



British School
of Bucharest

EAL POLICY

Reviewed & Approved by

Senior Leadership Team

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INTRODUCTION

BSB is an international school and we are proud to have students from a variety of countries and with a variety of home languages (Mother Tongues) in our school community.

Many of our students speak English as a second or even as a third language, and therefore may not have the English language skills necessary to cope with the demands of the British National Curriculum. Depending on their age, students new to English will likely acquire conversational fluency (BICS) in around two years, but will usually need a minimum of five years to achieve competence in academic English (CALP). Students new to BSB need to be assessed to determine whether they need EAL lessons, and where a need has been identified, to be provided with sufficient EAL support to enable them to better integrate into their mainstream classes, as well as being able to achieve their full potential academically.

Research has shown that continued study of a child's first language is a key factor in second language acquisition, and the advantages of bilingualism have been well documented. We therefore encourage all of our students to participate in a Co-curricular Mother Tongue Programme, which enables them to continue academic study in their mother tongue as well as in English.

AIMS

- To welcome and value the cultural, linguistic and educational experiences that EAL students bring to BSB
- To implement school-wide strategies to ensure that EAL students are supported both in the academic language of their curriculum subjects and in general English grammar and vocabulary
- To develop students' ability to understand and use English effectively for the purposes of practical communication (BICS) as well as in an academic context (CALP)
- To provide a positive, supportive and motivating learning environment and a smooth transition between Key Stages
- To ensure that all EAL students receive the appropriate level of support
- To maintain students' self-esteem and confidence by acknowledging and giving status to their home languages / mother tongues

OBJECTIVES

- To assess new students at BSB in order to accurately determine their level of English proficiency and the amount of withdrawn EAL support that a student needs. These lessons will primarily involve withdrawal from Modern Language lessons. Additional withdrawal may come from a variety of other areas including English, Humanities or PSCE lessons in Secondary, and appropriate times in Primary after discussion with class teachers.
- To equip teachers and support staff with the knowledge, skills and resources to be able to support and monitor EAL students
- To prepare EAL students for internationally recognised qualifications: Starters, Movers, Flyers in Primary and KET, PET, iGCSE English 2nd Language, and IELTS in Secondary
- To monitor and assess students' progress regularly and to use the data to inform planning, teaching and learning
- To ensure that there is regular dialogue and feedback between the EAL department and the class teachers (Primary) and subject teachers (Secondary)
- To encourage continued study of students' Mother Tongues, either in classes provided by BSB or elsewhere

TEACHING AND LEARNING

In order to ensure that we meet the needs of EAL students, EAL teachers will:

- assess new students' English level as soon as possible
- employ a range of strategies within each lesson to reinforce understanding and meaning so as to develop language in context
- teach general English grammar and vocabulary but also "content support", which develops the students' knowledge of subject-specific language and structures, as well as Academic English
- stay up to date with best practice in EAL and be prepared to share this in the department and beyond
- regularly assess students' progress both in grammar and vocabulary and in "content language"



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In order to ensure that we meet the needs of EAL students, Primary class teachers and Secondary subject staff will:

- have an understanding that a limited knowledge of English does not reflect a lack of ability or a lack of literacy in a student's mother tongue
- give newly arrived students time to absorb English, bearing in mind that there is a "silent period" when those new to the language understand more English than they use
- recognise that EAL students need more time to process answers and to complete work
- appreciate and acknowledge students' mother tongues and allow them structured opportunities to use them
- have high expectations and expect students to participate in all classroom activities/tasks, whilst realising that sufficient scaffolding must be provided for EAL students to successfully complete tasks
- monitor progress carefully and ensure that EAL students are set appropriate and challenging work, including extension tasks for the more able. This can involve carrying out extension research in the mother tongue or bilingually with outcomes delivered in English
- group students so that EAL students hear good models of English

ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

INITIAL ASSESSMENT:

Incoming Year 1-6 students will be assessed at the start of the year using the Oxford Young Learners English Placement test. Students joining Year 7 and above will be tested using the Oxford Placement Test.

ASSESSING PROGRESS IN EAL

EYFS, KS1 and KS2: Students move up to another level in EAL after a joint decision by the class teacher and the EAL department. Students are continually assessed throughout the year through small tests linked to the Cambridge Global English scheme. Students may also be assessed using past examination papers for the Cambridge Starters, Movers or Flyers tests where deemed appropriate. Students generally exit from EAL following a discussion between the EAL department and the class teacher.

KS3 and 4: There will be ongoing informal assessment through the year in the form of homework, class tests, and regular spelling tests. There will also be formal half-termly assessments to test students' progress in subject-specific and academic language.

Students will be prepared for KET or PET examinations in the KET or PET CCAs and also during some of their EAL lessons. The Cambridge ESOL examinations are usually taken in May / June. Students are entered for the examination commensurate with their English language ability and our success rate is high. When a student passes the PET examination, they will no longer receive EAL withdrawal lessons and will return to mainstream lessons, although support will continue to be offered to students passing PET in Year 10 or higher.

Students who are deemed not to be progressing sufficiently in EAL will be offered the option to continue intensive classes at an additional cost.

PARENT CONSULTATION

Parents of students requiring additional EAL support will be invited to a meeting to discuss the support needed; the number of hours the student will receive EAL lessons; when the student is ready to take the KET or PET examinations; and when the student is deemed ready to stop receiving EAL support, with the agreement of the EAL department and the student's class teacher / subject teachers.

Spoken and written communication between the students and teaching and nonteaching staff, and between the school and parents and the local community, will be positive and appropriate, including the use of students' home languages where needed.