

## **ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) – INCLUDING WELFARE ARRANGEMENTS**

### **Policy**

The International College recognizes that all students are individuals, who work in different ways at different levels and who are encouraged to develop their own learning styles. Non-native speakers of English have linguistic needs which must be borne in mind when considering academic progress. As with all learners, a proportion of those EAL learners will also have SpLD (Specific Learning Difficulties). Care must be taken when identifying such students to allow for normal language acquisition problems, cultural shock and different prior educational methods in their own countries.

It is normally advisable for a student to be allowed to settle for six months at school in the UK before an assessment is made for SpLD, unless there are very clear indicators and background information to suggest a specific need. If a student's English is below intermediate level, the results of language-based standardised tests may not be reliable as they are compared with results of English-speaking students and this may also be an important factor when choosing the best time for assessment.

### **Whole school approach**

The following approach is of benefit to all EAL students, including those with SpLD. It enables many students to have their needs met without extra support, but provision for that additional support is described later in this document.

- Initial EAL-specific testing and setting according to linguistic level
- Small class sizes (maximum 8 students)
- Regular student monitoring including individual tutorials
- Encouragement of cross-cultural understanding, promoting mutual respect and racial harmony
- Specialised teaching staff who are either/both trained and qualified in teaching English as an Additional Language irrespective of the subject they teach
- Boarding staff who are also trained or qualified to understand EAL need and develop student confidence.
- A newly-appointed teacher programme for every member of staff which fully involves the EAL department, irrespective of the new teacher's subject specialism or prior teaching experience.
- Sympathetic understanding from all staff, particularly in the first few weeks.
- Specially designed educational material, including worksheets, a subject-specific vocabulary book, greater emphasis on language explanation/development in the lesson.

### **Special Educational Needs**

The International College acknowledges that some students may have academic problems beyond those which can be attributed to linguistic difficulty, culture shock or a differing teaching methodology in their own country. Such problems are highlighted by

- Parental request.
- Information received on entry of prior knowledge of learning difficulties, either from parents or previous school reports.
- Monitoring highlights a potential issue.
- Indicators of SpLD.

When a situation arises that needs further investigation, the Vice-Principal, SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) will discuss the best way forward with the Head of Year, class teachers and boarding staff.

As appropriate, the following procedures will be put in place:

1. Send the parental questionnaire to find out about the student's medical, developmental and educational history in his/her first language.
2. Send parents and guardian the information sheet on Special Educational Needs to help them understand the range of difficulties and support available.
3. Collect teachers' and boarding staff's observations on the student.
4. Arrange assessment with an Educational Psychologist or an SpLD-qualified teacher. (Educational Psychologists' appointments often have to be booked months in advance.)
5. Provide assessor with all collated data from above sources, to contribute to a more thorough assessment. A formal assessment only provides one snapshot of a student's ability on that day. With EAL students, non-verbal testing and observational factors noted over a period of time carry more weight, because of potential problems with understanding language-based tasks. However, standardised literacy tests can be useful indicators of need.
6. Providing parents agree for the school to receive a copy of the report, then on its receipt, draft teacher and student Individual Education Plans (IEPs), taking account of the student's expected language progress.
7. Minuted meeting of all teachers concerned to finalise best approaches and recommendations for IEPs.
8. Extra support (e.g. individual lessons) to be set up as required with parental agreement. Guidance to be given on the focus of the teaching programme.
9. Discussion of IEP with the student.
10. Both student and teacher IEPs to be distributed to teachers concerned.
11. Review of IEP every half-term or after internal reports, depending on the College's monitoring system.
12. Further minuted meetings with staff and follow-up with the student to review progress, reward success and revise targets.
13. Further correspondence with parents, guardian and their representative.

**Welfare**

Since all students are from outside of the UK, the International College monitors the welfare of its students closely. This is done primarily through House staff and Heads of Year, although all members of staff have a role to play.

If necessary, a special IWP (Individual Welfare Plan) will be drawn up by the Head of House for any student giving rise to particular concern, following consultation with the Principal, Vice-Principal or Senior Housemaster as appropriate.

**Note:** *The College accepts that any tests undertaken are in a student's second language and will bear this in mind when evaluating the educational psychologist's report. On occasions where it is possible to do so, the College may request an educational psychologist's report to be undertaken in a student's own language, probably in their own country. This would then need to be sent to the College and translated for further evaluation.*

Revised by LMC June 2011

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