The Lotus Academy Trust
Transforming affected lives

The Damara School

Specialist SEMH Independent School

English as an Additional Language

Approved by: Trust Board	
Initial Ratification: 31 August 2019	Reviewed: October 2020, September 2023
Next review due by: September 2026	

Statement of Commitment

At The Damara School, we are committed to ensuring that every child succeeds and reaches their full potential. We are dedicated to raising the achievement and attainment of pupils with EAL enabling them to do the best they can within a positive, supportive, secure and safe learning environment. Through quality first teaching based on experiences and talk, we aim to meet the language needs of our learners.

Our pupils may come from diverse backgrounds with a wide range of language skills therefore we need to cater for an increasing multilingual community.

Aims

As a school we aim to:

- Provide a welcoming environment in which pupils will learn most effectively
- Provide support to pupils with EAL needs
- Plan and teach lessons using learning styles most appropriate to EAL learners
- Provide an inclusive curriculum
- Promote home languages across school and encourage and support discussion of learning (in home language) at home
- Monitor pupils progress regularly against the NASSEA step levels and assess pupils in class and set targets based on these assessments.
- Ensure pupils are making progress and are able to access the school curriculum
- Support pupils who are at risk of under achieving
- Celebrate pupils achievements in school as well as in extra-curricular activities

This policy aims to support our planning, organisation, teaching and assessment procedures and to support the use of resources and strategies, in order to meet the needs of pupils who have English as an Additional Language (EAL). Our goal is to promote language awareness and raise pupil attainment, progress and achievement.

What is EAL?

EAL means English as an Additional Language - when a pupil speaks a home language other than English. We are committed to providing appropriate and personalised support for all pupils with EAL.

Throughout their time at school, we will provide pupils with the necessary means to access the curriculum.

We give children the opportunity to improve their fluency in speaking, reading, writing and understanding English.

Definitions of an EAL Learner :- "First language is the language to which the child was initially exposed during early development and continues to use this language at home and community. If a child acquires English subsequent to early development then English is not their first language no matter how proficient in it they become" DFES Guidance 2007.

Bilingual Learner:- " Bilingual here is taken to mean all pupils who use or have access to more than one language at home or at school- it does not necessarily imply fluency in both or all languages" DFES Guidance 2007

Advanced Bilingual Learner: - "Advanced Bilingual learners are pupils who have had all or most of their school education in the UK and whose oral proficiency in English is usually indistinguishable from that of pupils with English as a first language but whose writing may still show distinctive features related to the language background" DCFS 2009.

Planning and Teaching for pupils with EAL needs

Teachers consider the needs of bilingual learners in their planning and teaching. In class, pupils are taught to learn using a variety of strategies. Pupils learn independently, as a whole class, in pairs, in groups and through collaborative activities. Children are encouraged to explore a range of learning styles - visual, auditory and kinaesthetic – and resources are prepared to reflect the needs of individuals across each class. Pupils are encouraged to share languages with their peers.

At our school, we place great emphasis on 'Talk for Writing' activities, which underpin the development of language for oral and written communication. Across school, we use consistent symbols through our marking codes and follow Alan Peat and Pie Corbett approaches in English, eg: story mapping. Guided talk and the use of visual stimulus is of particular benefit to our EAL learners. In addition, we have recently embraced a whole school 'Talk for Maths' approach (from Year 1 to Year 6) to develop our pupils' understanding of concepts and language in Maths.

A comprehensive programme of intervention is in place for our EAL pupils and those who speak English at an 'early acquisition' level, to support their access to the curriculum in class. Our EAL TAs liaise closely with class teachers before planning and delivering sessions.

Monitoring and Assessment

The class teacher is responsible for the assessment of all pupils in class. As outlined above, he/she liaises closely with the SLT to identify and address needs. The member of SLT meets regularly with the EAL TAs to review pupil progress, intervention groupings and assessments, according to the 'NASSEA EAL Assessment Framework'.

Teachers direct Teaching Assistants to provide additional, targeted support, through our Pupil Premium Pledge and Group Acceleration Programmes, as appropriate.

EAL Role and responsibilities

The Assistant Headteacher's role is to manage EAL effectively across the school, to develop the quality of provision for EAL pupils and to contribute to raising the educational achievement of pupils with EAL by working collaboratively with teaching and support staff.

To achieve the above, the Assistant Headteacher will:
- disseminate information and key messages effectively

- represent and promote the needs of EAL pupils
- advise teachers about the development of EAL strategies, planning and assessment
- actively contribute to the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the EAL policy
- keep up to date regarding EAL 'Good Practice'
- develop and maintain assessment procedures
- audit resources
- prepare and update EAL action plan
- take part in monitoring of teaching, planning and books.

Resources

The school's EAL resources include bilingual dictionaries, dual-language books, sight words in other languages, games and audio materials.

Induction

The Induction programme begins with a thorough interview process, to ensure we can offer the best support possible for our new pupils and their families.

Class teachers and SLT monitor the settling-in period closely, to enable a smooth transition for EAL pupils joining our school.

Key Principles for supporting EAL pupils

Key principles include:

- Language is central to our identity. Therefore the home language of all pupils and staff should be recognised and valued. Pupils are encouraged to maintain their home language and use it in the school environment.
- Where possible, we use other pupils/ adults who use the same home language as the new arrival.
- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum. We also ensure that the newly arrived EAL pupil works in collaborative groups or pairs with simple repetitive language.
- Group EAL pupils with good English speaking role models.
- Use as many visual prompts as possible and communication friendly practices.
- As EAL learners tend to stay within a narrow range of familiar vocabulary, we offer planned intervention to introduce new vocabulary and grammatical forms.
- Supply plenty of opportunities for hand on (kinaesthetic) learning such as role play, games and visits.

Strategies for working with children new to English

- Provide lots of hands on experience so children can learn the new language through participating in activities that support cognitive development.
- Teach pupils useful words and phrases (enabling language) and the routines of the classroom in order for them to communicate with their peer group.
- Additional visual support is provided e.g. Visual timetable, communication fans, gestures, pictures, photographs, posters, objects and demonstrations.
- Classroom activities have clear language and learning objectives, use of appropriate resources and support where available to enable pupils to participate and access the curriculum in all areas.
- Key language features are identified in all curriculum areas for e.g. language structures, key vocabulary and forms of text.
- Create a language rich environment.
- Display positive images of people from ethnic minorities.