Academy will provide a welcoming admission process, involving home-language support where possible. NAPs will have a 'buddy' assigned and the EAL Co-ordinator will guide on the advisability of placing the student with another who speaks the same language in form or class groups.
- Parental Links: Access to the full range of parental involvement will be supported by means of accessible communication strategies, such as translations. GSA have a team of staff who support in communicating with parents who do not have English as their first language. Written communications are translated into community languages.
- Refugees: All staff are committed to providing a safe and secure environment and being sensitive to the previous experiences of refugees and their families. The EAL co-ordinator is to liaise with the Safeguarding team if any safeguarding issues arise.