



ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (“EAL”) POLICY

1. Introduction

All pupils at Epsom College in Malaysia (“ECiM/the College”) are important, and this applies to every aspect of their education – their teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being. We encourage all our pupils to aim for the highest possible standards and we take account of each student’s individual needs and experiences.

A number of our children have particular requirements with regard to learning and assessment, and these are linked to their progress in learning English as an additional language (EAL).

Research suggests that being a speaker of more than one language is not a disadvantage to educational achievement; indeed multilingualism is associated with success. The College recognises the importance of community languages in their own right, and the ability of their speakers to acquire other languages. We celebrate the language diversity of the College and welcome multilingual pupils to our school.

2. Who is an ‘EAL’ student at Epsom College in Malaysia?

Multilingual speakers outnumber monolingual speakers in the world's population. The majority of our pupils are speakers of more than one language – this is the cultural norm at the College and one which we celebrate. Some children speak a different language with their parents (including household help) and may speak another language at school.

To support a student’s proficiency in English and their mother tongue language (the language spoken with their parents), pupils are recommended to attend additional language sessions as part of the mother tongue programme. Thus, they maintain the development of their mother tongue in line with their peers in their home context. In addition, this will develop their linguistic ability which is advantageous for learning any language, in this case, supporting their English proficiency.

A student who is identified as ‘EAL’ at the College is a child who needs additional support with their acquisition and use of English to enable them to access the curriculum. This support may be over the short-term or over a longer period.

3. Aims and objectives

Underlying the British National Curriculum is the entitlement of all pupils to access certain areas of learning, and thereby to acquire the knowledge, the understanding, the skills and the attitudes that are necessary not only for their self-fulfilment, but also for their development as responsible citizens. We seek to honour this entitlement through the education that we provide at ECiM.

The aim of this policy is therefore to help ensure that we meet all the needs of those pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

4. Teaching and learning style

At ECiM, we recognise that all adults are teachers of English and literacy and that, as such, teachers use various methods to help pupils who are learning English as an additional language by developing their spoken and written English in the following ways:

- ensuring that vocabulary work covers the technical as well as the everyday meanings;
- defining keywords as well as metaphors and idioms;
- explaining how spoken and written English have different usages for different purposes;
- providing them with a range of reading materials, to exemplify the different ways in which English is used;
- giving them appropriate opportunities for talking, and using talking to support writing;
- encouraging them to relate one language to another;
- ensuring their access to the curriculum and to assessment by;
 - using texts and materials that suit their ages and learning stages;
 - providing support through ICT, video and audio materials, dictionaries and translators, readers and amanuenses;
 - using the home or first language where appropriate.

Staff at ECiM are responsible for ensuring that EAL pupils and their families feel positively about the child's EAL support and development. Classroom routines and procedures should ensure that there is no stigma attached to EAL support, no disadvantage to additional support (i.e. student missing a favourite activity) or embarrassment caused to pupils (nickname for the EAL group or EAL list on wall).

5. EAL support and inclusion

ECiM has an EAL department which specialises in supporting pupils with EAL needs. The goal of the EAL department is to provide personalised support for EAL pupils until the pupils in question are judged able to access the British National Curriculum without extra EAL support.

A variety of teaching methods are used by the EAL department when working with EAL pupils. These include:

- withdrawing individual and small groups of pupils 4-12 times per week;
- supporting individuals or small groups of pupils with additional EAL lessons as a replacement for certain language heavy subjects (for example History and Geography) until a student's English language proficiency is high enough for them to access content areas with support from the teacher or from a specialist language teacher within normal lessons.

The EAL teachers develop a large variety of teaching materials, including the most up to date EAL methods from the UK and internationally, computerised resources and custom made resources such as flashcards, posters and computer software. The EAL teachers frequently discuss the pupils' progress with their class teachers/HMM and identify areas for development and methods for helping pupils.

In our school we value each child as a unique individual. We will strive to meet the needs of all our children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to inclusion. All children in our school follow the requirements of the National Curriculum. Children with English as an additional language do not produce separate work in their main class but may be given differentiated tasks. Class teachers and EAL department work together to ensure all EAL pupils can do the same work as other pupils, thereby accessing the British National Curriculum. We provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of all pupils learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

6. Link to Admissions

Prior to a formal offer letter accepting a new Senior School student into ECiM they need to complete assessments at the College. The combination of a student's previous report from their last school and data generated from assessments enables the College to create a holistic profile of a student. Furthermore, the College can ascertain a student's current ability and at what stage of development they are at compared to their peers.

The Oxford Online Placement Test (OOPT) measures a student's 'Listening' skills and their 'Use of English'. The OOPT data points are converted into the Common European Framework for Reference (CEFR) and used by academic staff to stream pupils into an appropriate EAL stream or English as First Language stream (Appendix I & II). To support the OOPT assessment, a student also completes a writing activity and has an interview with an academic member of staff. In addition to English language assessments, pupils complete an assessment referred to as Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM), this assessment tests a student's 'Vocabulary', 'Mathematical' and 'Non-Verbal' skills.

7. EAL in the Prep School

In the Early Years Foundation Stage at ECiM, we provide opportunities for pupils to develop their English, and we provide support to help them take part in activities. We follow the guidelines of the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage - the standard document for use in Foundation Stage teaching in the UK.

The Foundation Stage helps a student to learn English as an additional language by:

- building on their experience of acquiring language at home and in the wider community, so that this experience supports their developing use of English;
- providing a range of opportunities for them to engage in English speaking and listening activities, with peers and with adults;
- providing bilingual support to extend vocabulary. We have Bahasa Melayu speaking teaching assistants in all classes. Many of our teachers also speak other languages which can be used to help other EAL pupils;
- providing opportunities for pupils to hear and speak their home languages, as well as English;
- encouraging pupils to make their first marks (i.e. their first attempts at writing) in their first language as a precursor to learning how to write in English;

- celebrating the first languages and cultures of multilingual pupils in organised celebrations and informally in lessons when appropriate;
- carrying out certain points of assessment in the student's first language if appropriate.

8. EAL in the Senior School

In the Senior school at ECiM, pupils work towards the Cambridge English Assessments lower suite of exams, namely (Appendix III);

1. Key English Test [KET][A2 Level]
2. Preliminary English Test [PET] [B1 Level]
3. First Certificate in English [FCE][B2 Level]

It is suggested and research has shown that EAL pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 should be withdrawn from only a limited number of mainstream classes to prevent them from missing important work (limited withdrawal). EAL may be timetabled at the same time as English First Language or Foreign Languages so that when other pupils study these subjects, EAL pupils study English as their second language.

Pupils in the lower levels (IEAL to KET) may be withdrawn from both Language options, History, Geography and English first language lessons where possible. These pupils may not yet have sufficient command of the necessary skills to cope with certain genres of writing in English classes. Some pupils may receive in-class support from an EAL teacher if deemed necessary.

Pupils in the higher levels (PET to FCE) attend either one or both Language options. PET pupils in Years 7 and 8, may move to mainstream English after successful completion of the Cambridge Language Assessment. FCE pupils in Years 9 and 10, may move to first language English after successful completion of the Cambridge Language Assessment. Pupils in Year 11, who do not complete first language English, will complete either core or extended IGCSE English as a Second Language.

9. Assessment for learning

ECiM uses both the Cambridge English Scale and the Common European Framework for reference (CEFR) EAL scales to measure the English language competence of EAL pupils. We record their attainment and progress according to agreed school procedures.

The statutory assessment arrangements of the National Curriculum allow us to make special arrangements for pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

In line with the rest of the College, the EAL department uses Assessment for Learning procedures as a tool for planning lesson content, encouraging pupils to take ownership of their own learning through student generated success criteria and making pupils aware of their own achievements in EAL lessons.

Testing is important in the International school environment. Commercial tests are used to measure overall language proficiency and include reading, writing, speaking and listening. For example at ECiM, OOPT, CEM and Cambridge Language Assessments have been adopted.

Proficiency testing can help pupils in at least two ways. Firstly, such tests can help create positive attitudes and motivation within the EAL classroom. Pupils experience a sense of accomplishment and this contributes to a positive tone. Secondly, these tests assist pupils in mastering the language. They

are helped when they study for exams and when these exams are returned to them and discussed. They also confirm areas that each student has mastered and those that need further attention.

Cambridge Language Assessments are the most widely used of all types of commercial EAL exams for British Curriculum Schools. These tests reveal overall ability in the language as well as capabilities in a specific area (such as listening). Language assessments can also show if a person is ready for certain kinds of schooling work. Furthermore, the implementation of language assessments in the international school environment will ensure that pupils are placed in relevant levels and that the evaluation process is standardized. For example, KET, PET & FCE Cambridge Language Assessments.

It is important to note that there is no National Curriculum for EAL in neither the British National Curriculum nor the programmes offered by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). The Cambridge Language Assessments provides an EAL alternative to the National Curriculum or IBO. These examinations have been tried and tested by many International Schools throughout the world and are considered to be useful as preparation for and a natural progression to the IGCSE ESL examinations. Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) however does offer an IGCSE ESL examination for Key Stage 4. This particular course is aimed at pupils with a limited command of the English Language (ESL pupils).

Proficiency tests are both valid and reliable. Validity is normally taken to be the extent to which a test can be shown to produce scores which are an accurate reflection of the candidate's true level of language skills. Reliability concerns the extent to which test results are stable, consistent and accurate and therefore the extent to which they can be depended on for making decisions about the student. More importantly, the language assessments provide legitimacy to the levels instituted by the EAL Department and to the school as a whole.

Appendix 1

Common European Framework Reference Levels (CEFR)

| | | |
|------------------|-------|---|
| Proficient User | C2 | Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations. |
| | C1 | Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices. |
| Independent User | B2 | Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options. |
| | B1 | Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. |
| Basic User | A2 | Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need. |
| | A1/A0 | Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help. |

Appendix 2

Assessment Data Conversions: CEFR, OOPT & Cambridge Language Assessments

| Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) | Online Oxford Placement Test (OOPT) | Cambridge English Scale | Cambridge Language Assessments |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| C1 (There should not be a student at this level within the EAL program in KS3 and KS4) | 80-99 | 180-199 | NA |
| B2 | 60-79 | 160-179 | FCE |
| B1 | 40-59 | 140-159 | PET |
| A2 | 20-39 | 120-139 | KET |
| A1/A0 | 0-19 | 80-119 | IEAL - ECiM internal assessments |

Appendix 3

Key English Test [KET][A2 Level]

Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.

Preliminary English Test [PET] [B1 Level]

Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

First Certificate in English [FCE][B2 Level]

Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.