

Shrewsbury School

English as an Additional Language



Introduction

We are fortunate, at Shrewsbury, to have a significant proportion of international pupils. Many come to us from China and Russia and from a range of homes across the globe. As well as being fully committed to ensuring that they are integrated into our community at the school, we are keen to ensure that they are supported in their learning too, to ensure that language is not a barrier to progress and learning.

EAL Lessons & ETSOS

Some pupils, predominantly in the IIIrd and IVth Forms do find the English language challenging and their inability to express their thoughts with clarity and nuance can hamper their achievement and progress. These difficulties are usually flagged up through admissions testing, but occasionally a class teacher will raise the issue with the Head of EAL in an early lessons. These pupils are then offered additional support in English in a targeted and appropriate manner with an EAL specialist. Where there is a pronounced need, a third form pupil may take these sessions in place of another subject – most often another Foreign Language or Latin – but only when the pupil and parents are in agreement. The sessions are designed to support the wider curriculum and concentrate on the acquisition of language skills through continuing with work that has been set in lessons. The EAL specialist will liaise with and respond to the marking and assessment of the pupil's English teacher and will provide advice and guidance on strategies which will improve the pupil's progress, achievement, confidence and enjoyment.

The Head of EAL will also compile a short 'pupil profile' which is circulated to all of the pupil's teachers with some general background, some advice on strategies and approaches and indications of where problems might arise. This allows for an 'embedded approach' – allowing teachers to carefully manage EAL needs within the classroom context without causing any pupil to particularly stand out or feel any sense of discomfort. Further support and training will also be provided to the teaching staff on the general principles of supporting EAL pupils within the classroom.

The Head of EAL will also read the reports of pupils who are on the EAL list to ensure that language is not becoming a barrier in any particular subject and to inform and enhance practice. Regular termly reviews of the EAL list take place to ensure that the provision is effective for each individual. In many cases, pupils make such impressive progress that they do not remain in EAL for very long at all – another strength of Shrewsbury's immersive environment.

Some international pupils joining science subjects in the Sixth Form had expressed concerns over the lack of practical experience in their educational background and also with the high-level terminology required to succeed at this level. In response, the Science Faculties offer ETSOS (Experimental Techniques in Science for Overseas Students) which ensures that nobody is disadvantaged and builds an enormous level of confidence and assurance in using scientific language.

Maurice Walters | Deputy Head (Academic)

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