

Moyderwell Mercy Primary School

English Language Support Policy for EAL Children

Introduction

There are 369 pupils enrolled in Moyderwell Mercy Primary School as of September 2015. 255 of these pupils come from different countries across Europe, Asia and Africa. They are for the most part multilingual. Many of the pupils are in the early stages of English Language acquisition - 23 of the children are in their first year of Language Support, 20 are in their second year of Language support, 26 are in a third year and 186 are in a fourth year or more in the school.

Rationale

The original policy was formulated in 2009 by the then EAL team. This is a reviewed policy which was updated in March 2011, due to the reduction in the number of teachers on the EAL Team, and an ever increasing number of EAL pupils.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

It is the school's aim to lead the pupils towards a sense of their own worth, a pride in our school and town, and a respect for the diversity of languages, cultures and religions that are in our school.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure that the parents/guardians/pupils/staff have the necessary information to ensure that the pupil seeking enrolment will have his/her needs effectively met, thereby maximising their opportunity to learn.

The policy also aims to ensure that pupils learning English as an Additional Language will be fully included in the life of the school community, to develop conversation and social fluency in English, and to develop cognitive and academic language that is required for them to experience success within the Irish education system.

Guidelines (Content of Policy)

This policy is addressed under the following headings.

The Role of the Language Support Teacher

The primary responsibility of the language support teacher is to promote the pupil's development of English Language Proficiency so that he or she can gradually gain access to the curriculum, ultimately achieving the same educational opportunities as English speaking peers.

The Language support teacher's role is to provide support to each individual child in relation to curricular, social and pastoral needs as they arise.

The Language Support Teacher also has responsibility for the enrolment of EAL students. See Section on Enrolment.

To provide supplementary teaching in language acquisition.

To conduct language assessments using the Primary School Assessment Kit.

To maintain and review pupil records.

To liaise with principal, class teacher and parents.

The responsibility of the language support teacher is to deliver a programme of English language tuition which is based exclusively on the primary curriculum and the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and which prepares and supports the child in:

Accessing classroom learning

Socializing with peers.

Collaboration between the Language Teacher and the Class Teacher

The Language teacher collaborates with the mainstream class teacher to set relevant and achievable learning targets for each pupil.

The teacher prepares the pupil on an ongoing basis, to access mainstream learning, initially in part and later more fully.

The teacher helps the pupil to develop appropriate strategies and skills to support future formal education in general.

Organisation of Language Support

This is achieved by a mixture of inclass support and withdrawal of EAL students.

The time allocated to each group is usually approximately forty five minutes.

Assessment

The PSAK Initial interview takes place some days following enrolment.

A Set 1/Placement test takes place a number of weeks after the pupil's enrolment, to allow for a settling in period. The assessment task assesses a pupil's proficiency across two or four language skills, of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

The tests help to establish a pupil's level of English on arrival, and monitor progress over time in Language support, and identify the point at which a pupil no longer requires additional language support.

Each EAL student has a specific test folder showing their results and progress. An individual file for each pupil will be maintained to include all assessments, scoring sheets and pupil assessment profiles.

Programme Planning

There are 13 Thematic Units (slightly less for Junior and Senior Infants), taking account both of the need for socialisation of the pupils and the learning goals, prescribed in the curriculum for language support as outlined in 'Up and Away', over the course of two years.

Emphasis at all levels of language acquisition is placed on understanding, speaking, reading and writing.

Where possible, children are seen on a daily basis for approximately 45 minutes.

Support takes place in the EAL room and the mainstream classroom. In relation to

inclass support there are a variety of interventions as well as supplementary teaching in small groups.

Aspects of the English Literacy and EAL Programmes are devised in consultation with the class teacher.

There is a wide variety of materials and resources which reflect diversity in culture, language and customs, throughout the school. This includes books, relevant wordlists, pictorial representation of themes, picture dictionaries etc.

Recording and Monitoring of Pupils' Progress

See section on Assessment.

Individual Teacher Planning and Reporting

The approach used for yearly planning is based on the PPDS Long Term Plan for Language Support. Fortnightly and monthly plans are devised by individual support teachers.

Success Criteria

The success of this policy will be based on feedback from parents and teachers. It should ensure that adequate language support is given to EAL pupils to gain access to the curriculum, achieving the same educational opportunities as English speaking peers.

This policy is subject to review as the need arises, based on feedback from parents, guardians, teachers and Department circulars.

Discharge Procedure

Department of Education and Science guidelines specify that each child can receive language support until the child has reached the B1:3 benchmark in four areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing. *