



WESTMINSTER
SCHOOL

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE POLICY

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POLICY ON ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

Introduction

The term EAL (English as an Additional Language) is used to refer to pupils whose main language at home is other than English. EAL pupils, from complete beginners to those with considerable fluency, will have varying degrees of difficulty in accessing the full curriculum and in achieving their full potential.

The provision of this support fulfils the requirements of the Race Relations Act of 1976, and Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 which seek to promote Equality of Opportunity and to eliminate discrimination in the provision of education.

This policy applies to all pupils at Westminster School, enabling the formulation of strategies that ensure EAL pupils are fully supported in acquiring the requisite English Language skills they require in order to access the curriculum, thereby fulfilling their academic potential. Westminster recognises that for some pupils, English will be an Additional Language.

Principles underlying practice

Westminster School is committed to providing a quality education in English which provides all pupils with the opportunity to learn and make progress, and which fosters key competencies: speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. As the School makes welcome pupils with a variety of linguistic backgrounds, it is vitally important that its English as an Additional Language (EAL) policy is flexible, thereby allowing the school to incorporate the needs of different learning styles and needs of pupils, while at the same time exposing them to the variety of pedagogical approaches Westminster.

Assessment and Support

Westminster School is a high achieving environment and a good standard of English is expected upon entry in order to succeed. Pupils joining in the Lower School will invariably have been prepared for Common Entrance or the Challenge, in which English will have been assessed.

For pupils joining in the Sixth Form, the level of English is assessed through a variety of methods, including written subject tests and interviews, as well as an EAL test for pupils applying from countries where English is not the first language. The EAL test is used as a diagnostic assessment so that pupils who are offered a place but where the level of English is a concern, the pupil can take steps to improve before joining. New pupils are also made aware of university entrance requirements with regard to qualifications in English Language.

Westminster School seeks to promote a whole school policy approach through which all members of staff are aware and informed of the needs of all pupils with English as an Additional Language, and provide classroom support where necessary. If there is a need for additional support, this can be provided on a one to one basis. The School's practices are designed to enable EAL pupils to access the curriculum and public examinations, and both to help the pupil improve his/her academic skills and learning strategies and to take responsibility for their own learning.