

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

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1 Introduction

Doucecroft School is an independent special school for autistic pupils, and all have an EHC (Education, Health and Care) Plan.

Special educational needs are addressed by all staff in the school.

This policy states the school's approach towards identification of and meeting the needs of pupils who have English as an additional language. This policy applies to all pupils and young adults (including their parents), from our Primary Department through to our Transition Hub.

2 Definition

English as an additional language (EAL) is defined as: 'a child whose first language is not English' encompassing children who are fully bilingual and all those at different stages of learning English.

EAL children will need varying levels of provision so that they can access all aspects of the curriculum.

3 The Pyramid for Learning

The "Pyramid of Development" developed by Taylor and Trott (1991) shows the importance of integration in a child's development. It is recognised that the integration of the sensory systems and the development of attention, listening and language skills are a prerequisite for all higher-level skills of functioning, culminating in learning.

Doucecroft school uses SCERTS to help provide the best possible provision for pupils who are taught in the autism-specific classrooms. The school provides a **therapeutic environment** that is environment rich in a variety of communication and regulation methods that gives the pupils the maximum opportunity to understand and to express themselves.

We believe that:

- EAL children learn to communicate in English through immersion in a broad, rich curriculum.
- The school environment promotes language development through the rich use of language, technology and visual prompts.
- The school structure, pastoral care and overall ethos help EAL children integrate into the school whilst valuing diversity.
- Bilingualism is viewed as a positive and life-enriching asset.

It is important that that pupils who are learning English as an additional language (EAL) should receive their full entitlement to the broad, balanced and individually tailored curriculum.

For our pupils, **who have** communication difficulties, the added problem of pupils EAL increases their needs. All pupils have EHC Plans from which regular termly targets are devised and updated, at least 3 times per year. Should any pupil with EAL require additional support, this will be reflected in their EHC Plans.

Whenever possible we try to arrange for the pupil's first language to be spoken and experienced. If we do not have any members of staff sufficiently able or confident to speak the appropriate language then we encourage family members, volunteers and visitors to assist with bilingual support by providing taped recordings, telephone conversations and actual contact.