



St. Mogue's College

EAL POLICY

Introduction.

This policy was formulated to address the language issues of a growing number of pupils attending St. Mogue's College. Currently our enrolment stands at 297 pupils (as of September 30th 2023) with circa 2% having little or no exposure to the English language outside of the school setting. The school has not been able to access the services EAL teachers; the provision of support is reviewed by the AEN coordinator and the AEN team and allocation of support where needed on basis of student assessment, teacher feedback and observation. Since 2020 the school has seen a sharp rise in newcomer children from the Ukraine, Eastern Europe and Spain. Some of these children will have had little or no exposure to English and may enter St. Mogue's College in any class in line with school enrolment policy. Given that the number of pupils requiring EAL intervention has increased year on year with the upward movement in school enrolment, it has become necessary to revise our EAL policy regularly to address the increasing needs of our pupils.

Rationale.

The staff and Board of management of St. Mogue's College are well aware of the ethnic diversity inherent in our school and respect the rights of all pupils to communicate and to socialise in their native language where appropriate. However, given that the medium of instruction in St. Mogue's College is predominantly that of the English language, we have a duty to ensure that all of our pupils will reach a standard of English appropriate to the enhancement of their academic progress and more pertinent to allow them to effectively communicate with all other students. This entails effectively ensuring that the children's standard of English at the end of their term in school is of a spoken and written standard that will allow the students to effectively access the secondary school syllabus.

Aims of EAL Provision.

- To introduce children to the English language and to promote and enhance its attainment among the children.
- To attempt to bridge the fluency gap between those pupils requiring EAL intervention and their counterparts for whom English is their first language.

- To develop oral, reading and writing competency in those children requiring EAL intervention.
- To assist with the total integration and assimilation of all pupils into the school community.
- To help the children to assimilate into the local community by assisting in their attainment of competency in English thereby allowing for active community participation.
- Through structured language and pastoral intervention, to enhance the pupils' self-esteem and to ensure that they are not isolated through lack of language competence.

Assessment of Pupils Needs.

Children are identified as requiring EAL intervention when it is deemed that their communication skills are such that they experience difficulty in active participation in class and in the general school community. The children's primary language of communication is established via enrolment and communication with parent/host family/community liaison. The degree of competence in the English language is established by means of an informal conversation with the Principal during the course of the application process. On commencing in St. Mogue's College every effort is made to allow the child to settle into school seamlessly. To assist with this, children are often paired with another child from their country of origin (where such is available) This helps the child to become familiar with the school environment and day to day routines.

After an initial settling in period, the teacher will formally assess the child's level of competence in the English language and their receptiveness to English as an additional language through a baseline English test. This will utilise the EAL toolkit currently in use (DES Language Assessment Kit)

All pupils receiving EAL assistance will undergo an annual formal assessment of English language competence by means of the DES Language Assessment Kit.

Programme Delivery.

In the classes, where the needs for EAL intervention is greatest, the programme covered will correlate with the provisions of the English curriculum and will be predominantly oral language based. The EAL support will be primarily delivered within the classroom with minimal withdrawal of pupils from the classroom setting. This is based on the premise that the most effective acquisition of language occurs in an environment where the child is exposed to usage of the language among their peers.

In classes, where the EAL needs are markedly lesser the intervention will be a combination of class based and withdrawal. The programme will be based on conversational English based around the topics outlined in the EAL programme and will also promote social and conversational language.

Assessment.

All children requiring EAL assistance will undergo formal testing annually, usually in May where their current level of English competence will be ascertained. Teacher designed assessment will be ongoing throughout the year. Parents will receive ongoing verbal reports from the class teachers as well as at the formal Parent Teacher consultations.