

**MALONE COLLEGE  
BELFAST**



**EAL POLICY  
2020**

## Malone Integrated College EAL Policy 2020 2021

### **Our Aims and Objectives**

We aim to provide support to students speaking English as an additional language through the classroom teachers at Malone College and more specialised support through the Bilingual Centre. We aim to provide all round support including linguistic, cultural knowledge and resilience in terms of coping with the demands of the wider school curriculum. We aim to enhance our EAL students' social experience and general well-being within the school community.

As a School of Sanctuary the implementation of our support reflects the multicultural nature of our society maintaining and emphasis on mutual respect, tolerance and understanding. We promote and value highly individual cultures and past experiences encouraging positive attitudes towards the school community, the wider community and learning in general.

We aim to ensure that students are working towards B1 as a minimum on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages but fully appreciate that it can take five years or more for students to fully acquire Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency. We also recognise that some students may be attempting to acquire a new language in addition to coping in an environment different in many ways to that in which they have grown up in. Some will also have experienced trauma. We therefore aim to enhance confidence, self-esteem and well-being.

We aim to ensure that students are given immediate opportunities to familiarise themselves with the daily school routine, rules and procedures. We develop students' understanding of basic classroom instructions and promote their integration in extracurricular activities introducing students to an appropriate 'buddy' where possible.

Where appropriate we will run an EAL support programme for at least two weeks for students at Pre A1 level.

### **Bilingual Staff**

EAL Coordinator: Mr A Goddard

EAL Assistant: Mrs K Kesoglu

### **Points for consideration when planning an EAL student's timetable**

Depending on resources a student at Pre A1 level will ideally be withdrawn from around 50% of their mainstream classes during the initial phase of support. This is carefully balanced against the fact that EAL students will also benefit greatly from mixing with a variety of peers and other members of staff across the school including their form class.

Some students will have had limited experiences of being present in a formal education setting and may have previously undiagnosed SEN requirements.

Some students may arrive at Malone College and only have a short period of time to acclimatise before they are due to complete coursework and examinations.

EAL lessons must be delivered at times in relation to staff and student timetables and this impacts on the potential for grouping students with particular year groups or levels of ability. EAL lessons will typically be spread across classes and year groups and will often necessitate a highly differentiated approach. Differentiated approaches can be supported through the use of a variety of resources including books, board games, internet access, text books, language learning games, art materials, musical instruments, sports equipment, a selection of physical items such as toy food, materials, textures, etc.

EAL lessons are particularly beneficial when delivered from one consistent venue and therefore as much as realistically possible the Bilingual Centre. This is particularly beneficial for new students.

The Bilingual Centre is a place of learning, support, respite and worship. It is a meeting point for students before and after school and during the course of the day. Multilingualism is actively encouraged both within this environment and throughout the school. The Bilingual Centre is a place of mutual respect and understanding.

### **Timetabling**

The EAL timetable is formulated predominantly throughout August and September. It continues to evolve throughout the year and is dependent on student progress and well-being. It is therefore revised at regular intervals. This approach allows some students to be placed back into mainstream classes when they are deemed to be confident and proficient enough in English. There is flexibility for those requiring further support away from the mainstream setting.

Students where possible should attend mainstream lessons with a higher dependency on practical skills such as Home Economics, PE and music. There is scope to facilitate students' removal from RE at the request of parents based on religious beliefs. There is also flexibility for students to study their first language as part of an MFL qualification in place of the mainstream MFL. It is however, recognised that our EAL students are typically exceptional linguists who go on to excel in a variety of languages and so this approach should be considered on an individual basis. Support is available to students on an extracurricular basis. Students have access to at least one member of staff in the Bilingual Centre every day from 8am until 4pm.

The grouping of students will vary according to student and staff timetables. Some EAL classes will have numbers similar to those in mainstream classes and others will be smaller. EAL classes will be delivered as much as possible by a teaching member of staff but will at times be delivered by the EAL assistant. Some lessons will include a one-to-one/two-to-one approach where students require a more intensive approach. This will be managed on a lesson by lesson basis and at the discretion of the EAL staff.

### **Assessment**

All new students will typically be assessed during their first few weeks using the Post Primary Benchmarking Kit provided by the Intercultural Education Service. It is important to consider that some students may be particularly overwhelmed by their new environment and formal assessments such as these may be inappropriate. Staff should therefore be mindful of this and use a range of informal assessment methods to ascertain a student's ability to read, write and converse. It may take several weeks to generate a true picture of a student's actual ability level.

Students will also be tested at the start and end of the Academic Year using the same method. CEFR assessment will be recorded on Sims using the Assessment Manager Progress Grids. This will allow staff to track and monitor progress as required. Pre and post tests are being developed as a method to inform staff and students of more specific progress made across a programme of study.

### **Lesson Content**

The purpose of EAL lessons is to eventually allow students to access the educational opportunities offered by the school. A priority is to ensure students acquire the communication skills demanded by a mainstream class. A communicative approach to language learning is encouraged rather than the study of written language rules and grammar. EAL lessons will typically have a relevance to mainstream lessons allowing EAL students to put newly acquired skills into practice. There should be a strong emphasis on verbal communication within EAL lessons with 'hands-on' practical activities where appropriate. Homework should play an important part in the consolidation of skills taught in lesson but not at the expense of mainstream subjects. It is recognised that some EAL students will have to spend more time completing mainstream lesson homework than their English speaking classmates. The EAL staff will liaise at regular intervals with mainstream class teachers in relation to key words and concepts and where appropriate or where resources will allow, can be pre-taught.

### **The future**

The support of EAL students should be regularly reviewed and best practice sought. Pre and post tests are in the developmental stage and aim to bring more clarity to the progress made by students across a programme of study. We continue to build upon the success of achieving School of Sanctuary status by sharing our practice and continuing to form links with other schools aspiring to gain the same status. We continue to actively participate in research and the development of EAL support as a whole engaging in and contributing to a variety of studies.

### **Covid-19**

The Bilingual Centre will be restricted to a limited capacity. Students considered to be the most vulnerable and in need of support will be prioritised. Students will have their own work stations and where possible students sharing the same mainstream class or family 'bubble' will be grouped together. No other students will use their designated work station at any time. The Bilingual Centre will continue to be accessible online via Google Classroom and hard copies of tasks and activities will be provided to students unable to access the online resources.