

EAL Co-ordinators' Meeting 2.7.09

Transition Update – Steve Donohue

A letter has gone to all schools with Y6 pupils who are learning English as an additional language (EAL). This letter gives a link to the EMAS website:
<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/schoolseducationandlearning/ethnicminorityachievementservice/emasgeneralinformation.htm>

Here staff can find a poster template and an example poster for bilingual pupils to complete with help from an adult. These posters should be sent to EMAS so that the information about the pupils can be flagged up with their secondary schools.

For further information or advice please contact Steve at
steven.donohue@wiltshire.gov.uk

Bilingual Conferences – Cecilia Thompson

Cecilia, who is head of the EMAS secondary team, explained that research shows that valuing pupils' languages leads to increased self-esteem and improved sense of identity. The secondary team have therefore been working with pupils learning EAL to celebrate their language skills. Isolated learners in Wiltshire schools have been put in touch with others who speak the same first language, parents and carers have also been involved. Clusters of schools have combined to put on events where pupils come with members of staff to explore issues such as the advantages of multi-lingualism and strategies for improving study skills.

This initiative is being extended to primary schools with a pilot conference at Ivy Lane for Y5 and Y6 pupils. Secondary pupils will be invited to act as ambassadors and to discuss concerns about transition.

If any other schools would like to host an event please contact EMAS at
emas@wiltshire.gov.uk

EAL/BME Inclusion in Gifted and Talented Programmes – Sue Clements

All international new arrivals are potential candidates for G & T programmes

- G & T cohorts should be representative of the school's population – 10% of pupils in Britain are EAL learners

Reasons that EAL/BME pupils are often under-represented:

- Incomplete prior attainment history
- Pupils achieve less well in written work
- Achievements outside the school curriculum are not recognised (e.g. community schools)
- Cultural resistances to participation in some areas (e.g. dance, drama)
- Attainment is valued more highly than progress (i.e. rapid progress is not regarded as highly as test results)

Identification of new arrivals as G & T

- Monitor progress of acquiring EAL to identify rapid improvement
- Assess first language if possible to identify higher order thinking skills
- Look at data from previous schools
- Provide targeted monitoring and support over the first few weeks – observe learning strategies
- Place pupil in higher groups so that they have good models

Identification of more advanced learners as G & T

- Do not rely on written work as evidence – look at achievements in other areas and other ways of assessing understanding
- Achievements in first language – Y6 pupils may be able to take GCSEs in their home language

Other indicators of potential:

- High level of motivation. Good memory. Sustained initiative (e.g. use of dictionary). Well organised. Asks questions. Keen to do homework. Developed interpersonal skills. Readily applied interpersonal skills. Curious and observant. Can concentrate for extended periods. Demanding and anxious – wanting to learn too fast. Disruptive, disaffected or withdrawn because of frustration.

Maintaining the momentum:

- Ensure appropriate setting
- Encourage collaborative work and preparatory talk
- Provide previews of texts
- Explicitly teach higher level language structures and functions
- Have high expectations
- Gradually reduce contextual support

Assessment and Target Setting; Improving Writing Skills– Jeannie MacMeekin & Elspeth Taylor

In response to requests, issues related to assessment were revisited .

The EAL Assessment document was explained for those not familiar with it. Case studies were looked at and levelled – this led to discussion on the main errors made by learners of EAL, what to target and how to scaffold support. Participants felt that this boosted their confidence in making accurate assessments.

Jeannie and Elspeth demonstrated how activities such as jigsawing, information gap activities and story predictor stations can help learners of EAL and many other pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills as a bridge to improving writing.

Example of good practice: The Manor – Laura Mason

Inclusion is a priority at The Manor – 54% of pupils have special needs, there is a specialist centre for autism. The majority of EAL learners are Polish or Bengali speakers. The main issues for the school are the acceptance and understanding of different cultures and visible difference.

Measures the school has put in place include:

- A welcome poster in different languages
- A named person to do initial interviews and parents' guided tour for bilingual families
- Additional welcome booklet in first languages
- Valuing and respecting other languages e.g. language portfolio includes poster about other languages pupils know
- Festivals of light around the world
- Pupils are valued for abilities in first language e.g. written work, confidence to speak in front of class/school in home language

- Staff are aware of cultural issues e.g. the acceptability of drawing people for Muslims, ensuring a range of skin tone colours are available

Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion – Pam Carroll

Community Cohesion Guidance:

Since this came out in Feb. 09 there has been a marked change in Ofsted inspections which have been more critical of Wiltshire schools for not reflecting the UK demography.

The Institute for Community Cohesion (ICOCO) has produced an audit for schools to help them improve e.g. Who Do We Think We Are Week; involving local community members; International Week linking to countries represented within the school.

Pam demonstrated how stories such as Frog and the Stranger, This is Our House and Something Else can be used with quite young children to examine acceptance and attitudes to difference.

Useful websites:

<http://www.wdwtwa.org.uk/gettingstarted> - Who Do We Think We Are website includes 10 quick starters.

www.britkid.org is a fun website with information and activities about children from different ethnic backgrounds in the UK. It also includes lesson plans (www.britkid.org/ts-lesson_plans.html)

www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholschool/communitycohesion/communitycohesionresourcepack for ideas to ensure that all learners understand diversity from many different perspectives.

Race Equality:

Wiltshire LA is overhauling the template on Race Equality to include other equality strands. The draft will be sent to schools before the end of term

The new Ofsted Framework Guidance addresses equality and diversity and narrowing the achievement gap. The judgement on this will affect the overall judgement of the school – see p.13 and 14

The Marlborough Brandt Group will be running a course on 'Putting the World into Wiltshire Schools' on 13.7.09

There will be an exhibition entitled We Were There at the Civic Hall, Trowbridge from Tuesday 20th October to Thursday 22nd October 2009. This is a multi media display that shows how men and women from Africa, Asia, the West Indies and other Commonwealth countries fought alongside British forces during many conflict over the last 250 years. For details contact heather.patrick@wiltshire.gov.uk.

For more details on any of the above please contact Pam at pamela.carroll@wiltshire.gov.uk

ICT and EAL – Steve Donohue

Steve demonstrated a Powerpoint presentation developed by the SWHub on how ICT can be used to help EAL learners to develop their language e.g.

- use of Clicker 5
- video conferencing to link isolated learners
- creating multi-media resources (e.g. dual language books, films about local communities, transfer to secondary schools etc)

He also demonstrated a website designed to teach about internet safety – The Wild Web Woods – which is available in various languages and can be used with quite young children.

Another useful resource is the NALDIC vodcasts which show how ICT can be used to support learners of EAL: www.naldic.org.uk/docs/resources/ict.cfm