



## **St. Francis' College**

### ***English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy***

#### **Introduction**

The 'College' refers to all the staff and pupils of the Prep Department and Senior School which includes Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Pre-Prep (Key Stage 1), Prep (Key Stage 2), and Senior School (Key Stages 3-5).

#### **The Aims of the EAL (English as an Additional Language) Department**

The EAL department aims to:

- a) prepare students for external EAL examinations (Yr10 and Yr 11: Pearson Edexcel IGCSE English as a Second Language; Sixth Form: International English Language Testing System - IELTS) required for entry to universities in the UK and overseas;
- b) help students gain the best grades possible at GCSE and A Level;
- c) help students to operate successfully in their chosen subjects, offering in-class and/or out-of-class support where necessary and as requested;
- d) teach students to become as proficient as possible in understanding and using the English language in all its forms;
- e) introduce students to some cultural aspects of the UK;
- f) help students to integrate into English life and develop their social skills; and
- g) be a point of contact for subject staff when students experience difficulties.

#### **New pupils and the initial assessment of language ability**

Before joining the College, all prospective EAL pupils are required to sit an Entrance Test in Maths (appropriate for their age) and take a Password test (Password Younger for Yr7 and below). This is an online EAL test in which pupils have to complete a given number of questions within a certain time-frame. Their scores are made immediately available to the Head of EAL. Pupils also complete a writing task which is printed off by the Head of EAL, and then used to confirm the results of the Password. Comments are noted and sent to the Head via Admissions. Suitable candidates are then given a Skype interview by a member of SLT who then feedback to the Head for decision making on admissions.

All new EAL pupils are informally assessed by a member of the EAL Department on a one-to-one basis as soon as possible after arrival. The assessment is done orally so that the assessor can quickly build up a picture of the student's personal and educational background and determine the ease with which they will be able to cope with basic oral instructions in functional language. Relevant information is recorded on an EAL student profile form which also acts as the basis for questions the interviewer may wish to ask. Once a new EAL pupil arrives, further testing may be carried out, such as the ARELS test or online placement tests. All assessments are then used to form the basis of schemes of work. Courses are tailored to suit our students' very specific individual or small group requirements.

At the beginning of the academic year all students within the Senior School take the InCAS MIDYIS, YELLIS and ALIS tests. Durham University has noted that results of the non-verbal and Maths papers are the most reliable in terms of assessing an overseas pupil. However, this baseline data is only one of many assessment methods used to monitor a student's progress. The EAL Department constantly reviews each pupil's work and adapts the lesson content accordingly.

### **Placement of pupils in forms**

Heads of Year are responsible for placing EAL students in forms and it is recommended that they consult with the Head of EAL and the Head of Admissions so that, where possible, EAL pupils with similar interests and abilities are put in the same Form.

### **Background to EAL lessons**

The EAL Department aims to be as flexible as possible so that the needs of individual students are met. This is particularly true of pupils in the upper part of the school when they approach their public examinations. At such times, careful discussion takes place with students over the best use of their EAL provision. Students may, for example, ask to have individual lessons which will help them with the language of a specific subject. For example, students may request guidance with Economics, Business Studies or Art, while others have requested lessons in writing skills and literature. At all times the aim is to involve students in taking responsibility for their own learning.

The number of lessons pupils receive very much depends on their level, timetabling constraints and, very occasionally, parental requests. As a general guide, Sixth Formers receive two double lessons per week (ie up to 2 hours 20 minutes) for IELTS/EAL/subject specific English/help with UCAS. Pupils in other Forms have a minimum of three single lessons per week. If a pupil's English is weak, approximately six to eight lessons would be recommended. (A single lesson is 35 minutes long). Pupils are taught either individually, in a small group (2-5) or a large group (6+) but the group size is dependent on the timetable and subject choices. In order to receive their EAL tuition, pupils are withdrawn from one or more of: RS, French, German and Latin. However, it must be stressed that, as a timetable is drawn up to suit an individual's requirements, there are exceptions to this. Some students are keen, for example, to attend French and German, and this is something both the EAL and MFL Departments encourage.

### **EAL & More Able Students**

EAL students may well show themselves to be particularly talented in a subject or field, and may be identified by some staff at the College as More Able. The EAL Department supports

all students in their attempts to stretch and challenge themselves so that their understanding of English is not a barrier to learning.

Please see **More Able policy** for further information

### **EAL & Individual Needs**

Occasionally students are identified who have both EAL and specific learning difficulties. It can be hard to detect such difficulties in students whose first language is not English. Indeed, it is common for slow progress to be attributed to a lack of English. Although baseline testing can be a reasonable indicator of difficulties ahead, there are other signs to watch out for. Consistently slow reading speeds, a poor level of cohesion in written work, together with muddled word order as well as muddled letter order in individual words may well be indicators of underlying difficulties. Significant problems with reading and listening skills can also be indicators of problems. If the EAL Department suspects that a student is struggling, close liaison with the Individual Needs Department, the Deputy Head Academic and the Head of Prep are needed to identify the best course of action.

Please see **Individual Needs** policy for further information

### **Spiritual, Ethical and Moral Themes**

The EAL lessons that pupils receive are based on a variety of themes and topics. If an issue is raised during a lesson, it is more likely to be of a moral/ethical nature and therefore does not pertain to Christianity alone. Since most pupils opting to take EAL sessions are non-Christian, a set of values is discussed and promoted when an issue arises, in line with Fundamental British Values. As EAL classes are small (1-10), we are able to give our pupils individual care and attention. Some are natural language learners, while others struggle. Individual pupils are encouraged to use their strengths to boost confidence and to work on their weaknesses. All EAL pupils are from overseas with different backgrounds, cultures, religions and traditions. It is very important for us to respect those differences and to have an understanding of them. In addition, mutual understanding and respect should be encouraged in each pupil.

### **Related Policies**

Curriculum Policy  
Individual Needs Policy  
More Able Policy

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