EAL Policy

Coláiste Bríde,
Enniscorthy,
Co. Wexford.

Ratified by the Board of Management

Board of Management

Secretary,
Board of Management

MISSION STATEMENT

"We are working to promote a secure and caring environment; Where Respect, Responsibility and Christian commitment grow, Drawing forth the positive of each individual"

Coláiste Bríde is a Catholic School founded by the Mercy Order under the trusteeship of CEIST. It has a long tradition of academic excellence and is committed to the development of the whole student. It offers a curriculum designed to meet fully the needs of the student.

The school wishes to cater for the academic, spiritual, moral, aesthetic, interpersonal and physical needs of the student. The characteristics of the school are the pursuit of tolerance, compassion and a sense of justice and equality for all.

We aim to develop in each student, confidence, self-respect and respect for others.

The school and its staff value its partnership with parents in meeting the personal and educational requirements of students and staff alike.

The core values of CEIST are:

Promoting Spiritual and Human Development

We believe a knowledge of and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ gives meaning and purpose to our lives.

Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning

We are committed to excellence and to continually improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Showing Respect for Every Person

We respect the unique and intrinsic value of every person.

Creating Community

Our schools are faith communities of welcome and hospitality where Gospel values are lived and where there is special care for those most in need.

Being Just and Responsible

We seek to act justly and responsibly in all our relationships

EAL (English as an Additional Language) Policy

Coláiste Bríde Secondary School

Introductory Statement

Coláiste Bríde values diversity and celebrates cultural differences. This policy aims to provide students for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) with support to ensure successful inclusion throughout the school. In keeping with the inclusive ethos Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI policy) of Coláiste Bride, this EAL policy wishes to recognise, affirm and, in so far as is possible, provide for cultural and language diversity. Our policy recognises the importance of multilingualism and plurilingualism. EAL is included in the SEN allocation in our school.

Rationale

This policy was drawn up to:

- support English language acquisition for EAL students developing their proficiency in English so they can access to the curriculum with and at the same time as their peers
- support EAL students (Cohort B) within the pillars of the DEIS plan
- maximise the progress, academic attainment, and personal development of EAL students
- foster high self-esteem and positive attitudes towards the English language and the learning process
- ensure the inclusion of all students throughout the school, including those with English as an additional language
- support an inclusive school that reflects and upholds the CEIST ethos, “nurturing each child to develop their full potential in a caring environment.” (Charter)
- support the building of social interaction and positive relationships
- ensure respect is given towards each student’s own culture and language.

Aims and Objectives

We aim to support the attainment of English language for our EAL students in a safe and nurturing environment that values diversity and celebrates cultural differences. Our EAL provision aims to successfully bridge gaps in fluency of English between students for whom English is the language of communication in all spheres of their life and those students for whom English is simply one of the languages of communication in their lives.

The main objective of the language support programme is to integrate students as quickly as possible so they can gain meaningful access to the curriculum as well as forming bonds with others.

Coláiste Bríde strives to achieve this by:

- our whole school approach to supporting Cohort B students with our DEIS plan
- identifying the EAL students in our school
- identifying the individual EAL learner's needs which may include diagnostic testing with a view to provide appropriate supports
- supporting students of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds to nurture their self-esteem and to ensure they have a firm sense of belonging within the school community
- supporting EAL learners in accessing and engaging meaningfully with the curriculum with and at the same time as their peers
- providing EAL students with supplementary teaching, additional support, and resources to support their learning
- providing EAL students with authentic experiences and meaningful interactions that will allow them to become independent learners
- recognising the talents and skills they bring to the school
- promoting the well-being of EAL students by raising awareness of and celebrating the ethnic, religious, cultural, and linguistic diversity within the school
- promoting collaboration between students, teachers, SNAs, and parents
- supporting teachers and SNAs in this provision with appropriate resources and professional development

Organisation of EAL Language Support

"In collaboration with parents and class teacher, support teachers identify students requiring additional language support, assess students' proficiency in English, decide on appropriate language programmes, deliver the programmes and record and monitor students' progress. They collaborate with class teachers to … support the development of students' English language proficiency." (Circular 0015/2009)

Allocation

The "Department of Education and Skills have directed that specific Language Support if provided be subsumed within general resource allocation." (Circular No 008/2019)

Each EAL student is entitled to three full years of language support from the time they start at Coláiste Bríde because EAL provision in Coláiste Bríde is run in line with current circulars and DES allocation.

Decisions regarding language teaching for EAL students are usually made on a yearly basis, with due regard being given to the needs of EAL students and the availability of time; with ad hoc support provided where the need arises.

In allocating support time particular consideration will be given to senior students who continue to require EAL support. If the EAL student has not reached the B1 level in testing after three years, they will return to the SEN continuum for continued support.

Identification:

Students may by identified for Language Support on the following basis:

- Feedback from initial enrolment highlighting students who have English as an additional language.
- Information from our Home-school-community Liaison
- Observations and feedback from class teachers.
- Language support teacher(s) assessing English language skills.
- School entrance assessments.

Testing:

- EAL students receiving support take the DES recommended test.
- Standardised testing for EAL students is at the discretion of the SEN Department.
- The tests should be administered to all students unless a learning need or lack of proficiency in English prevents them from doing so. “Students may be excluded from the test if, in the view of the school principal, they have learning or physical disability which would prevent them from attempting the test, or in the case of newcomer students, where their level of English is such that attempting a test would be inappropriate.” (Circular 0138/2006)

SEN Supports:

- Support takes the form of both in-class support and withdrawal from class.
- EAL students have access to school digital devices for class.
- When an EAL student has additional learning needs, it is appropriate for them to receive additional learning support.
- “In collaboration with parents and mainstream class teachers, E.A.L. support teachers identify students requiring additional language support, assess students’ proficiency in English using the assessment materials, devise appropriate language programmes, deliver the programmes and record and monitor students’ progress.” (Circular 0015/2009)

Where discrete EAL Language Support is provided role of the Language Support Teacher:

The Language Support Teacher's main role is to provide supplementary teaching and extra support for students with English as an Additional Language so they can gain access to the full curriculum. In Coláiste Bríde the EAL Support Teacher does this in the following ways:

- The responsibility of the support teacher is to deliver a programme of English language tuition which prepares and supports the student in accessing classroom learning and in socialising with peers.
- Preparing the student, on an ongoing basis, to access mainstream learning. Helping the student to develop appropriate strategies and skills to support her learning. "The principal objective of the language support programme is to integrate the student as quickly as possible into all mainstream learning and activities of the school." (Up and Away p. 20)
- Working in consultation with the mainstream class teacher to set achievable targets for each student and collaborating with class teachers informally on a regular basis to ensure consistency and progression.
- EAL support time may be used to introduce/ pre-teach classroom work at a slower rate, thus enabling the EAL student to engage more fully when material is covered in class.
- Where there is discrete Language time allocated, the EAL support teacher will devise an individual SEN Plan for the EAL student and attach it to the student's file on Teams.
- The role of the Learning Support teachers who teach English as an Additional Language is a collaborative responsibility shared by all: The Board of Management, Principal, Class teachers, Learning Support teachers, parents, and the students themselves.

Mainstream Teacher support for EAL:

The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all students in his/her class including those in receipt of Language Support. The student remains the responsibility of the mainstream class teacher who will work closely with the Support/EAL teacher. In supporting the development and implementation of the school Language Support Plan the class teacher could:

- liaise and co-operate with the language support teacher to identify the language needs of the individual students
- differentiate for the EAL student in keeping with agreed targets and activities
- modify presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of students with English as an additional language including the use of digital technology
- place emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum.
- test learning targets at an appropriate level
- encourage EAL students to speak English while in class where possible
- be aware of the language demands of the Curriculum on an EAL student, including subject specific vocabulary in their subjects
- differentiate planning and teaching to account for the learning needs of EAL students

- provide opportunities to engage in pair/group work with English speaking peers who will provide useful role models
- support understanding through use of gestures, visual clues etc
- speak clearly and at a steady pace to ensure that EAL students can follow directions and material being taught, with repetition if required
- provide constructive and affirmative feedback for student work
- facilitate students speaking and writing in their mother tongue, including conversing with other students
- support students to access written materials in their mother tongue

Role of Senior Management:

- To assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school's language support policy.
- To monitor the implementation of the EAL in the school on an ongoing basis.
- To assume direct responsibility for coordinating language support and special needs services where appropriate to a particular student.

Role of Board of Management:

- To oversee the development, implementation, and review of the provision of Language support in the school.
- To ensure that adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for the EAL teachers.

Assessment, Monitoring, and Review

This takes the form of:

- ongoing observation of the language and literacy to identify the needs of each student
- assessment using tools; currently the Post-Primary Schools Assessment Kit
- implementing the school policies on screening and selecting students for supplementary teaching when appropriate
- keeping appropriate records on each student to ensure continuity from year to year

Communication and Liaising with Parents

Coláiste Bríde acknowledges the importance and value of communication with and involvement in our school of parents of EAL students. Effective communication with parents is essential to the success of a language support programme. In Coláiste Bríde we:

- are accessible to parents in a supportive role, including the HSCL
- translate school communication into a home language

- meet parents at organised parent teacher meetings to discuss their student's progress.
- provide a welcoming school environment that facilitates parental contact with the school including the EAL coordinator
- (On request) offer appointments to speak with management/class teacher/SEN teacher/resource teacher
- seek and appreciate parental and community involvement in school events, including Intercultural Day/Week.

Review

An annual review of the EAL programme will take place between the SMT, the SEN coordinator, and the EAL coordinator to evaluate the allocation and provision.