

Raising the Achievement of Pupils with English as an Additional Language

NATIONAL CONFERENCE - 13th March 2013

Jeffrey Hall, Institute of Education (University of London)

20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL

1. CONFERENCE AIMS

Language barriers remain the key factor affecting the performance of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) in British schools and yet little is known about the attainment of pupils who speak different languages and what works in raising achievement. This issue is increasingly important given the growth in the population of pupils with EAL in England over the last decade. About 15% of the school population in England and Wales, or over a million children now use English as an additional language.

- How can education respond to ensure every child can access the whole curriculum and raise achievement?
- Why do some schools do well with pupils with EAL?
- What are the factors contributing to this success?

The aim of this conference is to look at the attainment of pupils with EAL and good practice to raise achievement. There will also be a unique opportunity to discuss and share the findings of three good practice research reports into what works in schools. Successful practice will be shared by case study schools headteachers, researchers and EAL professionals. The conference offers practical tips for teachers' Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to keep up to date in the field of EAL.

2. SPEAKERS

Key LA and National Speakers

- **Educational Inequality: Raising aspiration and achievement of BME Pupils**
Derrick Anderson, Chief Executive, Lambeth Council
- **Good practice to raise achievement of pupils with EAL in schools**
Feyisa Demie, Adviser for School Self-evaluation and Head of Research and Statistics Unit
Amanda Bellsham-Revell, EAL Consultant
- **English as an Additional Language: The national picture and Ofsted update**
Mark Sims, HM Inspector, Ofsted

Headteachers Panel - What Works for Pupils with EAL?

- Morgan Williams, Headteacher, St. Anne's Primary School
- Martin Clarke, Headteacher, St. John's Angell Town Primary School
- John Conway, Headteacher, La Retraite Secondary School
- Louis Desa, Headteacher, Bishop Thomas Grant Secondary School

EAL Professional Panel - EAL Matters: Policy, Practice and Future Challenges

- Dr Frank Monaghan, Senior Lecturer, Open University and NALDIC
- Amanda Gay, EAL Consultant
- Cidalia Fraga, Assistant Headteacher, Stockwell Primary School

The conference will be opened and chaired by Cathy Twist - Assistant Director, Schools and Educational Improvement Service, Lambeth LA.

3. WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers, Assistant Headteachers, Head of Inclusion
- Mainstream Teachers, EMA/EAL Coordinators & Teachers, EAL Teaching Assistants
- School Governors, Local Authority Officers, Community Partnership Managers

BACKGROUND TO THE EAL RESEARCH REPORTS

Three new research reports published in Lambeth highlight the performance and strategies used to raise achievement of pupils with English as an additional language in schools.

The first research report is an empirical study of ***“The Achievement of Pupils with English as an Additional Language”***. Drawing on detailed School Census data for pupils who completed Key Stage 2 and General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), this research examines pupil performance differences among the main ethnic groups by levels of fluency in English and language spoken at home in schools. Three main conclusions emerged from this study. Firstly, the empirical data suggests it takes about 5 to 7 years for pupils with EAL to acquire academic English fluency. Secondly, the study of EAL and attainment suggests that there is a strong relationship between stage of fluency in English and educational attainment. The results suggest that the percentage of pupils attaining level 4 or above at KS2 and 5+A*-C at GCSE increased as stage of proficiency in English increased. Secondly, the language, ethnicity and attainment data reflect substantial differences in performance between different ethnic groups. A further analysis of the data by language spoken highlighted the potential of language data to help disaggregate census ethnic categories and give greater insight into the performance of different groups in schools. In particular the White Other and the Black Africans had the greatest linguistic diversity and attainment patterns. In conclusion, this study confirms that the worryingly low achievement of a number of ethnic groups has been masked by government statistics which do not distinguish ethnic groups by language spoken at home and level of fluency in English.

The second research report ***“English as an Additional Language: Good Practice to Raise Achievement in Primary Schools”*** and the third report ***“English as an Additional Language: Good Practice to Raise Achievement in Secondary Schools”*** draws on evidence of what works for pupils with EAL from schools that succeeded against the odds. Two overarching research questions guided both studies: Why do some schools do well with pupils with EAL? What are the factors contributing to this success? The main findings of these studies identify a number of good practices to overcome some of the barriers to achievement which face pupils with EAL in schools, such as: successful leadership that recruits an effective diverse workforce; parental engagement; mentoring; developing an inclusive curriculum; effective teaching and learning strategies; good care, guidance and targeted support for pupils with EAL through the effective use of EAL teachers, EAL teaching assistants, learning mentors and EMA co-ordinators; partnership with parents and the community that the school serves.

