



# EAL HANDBOOK

# Skagerak International School

## Primary School and Kindergarten

### Statement of Aims

This school is committed to making appropriate provision of teaching and resources for pupils for whom English is an additional language.

We aim to ensure that all EAL pupils are able to:

- ❖ **Use English confidently and competently to access additional languages. The school will identify individual pupil's needs, recognise the skills they bring to school and ensure equality of access to the curriculum, content and concepts.**
- ❖ **Use English as a means of learning across the curriculum**
- ❖ **Where appropriate, make use of their knowledge of other languages to help them to access curriculum, content, and concepts.**

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## **Key Principles for Additional Language Acquisition**

- All languages, dialects, accents and cultures are equally valued.
- All students have the right to instruction at their individual language level
- All students have the right to equal access to the curriculum
- Students have the right to learn content material in the language they are most able to understand.
- All teachers are language teachers.
- Language is best learned in a whole language environment
- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum.
- Effective use of language is crucial to the teaching and learning of every subject.
- The language demands of learning tasks need to be identified and planned for, with attention both to initial access and to extension.
- Access to learning requires attention to words and meanings embodied in each curriculum area. Meanings and understandings cannot always be assumed but need to be explored.
- Teachers have a crucial role in modelling uses of language.
- The focus and use of additional support time are best seen as an integral part of curriculum and lesson planning.
- Language is central to our identity. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of the importance of pupils' home languages and to build on their existing knowledge and skills.
- Many concepts and skills depend on and benefit from well-developed home language and literacy in home language enhances subsequent acquisition of EAL.

## **Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation**

At in-take and during initial interviews information is gathered about

- the student's linguistic background and competence in other languages
- the student's previous educational and schooling experience
- the student's family and biographical background
- the student's motivation to learn English and learn in English

The pupils' level of English is identified with reference to his or her abilities in the classroom and in social situations. Mainstream teachers and EAL Staff regularly observe, assess and record information about pupils' developing use of language. The EAL coordinator and EAL assistant conduct oral interviews, reading, writing, phonics, or other relevant testing, and together with the mainstream and EAL assistant, design an IEP that identifies the students current abilities, needs, plans for instruction and allocation of resources. The EAL coordinator meets with the EAL assistant and with mainstream teachers to upgrade the IEPs for each student on a half yearly basis.

Instructional time with the EAL assistant is allocated according to need. Not all students with an IEP may receive extra instructional time, and in these cases the responsibility for planning and executing the IEP will be that of the mainstream teacher together with the EAL Coordinator.

Mainstream teachers meet with the EAL coordinator and EAL assistant, if appropriate, to plan individual modifications on the PYP planner and language expectations for each identified student at the beginning of each new unit. The SIOP protocol is used during this planning and in subsequent follow-ups. The EAL coordinator and assistant are available weekly for planning sessions, which are scheduled with mainstream teachers in turn, while priority is given to teachers who have an upcoming unit to plan. While account is taken of EAL development, the school aims also to set appropriate yet challenging targets for each individual pupil and to encourage growth in language ability, not simply 'working at one's level'. Language targets are reviewed on a regular basis, during planning meetings, at parent teacher conferences, at the semester, at the end of the year and beginning of subsequent years.

Mainstream teachers continually communicate with the EAL assistant in the classroom about what is needed for the individual learners. The EAL coordinator meets weekly with the EAL assistant to help with planning and resources. The EAL assistant is responsible for meeting with individual students and small groups of students as well as developing materials to assist the mainstream teachers in presenting language and inquiry to their EAL students. During prepping periods, the EAL assistant is responsible for locating, collecting, and sometimes developing EAL resource materials for the various PYP units in each classroom and for locating these in a PYP EAL resources box that will be available to subsequent class years. In the beginning of the year the EAL assistant may have more pull out classes, but as the year progresses, the assistant is increasingly a resource to the classroom.

## **Instruction and Resources**

### **Pull out**

Although Skagerak believes most language learning is best done in the context of the mainstream classroom, students with very low levels of English may be pulled out for individual instruction at the beginning of their EAL instruction. Pull out classes focus on immediate survival English, on direct one on one instruction in phonics or grammar where needed to move forward with work in the class, and on conversation groups. It is accepted that these classes are only for the initial stages of language development and students are encouraged to join the class and to interact with peers and with the academic work of the class at their own level as soon as possible.

### **Immersion**

Inside the classroom, the EAL student is included in all aspects of learning and inquiry, through analysis and direct instruction of language elements, through modified language tasks and or modified assignments, or through his or her native language, if necessary.

**Reading and reading logs:** Students read at their own level and write (or draw) in reading logs, developing critical thinking skills for reading response as well as vocabulary and language forms. As they develop their language skills, students are included in literature groups at their own level or L+1. During planning, alternative reading materials that are compatible with the Central Idea and inquiry in the classroom are identified and made available for the EAL student(s). Where no such material is available, or at the beginning of instruction when a student's language level is still not advanced enough, peer reading, reading and paraphrasing with the EAL assistant, re-written texts, and home reading with translation may be used to help the EAL students cope with reading assignments.

**Writer's workshop:** Classroom teachers use a First Steps model to identify each student's current language and writing developmental level. EAL students work on much the same assignments as their fellow classmates with the addition of differentiated expectations and with scaffolded vocabulary and structure where needed. (an exception to this is made in the very beginning, where the EAL student's writing work may more closely reflect the level of initial language they are developing, as in 'My family', 'My House', etc. However, even here, an attempt is made during planning and with the help of the mainstream teacher and EAL assistant to make these assignments compatible with the inquiry and Central Idea the mainstream class is working with. Students also keep an editing check list in their writing journals that they can refer to in order to self correct the structure in their writing.

**Oral and Aural development-** It is understood that each student's oral language develops at an individual pace. Students are encouraged to engage with the class and attempt to use English to communicate their ideas and inquiry as early as they are able. At the same time, translation remains an option for both receptive and productive language, to ensure that all students understand the content fully and are able to inquire in a language they are comfortable with.

### **Peer grouping**

EAL students are paired with same language students in peer groupings that allow for translation or explanation as needed. Students may volunteer to be a new EAL student's 'buddy' in the beginning, to help him or her feel comfortable and to help with orientation, instructions, and translation until the student can manage more comfortably on his or her own.

### **Parental Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to be involved with their child's inquiry. Parents may help by working with the child at home in his or her home language, by taking out books from the public Norwegian language library that follow the concepts of the unit of inquiry, and by keeping in contact with the mainstream teacher and EAL assistant to follow the child's development more closely.

### **Hands on Resources for the Unit Teaching:**

It is essential that EAL students have access to 'hands on' resources that will help them understand complicated concepts, especially in their unit work. To that end, the school is developing EAL resource boxes for each grade level classroom. The EAL assistant works with the EAL coordinator and the mainstream teacher to identify areas within the curriculum and especially the unit work that can be supported with hands on resources, and spends a portion of planning time on gathering and developing these resources, which are then available for later years. These resources can then be used by the EAL assistant with the EAL child, independently by the child, or in peer sessions, as needed and designated by the mainstream teacher.

### **Staff Development**

The school will enable all staff to undertake professional development to ensure that provision for EAL pupils is appropriately delivered and co-ordinated. The EAL coordinator provides staff development on subjects ranging from How to Teach EAL students in the Mainstream Classroom to how to Incorporate the SIOP protocol in planning for EAL students.

The SIOP, or Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol is a planning and management tool that is being adopted for EAL planning sessions, and is expected to be incorporated in unit planning for differentiation for EAL children in the 2014-2015 school year.

The school incorporates annual reviews relating to raising the achievement of EAL pupils.

## EAL Developmental Continuum

An EAL Developmental Continuum is used by teachers to identify the communicative level of students in their classes. Students who are New to English or in some cases in upper grade levels becoming Familiar with English, may be pulled out in the beginning of a school year to help them develop their communicative competency before being 'immersed' in the mainstream classroom. Students who are identified as Becoming Competent in English will usually still receive EAL support in the classroom, while students who are Becoming Fluent in English will receive differentiation by the teacher in the mainstream classroom. The number of hours and the amount of support available to students from the EAL support staff will depend on the number of students in the EAL program at any given time. An effort is made to give as much support as possible to all children, although children at the beginning of the continuum, especially at higher grade levels, will be given priority.

### New to English

<b>Listening</b>	<b>Speaking</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>
<p>Listens and responds to questions commands or instructions non-verbally</p> <p>Listens when addressed personally</p> <p>Makes an effort to understand spoken English</p>	<p>Is silent in English in class or speaks mainly in first language</p> <p>Asks simple questions in English</p> <p>Responds to greetings in English</p> <p>Initiates single words and short phrases</p>	<p>Recognises letters and sounds out words</p> <p>Reads simple words</p> <p>Recognizes words in context with pictures</p> <p>Responds to reading with understanding</p> <p>Is beginning to develop a databank of simple English vocabulary</p>	<p>Forms letters</p> <p>Copies words and phrases</p> <p>Spells phonetically and spells basic words correctly</p> <p>Can write to a given model i.e. given a sentence pattern</p> <p>Begins to write independently</p>

### Becoming Familiar with English

<b>Listening</b>	<b>Speaking</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>
<p>Can follow instructions that are stated clearly with simple words one step at a time</p> <p>Can understand specific information in the classroom, but may need clarification for details.</p> <p>Follows simple instructions and explanations</p> <p>Can follow and respond to simple peer language in English</p>	<p>Responds to questions with phrases and some sentences</p> <p>Begins to participate in group work</p> <p>Uses English in social situations</p> <p>Can use English for specific purposes with a structural model.</p> <p>Begins to use vocabulary learned at school and in reading.</p>	<p>Reads longer stories with some new words that are not basic English</p> <p>Is developing a databank of English vocabulary, including some specific or academic vocabulary</p> <p>Can read simple texts for information and find information set by a teacher.</p> <p>Begins to guess meaning of unknown words from context</p> <p>Able to retell simply</p>	<p>Punctuates with capital letter and full stop; is beginning to use commas and other punctuation.</p> <p>Writes short passages using a writing guide.</p> <p>Uses simple spelling patterns</p> <p>Sequences work in logical order</p> <p>Begins to write simply and grammatically</p>

## Becoming Competent in English

Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
<p>understands great amount of teacher and peer talk</p> <p>Follows complex explanations with some support from other students or teacher</p> <p>Needs little support in comprehension and execution of tasks.</p> <p>Understands unit language with clarification in English</p>	<p>shows confidence in starting and sustaining a conversation Speaks clearly</p> <p>Begins to contribute to class discussions and offer opinions on conceptual content.</p> <p>Beginning to vary language according to audience</p> <p>Expresses needs and gives information independently.</p> <p>Begins to use a more extensive vocabulary, including some specialist or abstract vocabulary</p>	<p>Reads texts at grade level with some clarification where needed.</p> <p>Manages unit material but may still require some support for understanding</p> <p>Reads aloud with speed, confidence and fluency</p> <p>Is beginning to read with expression</p> <p>Is beginning to take notes in his/her own words in English</p>	<p>Writes Independently with some errors in: vocabulary, spelling, or grammar</p> <p>Attempts to express complex ideas in English</p> <p>Beginning to develop voice in writing</p> <p>Is aware of linguistic limitations and may be frustrated by them</p>

## Becoming Fluent in English

Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
<p>Listens attentively and offers feedback</p> <p>Can paraphrase information simply</p> <p>Uses new vocabulary in new situations.</p> <p>Learns more abstract and specialized vocabulary</p>	<p>Participates and performs confidently in the classroom</p> <p>Uses language confidently across the curriculum for different purposes and audiences Is willing to speak in front of a group.</p> <p>Generally uses correct form when speaking.</p> <p>Uses new vocabulary in new situations.</p> <p>Is learning and using abstract and specialized vocabulary</p>	<p>Able to read a range of grade level materials confidently, using a dictionary when needed.</p> <p>Able to skim and scan for information</p> <p>Able to take notes from reading in one's own words.</p> <p>Reads independently at home and at school in English</p>	<p>Writes in a variety of genre with confidence</p> <p>Writes fluently and generally grammatically.</p> <p>Writing shows influence of extended reading</p> <p>Beginning to use idiom and metaphor in writing</p>

Adapted from Developmental Continuums: A Framework for Literacy and Assessment K-8, by Bonnie Cambell Hill , the TESOL English Language Proficiency Levels ([http://www.tesol.org/s\\_tesol/sec\\_document.asp?CID=281&DID=13323](http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/sec_document.asp?CID=281&DID=13323)) and the International School of Stuttgart Primary EAL Handbook, with consideration to the Language scope and sequence at Skagerak International School, Primary School.

## **A Guide for Parents:**

### **Supporting the EAL Child's Language Learning at Home**

Parents of EAL students often ask if they should speak English at home with their child. The practice of switching the language of the home in order to help a child learn English for school is generally not recommended. There are some exceptions to the rule, but your child should participate fully in the decision to switch languages as well as genuinely desire this change, if it is done. Of course you may use English while working on homework, or reading English language books together.

**While speaking English with your child might not be such a good idea, speaking and reading your home language is one of the best ways to help improve your child's command of both languages. Research on the connection between a solid foundation in the home language and success in learning a second language is undisputed.**

Ensuring the continued development of the home language is not always easy. Your child is immersed in English for at least six hours of every school day and is often tired and busy with homework in the evening. However, parents who make the effort are often rewarded with a child who is academically successful and proficient in two languages.

#### **The following suggestions and tips for developing home language skills may be useful**

- Be language aware. Talk to your children and take advantage of every opportunity for home language enrichment in the course of your daily interactions.
- Plan ahead. Maintain contact with the school to learn what units your child will be studying in the course of the school year. Collect related learning materials on visits back to your home country, if this is relevant.
- Provide your child with access to an online encyclopedia and other reference materials in your home language.
- As far as possible, help your child get an extensive understanding of the units they are studying in school. Provide your child with books, magazines and videos in your home language. Engage in discussions at home about the unit work. Take trips to museums and places of cultural interest.
- Enlist the support of relatives and friends in your home country who might be able to help you get the necessary resources. Get together with other families with the same language background and pool your learning resources.
- Visit the library frequently to encourage reading in your home language.
- Get together with other families who speak the same home language and read together, watch a movie together, or engage in another activity.
- Don't become anxious about the 'silent phase'. Don't pressure your child to speak English. It will happen in time.
- As a good role model, socialize with speakers of English as well as of other languages. As a good role model, read books in the language of your choice or what is appropriate to the occasion. Read for pleasure in your home language.
- Don't feel you must over-correct your child's English. Praise your child for communicating meaning, not for getting it right grammatically. Making mistakes is an important part of learning. Remember what language learning was like for you, and share this with your child. Trust your child to learn the new language just as they learned their mother tongue.



## **Why do some children learn English more quickly than others?**

### **Some Factors:**

The more similar the first language is to the new language, the more the children will make connections and learn.

### **First language:**

When children read books in their mother tongue and spell in their mother tongue, they build a strong background of knowledge, which helps them to make connections to reading in the new language.

### **Background Experience:**

When parents take children to museums, galleries, zoos, movies and talk and read with their children in their own language, children are able to make connections more quickly to content taught in English or Norwegian.

### **Self Esteem:**

Children with high self-esteem are more likely to take risks, to engage others in conversation, to worry less about making mistakes.

### **Attitude towards the Target Language and Culture:**

When children feel – “I like these people. I want to be able to talk to them” – they are more motivated to try and learn a new language.

### **Attitude towards the teacher and the classroom environment:**

When the children like the teacher and like the school, and want to work with the teacher and their peers, they acquire new language more quickly.

### **Motivation:**

If children did not want to leave their own country or if they are angry, anxious or frustrated about their new experiences – this slows down learning. The more a child wants to learn, the faster they do learn.

### **Anxiety Level:**

The more worried a child is or the more worried parents are, the more slowly a child learns. Pressure is not helpful in improving the speed of language acquisition.

### **Acculturation:**

If children think people are like them, they will learn more quickly. If children think people are very different to themselves, they are less likely to learn the new language. If children are afraid they will lose their identity, this can also cause learning difficulties.

### **Personality:**

Children who are outgoing tend to learn languages more quickly.

## What the Research Tells Us

Contrary to popular belief, students do not acquire communicative competence by learning the elements of the language system first. Learners do not learn best by memorizing vocabulary items in isolation and by producing limited, simple memorized sentences. Even those students who learn grammar well and are able to pass tests on nouns, verb conjugations, tense usage, and so on may be quite unable to understand language when it is spoken to them outside the classroom.

The study of the language system itself, while useful for some students, does not automatically result in the development of the ability to process language in real situations or in the ability to respond meaningfully in appropriate ways. Indeed, an earlier emphasis on the learning of the language system to the exclusion of meaningful interactive activities has led to frustration and dissatisfaction for students. Many adults complain that although they 'took' two or more years of foreign language and obtained high grades on grammar examinations, they are unable to speak the language at all.

Current state of the arts linguistic research tell us that:

- Children take up to two years to develop 'basic interpersonal communication skills' (playground/street survival language) BUT it takes from five to seven years to acquire the full range of literacy skills ('cognitive academic language proficiency') needed to cope with the literacy demands in Middle School and High School.
- A silent (receptive) period is natural in the learning of a second language and not a sign of learning difficulties in the first/early stages.
- There are developmental factors common to both native and second language acquisition. Pupils learn roughly the same regardless of their first language background.
- Parents should be encouraged to share language and literacy in speaking and listening as well as in reading and writing. This can be as valuable in first/home language as in English.
- Being bilingual can be educationally enriching and has a positive effect on intellectual performance.
- Being bilingual should be valued as a special achievement.
- Students learn English more easily and effectively if they maintain and develop their proficiency in their mother tongue.

## **EAL FAQ for Parents**

### **• What teaching methods does the EAL Program use?**

The four modes of language, listening, speaking, reading and writing are taught as an integrated whole and not in isolation. The children participate in many “hands-on” activities in small groups. They are not passive members of the group, but actively participate in a variety of tasks, such as singing, performing role-play, playing games, reading and writing, sharing ideas, discussing, doing arts and crafts, etc.

### **• How is my child placed in the EAL program?**

A student who is a potential candidate for the EAL program is assessed in an informal stress free setting. Older children may have an informal verbal interview, an individualized reading test, or a writing assignment. Information from mainstream teachers about the child’s performance in the classroom and background information provided by the parents will give the EAL staff additional insights into the child’s English proficiency.

### **• How much support will my child receive?**

According to individual needs students receive either pull-out or mainstream instruction or a combination of both pull-out and classroom support.

### **• How is my child assessed?**

There is no one method of assessment: no one test can be applied to a child to determine their stage or level. Assessment is viewed as an ongoing process. Through daily contact with the child in small group learning situations and by collecting and analyzing work, teachers gain a comprehensive view of the child’s development.

### **• How will I be informed of my child’s progress?**

A written report is sent home with the child twice a year at the end of each semester. In addition to this, the EAL coordinator is available when the child’s IEP (Individual Learning Plan) is made available which can be discussed in fall and early spring. However we value open communication with parents and therefore, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at any time.

### **• How important is Mother Tongue support?**

Parents can play an important role in supporting their child’s language learning by maintaining and developing the child’s proficiency in the mother tongue. This can be achieved by speaking the mother tongue, providing reading material in the mother tongue, and so on. Research shows that EAL students learn English more effectively if they maintain proficiency in the mother tongue.

### **• How will my child best learn?**

It is our firm belief that children will learn best in a place where they feel happy, accepted and safe. We strive to provide an environment where each child can achieve their best and experience success.