



EAL (English as an Additional Language) statement/protocol

Statement of Intent

At ACE we undertake to include all children and welcome those who are not able to speak or understand English.

Our strategy to support these children and their families will be implemented by all members of staff, and temporary or new staff will receive support and information during their induction to enable them to follow the same strategies.

Children attending our setting may be monolingual in English or another heritage language, or multilingual and able to understand and speak a number of languages.

It is important to identify the child's first language at the pre-admission stage, which is why we ask the question 'FIRST LANGUAGE' on our application form; to establish whether the parents are able to converse in English, or whether they may need alternative support to understand the routines and learning environment that their child will experience.

To speak another language other than English or to be multi lingual will be celebrated and not seen as a deficit or disadvantage for the individual children and their family. It is the responsibility of staff to be flexible and creative to ensure that effective communication takes place.

Creating a positive environment

Children from different cultures may find our setting environment quite strange. It is important that we include pictures with which the children can identify. These may be of landscapes, houses, families, or children playing.

Bilingual books will be displayed in the book area, and where possible a parent or staff member will be asked to co-tell a bilingual story with the children, or record a simple story for the children to listen to whilst looking at the book with an adult. Staff who can speak an alternative language will be encouraged to use it with the children in a variety of situations.

The role-play area will reflect diversity and the staff are responsible for ensuring the children respect and understand the function of the resources on offer.

Language rich environment

Communication involves speaking, listening and understanding and affects the social as well as the learning outcomes for children. A language rich environment will be provided for all children, and any strategies which we use to support EAL children will also benefit all children, including those with special needs.

Staff must find ways of encouraging children to keep talking, even if they are unable to do so in English

- *We will keep language simple and literal initially so that the child has the best opportunity to understand*

- *We will give instructions to the child individually and with eye contact, getting down to the child's level, as generalised instructions are hard to follow*
- *We will give plenty of time for the child to respond – it takes time to translate!*
- *We will learn key words in the child's first language so they can tell us important things like needing the toilet, being thirsty, wanting to play with a toy.*
- *We will use non-verbal clues when working with the child*
- *We will choose stories which are simple, have clear pictures, repetitive, but interesting (Farmer Duck for example)*
- *We will encourage the child to teach the other children the name of objects in their own language*
- *We will borrow music/story CDs from the family to play to the whole group to enjoy*
- *We will model correct sentences for the child when they have tried to communicate.*

Alternative ways of communicating

Up to 80% of everyday communication is non-verbal and it is vital that this knowledge is used by all staff to facilitate communication.

Therefore all staff **will engage with the EAL children using non-verbal communication alongside the verbal**: This will involve the use of sign language, symbols, visual timetables, drama, and drawing as well as props for stories.

Different stages experienced by EAL children

We will respect the different phases that EAL children may go through:

- *Clinging/crying phase – like all new children the child may be frightened of being left in a new environment: parents will be welcome to stay initially, or leave the child for shorter periods. The child will have a named key person (as all children do) who will be able to facilitate and comfort the child during the initial settling in period.*
- *Watching/silent phase – the child may not want to take part in group activities initially and should be allowed to watch and observe the other children until they are confident to join in.*
- *Noisy phase: some EAL children will go through a phase of shouting in order to make themselves understood: we encourage them to speak quietly but will acknowledge and praise their efforts to communicate.*
- *Physical phase: children who cannot communicate in words may become physical in their interaction with other children. We will intervene calmly and model appropriate words for the child to learn such as “I want to play with the...”, “please can I play too”, “can I do that”.*
- *Understanding/not speaking phase: we will recognise that children understand a new language much faster than they can speak it, and will therefore always use verbal instructions or comments alongside non-verbal ones.*

Setting Boundaries

All children quickly recognise the word or symbol for “no” and we must all ensure that the children with EAL are given the same clear boundaries as other children in the setting. If children consistently fail to understand these, they key worker will approach the parent and ask them to explain them to the child.

Working with Parents/Carers

Parents from other countries may have no personal experience of pre-school/early years education as we know it. It is important that sufficient time is given to them the key principles of our system, and the routines the children experience.

We ask for crucial details before a child starts at the school: country of origin, religion, language and key cultural needs of the child, along with any dietary restrictions, these are all be shared with the staff team, to prevent misunderstandings.

Any letters sent home will be explained verbally to the parent.

Parents are encouraged to contribute to the learning of the children by visiting (when COVID-19 restrictions allow), via zoom storytelling, sharing significant events/festivals and suggesting activities such as cooking with the children.

Assessment

Where concerns are exposed through the regular assessment of the child, it will be the responsibility of the key person to discuss the child's first language competency with the parents. If this is not age appropriate, the key person should inform the setting SENCO's (**Diana Church (Lead Practitioner) or Bethany Peck**) with a view to signposting the family to strategies given in the Early Years SEND Toolkit focussed around speech, language and communication.

It is important to remember the SEND Code of Practice makes it unequivocally clear that 'a lack of competence in English must not be equated with learning difficulties'. However, additional support strategies will overlap.

When the progress of the child in their home language appears appropriate, they should discuss the needs of the child and whether they need to be encouraged to take up more learning opportunities which are not language dependent.

Resources

Whenever resources are being ordered they should be relevant for all the children including the EAL children. All orders will be discussed by the staff team including the Enco and if inappropriate alternatives will be sought.

Responsibilities

All staff will be familiar with this protocol and be involved in seeing that it is carried out

The Headteacher will be responsible for sharing this protocol with all new or relief staff.

The key person will be responsible for liaising with the parents, and monitoring the progress of the individual child.

Policy Adopted: Autumn term 2022

Review Date: Autumn term 2023

Policy signed by setting Enco: Rebecca Fayers

Co-signed by setting Special Educational Needs/Disabilities (SEN/D) Lead: Diana Church and Bethany Peck