



ENGLISH as an ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

EAL POLICY

Meán Scoil Mhuire

Chairperson: Ms. Karen Clabby
Principal: Ms. Mairéad Lyons
Date: 20th June 2024

EAL Policy

Introduction

We in Meán Scoil Mhuire Longford endeavour to foster a fully inclusive school environment in line with our school's ethos. This policy has been devised in keeping with the school ethos espoused by the CEIST charter and is guided by the relevant Department of Education and Skills' publications and circulars.

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to all partners on the delivery of English as an additional language in Meán Scoil Mhuire and how best to accommodate and fully include EAL students who now form a significant part of our school population.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

This policy is in keeping with the inclusive ethos outlined by our CEIST values. An inclusive school environment reflects values and affirms linguistic, ethnic and cultural diversity.

Aims

We at Meán Scoil Mhuire hope to achieve the following by introducing this policy:

- To promote a recognition of and respect for ethnic and cultural diversity in the school, thus ensuring that EAL pupils feel valued and affirmed.
- To enable students of ethnic minorities to have a sense of belonging.
- To provide a framework for supplementary teaching, additional support and resources for students where English is an additional language.
- To promote EAL students' development of English Language proficiency so that they can gradually gain access to the curriculum.
- To promote effective home school links

Assessment of the Language proficiency of students for whom English is an additional Language

- All students who have English as an additional language will have their language proficiency assessed using the Post-Primary Assessment Toolkit developed by Integrate Ireland Language and Training and recognised by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and Department of Education and Skills (DES).
- The purpose of this assessment is to assess level of English proficiency to indicate a starting point for teaching and learning and to ensure that students receive additional support in English language acquisition, where necessary, so that they can gain access to mainstream classroom learning and socialisation in the school.
- Students will be re-assessed after a period of EAL support to establish what progress has been made.

- A record of this progress will be maintained by the language support team and placed on the student file.

Programme Planning

EAL support teaching themes are aligned, where possible, with the English language proficiency benchmarks for non-English speaking students at post-primary level, as outlined by Integrate Ireland Language and Training.

These benchmarks fall under the following categories:

- Personal Identification
- Classroom Interaction
- Learning to Learn
- Cultural Awareness
- Subject-Specific benchmarks

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Management

- To ensure procedures are put in place to foster an inclusive school environment that provides equality of curriculum access for all students.
- To encourage and promote parental involvement.

The Principal

- To ensure an inclusive school environment for all students.
- To ensure that resources are deployed to support all students in accessing the curriculum as quickly as possible.
- To support a Mentoring /Buddy system to help EAL students settling into Meán Scoil Mhuire.
- To ensure the effective and efficient use of resources, including the allocation of EAL hours and resources.
- To support the continuing professional development of staff for the teaching and learning of EAL students in the classroom
- To support positive partnerships with parents/guardians of EAL students

The EAL teacher(s)

- To identify students requiring additional language support.
- To assess students proficiency in English using the recommended assessment materials
- To devise and deliver appropriate EAL programmes.
- To record and monitor students progress in English

- To collaborate with subject specialist teachers, share expertise, assist in developing and disseminating good practice to support the development of students English language proficiency.
- To collaborate with SET and pastoral care teams in promoting a whole school approach in meeting the needs of EAL students.
- To collaborate with Parents/Guardians of EAL students.

Subject Teachers

- To collaborate and consult with the EAL support teacher to seek advice on supporting EAL students in their care.
- To facilitate students to maintain a connection with their own culture and language through curricular activities and displays.

Supporting Documents

- Circular 0015/2009 Meeting the needs of pupils learning English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- EAL Post-Primary Assessment Kit. Available at:
<https://www.ncca.ie/en/resources/eal-post-primary-assessment-kit>
- Looking at English as an Additional language: Teaching and learning in Post-primary Schools in 2008, (DES, 2010).
- Meeting Additional language Needs: Whole-school and Classroom Approaches for Inclusive Language Learning
<https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/284884/43debd6d-6362-4bdf-b46d-0326f3de13bd.pdf#page=null>

Links to Other School Policies

- Admissions Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- SEN Policy
- Data Protection
- Anti-Bullying
- Child Protection

Reviewing and evaluating the policy

The policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis by the EAL teacher(s) and SET Department and will be reviewed and evaluated every two years by all the partners.