



St. Finian's Community College

English as an Additional Language Policy

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1. Rationale

St. Finian's Community College is a multi-cultural and multi-denominational school. We, with the partners in education are committed to being a caring, learning community where each person is valued and accorded respect and dignity.

St. Finian's Community College recognises that all students acquire proficiency in English if they are to function adequately in their schooling. The provision of EAL support is part of a whole-school response to language and literacy needs. The school recognises that respect for and valuing an individual's first language and culture is important in order for English language learners to succeed.

2. Context

This policy sets out the aims and practices for the support of EAL students at St. Finian's Community College. It supplements guidelines laid out by County Dublin Vocational Education Committee (Good Practice Guidelines: EAL, December 2012), and also the "National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy Among Children and Young People 2011-2020".

3. Aims and Objectives

The EAL department and the school as a whole aim to:

- Support the pupil's acquisition of English with transferable learning skills.
- Help the pupil to develop key skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) and advance grammar, syntax and vocabulary.
- Provide the pupil with subject-specific language support.
- Prepare the pupil for Cambridge School Testing.
- Foster an interest in and enjoyment of language learning.
- Help integrate new arrivals/EAL pupils into school both socially and academically.

4. Induction

St. Finian's EAL support programme signifies our commitment to being an inclusive learning environment. Specific steps are taken to assist the integration of EAL students into the support programme and into the school community as a whole, particularly international students who have recently arrived in Ireland:

- Introduce the student to a peer 'buddy', preferably someone who speaks the pupil's first language, to help familiarise them with school layout and routine.
- Obtain necessary background information – see appendix 1.
- Assess the student's level of English – see appendix 2.
- Initiate parental involvement in the student's EAL studies.

5. Provision of EAL Support

- Students will be grouped, where possible, according to their language competency and will receive English language classes.
- Students will be withdrawn from timetabled Irish classes.
- A programme of work will be designed and implemented by the EAL teachers, to meet the student's needs and abilities.
- Classes are given in a dedicated classroom to language support, supplied with substantial reading materials and ICT equipment.
- Students' progress will be monitored throughout the year and a record of progress will be kept for each student.
- Classes will enable EAL students to support each other in their shared learning goals.

6. Assessment

The following forms of assessment are carried out to ensure the correct placement of EAL students initially; to monitor their progress; and to enable them to obtain recognized certificates in English language training:

- The student will complete an Oxford Placement Test in September to establish their level of English and again in May to assess progress. Placement is assigned under the *Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)*.
- The whole-school entrance exams of incoming EAL 1st years will be used as a supplementary form of assessment.
- Communication with primary school personnel, where necessary.
- An Individual Language Plan (ILP) will be completed for each EAL student. This will be issued to subject teachers so that all teachers can better cater for the needs of EAL students in their classroom.
- Formative assessment will be carried out by the EAL teachers continually and qualitative feedback will be given to the students.

- Summative assessment will be carried out using tests designed by EAL teachers and also Cambridge School Tests (KET and PET) – see appendix 2.
- Reports will be issued to parents/guardians outlining a student’s progress at the end of each term.

7. Role of Staff

The EAL department is coordinated by the learning support coordinator and classes are delivered by EAL teachers. In addition and in keeping with a whole-school approach, the following guidelines are in place:

- The whole staff is responsible for ensuring that the pupil receives language support.
- Subject teachers are provided with student information (appendix 2 & 3) to assist them in meeting the needs of the EAL students in class. Subject teachers can
- Subject teachers will provide EAL teachers with information, such as topics/chapters being studied in class and subject-specific vocabulary.
- All teachers should be aware of the challenges pupils learning EAL face in their subject and apply techniques to develop a more language-accessible classroom.
- All teachers can avail of CPD training through County Dublin VEC’s ‘Content and Language Integrated Learning’ (CLIL).
- The EAL coordinator makes applications for bilingual dictionaries for Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate EAL students.

8. Cross-curricular Links

St. Finian’s Community College adopts a cross-curricular approach to the teaching and learning of EAL, so that students may be enabled to use the same language in different contexts in the classroom. Subject-specific material is used for language learning as well as for subject support. EAL students are also encouraged to do the leaving certificate equivalent exam for their first language.

9. Resources

Below is a list of resources and websites available for EAL teachers and students. This list is not exhaustive.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cambridge graded grammar books • Learners Publishing ESOL books • Penguin Publishing graded ESOL books • Graded readers • Categorised reading room • Interactive phonetic software • Audio books collection • Lexion language software • Prim-Ed Publishing Cloze Software • Dictionaries – English and other languages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.eslp.ie • www.funenglishgames.com • www.esolcourses.com • www.simpleesl.com • www.learnenglishfeelgood.com • www.islcollective.com • www.cambridgeenglish.org • www.teachers.cambridgeesol.org • www.ncca.ie • www.englishpage.com
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10. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Induction Check List

Appendix 2 – EAL Assessment Record

Appendix 3 – ILP; Individual Language Plan

Appendix 1

Induction Check List

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Nationality: _____

Ethnicity: _____

1. The pupil's first language:

2. How long they have lived in Ireland:

3. Length of time learning English:

4. Previous school experiences:

5. Can parents/guardians speak English?

6. Additional significant information:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2
EAL Assessment Record

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Nationality: _____

Information from primary school:

Entrance Exam:

Oxford Placement Test:

September -

May -

KET Exam:

PET Exam:

BULATS Exam:

Appendix 3

St. Finian's Community College

Individual Language Plan

Name:	
DOB:	
Class:	
Nationality:	
Pupil's first language:	
Length of time in Ireland:	
Length of time learning English:	
Previous school experiences:	
Do parents/guardians speak English?	

Assessment

Test	Result
Oxford Placement Test:	
Entrance Exam:	
Other:	

Student's Area of Strength

Student's Area of Need

Learning Objectives

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Learning Styles / Classroom Accommodations

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Teaching Strategies

Note to teachers: Research tells us that it can take one to two years to acquire conversational skills but that it takes a further five to seven years to acquire English for academic purposes.

Suggested strategies:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aim to develop a language-rich classroom• Use as much visual support as possible (ICT)• Enable the use of bilingual dictionaries• Provide keyword lists and explain in context• Encourage lots of talk and collaboration (group & pair work) to consolidate learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give instructions in simple language• Try to assign tasks to EAL learners that can be achievable• Frequent checks on understanding• For early EAL learners (A1, A2) consider differentiating end of term exams so they can experience success• Share observations of EAL learners' progress or difficulties with EAL teachers so that they can provide support
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