

## English as an Additional Language (EAL)

*November 2023*

### **Policy statement**

We are committed to supporting pupils for whom English is not a first language, and this policy sets our aims, principles, and strategies to ensure that EAL children fulfil their potential accessing all areas of the curriculum.

Children attending our setting may be monolingual (able to speak and understand one heritage language), bilingual (and able to speak and understand equally in two languages), or multilingual (able to understand multiple languages). It is important to identify the child's first language at the pre-admission stage, and to establish whether their parents/carers are able to converse in English, or whether they may need alternative support to understand the routines and learning environment that their child will experience.

We aim to:

- provide a caring, supportive, and stimulating environment in which all the children are equally valued and encouraged to reach their full potential.
- make every effort to enable children to interact socially and to ensure their wellbeing.
- recognise and value the child's home language and background.
- provide parents with clear information about the school and its procedures and to establish mutual respect for culture and values.
- make it clear that we believe that speaking additional languages is a strength, and that EAL pupils have a valuable contribution to make.

This policy aims to raise awareness of Domino Pre-school's obligations to children and to support the planning, organisation, teaching strategies and the use of resources to meet the needs of children who have English as an additional language.

## **Procedures**

All EAL children are entitled to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum whatever their ability. We aim to fully include EAL pupils, providing learning opportunities to help them develop their English. All pupils need to feel safe, accepted and valued in order to learn.

To achieve these aims, Domino Pre-school will:

- ensure that the setting is welcoming;
- assess individual children for cognitive level, education background and linguistic repertoire;
- establish communication links with home and family and to identify cultural and religious background;
- provide appropriate emotional and academic support;
- ensure that the setting reflects the culture of all the children, and that every child's culture and language is valued;
- plan opportunities for the children who have EAL to develop their English skills, by providing support to help them access the entire EYFS curriculum and take part in all our activities;
- provide a range of opportunities for children to engage in speaking and listening activities with their key workers;
- monitor and assess progress regularly to check that the pupils have the opportunity to achieve their full potential for learning;

## **Creating a positive environment**

Children from different cultures may find our setting environment quite strange and it is important that we include pictures with which the children can identify.

- We may include pictures/images of resources and objects that the children might need to refer to/ask for to help them communicate their needs.
- Bilingual books will be displayed in the book area, and when possible, a parent will be asked to co-tell a bilingual story with the children or record a simple story that the children can listen to.
- The resources we use will reflect diversity and the adults are responsible for ensuring that the children respect and understand the function of the resources on offer.

## **Language rich environment**

Communication involves speaking, listening and understanding and it affects social as well as learning outcomes for children. A language rich environment will be provided for all children and any strategies which we use to support children with EAL will also benefit all the children, including those with additional needs.

Staff will encourage children to keep talking, even if they are unable to do so in English.

- We will keep language simple and literal initially, so that the child has the best opportunity to understand.
- We will give instructions to the child individually and with eye contact, as generalised instructions are hard to follow.
- We will give plenty of time for the child to respond - it takes time to translate!
- We will do our best to learn keys words in the child's first language, so they can tell us important things like needing the toilet, being thirsty, wanting to play with a toy. We will work with parents to develop this.
- We will use non-verbal cues when working with the child.

- We may use Talking Boxes with the child, individually at first, then with a learning partner, and eventually with a small group or other language beneficial resources and programmes.
- We will choose stories which are simple, repetitive, but interesting.
- We will build up a bank of stories with props which can be shared regularly with children.
- We will rehearse stories or activities with EAL children so they can join in with the whole group session.
- We will encourage the child to teach other children the name of objects in their own language.
- Whenever possible, we will borrow resources such as comics, CDs or books from the parents/carers to share with the other children.
- We will model correct sentences for the child when they try to communicate.

### **Alternative ways of communicating**

Up to 80% of everyday communication is non-verbal and it is vital that this knowledge is used by all staff to facilitate communication. Therefore, all staff will engage with the EAL children using non-verbal communication alongside the verbal, this will involve the use of:

- Makaton;
- symbols;
- visual timetables;
- drama;
- drawing; as well as
- props for stories or any other method suitable for the individual child.

## **Different stages experienced by EAL children**

We will all respect the different phases that EAL children may go through:

- Clinging/crying phase: like all new children the child may be frightened of being left in a new environment: parents will be welcome to stay initially or leave the child for shorter periods. The child will have a named and consistent key person who will be able to facilitate and comfort the child during the initial settling in period.
- Watching/silent phase: the child may not want to take part in group activities initially and should be allowed to watch and observe the other children until they are confident to join in.
- Noisy phase: some EAL children will go through a phase of shouting in order to make themselves understood: We will encourage them to speak quietly but will acknowledge and praise their efforts to communicate.
- Physical phase: children who cannot communicate in words may become physical in their interaction with other children. We will intervene calmly and model appropriate words for the child to learn such as "I want to play with the ...", "please can I play too?", "can I do that?"
- Understanding/not speaking phase: we will recognise that children understand a new language much faster than they can speak it and will therefore always use verbal instructions or comments alongside nonverbal ones.

## **Setting boundaries**

All children quickly recognise the word or symbol for "no" and we must all ensure that the children with EAL are given the same clear boundaries as other children in the setting. If children consistently fail to understand these, the key worker will approach the parent and ask them to explain them to the child to ensure that we can keep them and other children in the setting safe.

## **Working with parents**

Parents from other countries may have no personal experience of Early Years Education as it is in England. It is important that sufficient time is given to explain to them the key principles of our system, the routines and the children's experience. It is crucial that whoever welcomes the parents and fills in the admission forms, takes down details of the country of origin, the religion, the language and key cultural needs of the child. This may include dietary restrictions which should be shared with all staff to prevent misunderstandings. For those parents who find English difficult to understand then with notice we may be able to provide a translated version of our welcome materials.

Parents should be encouraged to contribute to the learning of the children by visiting, sharing significant events/festivals and doing activities such as cooking with the children.

## **Assessment**

No assumptions should be made of a child's ability and learning capability based solely on their ability to speak English.

- Observations by staff members of what the child "can do" will be part of a crucial learning record.
- Where concerns are exposed through the regular assessment of the child, it will be the responsibility of the key person to discuss the child's first language competency with the parents.
- If this is not age appropriate, the key person should inform the setting SENCo with a view to referring to the Area SENCo or Speech Therapist for further assessment.
- When the progress of the child in their home language appears appropriate, they should discuss the needs of the child and whether they need to be

encouraged to take up more learning opportunities which are not language dependent.

## Resources

Whenever resources are being ordered they should be relevant for all the children including the children with EAL, all orders will be checked by the setting ENCo to recommend, when possible, alternatives which are more culturally appropriate. Responsibilities All staff will be familiar with this policy and be involved in seeing that it is carried out. The Manager will be responsible for sharing this policy with all new or relief staff and keyworkers will be responsible for liaising with the parents and monitoring the progress of the individual child.

Version	Changes made	Author	Date	Review Date
1.0	Baseline version	H Clarke	14 <sup>th</sup> October 2020	September 2021
1.1	Review – no changes	H Clarke	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	September 2021
1.2	New Logo	H Clarke	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2022	September 2023
1.3	Review- no changes	H Clarke	November 2023	November 2024