English as an Additional Language Policy

At Isaac Newton Academy our aim is to equip every student with the knowledge, learning power and character necessary for success at university and beyond. We believe unswervingly that, regardless of background or prior attainment, every student entering the Academy has the potential to leave with a set of qualifications that will enable them to pursue their education at a top university. Fundamental to the realisation of this challenging aspiration is an absolute commitment to providing a learning environment where students with English as an additional language (EAL) make exceptional progress and fulfil their potential.

As an inclusive school we provide an education which:
- is characterised by high expectations of every student, including those with EAL
- is broad and balanced with full access to the National Curriculum
- provides careful assessment and close monitoring of each individual student's progress and outcomes
- equips all students with the habits of mind, dispositions and learning power to be successful learners
- recognises and celebrates achievement in all its forms
- enables every student to become a full, independent and positive member of the community.

Definition of English as an Additional Language

English as an additional language refers to learners whose first language is not English. The learner may already be fluent in several other languages or dialects.

EAL students will be at different stages of language acquisition, from complete beginner to advanced bilingual. However, those at the same stage are highly likely to have different backgrounds and needs. Their experience of schooling overseas may be different. Some students may have had little or no formal education and may not be literate in any language. Some students may have developed knowledge and concepts in subjects such as science and maths through another language. The conceptual thinking of EAL students may be in advance of their ability to speak English.

Some EAL learners may have learning difficulties. However, simply because a student has a home language which is different from the language in which he/she is taught or he/she is a new arrival in the UK, it does not mean that they have Special Educational Needs (SEND).

Monitoring the progress and attainment of EAL students

At Isaac Newton Academy we assess and closely monitor the progress and attainment of every student.   Assessment is largely performance-based and provides accurate and reliable information

to inform teaching and to support effective progress in learning for all students, including those with EAL (see INA Assessment for Learning policy).

We screen all students on entry, using the following tools:

- baseline ARK tests in reading, writing, maths and science at the end of Year 6
- commercial reading age tests at the beginning of Year 7
- baseline assessments in the non-core subjects during the first half term of Year 7
- on-going observations by teachers, form tutors and Learning Assistants (LAs).

We assess any students who are at the earliest stages of learning English to establish their proficiency and literacy in their first language and to establish their prior knowledge and experience in other subjects.

The National Curriculum extended scale step descriptors (as defined in 'A Language in Common' QCA, 2004) are used to measure beginner EAL students' developing proficiency in speaking and listening, reading and writing until the point at which they begin to work at National Curriculum levels. At Isaac Newton Academy the SEND team monitors the language development of beginner EAL students. This includes observing students (both in and out of the classroom), conducting diagnostic assessments, and consulting with subject teachers. All students with English as an additional language are included on the school's EAL register as being advanced, developing or beginner learners. This register is circulated to all staff at the start of the year and redistributed as it is updated.

The identification and assessment of the SEND of students whose first language is not English is given particular care. The student's performance in a range of subjects is considered to establish whether the difficulties being encountered arise due to English not being a first language or from the student having SEND (see INA SEND policy).

Supporting the language development of EAL students

EAL students 'learn more quickly when socialising and interacting with their peers who speak English fluently and can provide good language and learning role models', Ofsted EAL briefing paper, 2012.

At Isaac Newton Academy, EAL students are given access to a broad and balanced curriculum and learn alongside their peers. All teachers are teachers of literacy, and are responsible for supporting all students to develop their language skills, including EAL learners (see INA Literacy for Learning policy).

Any withdrawal of EAL learners from the mainstream classroom is for a specific purpose, time-limited and linked to the work of the mainstream classroom. In such instances the LA and the subject teacher liaise to plan the withdrawal lesson(s) and to review the progress of EAL student concerned.   Additional targeted support, such as individual or small group literacy work or independent learning support, is provided outside of lesson time, either before or after school hours, as and when required. The purpose of any such targeted interventions is to help EAL students apply their learning in mainstream lessons.

At Isaac Newton Academy EAL students are supported in their learning by:

- a tailored induction programme for new arrivals including a buddy system and highly structured individual/group interventions, where applicable
- high quality whole class, inclusive teaching
- an appropriate level of cognitive challenge in lessons, with appropriate language scaffolding
- visual support to help them access the curriculum, including dual language texts, bi-lingual dictionaries and pictorial prompts, where appropriate
- careful consideration of grouping i.e. a new arrival is not automatically placed in the lowest attaining set
- a rich programme of extra-curricular activities.

Responsibilities of subject teachers

Subject teachers have a responsibility to ensure that they:
- plan collaboratively with the LA, focusing on language and subject content in lesson planning
- provide targeted support to learners of EAL. Such support involves pre-teaching to enable pupils to access the lesson content, as well as support during the lesson and follow-up consolidation
- provide individual support, either before or during the lesson, on occasions when specific difficulties and misconceptions arise
- use a range of strategies to develop and consolidate students' skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing (see INA's Literacy for Learning policy)
- modify or design specific resources to scaffold and support the learning or curriculum access needs of students with EAL
- closely monitor progress of EAL students
- ensure that more advanced learners have continuing support to meet their varying needs as they develop competence in English
- ensure that the cognitive challenge for EAL students remains high.

For further guidance, see Appendix 1 'Strategies to support beginner EAL students in the classroom'.

Responsibilities of Learning Assistants

Learning Assistants have a responsibility to ensure that:
- subject teachers are aware of the range of needs of the EAL learners in their classes
- they plan collaboratively with subject teachers, focusing on language and subject content in lesson planning
- targeted support is provided to learners of EAL. Such support includes individual and small group literacy work and independent learning support
- individual support, either before or during the lesson, on occasions when specific difficulties and misconceptions arise is provided
- subject content materials are adapted to make them accessible for new arrival EAL learners
- specific resources are available to scaffold and support the learning or curriculum access needs of students with EAL
- they monitor the progress of EAL students and report their progress to subject teachers
- more advanced learners have continuing support to meet their varying needs as they develop competence in English.

Training

The Academy is committed to offering staff training that enables them to feel confident and skilled when dealing with the diverse needs of the students they are supporting, teaching and working with. A programme of training on issues related to EAL will be scheduled each year.

Review of the Policy

The EAL Policy will be reviewed annually by staff and the Governing Body and updated and revised as agreed.

Reviewed June 2016