

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) POLICY

1. Overview

- 1.1 The department provides specialist tuition in EAL as well as pastoral care for students at St Chris. The aim is twofold: academic and pastoral.
- 1.2 On the academic side, the students are taught either in group lessons or individually in order to speed up their proficiency in English. This enables them to adapt more quickly to life and conditions in an English school, provides support for their mainstream lessons and, if necessary, prepares them for internationally-recognised English language qualifications. The teaching also addresses the special needs of overseas students, helping to bridge gaps which may be found in their knowledge of British life and culture.
- 1.2 On the pastoral side, the EAL tutor maintains close links with the students' subject teachers, advisers and houseparents, acting at times as mentor amid the difficulties encountered by some students in adapting to an unfamiliar country, its language and its customs.
- 1.3 The language level of every overseas student is tested on arrival to check that the language level is the same as the original application assessment. This ensures the School can make any necessary alterations to the EAL provision given.

2. Course Content

- 2.1 This is very largely tailored to each student's needs and takes into account his/her current level, strengths and weaknesses within the language, GCSE/AS/ A level courses (if appropriate) and plans for higher education (if a Sixth Former).

3. Examinations Offered

- 3.1 We prepare students for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Students can also be prepared for the TOEFL and SATs if planning to study in the US.
- 3.2 The decision as to which examination the student should be prepared for rests largely with the EAL tutor but needs to be discussed and agreed with the Head of Department and, in certain cases, the parents. The examinations have different emphases and therefore suit different students in many cases.

4. Homework

- 4.1 EAL homework is usually set each lesson. Most students have two lessons and so homework should be set for the following lesson with the longer pieces of written work being planned around the individual students' homework timetable.

- 4.2 Homework should be linked to classwork and form part of a unit of work rather than an isolated exercise unless particular emphasis is needed or practice for an exam is required. Its purpose may be to prepare for work to be developed in class, to reinforce skills covered in the lesson or to extend classwork activities.
- 4.3 It is the tutor's responsibility to ensure that instructions are clear and that student has recorded the details and due date of homework in their homework diaries correctly and that this is then transferred to Show My Homework on the School system.

5. Organisation and Presentation of Work

- 5.1 Students in I-V Group usually work in an exercise book, which is used for short exercises as well as planning and drafting work. It also allows the tutor to give written feedback, which can be referred back to when needed. In addition, students also have a ring binder for any word-processed or polished work as well as to retain photocopied sheets which are used to supplement the students' coursebook.
- 5.2 Students in the Sixth Form usually use a ring binder for all their work/notes, which they will need to refer to for revision, consolidation and exam preparation.
- 5.3 Work is expected to be presented neatly with title and date. However, tutors may use their discretion with the school policy regarding pens and may allow pencil to be used when a student is clearly struggling with the English script, and may be making numerous mistakes. In such a case, the use of a pencil and a clean eraser will actually enhance the finished work and therefore the student's self-esteem.

6. Links with the Library

- 6.1 The department has its own selection of graded readers. Although the resources in the main library are, in many cases, beyond the EAL students, they are encouraged to use the resources where they can. Linda Aird, the librarian, also stocks a selection of dictionaries (including picture dictionaries) for easy reference during private study or prep time. These resources are reviewed regularly with Linda.

7. ICT

- 7.1 Students are encouraged to support their work in EAL (where necessary) by using internet sources for research, and by using technology to draft, critically review and amend their work.

8. Personal Development

8.1 Overall

- 8.1.1 Students are exposed to age-appropriate versions of great literature via the EAL library – all texts are graded from 1 – 6 (starters to advanced learners) with a broad range of genres at each level. The content and subsequent discussion or report/review writing give opportunity for

exploration of themes and self-reflection. Personal writing, both prose and poetry, offer the chance for self-expression.

8.2 Moral Development

- 8.2.1 Similar to personal development, the texts that the students are exposed to encourage them to make responsible and reasoned judgments on moral issues. The group discussion work at an advanced level, in particular, allows scope for debates on topical issues that develop language as well as providing an opportunity for the students to reflect on their views and moral standpoints.

8.3 Social Development

- 8.3.1 As with cultural development, this is a core aspect of all that we do in the department, particularly at an earlier level where language acquisition is the very key to all social development.
- 8.3.2 The encouragement of positive social relationships, taking responsibility and participation in the school community is largely dependent on an understanding and appreciation of how English language is used.
- 8.3.3 Examples of activities that support development are diary writing, autobiographical writing, and poetry.

8.4 Cultural Development

- 8.4.1 The cultural development of the students in the EAL department is an integral part of all that we do. Much of the work done (both in terms of topics discussed and texts studied) addresses various aspects of British life and culture. From a very early point the traditions and culture of a British boarding school are obviously part of what they learn about.
- 8.4.2 Their own cultures provide a valuable resource, too, and very worthwhile work can be done comparing the cultural beliefs and traditions of their own and other students' cultures.
- 8.4.3 Students are encouraged to read the daily newspapers available in the library and the boarding houses; this is especially to see how news from their own countries is handled, as well as general current affairs.

9. Assessment and Marking

- 9.1 Assessment of progress at the higher level is relatively straightforward in that students are preparing for a specific examination. Their linguistic proficiency can therefore be gauged through practice tests and mock examinations, which are carried out regularly. Their results are the final proof of such progress.
- 9.2 At a lower level, where examinations are not taken, the tutor has to ensure that regular progress tests are given on completion of each module of work. These progress checks are incorporated into most of the course books that we use.

- 9.3 Marking should be thorough and informative at all times. A positive comment should be written before suggestions for improvement are made. A grade is not given on any work unless it is specifically marked as an examination piece, when (in such situations) it should be graded as it is in the examination itself.

10. Setting up EAL lessons and arranging withdrawal from mainstream lessons

- 10.1 At the beginning of each academic year the tutors must sit down to arrange their teaching timetables. EAL demands that students be withdrawn from other lessons or taught after school or at lunchtime. Students in their GCSE years usually choose 3 rather than 4 GCSE options to make room for their EAL tuition. They generally attend IV Group English to increase their exposure to the language and help their reading and writing skills in particular. They then drop English and concentrate on EAL in the V Group unless their English teacher believes they will pass their GCSE.
- 10.2 The Sixth Formers have more flexibility and their EAL can be fitted around their other commitments. In KS3, students are usually withdrawn from their modern language lessons. Where this does not fit in with the tutor's timetable they can be withdrawn from P.E., a Drama/Music rotation or PSHE. In all instances the students' preferences and best interests are borne in mind and if necessary they are taught outside the main timetable, in most cases after school.

11. Professional Development of Staff

- 11.1 The tutors are encouraged to attend courses to develop and enhance their teaching, tutoring and knowledge of specific examinations.

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