



English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

Introduction:

We recognise that many children in early years' settings will have a home language other than English. We believe that acknowledging and celebrating children's home language promotes confidence in their own abilities and raises their self-esteem. We feel that play should promote self-image and value the experiences of each other and a respect for our different backgrounds. We recognise and reassure parents that their child will benefit if they continue to use their home language and we encourage them to spend quality time in this interaction with their child.

Our staff are committed to working within an equal opportunities framework and are fully prepared to make any necessary adjustments and obtain information/training (if necessary) prior to your child starting at Oasis. We treat all children and families with equal concern, regardless of gender, racial origin, ability, cultural and linguistic background or religious beliefs (please see Equal Opportunities Policy).

Definitions:

We differentiate between those children who speak English as an Additional Language or those who are Bilingual by using the following definitions as provided by the Department of Education:

- EAL stands for English as an Additional Language and recognises the fact that many children learning English in schools in this country already know one or more other languages and are adding English to that repertoire.
- Bilingual is used to refer to those children who have access to more than one language at home and at school. It does not necessarily imply full fluency in both or all of their languages.

Aim:

We endeavor to provide a safe, stimulating learning environment that promotes the concept of 'lifelong' learning and enables all children to learn and develop to their full potential. We are committed to working within the EYFS framework and provide a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the individual needs of all children. When a Bilingual child or a child with English as an additional language joins our settings, we strive to work closely with the

child and their family to make the transition from home to nursery as smooth as possible. We invite parents to share their home language and cultural background with staff during the settling process and parents are actively encouraged to provide a list of key words and phrases from their home language.

Admission Procedures:

On admission, all parents must complete a Registration Form. This requires parents to provide details about the child and their individual needs, including their correct name and pronunciation, dietary needs, dress code and previous early years setting experience. Parents are also required to note the languages spoken at home on their child's 'All About Me' form, which is shared with their key person. The Senior Manager/Senior Deputy Manager will offer support with completing the setting's Registration Forms, if required. They will then continue to liaise with the family to ensure that they receive information and newsletters in a form that is accessible to them and that they can clearly communicate their views and any concerns that they may have.

Language Development:

Practitioners value children's linguistic diversity and provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning. They also plan learning opportunities to develop the child's English speaking skills and support them to engage in a wide range of activities. For example, key person's will:

- Provide a range of opportunities for children to engage in speaking and listening activities in English with peers and adults.
- Ensure that all children have opportunities to recognise and show respect for each child's home language.
- Provide bilingual support, in particular to extend vocabulary and support children's developing understanding.
- Provide a variety of writing in the children's home languages as well as English, including books, notices and posters.
- Provide opportunities for children to hear their home languages as well as English, through use of audio and video materials, such as stories, songs and poems.
- Use visual aids and pictures to enable children who are Bilingual or have English as an additional language to fully access the inclusive learning environment.
- Ensure that they use gestures, facial expressions and explanatory actions together with the use of objects to explain activities, routines and instructions.

Progress and Assessment:

On entry to the setting, the child's name will be added to our EAL register. Within 4-6 weeks of a child starting at Oasis, a baseline assessment is completed to identify their stage of development and plan next steps to extend/support future learning and development. Following this, weekly observations are carried out and their progress is monitored against the Statutory EYFS and Development Matters. Key person's complete cohort tracking assessments on each of their individual key children four times a year (twice during the Autumn term, at the end of the spring term and at the end of the summer term). These assessments are monitored and reviewed by the Manager, Deputy Manager and settings SENCO's. We also use the 'ESCAL Speech, Language and Communication tracker with bilingual considerations' to monitor children's speech and language development.

If it is identified that a Bilingual or EAL child is not progressing within the typical developmental stages for their age group, their key person and the settings' Lead SENCO will work closely with the parents to best support the child's individual needs and Individual Education Plans (IEP's) will be put in place to support the child's development. Practitioners are also able to access support and additional resources (such as books and stories) from the Early Years Consultancy Team, and additional support for communication and language skills can be sought through a referral to the speech and language therapy team.

Adopted by The Oasis Management Committee on: 07.08.2024

Representative of Management Committee Signature: Laura Trudgee

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