



EAL (English as an Additional Language) Policy

Leighton Park welcomes students of all nationalities and aims to give both academic and pastoral support to those whose native language is not English so that they can be fully integrated into school life.

Aims of department

The aims of the EAL department are:

- To develop essential English language skills so that students can have equal access to the curriculum and become fully integrated into school life.
- To develop students' confidence to cope with a wide variety of tasks and to become mature, independent learners.
- To assess and monitor progress in language acquisition.
- To celebrate differing cultures of EAL students.
- To assist all academic departments in helping EAL students reach their full potential.
- To prepare students for Cambridge ESOL Exams, such as the Key English Test (KET), Preliminary English Test (PET), First Certificate in English (FCE), Certificate in Advanced English (CAE) and the IELTS.

Responsibilities of the Head of EAL

The Head of Department is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the EAL Policy and for striving to achieve its aims. The Head of Department has HoD status and as such fulfils the requirements as laid out in the HoD job description.

Responsibilities of the Teaching Staff

- To support the Head of Department in fulfilling the aims of the department.

Admissions and Assessment process

The EAL department works closely with Admissions in order to assess prospective students' level of English prior to entry. We aim to admit students whose English is sufficient to cope with the curriculum which we offer at Leighton Park, including those who will need EAL support once they have arrived.

Ideally, overseas students visit the school for an interview and a written English test. Unfortunately, this is often not possible, and applicants are sent our written English test, and interviewed via Skype. Obviously, there can be difficulties with this system, and we are unable to produce a truly reliable assessment of students' level of English until they actually arrive. All overseas students are therefore given an EAL assessment soon after arrival at the school.

Sixth Form entry requirements are under review. It is suggested that applicants should have one of the following:

- GCSE or IGCSE English Language grade 4
- IGCSE English as a Second Language grade 5
- IELTS 5
- First Certificate (FCE) pass

EAL Curriculum

EAL classes are provided for all non-native speakers whose initial assessment shows a need for support. Lessons aim to help students in three main ways: -

- i. To improve the four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, as appropriate.
- ii. To support the students with academic subjects (usually liaising with subject teachers).
- iii. To prepare students for external Cambridge ESOL Exams. They are entered for KET, PET, FCE, CAE and IELTS. All students are accompanied by a member of the EAL department to an off-site exam centre to sit these exams.
- iv. To prepare students in Years 10 & 11 for IGCSE English as a Second Language.

Years 7-11

Classes take part within the mainstream curriculum, in place of Modern Foreign Languages, as follows:

- Year 7 Either 4 or 8 lessons per fortnight
- Year 8 Either 4 or 8 lessons per fortnight
- Year 9 Either 4 or 8 lessons per fortnight
- Year 10 5 lessons per fortnight
- Year 11 5 lessons per fortnight

Some students in Years 7-9 with stronger language skills are able to follow one modern foreign language in place of some of the EAL lessons.

The EAL department also provides smaller-than-usual GCSE English classes for international students in Years 10 and 11 in order to give extra support where needed.

Pre-Sixth

Pre-Sixth students will receive EAL support where necessary, either integrated into the existing Year 11 group where numbers permit, or as a separate group. They also receive 10, rather than 8, English GCSE lessons as a separate group. This allows their needs to be met more effectively.

Sixth Form

All students are advised to attend classes even if they have a suitable qualification (e.g. IGCSE, GCSE, IELTS OR TOEFL) for higher education already. The classes take place in small groups during students' private study periods.

The Sixth form usually have 4 lessons per fortnight. Students prepare for the IELTS exam which they sit in the February/March of their final year. If they achieve the band required for their choice of university, they can cease EAL lessons in order to concentrate on their A levels. However, they are encouraged to continue to attend classes. This way they are able to maintain the development of their language skills which will help them achieve good A level grades as well as preparing them for university.

EAL and SEN

Where there is a concern, the EAL department will liaise with the SENCO to determine whether the problems are due to limitations in their command of the language or arise from a learning difficulty that would be evident in their first language. After discussion with students and parents, an Educational Psychologist's assessment may be recommended. The cost of this is met by the parents.

Monitoring, Reviewing and Evaluation

Grammar and vocabulary are regularly tested in class. Spoken and listening skills are constantly assessed through classroom oral work and listening exercises. Written work is general assessed through prep.

The EAL department prepares EAL assessments/examinations in line with the other school departments. Students are also prepared for the Cambridge KET, PET, FCE, and CAE. They are advised when they are ready to sit these examinations, irrespective of age or year group. Arrangements are made for them to sit the exam at a nearby centre. These exams are chosen for various reasons: -

- i. They have international recognition.
- ii. They are used in similar establishments.
- iii. Topics and tasks are generally relevant to the needs of our pupils.
- iv. Materials and course books are widely available.

We feel that these exams are effective if used to encourage progress and set targets. However, we are careful not to become too exam focused because our aim in the EAL department is to improve levels of English so that students are able to cope with their other subjects.

In the Upper Sixth year students prepare for the IELTS examination which provides a well-recognised qualification in English for entry to higher education in the UK.

Some students wish to further their education in other countries e.g. USA, Canada and need to pass the TOEFL exam. We can help them prepare for the exam, but students have to make their own arrangements to sit it.

Intervention

The EAL department will arrange student observations in subject classes where the teacher feels there are particular issues with a student's level of English. This enables the department to ascertain where particular problems lie in order to give maximum support according to individual needs.

Guidance given to Teaching Staff

The EAL department liaises on a regular basis with other departments and advice is given where individual students are concerned. There is a brief list of issues that all staff should be aware of in circulation ('Top Tips for teaching EAL students'), and the EAL department carries out regular observations of our students in other subject lessons.

Pastoral Support

Leighton Park recognises that students will come from a range of ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The students are supported individually according to their exposure to British culture, boarding life and level of English. All students receive a welcome booklet before arrival and will be fully inducted by the Head of Boarding and Housemaster/Mistress. Each student will be the responsibility of a personal tutor who will monitor their academic progress and take care of their welfare needs. The tutor will work closely with the Head of EAL, Head of Boarding, Head of Pastoral and Housemaster/Mistress. In addition, the EAL department has an open-door policy for students to be able to bring any pastoral issues to our attention.

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Review date:	November 2020
Next review due:	November 2022
Publication:	Z:\Policies\Current Policies\Academic Honesty Policy V:\School Policies\Academic Honesty Policy