

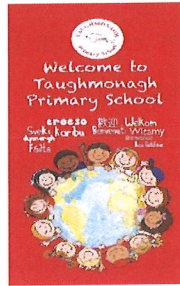


Newcomer Policy

Date ratified: October 2023

Date for review: October 2025

Learning Without Limits



Newcomer Policy October 2023

Rationale

Taughmonagh Primary School believes that school should be a safe and nurturing place where children can reach their full potential. It aims to equip children with the skills values and opportunities to make a positive contribution to an inclusive and diverse society.

Taughmonagh Primary School is committed to providing equal access for all learners to a broad and balanced curriculum which is appropriate to the child's abilities, talents and personal qualities. Inclusion for all within the school community and access to appropriate support, both academic and pastoral, are key priorities in Taughmonagh that values the successful development of each of its pupils. Educational inclusion is an on-going process that celebrates diversity which is valued as a rich resource that supports the learning of all. It involves the identification and minimising of barriers to learning, that may be experienced by some groups of children and aims to maximise resources to reduce these barriers. This policy is intended to ensure that newcomer children have access to appropriate support to enable them to access the curriculum and participate in the wider school community. The ethos of the school creates a welcoming and inclusive environment for both students and parents from all ethnic or cultural backgrounds and demands that this policy statement should apply to all governors, staff, pupils, parents/ carers, visitors and others involved in any way with Taughmonagh Primary School.

We aim to ensure that all newcomer children are able to:

- Celebrate their culture within the school
- Develop their self-esteem and confidence through recognition and acceptance of their cultural identity
- Use English confidently and competently.
- Use English as a means of learning across the curriculum.
- Have equal access to the NI revised curriculum.

Definition

For the purpose of clarity, a 'newcomer pupil' refers to a child or young person who has enrolled in Taughmonagh Primary School for whom English is not the primary language spoken at home and does not have satisfactory language skills to participate fully in the school curriculum.

Context

Children from a wide range of background cultures, languages and dialects attend Taughmonagh Primary School. They exhibit great cultural diversity and bring with them the knowledge they may have gained from the range of experiences through which they may have lived. There should be empathy and understanding about the journey that children and their families may have been on prior to joining the school.

Key Principles for Additional Language Acquisition

- Offer a safe, welcoming and nurturing environment.
- An initial silent period is a natural stage when learning a language.
- Integrating newly arrived pupils into school life and classroom routines.
- Teachers have a crucial role in modelling the use of language.
- Developing a pupil's self-image through recognition of their distinctive cultural experiences, the ability to use two languages or more, of being bilingual and through praise for their achievements.
- Employ both same language and English speaking buddies where possible.

- All pupils have access to the revised NI Curriculum
- Organising classroom activities and experiences which foster communication.
- Motivation to communicate through the development of acceptance, security and self-confidence.
- Helping pupils take ownership of their learning
- A distinction is made between EAL and SEN. The focus and use of additional support time are best seen as an integral part of the curriculum and lesson planning.

"No pupil should be expected to cast off the language and culture of the home as he crosses the school threshold, nor live and act as though the school and home represent two totally different cultures which have to be kept firmly apart"

The Bullock Report 1976.

Knowledge of the culture and community or communities in which language is spoken is very important in the learning context. The learner should develop an understanding of the similarities and differences between his/her culture and other cultures. All language and intercultural competences should be equally acknowledged.

European Language Portfolio (ELP) guidance (SELB 2003 p7)

Roles and Responsibilities

A communication strategy should be implemented to ensure the successful dissemination of the roles and responsibilities within the school's policy for newcomer children.

The Board of Governors should ensure that:

- the needs of all Newcomers are addressed;
- the policy for Newcomers is kept under review; and
- appropriate funds and resources are delegated to Newcomers.

The Principal should:

- keep the Board of Governors informed about Newcomer issues;
- work in close partnership with the SENCO and Newcomer Lead.

- ensure that the SMT are actively involved in the management of Newcomers within the school
- meet with parents and complete checklist for admissions and data capture forms.

The Newcomer Lead/ SENCO should:

- Have a welcome meeting with parents and find out background information. Use an interpreter if necessary and provide parents with a welcome booklet.
- responsible for maintaining the school Newcomer Register;
- complete mandatory Newcomer forms;
- maintain records for individual children to be available for monitoring for funding by the EA via CFER;
- give guidance and support in target setting and planning work;
- liaise with staff to identify SEN difficulties;
- support staff with resources;
- offer holistic and nurturing support.
- contribute to the in-service training of staff;
- liaise with Inclusion and Diversity Service (IDS); and
- be aware of current research.

All staff should:

- Be aware of and respect dietary, religious and cultural needs of the child.
- Make use of visual cues to support language where appropriate.
- liaise with and advise colleagues;
- include opportunities to teach and model language skills;
- provide opportunities for relationship and self-esteem building activities;
- have a balance and range of teaching strategies and activities, for example whole group, small group, pairs, individual or practical;
- ensure that learners have appropriate time to complete a task;
- facilitate buddy system

The class teacher should:

- gather important information about the pupil from initial parent meeting;
- hire an interpreter if needed for parent's meetings;
- monitor progress carefully and record information through observation and assessment forms;
- be knowledgeable about pupil's abilities and needs in English;

- not insist that newcomer children take part in oral activities as part of the immersion period;
- provide opportunities for celebrating diversity such as 'European Day of Languages';
- develop a socially and intellectually inclusive classroom, valuing cultural differences;
- provide information to parents regarding school procedures and progress of children through home-school journal / Seesaw;
- prepare buddy to welcome new arrivals;
- make parents aware of resources available to them; and
- refer to the 'Toolkit For Diversity in the Classroom' booklet for advice;



Learning and Teaching

- All classrooms should be warm and welcoming.
- Work should be stimulating and differentiated so that learners can experience success, yet challenging enough to promote progression in learning.
- Explain rules and routines with the support of visual cues.
- Use visuals to assist children to know exactly what is expected of them and to support increasing both receptive and expressive language.
- Provide chill out or quiet areas if necessary.
- Promote a sense of belonging through circle time activities and sense of place activities. (Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School page 54)
- Use CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) to monitor progress.
- Work should allow learners to progress at their own rate, yet encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning.

- Key language relating to curriculum topics should be pre-taught. This language should also be displayed in the classroom.
- Provide time for children to demonstrate their prior learning, including means other than writing.
- Lessons should be structured in a series of simple, clearly-defined steps with clear learning intentions.
- The classroom environment should be inclusive, simulating and attractive, featuring as much learner work and vocabulary as possible.
- Provision of dual language books and bi-lingual dictionaries where available.

Continuing Professional Development

It is essential that all staff keep up-to-date with current developments in order to best provide for newcomer children.

Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy

This policy will be reviewed in light of changes in legislation or practice following consultation with all staff members, parents and external agencies. Feedback will also be sought on an annual basis.

Process for Review and Development

This policy will be reviewed in 2026

Resources

- Every School a Good School 'Newcomer Guidance for Schools' DE.
- Every School a Good School 'Supporting Newcomer Pupils' DE.
- Toolkit for Diversity for Nursery and Primary.
- EAL Language Builders - Books 1 and 2.
- Guidance pack for teachers
- www.education-support.org.uk - Education support website for parents and teachers.
- www.education-support.org.uk/teachers/ids/cefr-primary/ - Common European Framework of Reference (CFER).

