WREKIN

POLICY FOR PUPILS FOR WHOM ENGLISH IS NOT THEIR FIRST LANGUAGE (EAL)

Aims

Wrekin College aims to provide a welcoming, supportive environment for all pupils, including for those whose first language is not English, ensuring they are fully integrated into the school community. It aims to provide equal access to the curriculum for all pupils, including those for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL). EAL pupils will be given the support they need to access their curriculum of study as well as instruction by specialist teachers for the English Language Qualifications they want to take here at Wrekin or in their home country in order to pursue higher education in an English speaking institution.

Identification of pupils needing EAL

If it is possible for prospective pupils to visit before being offered a place, we shall arrange it. Those for whom a visit is not possible are offered places on the basis of a video-conference interview with the Head of International Admissions and/or the Head, and usually a test or tests administered on our behalf by the pupil's school or agent.

A place will be offered in the Sixth Form if we consider the pupil to be suitable for the courses they wish to study, sometimes subject to gaining suitable overseas qualifications at a given level. Those admitted below the Sixth Form will be offered places if, from school reports, letters of recommendation and (video) interview, we feel they have the necessary potential and desire to succeed. All pupils sit a placement test on arrival in school to enable an appropriate programme of study for EAL and provision of lessons to be put in place.

EAL Teaching Provision

Many overseas pupils require some support in English and attend lessons in the EAL Department. Please see the separate Admissions Policy (including for International Admissions) for more details regarding Wrekin's entry requirements for International pupils. Once at Wrekin, EAL pupils that require it are taught two EAL lessons per fortnight in small groups or on an individual basis, depending on their language level and needs. All EAL pupils are invited to attend a 50 EAL lesson on Saturday mornings to improve their language level and to focus on exam techniques. This session is compulsory for boarders.

In the Sixth Form, pupils are admitted to the courses on offer if we believe they have a realistic chance of success; otherwise we try to advise them on courses which will suit their abilities and aptitudes. Those who require an English qualification for university entrance are prepared for the IELTS test.

Pupils admitted to the Fourth Form will select three or four GCSE subjects. Confident linguists may attend mainstream English lessons and follow the IGCSE English course for native speakers with English subject support offered by the EAL department. Depending on their length of time at Wrekin, it may also be possible for such pupils to take the IGCSE English Literature course too. Pupils whose English language is not at a high enough level to achieve a pass in the iGCSE First language paper will study iGCSE English as an Additional Language instead.

Pupils can also study for the Cambridge suite of exams (A2 Key, B1 Preliminary, B2 First) if required. In Sixth Form some pupils may also prefer to prepare for the Cambridge C1 Advanced or C2 Proficiency as an alternative to the IELTS exam.

Pupils admitted to the First to Third Forms are expected to attend lessons across the whole curriculum, although sometimes special arrangements are needed to fit in the required number of extra English lessons, until their language improves sufficiently for them to follow a standard timetable. Any modifications to a pupil's timetable will be carried out through liaison with the Deputy Head (Academic).

If a pupil joins part way through the GCSE courses, then discussion with the Deputy Head (Academic) and EAL Administrator will be required in order to tailor a timetable to suit the individual's capabilities. It is unlikely that a pupil joining at the start of Fifth Form will be able to complete a full complement of GCSEs but they may be able to pass a number of GCSEs, depending on prior teaching in their own country and their ability in written English.

If a pupil is admitted who requires intensive English assistance to enable them to join mainstream lessons, then special arrangements will be made, at the parents' own cost, either for them to attend another school for intensive teaching in English before being admitted to Wrekin College, or for additional support to be provided at Wrekin. This will help initially with spoken and written English and then, on a diminishing basis, with work in class as required.

Monitoring the progress of EAL pupils

Proficiency in English is initially assessed through the placement test, using The Common European Framework for Reference (CEFR) levels, and is regularly reviewed. Each EAL pupil will have the opportunity to communicate what their language learning goals are for their stay at Wrekin.Targets are set and progress monitored for each pupil in the EAL department and regular meetings take place within the department to keep track of pupil progress. The EAL department has specialists across a wide range of subjects including English, Maths and the Sciences, who are able to offer subject support for key vocabulary as well as study skills, methods of revision and exam technique. Regular liaison with subject teachers, tutors and houseparents ensures a good network of support for each pupil, both pastorally and to help their academic progress.

Qualifications in a student's home language

Overseas pupils in the Fourth or Fifth Forms usually take a GCSE (if available) with a small amount of guidance towards the specification being the only usual requirement. Similarly, in the Sixth Form pupils from overseas may wish to take an A level in their home language, usually at the end of Upper Sixth Form, if the A level is available. However, this can only be offered if we find a suitable tutor and lessons for this purpose will be charged. The EAL department (in conjunction with the Modern Foreign Languages

department) organises guidance and preparation sessions with teachers of that language to ensure pupils fulfil the substantial requirements in order to gain a good grade at this level.

University Entrance

Many overseas pupils are boarders and benefit from the extra classes offered on Saturday mornings to prepare for IELTS and to support their A Level subjects. Most are successful in eventually gaining university places either in this country, the USA, or back home. In addition, the Head of Sixth Form and the Careers and UCAS Coordinator give individual guidance to EAL students at all stages of the application process to universities in the UK.

Pastoral Care

Houseparents are responsible for the day-to-day pastoral care of all pupils at Wrekin (overseen by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Head of Boarding). In addition, EAL staff (who see EAL pupils regularly in individual or small group lessons) liaise with the Head of Support for Learning, Head of Boarding, Houseparents, Deputy Head (Pastoral), Parents, and Educational Guardians to help ensure the welfare of EAL pupils. Cultural events are organised throughout the year to celebrate the linguistic and cultural diversity of pupils in the school.