St. Patrick’s N.S.

Drumshanbo,

Co. Leitrim.

Roll No: 19423J

**English as an Additional Language Policy**

**Created: October 2023**

**Ratified: 18th October 2023**

**Full review: 2027**

**Introductory Statement**:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to school staff on the delivery of English as an Additional Language (EAL) in St. Patrick’s National School. This policy will provide a basis of consistency and quality while allowing for flexibility in the delivery of EAL service. The aim of our EAL policy is to ensure that pupils develop the competence to use English confidently as a means of learning across the range of curriculum areas. St. Patrick’s National School acknowledges the right of children to communicate and socialise in the language of their home. The variety and diversity of the languages that the children bring to the classroom and to the school yard is respected and celebrated.

**Rationale**:

In St. Patrick’s National School, we acknowledge children's differing culture, backgrounds and language. The EAL service enables the students whose primary language or language of the home is other than English, to develop their individual potential, both socially and academically, within the school system.

**Aims and Objectives:**

In St. Patrick’s National School, we are committed to providing appropriate provision of teaching and resources for pupils for whom English is an additional language and for raising the achievement of all pupils. The aim of our EAL provision will be to successfully bridge any gap in fluency of English between children for whom English is the language of communication in all spheres of their life and those children for whom English is simply one of the languages of communication in their lives. We aim to:

• Identify individual EAL learner's needs.

• Recognise the talents and skills they bring to the school.

• Respond to the needs of the EAL learner.

• Support EAL learners in accessing and engaging with the National Irish curriculum.

**Organisation of Teachers:**

The DES currently sanction teachers under the following titles to support the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language

1. EAL teacher (to teach pupils with EAL needs)
2. GAM/EAL teacher (to teach pupils with learning needs and to teach pupils with EAL needs)

In St. Patrick’s National School we have one temporary EAL teacher. We have EAL SET hours but due to lack of available substitutes, we use these when we have access to available teachers. Our EAL teacher works as part of our Special Education Teaching Team(SET). Our SETs are assigned to individual classes. They team teach and withdraw groups based on the level of need across the whole school. Our EAL teacher will withdraw children for specific language lessons while delivering support in the mainstream class during other lessons. An example of this would be in Junior Infants during which EAL teaching will be delivered in-class via the Aistear themes.

**Role of the Support/ EAL Teacher:**

The primary role of the EAL teacher is to promote the pupils development of English language proficiency so that he or she can gradually gain access to the curriculum. The pupil remains the responsibility of the mainstream class teacher who will work closely with the EAL teacher. In collaboration with parents and the mainstream class teacher, the EAL teacher:

• Identifies pupils requiring additional language support.

• Assesses the pupils proficiency in English using the assessments tasks and teacher-designed tasks/assessments.

• Devises an appropriate language programme, with the help of our mainstream teachers and SET team (either in –class or withdrawal).

• Delivers the programme.

• Records and monitors the pupil's progress.

**Assessment of Pupil’s Needs**:

Various methodologies will be used with regard to the identification of children with EAL needs.

1. Department guidelines delivered annually outlining who is eligible for EAL hours.
2. The parents will be surveyed and, if need be, interviewed with regard to the languages of communication used in their family and community. An identification of the dominant or frequent use of another language other than English means that this child will be identified as having EAL needs.
3. The class teacher will, over the first month of school term pay particular attention to the child - to make a formal and informal assessment of the child’s English language capabilities and competencies. A draft list will be presented to the SEN Co-Ordinator and the Principal, who will in turn make recommendations to run further formal and informal assessments before the child is identified as having EAL needs.
4. The EAL teacher will administer a selection of assessments including the PSAK assessment from Department of Education and teacher-designed tasks to ascertain the pupil’s level of proficiency using the English language. EAL teacher will use these results to place children on an EAL continuum and children who score below threshold scores are eligible for EAL supports following Department guidelines.

**Aims of Programme:**

The aim of the school’s EAL programme is the development of oral, reading and writing English language competency for identified children, to a standard that is comparable to that of children for whom English is their sole language of communication and in keeping with the capability of the child.

In addition to this primary aim, the school also aims to facilitate the child in English language competence to assist in his/her integration into the life of the school and the English language community of his/her locality. It is also expected to develop the child’s sense of self-esteem and to encourage creativity in the child.

Finally, it is also aimed at professionally developing the whole school staff in competence as EAL teachers.

**Details of Programme:**

The EAL teacher will plan activities to support the teaching and learning of EAL learners. One of recommended resources include the Up and Away programme for EAL learners. In St. Patrick’s National School, our SET team and EAL teacher will plan activities collaboratively with the class teacher. In the Infant classes this planning will be in line with the themes outlined as part of the Aistear programme, and the EAL programme will be delivered via in-class support. In other classes this planning will be based on the needs of the child. EAL teacher will refer to the Up and Away programme for themes and progression steps. EAL teacher will also refer to the progression steps in the Primary Language Curriculum when setting targets.

In accordance with Circular 15/2009, pupils who meet the criteria for EAL will receive support for his/her first two years in the Irish school system. After a pupil has received two years of EAL support, additional support may be provided. This level of support is dependent on the availability of staff in the school and an annual evaluation of all the needs across the school. EAL support in St. Patrick’s National School comprises of a mix of in-class support and pupil/group withdrawal by a teacher from the SET team. This is determined by strategies that will best meet the needs of the pupils. In the Infant classrooms, in-class activities will be sophisticated English language activities based on the Infant Primary Curriculum. In the Infant classes, the EAL teacher will work primarily in the classroom, working as closely as possible with the class teacher’s timetable and classroom management strategies. As appropriate, the EAL teacher will identify mixed-ability groups, EAL-pairs or individual work for work on targets and assigned tasks. The EAL Teacher will be timetabled according to an agreed timetable following the Continuum of Support Guidelines. Work completed with each child shall be recorded in the teacher’s short term planning and using the School Support Plan template. (Our school template is on Aladdin).

**Programme Planning:**

1. Identifying EAL learners.
2. Aiding the 'settling down' period.
3. Collaboration between class teacher and EAL teacher.
4. Initial assessment.
5. Devising a specific language programme for individual pupils/groups.
6. Delivering language programme.
7. End of year assessment/progress assessment (Primary School Assessment Kit, review of Support Plan targets)

**Recording and monitoring of pupils progress:**

The language support teacher will record and monitor pupils progress by:

• Initial assessment ( PSAK)

• Teacher observations

• Teacher questioning

• Pupils work samples

• Meeting with class teacher to discuss progress both in the language support class and in the mainstream class.

• End of year assessment/ progress assessment (Primary School Assessment Kit and/or Aistear checklists)

**Resources:**

• Up and Away programme by IILT

• Primary School Assessment Kit by the department of education and skills

• PM Readers

• Oral Language Books

• Pupil progress record sheet – Our School Support Plan.

• Observation notes during Aistear

In Class Team Teaching Strategies – including Aistear, Literacy Lift Off, Mata sa Rang, Heggerty Phonological Awareness Programme, UFLI Phonics programme, Comprehension Strategies.

• This list is not prescriptive or exhaustive and teachers may use additional resources for the planning and delivery of this programme.

**Standardised testing:**

In reference to Circular 0138 / 2006 : “Pupils may be excluded from the test if in the view of the school principal they have learning or physical disability which would prevent them from attempting the test, or in the case of newcomer pupils, where their level of English is such that attempting such a test would be inappropriate.”

It is generally accepted that pupils who have not reached level A1.3 of the language proficiency benchmarks may not be tested with standardised tests Reference Section:

• Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework, NCCA, 2009

• Circular 15/2009 Meeting the needs of pupils learning English as an Additional Language, DES • Intercultural Education in the Primary School, Guidelines for schools, NCCA, 2005

• Primary School Assessment Kit, DES, 2007

• Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School, 2007

• Up and Away, IILT, 2006

• Intercultural Guidelines for Schools, INTO

• Circular 138/2006 Supporting Assessment in the Primary School, DES

**St. Patrick’s National School**

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**Ratification of policy for St. Patrick’s NS**

**Martin McGowan 18/10/2023**

**Chairperson Date**

**Ruth McLoughlin 18/10/2023**

**Principal Date**