



Language Policy (EAL)

Policy prepared by: Miss Hanne Adnanes (EAL Co-Ordinator)

Responsible for policy: Miss Alex Chorley (AP of Teaching and Learning)

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Language Policy

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A) Overview

Introduction

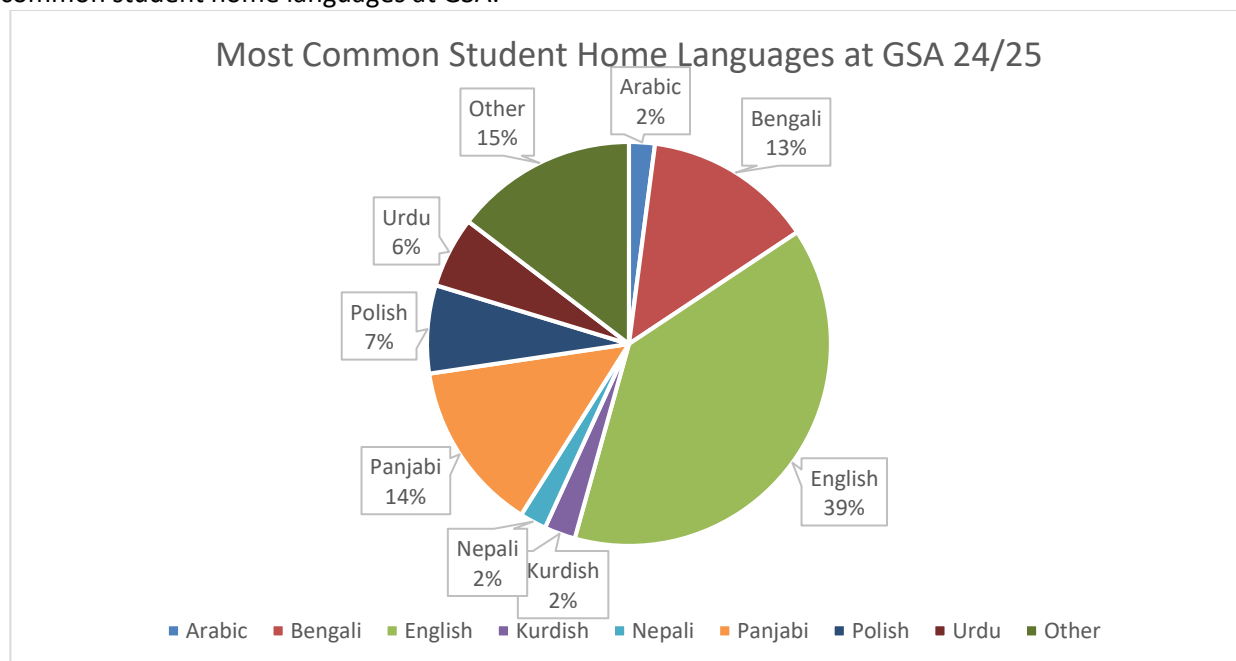
The command of language is vital to a good education, life-long learning and a happy, productive life. Language is also central to every individual's identity. Therefore, this policy will incorporate the Academy's approach to English as an Additional Language (EAL) since both home and additional languages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

George Salter Academy (GSA) has a long-standing, inclusive vision, which celebrates diversity: 'One World in One School'. Equality is also important; all students are entitled to the full National Curriculum programs of study and therefore all teachers have a responsibility for teaching English as well as other subject content. However, limited and targeted withdrawal from lessons to allow bespoke support is a useful strategy, especially for Newly Arrived Pupils (NAPs). The Academy is committed to all students having a confident command of language and acquiring the English language skills they need to be able to fulfil their academic potential.

Context

Sandwell has high levels of diversity. This is also true at George Salter where 61% of students are defined as EAL – that is, pupils who are "(...) exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English. It is not a measure of English Language proficiency or a good proxy for recent immigration" (DfE, *English proficiency of pupils with English as an additional language*, February 2020, p.4). In other words, labelling a student as EAL is not useful in itself. The local community has many second- and third-generation immigrant families and many EAL students may be comfortably multilingual. In fact, EAL students at the Academy tend to outperform monolingual speakers in terms of attainment and progress. It is often more helpful to use the term 'multilingual', and to distinguish between English proficiency levels using the DfE scale ranging from A: *New to English* to E: *Fluent*.

There are 51 different languages which GSA students consider their 'home' language. Below is a graph showing the most common student home languages at GSA:



B) General Literacy Strategy

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 and Mike Gershon.

All teachers should have a clear focus on planning for, and marking for, literacy as well as other subject content. There are strands to the Academy's drive to improve students' literacy. The following is a summary of the Academy's systems and expectations.

Definition and Expectations

Literacy is defined as how a student communicates – it is not just reading and writing but also speaking and listening (oral literacy). 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).

Whole-School Systems

- All staff at KS3 and 4 should mark for literacy using the Literacy Marking Symbols and a copy should be in every student's book **or** planner. 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 oracy 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. Teachers should ensure students' individualised targets are stuck in their books (at least for their first book of the year).

Suggested Environmental Resources

All classrooms (excluding workrooms) in the Post-16 Centre have 'Literacy Key' resources as a wall display. These are resources which support marking for literacy and encourage students to self- and peer-assess their literacy. Though not compulsory, use of these resources are good practice for all Key Stages.

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.

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 the Bedrock (in Year 7) to support reading.
- Students in year 7 with a SAS score of 69 (reading age 5.00) take part in Freshstart, a phonics based programme used to boost and consolidate decoding.
- Students in year 7-11 with a SAS of below 85 take part in Lexonik Leap, a Literacy based program aimed to increase reading ages by 36 months. This is delivered by specially trained staff and overseen by the Assistant Principal for Teaching and Learning.

Staff CPD

It is good practice to offer regular development opportunities for the teaching and learning of literacy. The Assistant Principal for Teaching and Learning 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

The support EAL students and NAPs receive is based on their English proficiency level in the four key areas: Speaking, Listening (Understanding), Reading/Viewing and Writing. This is assessed through time spent in the UK, what the students identify as their heart language (the language they find it easiest to express themselves in and think in) and, for NAPs, using the EAL Initial Assessment developed by Helen Handford at City of Wolverhampton Council as well as The Bell Foundation's EAL Assessment Framework for Secondary School.

Assessing English proficiency is complex and teacher input is vital to this process. Students may also have so called "spiky profiles", where their proficiency in one or more key area(s) may be higher or lower than in others. Once the proficiency level is determined, the appropriate support is put into place. Below is a simplified grid of the English proficiency levels (DfE, *English proficiency of pupils with English as an additional language*, February 2020, p.5) and support students may receive:

Proficiency Level	Descriptors	Support
NAP	Students who are new to the UK	English Proficiency assessment. NAP induction intervention. Paired with a student/students for social inclusion and support, if possible someone who shares a home language (referred to as a Buddy). Quality first teaching in mainstream lessons, as this supports them socially, academically and exposes them to both conversational and academic English.
A – New to English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May use first language for learning and other purposes. - May remain completely silent in the classroom. - May be copying/repeating some words or phrases. - May understand some everyday expressions in English, but may have minimal or no literacy in English. 	Quality first teaching, focusing on what the learner is able to do using graded language, home language translation, adapted work and visuals (WidgitOnline).
B – Early Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May follow day-to-day social communication in English and participate in learning activities with support. - Beginning to use spoken English for social purposes. - May understand simple instructions and can follow narrative/accounts with visual support. - May have developed some skills in reading and writing. - May have become familiar with some subject specific vocabulary. 	Targeted interventions (using WellComm and/or related to core subjects). <u>Reading:</u> - Year 7: Fresh Start - Year 7-11: Lexonik Leap - Word of the Week
C – Developing Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May participate in learning activities with increasing independence. - Able to express themselves orally in English, but structural inaccuracies are still apparent.. - Literacy will require ongoing support, particularly for understanding text and writing. - May be able to follow abstract concepts and more complex written English. 	If capacity, targeted interventions related to core subjects. <u>Reading:</u> - Year 7: Fresh Start - Year 7-11: Lexonik Leap/Advance - Word of the Week
D – Competent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oral English will be developing well, enabling successful engagement in activities across the curriculum. 	Community Language GCSE exam if literate in Polish or Punjabi.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can read and understand a wide variety of texts. - Written English may lack complexity and contain occasional evidence of errors in structure. - Needs some support to access subtle nuances of meaning, to refine usage, and to develop abstract vocabulary. 	<u>Reading:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Year 7-11: Lexonik Leap/Advance - Word of the Week
E - Fluent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can operate across the curriculum to a level of competence equivalent to that of a pupil who uses English as their first language. 	

Summary/Key Points

- All students are entitled to the full National Curriculum programmes of study and therefore the vast majority of learning is accommodated in mainstream lessons, with teaching adapted to respond to the strengths and needs of all students.
- The EAL label alone is not useful. Many students may be comfortably multilingual, and all students may require support with the demands of academic language and their wider reading. Therefore, all teachers have a responsibility for teaching English as well as other subject content.
- All teaching staff receive EAL training and there is a dedicated EAL Co-Ordinator who oversees the progress of EAL students. Students with EAL feel as much a part of the Academy community as any other student at GSA and frequently achieve phenomenal results. Newly Arrived Pupils feel supported and included.
- We always assume a student is academically able until there is evidence otherwise –NAPs therefore tend to be placed in upper ability groups until we gather information on them. To make this work, we are not afraid to 'get it wrong' and it is not uncommon to re-set in the first few weeks as assessments come in.

The Role of the EAL Co-Ordinator

- The EAL Co-Ordinator liaises with the admissions team regarding NAPs and helps assign a peer Buddy as well as helps ensure the students settle in to GSA. They also work with the admissions team to gather information about new starters both in Year 7 and throughout the academic year.
- The EAL Co-Ordinator provides resources and advice for the teaching of EAL students, contributing to the training of staff on the field of EAL and liaising with Heads of Department and teaching staff to ensure key vocabulary and topics in core subjects are accessible to all students. This work is supported through use of technology such as closed caption translation in PowerPoint and creating visuals and resources using WidgeOnline. This key vocabulary is also used in intervention sessions to ensure streamlined support.
- The EAL Co-Ordinator maintains a central record which monitors EAL students' proficiency of English. At present we use the Bell Foundation EAL Assessment Framework: Secondary to set targets and create EAL Pupil Passports for students with proficiency level *A: New to English* and *B: Early Acquisition*. For students with proficiency level *A: New to English* to *C: Developing Competence*, their English Language and English Literacy data is tracked and monitored.
- The EAL Co-Ordinator plans, resources, delivers and assesses targeted intervention sessions based on WellComm, core subjects and the City of Wolverhampton Council NAP Induction framework developed by Helen Handford, as well as Lexonik Leap and Lexonik Advance sessions.
- The EAL Co-Ordinator works with the Head of MFL to ensure eligible students are aware of and accessing Community Language exams in Polish and Punjabi.
- The EAL Co-Ordinator works with other staff to conduct a Language Survey of Year 7 at the start of the academic year to gain an overview of the languages of the new students and to raise the profile of multilingualism in line with the academy's vision of 'One World in One School'.
- The EAL Co-Ordinator conducts a Staff Language Survey at the start of the academic year to gain an overview of languages spoken and understood by staff to support when needed in work with students and/or families.
- The EAL Co-Ordinator supports other staff in contacting families through translating and/or visualising written communication and by making links with multilingual staff members.
- The EAL Co-Ordinator assesses students using Cognitive Assessment for Multilingual Learners (CAML) as and when needed to support the SENDCo with referrals of EAL students.
- The EAL Co-Ordinator stays up-to-date on the field of EAL through CPD and networking, such as STEPS and the City of Wolverhampton Council EAL Network Secondary.

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 multilingual. 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 (such as WidgitOnline)
- Giving students access to word definitions and synonyms/antonyms
- Using the Lexonik Vocabulary Portal to show the etymology and –fixes of words
- 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, etc.
- Refugees: All staff are committed to providing a safe and secure environment and being sensitive to the previous experiences of refugees and their families.