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Inspecting English as an Additional Language

11-16

with guidance on

self-evaluation

From the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools

Inspecting English as an Additional Language

11-16

with guidance on

self-evaluation

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet is intended to help inspectors, headteachers and staff to evaluate English as an additional language (EAL) for pupils aged 11-16. It complements the *Handbooks for Inspecting Secondary Schools* and *Special Schools*, which were published in December 1999, and replaces the earlier guidance *Inspecting Subjects and Aspects 11–18* (February 1999).

The booklet gives guidance on evaluating standards and achievement, teaching and learning, and other factors that are likely to have an important bearing on what is achieved. You will find advice on: how to interpret performance data; what to look for in pupils' work and the questions to ask them about it; the EAL-specific points to observe when in lessons; and how to bring your evaluations together to form a coherent view.

The booklet provides general advice, which is illustrated using a case study involving the hypothetical **City Comprehensive**. It has a high percentage of EAL pupils. Examples of evidence and evaluations about the school are italicised and presented in boxes, sometimes with a commentary to give further explanation of the evaluation. These examples show a range of ways in which evidence and findings can be recorded and reported. They are not meant to endorse any particular method or approach. As a case study comprising discrete examples is unlikely to cover all possible issues, further points are flagged as **general advice**.

All the subject guidance booklets, including *Inspecting New Developments in the Secondary Curriculum*, can be downloaded from OFSTED's website www.ofsted.gov.uk

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The context of English as an Additional Language

Pupils with EAL vary, for example, in the length of time they have spent in the English education system, the languages they speak, whether they are literate or not in the first language, whether there are other families locally sharing the same language and cultural background or whether they are isolated. Any achievement and language proficiency data held by the school must, therefore, be interpreted with caution and every attempt made to obtain a full picture of significant contextual factors (for example, refugee status) that might impact on the pupils' progress in learning English – a process that in any case will take time. Your task is to evaluate the extent and quality of the additional support and the impact it is having on outcomes for EAL pupils across the curriculum.

EAL is a distinctive and specialist area of teaching. It differs from other subject areas, however, because of its cross-curricular nature. In addition, the provision schools make for pupils with EAL will vary considerably, depending on the context of the school, the availability of resources and the number, experience and qualifications of the staff involved. For these reasons, the inspection of EAL is rarely straightforward.

In a school with a significant number of developing bilingual[1] pupils, a common strategy is for language support staff to work in partnership with subject specialists, influencing mainstream teaching and learning strategies, providing additional resources, and targeting individuals at early stages of English who need focused support. There might be induction arrangements involving some limited withdrawal work for pupils who have recently arrived in this country or specific options for pupils who arrive during Key Stage 4 with little English and who might otherwise receive no accredited qualifications. By contrast, in a school with few bilingual pupils, an EAL specialist might only be on site for half a day (or less) which considerably limits the impact the teacher can make across the school. Nevertheless, the impact on the attainment of target pupils should be evident.

It is important to inspect the range of support on offer in order to decide whether the provision meets effectively the needs of the developing bilinguals as a whole, including more advanced learners of English[2]. All inspectors should routinely include judgments on the extent to which pupils with EAL understand and take part in lessons. Draw on their observations on lessons and analysis of pupils' work to help you assess whether the deployment of support is effective and how well pupils cope when no additional support is available.

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1 In this guidance **bilingual** refers to children who are in regular contact with more than one language for the purposes of daily living. Their competence may be in one or all of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in either or both languages and is likely to be at varying levels.

  Bilingual or **developing bilingual** are descriptors which encompass a wide range of starting points and levels of proficiency. English as a second language (ESL) and English as an additional language (EAL) are terms which refer to only one aspect of an individual's language repertoire. For most pupils English will quickly become their main language for education, career and life chances, but their first or community language will remain a crucial dimension for their social and cultural identity.

2 It takes on average five–seven years to become fully competent in a second language, although individuals will vary in the speed with which they acquire this competence. Fluency in spoken English is usually achieved within two years, but the ability to read and understand more complex texts containing unfamiliar cultural references and to write the academic English needed for success in examinations takes much longer.

1 STANDARDS AND ACHIEVEMENT

General advice

Judge the standards achieved by pupils learning EAL in the same way as you would for other pupils. However, when judging the achievement made by these pupils you should consider any additional information on the pupils' language and general competence and then decide whether they are working to their limits.

Consider EAL pupils' standards and achievements across the curriculum. In particular:

- significant differences in standards and achievement, for example between monolingual and bilingual pupils or different ethnic groups; and

- variation in achievement in different subjects, for example better scores in mathematics than in English.

Be alert to the idea that EAL pupils' conceptual thinking may be in advance of their ability to speak English. Draw on other inspectors' views of how well bilingual pupils achieve in their particular subject. It will be particularly important to liaise with the English inspector in assessing the overall standards of bilingual pupils' English. Establish also the extent of collaboration between the English and EAL departments and any integrated work on literacy across the curriculum.

1.1 Performance data

General advice

A Pre-inspection Context and School Indicator (PICSI) report is issued to inspectors and to schools for self-evaluation prior to an inspection. Schools annually receive their similar Performance and Assessment (PANDA) report. School or LEA performance and value-added data may also be available.

City Comprehensive is an 11–16 school with 750 pupils on roll. Eligibility for free school meals (58 per cent) is well above the national average. There are very high numbers of pupils with EAL (75 per cent). Attainment on entry to GCSE courses is well below the national average, but average in comparison with similar schools.

Extract from PICSI (1999 figures) for GCSE

% 5+A*–C	% 5+A*–G	Average points score
19.0 Comparison: All schools: E Similar schools: C	83.0 All schools: E Similar schools: B	28.0 All schools: E Similar schools: B

Comparisons with all schools show improvement from E* to E over the last two years.

Other data and information provided by the school:

- 35 languages in addition to English spoken at home;
- main languages: Sylheti/Bengali, Arabic, French.

Fifteen per cent of pupils are refugees.
Eighteen per cent of bilingual pupils are at early stages of learning English, 22 per cent deemed fluent.

Pupils at early stages of learning English need considerable support to attain well.

Some late arriving bilingual pupils are also entered for a non-GCSE course so that some certification in English is achieved.

Very few pupils enter the school with reading ages at or above their chronological age as measured by the London Reading Test (LRT). Typically, over 60 per cent are placed in the bottom band (Band 3) with less than ten per cent placed in Band 1. In addition to the LRT data, a range of other tests are administered in Year 7 (CAT, GAP, spelling and reading tests). [None of the attainment data available in the school is analysed by EAL or ethnic group.]

Other evidence

- The last inspection report (four years ago) noted: racial harmony was a strong feature of the school; all pupils made significant progress in relation to their prior attainment; there was no significant difference in attainment between pupils of different social or ethnic groups. (However, as the school had no ethnically analysed attainment data, it is difficult to see how this judgement was reached.)

- The report also noted that 'a key feature of many lessons is the involvement of support teachers. Their role is to enable pupils with learning difficulties, or who are at the early stages of learning English to gain access to the curriculum and to make progress'. However the report also referred to newly appointed teaching and learning co-ordinators whose role is to raise achievement. These posts were considered necessary as EAL, special educational needs (SEN) and refugee support work were recognised to be in need of strengthening. Overall there was minimal comment on EAL in the report.

- A subsequent inspection visit (two years ago) **focusing** on EAL commented as follows:

    'The work of the full-time induction unit is of poor quality, with too much filling in of undemanding and irrelevant worksheets (unrelated to the National Curriculum (NC)) and there is insufficient focus on spoken language. Some good partnership work exists in science, but overall the impact of the EAL specialists on mainstream teaching strategies is negligible. Equally, mainstream teachers appear to have little idea of how to support developing bilingual pupils, especially those more advanced speakers of English who still need additional language support if they are to succeed in public examinations. Paradoxically, there is little take up from departments of offers from the EAL department for in-class support. This is an issue for management. The existing good partnership work in science should be disseminated with the aim of extending such approaches more broadly across the curriculum.'

Example EAL1: notes from pre-inspection information relating to attainment

- *The only indicators for pupils using EAL are Language Stage data required by the LEA.[3] These indicate a significant number of pupils at early stages of English, with less than a quarter deemed fluent.*

- *The high proportion of refugee pupils suggests that many pupils will be arriving at different times during the year across the entire age-range with considerable language support needs.*

- *Although attainment data is not analysed by ethnic group, it seems likely that a significant number of minority ethnic pupils (the majority of whom are developing bilinguals) share in the overall low performance at GCSE level.*

- *The depressed English language attainment of pupils with EAL almost certainly contributes to the low English literacy levels evident from reading test data at transfer.*

Initial hypotheses and areas for further exploration

- *Standards in the school are low because the considerable language support needs of the pupils with EAL are not being met effectively. This could be due to:*

    insufficient EAL specialist support staff;

    inappropriate management and deployment of support staff; or

    specialist support staff not being appropriately qualified for the work and therefore ineffective.

- *Mainstream staff lack training in how to support EAL pupils in class.*

- *The considerable needs of late arriving refugees have impacted on the support strategies in place.*

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3 This LEA uses a four-point scale to measure language proficiency for EAL pupils. Across the country, approaches to the assessment of EAL differ enormously. Currently, for example LEAs use between 2 and 13 stages to describe progress in learning EAL. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has recently developed new assessment arrangements to provide a nationally consistent measure of English language competence for EAL pupils linked to the National Curriculum. The outcome of their work *A language in common: Assessing English as an additional language* was published in May 2000. There is an expectation that the resulting extended NC English Scales will be used by schools and LEAs for assessing early progress in EAL. Although it will take time for these new scales to bed in and for teachers to feel confident about using them for assessing the progress of pupils with EAL, inspectors should expect to find that EAL departments are at the very least aware of the new QCA framework for assessment and have considered its implications for their assessment practice. The direct link to the National Curriculum English scales should enable more dialogue and shared assessment procedures between mainstream teachers and EAL specialists. Many LEAs are currently seeking to align their own EAL assessment scales with the new extended NC English scales.

English as an additional language

1.2 Analysis of pupils' work

General advice.

Analysis of work for pupils learning EAL should include:

- an examination of the written work of a range of pupils across the curriculum; and

- discussion with a selection of pupils who have been in the school for differing periods of time.

In the main, developing bilingual pupils will not be producing separate work for the EAL department. Analysis of pupils' work will, therefore, be undertaken as part of the more general sampling of work during an inspection. Ask specifically for the work of pupils with EAL to be included in the sample, with an indication of their level of English. Additionally, ask to see developing bilingual pupils' profiles kept for those targeted for additional support. These should contain examples of work with an assessment of language progress related to NC English and used to plan future work and to set targets.

Taking both oral and written contributions into account, you will need to come to a judgement about how pupils' English is developing, for example, whether understanding is moving beyond the literal, whether colloquial English presents a challenge or whether the more academic language of text books causes more difficulty. Can pupils move from social interactions to the more formal language needed for certain school tasks and audiences, particularly for writing? Do marking and feedback draw attention to these aspects of English (some of which are important for monolingual speakers too) as well as the more routine second language learner errors of correct tense, preposition and article usage? Do all teachers provide helpful models of the kind of writing they expect in their subject areas as well as key vocabulary?

There are no age-related average standards of attainment with EAL, so attainment cannot be graded in the same way as in subjects of the curriculum. The focus is to determine the extent of progress over time, the quality of learning and hence pupils' attainment.

1.3 Talking with pupils

General advice

Take time to ask bilingual pupils about their developing competence in English: what they find most helpful; what they still find difficult; what more the school could do to help them improve their English? This discussion should give an impression of pupils' own sense of achievement. When their prior attainment is known (for example, arrival two years ago with no English), evaluation of current attainment leads to judgement about progress over time.

Example EAL2: evidence from discussion with EAL pupils

Many pupils who received additional help with their English expressed their gratitude for the support, referring to the open door policy of the language support department and their appreciation of the range of lunchtime and after-school opportunities for guidance on classwork and homework.

However, attitudes to withdrawal work varied. Some pupils resented being pulled out of mainstream classes and felt they might be missing vital subject content. Others found the support base a 'refuge' where their language needs were recognised and responded to sympathetically.

In-class support was not always viewed positively either, with some pupils uncomfortable at being singled out by the support teacher.

Commentary

The attitudes expressed above are fairly typical. For this reason the most effective support teachers (or assistants) adapt their methods of support to the needs and perceptions of the targeted bilinguals. Where good quality partnership work is in place, with both teachers alternating lead and support roles and planning lesson content, approaches and materials jointly, any 'embarrassment' attached to being a 'focus pupil' is greatly reduced.

1.4 Evidence from lessons

General advice

Attainment in EAL cannot be judged in relation to age-related average standards. In lessons, the quality of learning needs to be evaluated in the context of the teaching and pupils' attitudes in the context. Examples EAL3 to EAL7 in section 2.2 illustrate this. An overview on pupils' advancement is derived from impressions of the quality of their learning in lessons and evidence on their progress over time.

2 TEACHING AND LEARNING

General advice

The nature of the EAL support work will vary considerably depending on the size of the EAL department and the context of the school. In many schools all work will be within the mainstream, in others there will be a combination of in-class and withdrawal support (the latter might be induction provision for recently arrived bilingual pupils). There might be focused support to individuals or small groups at key points (such as prior to NC assessments or GCSE) and/or option classes for Key Stage 4 pupils to ensure they receive some certification. All work should be firmly placed within the context of the National Curriculum or relevant coursework rather than consisting of de-contextualised language activities. Time limits for withdrawal work should always be set and outcomes reviewed regularly.

Key questions are:

- Has the work been planned in conjunction with the mainstream subject specialists;

- Is there a focus both on language and subject content;

- Is the content sufficiently challenging even where the pupils' English is still at relatively early stages; and

- Does the school keep a profile of the pupils' developing language competence – including information on first languages – and use this to help plan future support work?

In partnership lessons teaching and learning should be evaluated from the EAL perspective, not that of the subject being taught. Establish the extent of joint planning and whether the skills of both teachers are being used effectively. What does the subject teacher do differently as a result of having an additional adult in the room? How has his/her practice changed through working with an EAL specialist? What contribution is the language support teacher making to the improvement of standards? How effective is this collaboration?

The collaboration might result in additionally produced resources, for example directed activity related to text (DART),[4] texts adapted so that the lesson content is more readily comprehensible for pupils with limited English (drawing on pupils' prior knowledge and experience, providing additional contextual support such as the use of visual materials, sequencing the learning more carefully, identifying key words and their meanings – perhaps in more than one language, providing writing frames or matrices to help pupils organise and record what they have learnt). On the other hand, the collaboration might result in teaching approaches that allow the original text to be tackled more confidently. This may be by means of collaborative group work, using more than one language, introducing type activities or quite simply, mediation by the EAL or class teacher so that pupils are helped to understand the content of the lesson.

The same general features of good practice should be evident in withdrawal or induction classes.

EAL staff should measure progress in relation to the NC English extended scales, as well as keeping more detailed profiles of the pupils' developing language competence, including information on first languages. All such information should be used to plan future support work.

2.1 What to look for in lessons

General advice

When observing a lesson, note whether some or all of the following features are present – all are important for developing bilingual learners:

- enhanced opportunities[5] for speaking and listening;

- effective models of spoken and written language;

- a welcoming environment in which bilingual pupils feel confident to contribute;

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4 The statement matching activity described in the Year 10 Option support poetry lesson (*EAL 6, see below*), is a good example of a DART activity.

5 This does not mean simply more, but purposeful and focused talking and listening as in the introduction to the Year 8 geography lesson or the pair matrix work in the Y11 RE lesson (EAL 3 and EAL 5, see below).

- a recognition that the use of the first language will enhance understanding and support the development of English;

- teaching that assists EAL learners to internalise and apply new subject-specific language;

- teaching that recognises that more advanced learners of English need continuing support; and

- grouping strategies that allow EAL pupils to work at their own intellectual level even though their English is not yet proficient.

2.2 Observing lessons

General advice

Lessons should be evaluated from an EAL perspective. The effectiveness of pupils' learning in EAL depends crucially on their attitude; where they are uncomfortable in the context, learning is likely to be inhibited. Teaching provision by one or more teachers may have a combined focus on subjects and on EAL. All considered, teaching quality and EAL learning gain may not be equally good. This is illustrated in examples EAL5 and EAL7 that follow.

Example EAL3: evidence from Year 8 Geography with EAL support

Tourism in Italy. Main aim is to understand geographical reasons (human/physical) which make a popular tourist destination. Specific objectives in this lesson are to: identify and understand the term 'tourism'; discuss reasons why Italy is popular with tourists; encourage decision making (choosing suitable holiday destinations for groups); extract geographical information from texts.

Geography teacher and EAL specialist have jointly planned lesson. EAL teacher has produced additional resources of good quality, including worksheets for all the class to use as well as Bengali/English key word sheet for one very recently arrived pupil with limited English, and a writing frame to help a small group of intermediate speakers of EAL.

Pupils' attention engaged by lively start to the lesson; guess what the lesson is about with the help of clues presented on an OHP.

- *This <u>industry</u> is found in the UK and other countries.*

- *This is <u>not</u> a manufacturing industry, but it does make people happy.*

- *It is a <u>tertiary</u> industry and serves people.*

This resulted in much oral work (pupils guessed after three of the five clues shared) and an opportunity to review specialist subject vocabulary introduced previously (primary, secondary, tertiary, industry). Several pupils found it difficult to accept that tourism was an industry, a chance for the teachers to explore the concept in greater detail for this linguistically diverse class.

Pupils in pairs then read extracts from geography texts to identify three main reasons why Italy is a popular tourist destination. Whole class discussion of their suggestions was followed by a 'holiday choices' activity. In pairs, pupils to select holiday destinations for five groups with differing holiday needs (for example two pupils who did not want anywhere too quiet at night, a family of four who wanted a beach for the children etc). They had to give reasons for their choices using geographical headings (physical/human attractions) and research their choices referring to source material.

At the end of the lesson some responses were shared and discussed with the whole class. However, time ran out and this part of the lesson was rushed. Quite a few pupils had only completed two of the five 'choices'. Instructions for homework were also rushed and several pupils were still asking for clarification as they proceeded to their next lesson.

Both teachers took a very active role in the lesson, alternating between leading in different sections of the work and supporting groups and individuals as appropriate. All pupils were fully engaged in the work and making good progress relative to their present levels of attainment and knowledge of English.

[Teaching, learning and attitudes very good (2)]

Commentary

In this case, the particular lesson is evaluated from the EAL perspective. A challenging lesson with a main task that helps pupils identify and understand key geographical concepts, apply them to a real life task and explain their choices in appropriate language. It contains many features of high quality in-class EAL support: joint planning by mainstream and EAL teachers; the production of additional materials which enable pupils at different levels of English proficiency to participate fully in the lesson; a range of teaching strategies which ensure plenty of opportunities for talk (whole class and small groups) both to reinforce the language necessary for the task (vocabulary and structure) and to check understanding of key concepts; a worksheet which helps pupils to organise their responses and provides a framework to marshal the language and ideas necessary for the task; a recognition of the importance of using the first language to

help understanding of the content of the work and support the learning of English and successful outcomes. With tighter time management and a better strategy for ensuring everyone was clear about the homework, this would have been an excellent lesson.

Example EAL4: EAL induction (a withdrawal lesson)

Pupils who join the school as beginners in English are given additional language support for a limited period of time. Lessons are linked to the core subjects and this one focuses on the language of science. Six pupils are present (three absent). The EAL teacher has prepared a lesson on classifying materials (a topic covered in the school's Year 7 science syllabus), but there is no direct link to the work being covered in the mainstream science lesson from which they have been withdrawn.

To introduce the notion of classification, the teacher invites the pupils to label and sort into two groups a range of plastic fruit and vegetables. As they do this, the teacher asks them to describe the differences between the various fruit and vegetables, utilising the pupils' own knowledge where possible (including the first language). She uses the activity to extend their knowledge of English vocabulary.

Pupils in pairs are then asked to classify a range of other objects that have matching drawings (wax crayons, jam jar, beaker, funnel etc). Finally they stick the pictures in their books and colour them in. Not all the objects are easily identifiable from the drawings and this gives rise to rather noisy disagreement. Some of the pupils appear to treat this withdrawal session as other than real work and the teacher has to work hard to keep them on task. Pupils' attitudes to the work are not enhanced by the mocking behaviour of other classmates who on several occasions make faces at the group through a small window in the door. As a consequence, they learn very little.

Some useful words and phrases are introduced and rehearsed (the car is made of metal, the jar is made of glass etc) but attainment and progress overall limited.

[Teaching, learning and attitudes unsatisfactory (5)]

Commentary

The main aim of the induction classes is to give developing bilingual pupils greater opportunity to use and extend their knowledge of English in a supportive environment. While in principle this is a worthwhile objective, as is the attempt to link the work to the Year 7 science syllabus, the intellectual challenge is limited. The pupils do not engage seriously with the task, perhaps because they fail to see its relevance to mainstream science. In addition the English of several of the pupils is now sufficient for them to participate in the mainstream science class – given appropriate support. This calls into question the wisdom of withdrawing them for group work of this kind. It also raises questions about the quality of the task they are given and thus, the teaching.

Example EAL5: evidence from Year 11 RE with EAL support

A religious education lesson on the theme 'Does God Exist?'

Religious education teacher and EAL specialist have planned lesson together. EAL teacher has produced support materials which all use.

Teacher starts by putting two phrases on the board, one in support of the notion that God exists 'Ex nihilo, nihil fit' and one against 'Seeing is believing'. Very good whole class discussion of the ideas expressed here. Pupils in pairs then classify (using a matrix) a range of other statements according to whether the statement is an argument for or against the existence of God. A writing task follows, then a plenary. A very successful lesson, largely due to the careful preparation which has resulted in a challenging and interesting series of tasks. Supportive and collaborative talk is built in to give confidence both in the ideas and the language needed to express them. This is helpful for all, but especially for the developing bilinguals. The matrix constructed by the pupils helps them with the next task – writing paragraphs to argue for and against the existence of God.

Pupils responded with enthusiasm during the class discussion and also while working in pairs. Attainment variable, but all pupils are enabled to take part in the lesson and the majority of pupils have completed their paragraphs by the end of the period. The EAL specialist focuses particularly on two boys at a fairly early stage of English. He has produced an additional writing frame to help them with the task. Several other pupils benefit from this too. All make good progress and most have confidence to engage in complex arguments, defending their viewpoints. However, the writing task reveals that some more advanced bilingual pupils still need support to produce appropriate language. Several write as they speak, for example, 'The argument for the existence OK is that something so complicated as the Earth . . .'

[Teaching and attitudes very good (2); learning good (3)]

The lesson is evaluated from the EAL perspective, not that of RE as a subject. This lesson contains many of the effective EAL support features described in the Year 8 geography lesson above (opportunities for talk and strategies that help organise the learning: in this lesson the matrix and writing frames for those few whose English is still at fairly early stages). The teachers have addressed the complex task of stretching both early stage and more advanced EAL learners. A more specific focus on the differences between speech and writing for academic purposes (including models) would be helpful for most of these pupils; virtually all are bilingual. The RE teacher says the EAL specialist has helped her plan lessons that give more support to bilinguals by encouraging discussion and by providing support for writing. His knowledge of a range of languages other than English has also been of enormous help to pupils. The teaching provided by the collaborative work of the two teachers for the RE and EAL elements of the work is very good in relation to the needs of the whole class. The learning by the targeted EAL pupils is good; they do not learn quite as much concerning the RE objectives of the lesson as do their fully language competent peers. Overall, learning balances out as good rather than very good. Nonetheless, the gain in language confidence of the EAL pupils is considerable.

Example EAL6: evidence from Year 10 Option Support - NEAB Certificate of Achievement in English

An EAL and refugee support teacher jointly take this English option intended both to provide additional language support for pupils (often refugees) arriving at the school in Key Stage 4, and to ensure that they obtain some qualifications in English and can continue their studies. The units of work in this course link with the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and serve to support pupils in their GCSE course (most of these pupils will also attempt GCSE English). Results in the past have been good. All go into the sixth form.

The group is studying the poem 'About His Person' by Simon Armitage, part of a 'reading for pleasure' NEAB module. Pupils around the class are called on to read the poem, which they do with considerable hesitation in some cases. Difficult vocabulary is explained. Pupils then cut out a series of statements about the dead man (prepared by staff) and try, in pairs, to match them to specific lines in the poem. This is a good activity and focuses pupils on meanings which are not at all obvious in the text. A final activity is to say which statements they agree or disagree with. Pupils work hard on text which is dense and demanding, with considerable cultural challenge (assumes/requires good knowledge of aspects of life with which many may be unfamiliar). All pupils are clearly keen to improve their English and catch up. However, some are working at frustration level as they attempt to understand the various layers of meaning in the poem. And the final task, agreeing/disagreeing with cut-out statements is confusing.

Consideration of exercise books shows that over time pupils are making rapid strides with their English, although this particular lesson ends with some residual confusions about the poem studied.

[Teaching, learning and attitudes satisfactory (4)]

Commentary

In general a well-conceived and planned lesson although the text was too challenging for some of the pupils. However, this is sometimes difficult to avoid given syllabus requirements, and the teachers have worked hard to identify strategies to help pupils access the materials. There is good use of whole class and peer discussion, with useful activities aimed at helping pupils unravel meanings and develop a personal response. It would have helped if the teacher had read the poem through initially both as an aid to understanding and a model of how to read poetry well. More explanation of potential cultural confusions would have aided the understanding of the poem. The final task – agreeing/disagreeing with statements – presented difficulties that had not been foreseen and which had much to do with differing cultural expectations.

For most of this session, the history teacher takes this bottom set on his own. He is joined in the second part of the lesson by a BCA who comes to support two fairly recently arrived Urdu-speaking pupils as they attempt the writing task. A large proportion of the class is bilingual.

The class is studying Richard Arkwright and in particular how to weigh up and interpret evidence. What sort of man was he?

Lively style, clear presentation of ideas and content. Good use of blackboard to underline key concepts (inventor, industry, technology, textiles etc). Good questioning techniques and well-chosen excerpts of people's differing views of Arkwright, presented in speech bubble cartoon form. Pupils called on to read these aloud and discuss the implications of the comments. Good inferencing skills emerge. To help answer the question 'What sort of a man do you think he was?', pupils are given supportive worksheet in the form of a writing frame: 'People who admired him said … People who didn't like him said … I believe …'. Pupils are encouraged to discuss the task in pairs before writing their answers.

The BCA joins the two Urdu-speakers and checks, by translating the worksheets, that they have followed the lesson. She helps them compose their response, using both Urdu and English. They work with enthusiasm and appear to enjoy the lesson.

Most pupils work well, making good use of the carefully constructed resources to help them record their response. A few, however, despite the good quality support, have not listened carefully. They become restless as they struggle to complete the task.

[Teaching good (3); learning and attitudes satisfactory (4)]

Commentary

This history lesson is evaluated from the EAL perspective. Recognising that the class contains many pupils with SEN and EAL support needs, the teacher takes great care to present the information clearly using the blackboard, questioning and worksheets to underline the key concepts and reinforce his teaching points. The speech bubbles present the information in an accessible form and bullet points help summarise the main ideas. The pair discussion enables some pupils to clarify meanings. Finally, the writing frame helps the pupils organise contrasting evidence so that they can then draw their own conclusions. All of these strategies are of considerable help to the EAL learners. The BCA (who had been given copies of the materials before the lesson) was able to provide well-focused support at the point when it was most needed by the two Urdu-speakers. This history teacher has worked collaboratively with EAL staff in the school over a period of years and is now confident of his ability to teach in a way that enables most bilingual learners to take a full part in his lessons. He does, however, welcome the help provided by the BCA to the recently arrived pupils whose English is still limited. Her ability to support these pupils bilingually is invaluable. Although the majority of pupils were attentive, a few did not concentrate on listening as well as they were capable of doing. This minor lapse in attitude by a few limited the effectiveness of learning overall.

Strengths

- *Overall the quality of EAL teaching is satisfactory with some excellent practice developing.*

- *A major strength is the high quality partnership teaching evident in several curriculum areas which enables developing bilinguals to join confidently in the work of the class and make good progress with subject content <u>and</u> language acquisition.*

- *Of particular note is the range of carefully selected teaching strategies which provide pupils with opportunities to use English, both written and spoken, in a supportive context.*

- *The bilingual skills of some of the EAL teachers and the one learning support assistant are of considerable value in helping children understand and participate in lessons.*

- *Several subject specialists now feel more confident about making appropriate provision for EAL pupils as a result of working with EAL specialists.*

- *The additional (and differentiated) materials produced as a result of the partnership work have not only benefited the pupils with EAL but, quite often, all pupils.*

- *The Key Stage 4 Option Support work provides a valuable opportunity for late-arriving pupils to improve their English and obtain some qualifications. However, every effort must be made to ensure EAL pupils in general have an opportunity to take GCSE English.*

Weaknesses

- *The work in the induction unit, although improved since the last visit, is still less effective than the other support work. It is of concern that pupils are missing mainstream science and technology for work which is insufficiently challenging, either in terms of language or subject content. It is essential to monitor this provision to ensure that it is an effective use of resources.*

- *A few support teachers are still not being deployed effectively in the mainstream – they are ill-briefed on the lesson they are supporting, they have not developed additional resources or influenced teaching strategies.   One support teacher was barely acknowledged by the mainstream teacher and could, therefore, play only a limited role (whispering advice to individual pupils and contributing to classroom control by placing herself strategically when difficulties arose). This is a waste of resources. The EAL co-ordinator, with support from senior management if necessary, must ensure that all departments recognise their responsibility for supporting developing bilingual learners and are prepared to learn from the good quality partnership work now evident in many areas of the school.*

Strengths

3 OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING QUALITY

General advice

Inspection of a subject should evaluate 'any other factors <u>which have a bearing on what is achieved</u>, especially the extent to which management of the subject is directed towards monitoring, evaluating and improving performance' (*Handbook for Inspecting Secondary Schools*, P104). There should not be over elaboration with regard to factors that do not have a significant bearing on what is achieved. However, in view of the complexities of EAL provision, there is full discussion of possible points to consider here.

Pupils learning EAL face a challenging task, learning the content of the **curriculum** and a new language at the same time.[6] However, language is best learnt in context, so as long as appropriate teaching strategies are used that both enable pupils to understand the content being taught and give them opportunities of using and practising the language needed for the task, their proficiency in English will develop securely over time. Because it is unnecessary, indeed unhelpful, to separate language and content learning, the majority of EAL teaching should take place within the mainstream and across the curriculum. All subjects offer considerable potential for the learning of English although EAL support is frequently concentrated in the core subjects and humanities if resources are limited.

Effective strategies for supporting developing bilingual pupils will inevitably be varied as such pupils' needs differ widely; they come with a range of different experiences, educational, social and cultural backgrounds, learning styles and in some cases SEN as well as EAL needs. Inspection evidence demonstrates that the most effective work is closely linked to the National Curriculum and that withdrawal from the mainstream should be limited with outcomes carefully monitored. In particular, de-contextualised language activities are rarely productive. Separate option courses at Key Stage 4 leading to alternative accreditation might be appropriate but only if pupils have arrived in the education system too late to have any chance of completing GCSE courses successfully. Any such courses should enable pupils to continue their education Post-16.

Check with other subject inspectors that the curriculum offered takes appropriate account of the culturally diverse nature of the school (or wider community) as this will impact on the extent to which bilingual and other minority ethnic pupils engage with the learning.

> *Example EAL9: notes on curriculum analysis*
>
> *The EAL department in this school offers a range of support: in-class partnership work, withdrawal sessions and separate options leading to accreditation. The evidence indicates that in-class work is the most successful, with the option course providing a valuable route for late-arriving Key Stage 4 pupils, enabling them to continue their studies in the sixth form. The school has significantly reduced the amount of withdrawal work it offers and is now concentrating on developing successful in-class partnerships with a wider range of subject departments. Some mainstream staff (as in the history example above) now feel confident about working with linguistically diverse classes without additional support.*

General advice

Well-qualified **staff** would be experienced practitioners with additional specialist qualifications (eg RSA diploma, MA in applied linguistics). Where such staff are bilingual and share the languages and cultures of the pupils, they have additional and valuable expertise to offer. Bilingual assistants, though less common at secondary level, when trained and carefully deployed can work effectively in small group and one-to-one situations and are particularly helpful in enabling new pupils to settle in and understand what is going on around them. Experienced EAL staff should be able to play a more strategic role in the school, producing resources, offering advice and training across the curriculum.

The following points need to be taken into account:

i. The number of staff relative to need varies enormously from school to school. For example, it is not generally effective to spread the work of the EAL teacher/s ever more thinly across the school. More productive might be blocked time with departments to help mainstream staff work more effectively with EAL pupils. However, the needs of very early stage learners of English should not be overlooked. Striking the right balance is crucial and the monitoring and quality assurance role of the SMT is important.

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6 The Inclusion Statement in the *National Curriculum Handbooks for primary and secondary teachers* (QCA 1999) contains a helpful section on 'Pupils who are learning English as an additional language'.

ii. The short-term nature of funding in this area and the resultant lack of a career structure has exacerbated the difficulty of recruiting and retaining well-qualified teachers.

iii. The demise a few years ago of a nationally recognised qualification in this field and the resultant decline in specialist training for this work, means that fewer and fewer EAL staff have appropriate training for the work.

Example EAL10: notes on staffing

In this school there are five full-time and one part-time EAL teachers. There is also a bilingual classroom assistant, a refugee co-ordinator and home-school link worker. This enables a range of provision to be offered: induction classes for new arrivals, partnership teaching in the mainstream, and a separate NEAB Certificate of Achievement course in English for late-arriving older pupils. The bilingual classroom assistant, who speaks the language of the main minority ethnic group in the school, helps newly arrived pupils settle into school, supports individual pupils whose English is limited, liaises with parents and undertakes bilingual assessments with other members of the department. Several staff have qualifications in EAL/applied linguistics and between them are fluent in a number of languages in addition to English. This wide range of experience allows them to offer pupils with EAL an appropriate package of support strategies. In addition, the efforts they make to forge good home–school links, using translators where necessary, are highly successful and a strength of the department. They recognise the needs of all parents to understand what goes on in school so that they can support their child's education.

General advice

Most EAL departments have a **resource base** which is sometimes used for withdrawal group work but also as a working space for staff as well. Some are well equipped (with computers, additional resources produced by staff, bilingual books and simplified texts etc) and serve as an area where EAL pupils can come for additional guidance during lunch and after school. They are frequently very well used by pupils who appreciate being able to get extra help or talk through their concerns. It is important to check that materials produced for use in other subject areas are also lodged in those departments, so that they can serve as reference material for all staff, not just those involved in joint teaching and planning.

Example EAL11: notes on resources and accommodation

In this school the resource base contains two computers and a wide range of bilingual texts that pupils can borrow. A member of the department is available at lunchtime to respond to requests for help, and twice a week pupils can attend to play board games, which not only support their developing English but create an atmosphere of fun and relaxation. They are welcome to bring along their friends. Many EAL pupils use the computers at lunchtime and after school to work on their homework with help from EAL staff. This is a valuable resource for pupils.

General advice

Some language support departments are free-standing with several staff **managed** by a head of department. In others the department might be part of a broader faculty of pupil support, including SEN provision. Whatever the structure, the difference between pupils whose main need is to learn English and those who have learning difficulties must be clear and understood by all staff. Good links with the SEN department are in any case vital as inevitably some bilingual pupils will have both language and learning support needs. It is also essential that the department is line managed by a member of the senior management team who understands the rationale for the team's work and can ensure that their cross curricular responsibilities are carried out effectively. Many schools have a member of the governing body who takes an interest in literacy and EAL work and perhaps minority ethnic issues more generally.

As with all departments, the language support team should have clear documentation. The following areas need to be covered: the roles and responsibilities of the various team members; admission and induction procedures for late-arriving bilingual pupils, and the methods by which all pupils who need additional help are identified; the range of provision on offer; the rationale for staff deployment; what mainstream teachers can expect from both teaching and non teaching support staff (and equally their own responsibility for making this work successful); and information on record-keeping and how this is integrated into school and departmental files. Policy statements, including action plans and targets which schools are now required to produce for the purposes of EMAG[7] funding, should be linked to school development plans as well as any equal opportunity/race equality policies.

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7 For further details on EMAG (Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant) see *Guidance on Evaluating Educational Inclusion*, OFSTED 2000.

In some schools and LEAs key mainstream staff are seconded into EAL work (with appropriate training provided) returning subsequently to their previous posts with valuable additional skills. This is a powerful model for whole school change. School managers should ensure that both mainstream and specialist EAL staff have access to continuing professional development for this area of work. They should also ensure that time is allocated for the joint planning that is necessary if good quality partnership work is to develop. Where an EAL specialist is supporting a wide range of lessons, or where the teacher is peripatetic, it is not, of course, possible for a full partnership model to operate in all lessons. But even where detailed joint planning is not possible, support staff should have enough information about the lesson they are to join to enable them to participate effectively.

The devolution of EMAG funding to many schools has given headteachers greater flexibility to use the resources as they see fit. In some schools this has led to the recasting of posts (eg upgrading and giving greater status to the work) and experimentation with alternative strategies (such as secondments). You should satisfy yourself that the additional grant funding is being used in ways which are consistent with the purposes of the grant and are likely to lead to improved attainment.

Example EAL12: notes on management

There are 9 (7.3 fte) staff in this school with a responsibility for EAL/bilingual support, including a refugee co-ordinator and home–school link worker. The staff are line managed by a head of department who is in turn line managed by the deputy head. Following the two inspection visits, the deputy head (in conjunction with the head of EAL) undertook a review of the work of this team and has developed and defined much more precisely the roles of the various staff. She has also set measurable targets (language proficiency as well as pupil progress through National Curriculum levels) in the subjects where support is given to improve the effectiveness of the department. The quality of support work is monitored by an evaluation of the department's record-keeping, of materials produced, and by in-class observation. The department has clarified its aims and objectives, been much more explicit about its belief that language is best learnt through the medium of the curriculum and that all mainstream staff have an important role to play in helping bilingual pupils develop their English. They have reduced the amount of time pupils spend in the separate induction programme and now focus more on partnership teaching in a wider range of curriculum areas (using the earlier successful work with one or two departments to show what can be done). The management of this department has improved significantly.

4 RECONCILING EVALUATIONS

Example EAL13: overview notes

Since the previous OFSTED visits, the work of the EAL department at City Comprehensive has made significant strides. The combined efforts of the deputy head who line manages the work and the EAL staff themselves have resulted in a department that is no longer on the margins of school life but beginning to be a power for change within the mainstream.

The partnership work is impacting on teaching and learning strategies in subject classrooms and, therefore, supporting a wider number of developing bilingual pupils: their achievement in EAL and in subjects is facilitated well by this provision. The confidence of the team has improved as more departments ask for their support. This is in contrast to the position previously where offers of support were mostly not taken up. Nevertheless some departments still fail to recognise that they need to do more to enable the EAL staff to work effectively and there is still some way to go before all support can be said to be of the highest quality.

The work of the induction unit has improved since the last OFSTED visit. However, withdrawal work in the induction unit is sometimes not appreciated by pupils and not as effective as it should be; it is unsatisfactory that pupils miss other important lessons for these sessions.

While the school's results remain well below national averages (although even this is an improvement on the 'very low' of two years ago), in comparison with similar schools clear progress is being made, with marked improvement between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. The PICSI indicates a range of B grades for GCSE data in comparison with similar schools. It is not of course possible to say that this is due solely or even largely to the more effective in-class support of the EAL staff, but their work is likely to be one of the many factors involved in this school's improving attainment profile in very challenging circumstances.