

# **WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**

This policy was revised in September 2011 in line with the School's Policy Review Schedule which ensures all policies are kept up to date and replaces that updated in 2010.

The Whole School refers to all staff and students at Lavant House School in the junior and senior school which includes: the Early Years/Foundation Stage (EYFS), Pre-Prep School (Key Stage 1), Prep. School (Key Stage 2); Middle School (Key Stage 3); Senior School (Key Stage 4) and the Sixth Form (Key Stage 5).

## **A. GENERAL**

Lavant House school sets high standards and holds a firm belief in providing a rounded education for girls where the majority of girls study nine subjects at GCSE, four at AS and three or four at A2 level. Our EAL speakers will demonstrate at entrance the same intellectual levels as our native speakers. However, we acknowledge that they can sometimes face the additional challenge of achieving a sophisticated level of written English in order to take English medium examinations as they have opted to do. Experience has shown that even girls of high academic ability are placed under considerable strain if they enter the School at a senior level (L5 and above) with limited proficiency in formal written English. This is especially true of subjects that are heavily language based. Accordingly, to ensure that no girl faces unreasonable expectations, as a School we feel it is right to require evidence of such proficiency as indicated above and we also advise very carefully on subject choices to suit the candidates profile whilst building her linguistic confidence.

## **B. ENTRANCE BELOW SIXTH FORM**

A confidential school report including an appraisal of oral skills in English is required. The older a girl is on entry, the more important this becomes since there is limited time before external examinations.

Once accepted, all girls in Middle and Senior Schools will usually be presented for GCSE English and English Literature. Girls are expected to attend normal classes in the majority of subjects but, depending on the age of entry, certain subjects may not be studied e.g. a foreign language if they have no background knowledge. This allows extra time to improve the girl's proficiency in English itself by wider reading and closer focus on other prep. Where appropriate, girls will be presented for an alternative to the GCSE examination e.g. GCSE in their own native languages which will provide a qualification acceptable to colleges and universities to study subjects other than English itself.

## **C. SIXTH FORM ENTRY**

A confidential report requesting information about the standard of English is required. Ideally, the successful applicants at this stage are interviewed by

telephone by the Director of Studies and the Head of Boarding. Where possible this takes place at school but is often via long distance telephone conference call. We also expect a girl to have some form of certificated evidence of proficiency in English that is acceptable to English colleges and universities e.g. Hong Kong Certificate of Education, the West African Examination Council and Senior Secondary School Certificate.

Once accepted, Sixth Form Level, new boarders are sent advice by the School that they should try to listen to a news programme in English on a daily basis prior to their arriving in the UK in order to practice listening and comprehending English used at a fast pace. BBC World Service Radio, BBC World News TV, CNN etc. We also suggest to them on arrival that they continue with this as part of their daily routine. A reading list is also enclosed listing some enjoyable, short books in contemporary English from which they are asked to select and read a few, e.g. Bill Bryson, *Notes From a Small Island*.

#### **D. AFTER ENTRY**

All new girls through to Sixth form are screened on entry as part of the whole-school programme by the Learning Support Co-ordinator. The latter will monitor progress in the first weeks and liaise with boarding and subject teachers if issues are identified. If it is necessary, specialist tuition will be offered by the Learning Support Co-ordinator or from one of her team and parents will be advised. This is chargeable as an extra on the girl's end-of-term bill. Prior to admission, parents must agree to accept the School's judgement on the need for extra tuition and to pay for it at the current rate. Parents receive an information letter and are asked to return a signed permission slip. Tuition may be on either a one-to-one or small group basis and will focus on practising essential skills in English which underpin A Level study. Parents will be informed and reports supplied at reporting times. The length of the tuition course will be decided by the Learning Support Co-ordinator and Sixth Form Tutor/subject teachers together.

In general, all overseas students who have English as a second or even third/fourth language are warmly encouraged to integrate with their English-speaking peers. They learn English best through practical experience. Boarders will be placed in dormitories or bedrooms shared with English speakers and they quickly settle to being part of the whole boarding community, their English developing organically over time. They have an induction programme with a Boarding Housemistress on arrival to familiarise them with the local neighbourhood. The majority leave the Sixth Form as good, fluent speakers of English, and with a sound level of written English, depending on their A2 subject profile. The Director of Studies is in charge of entering overseas students into external examinations in their own languages.

#### **AIMS**

To promote the effective use of English by students, appropriate to their age, ability and experience and to facilitate their participation in other subjects in the classroom, as well as social interaction with their British peers, through the use of key vocabulary and oral and written practice in the language. To

enable pupils from abroad to improve their English language skills during their time at the school. Pupils to learn to comprehend and communicate in English both orally and in written form to the best of their ability.

Students are taught individually or in small groups at least twice a week and placed according to their experience and ability.

Those who attend for at least a year are encouraged to attempt Cambridge University EAL examinations as follows:

PET: Preliminary English Test

FCE: First Certificate in English

IELTS: International English Language Testing System

Those who attend for a matter of weeks are assessed and taught according to need and are given a short test at the end of their stay.

### **Facilities and resources:**

EAL is taught in a small classroom within the languages area which is shared with the PE Department. It is adequate for individuals and small groups

We have the use of a whiteboard, tape recorder and CD player with microphone, computer, printer and projector.

There is a variety of EAL courses comprising of books, tapes and CDs, which are updated as the need arises. English Language magazines aimed at specific age-groups are also used from time to time. English Readers are also available.

### **Timetables**

Individual timetables are organised by Mrs. Harrison when the student arrives. Lessons take place during the school day whenever possible, at a time to suit the student, either at lunch-time or whilst the other girls are studying a modern language for example. Lessons are 30 minutes in duration for Junior School students and 40 minutes for Seniors. For FCE or IELTS students in the Sixth Form they may be double lessons. One or two homeworks are set each week for consolidation and for further practice. In order to further their knowledge girls are also encouraged to read a fiction book in English. The four skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing are tested regularly; attainment tests are given every few units of the course-book and records of the results are kept for reference. Reports are written in the Autumn and Summer terms and attainment grades given in the Spring Term.

### **Staff:**

Bethan Harrison BA Hons PGCE

Mrs. Harrison was formerly Head of Modern Languages at Lavant House. She retired from this post in 2009 but has continued to teach English as Another Language to small groups and individuals and also GCSE French to a small group of students.

Mrs. Harrison obtained her BA Honours degree in French with Subsidiary German from the University of London, Queen Mary College in 1970 and her

PGCE in French and German from Cambridge University, Hughes Hall in 1971. She taught at Surbiton Boys' Grammar School, subsequently Esher Sixth Form College from 1971-1975. After bringing up a family she taught French and German at Rosemead School, Littlehampton from 1987-1995 before its merger with Lavant House when she obtained the full-time post of Head of Modern Languages for the merged school. She held the post for 14 years until her retirement.\*

*\*Please see the Modern Languages handbook for B Harrison's full CV*

## **English as an Additional Language Courses – September 2011**

At present we only have three foreign girls in school who require English as an Additional Language lessons.

Two girls are Chinese:

- Alice Jin (LVI) has attended school in England for several years and has joined Lavant House for her Advanced level Studies. She is working towards the IELTS University Entrance qualification in English
- Jane Ding is in England for the first time and has joined Form IV. She is concentrating first on keywords in Science, Mathematics and English. Jane has good experience of English grammar but needs to build up her vocabulary and her confidence. We are therefore using 'Team' magazine as a resource for articles on many aspects of English life to enhance listening, reading, speaking and writing skills.

The third girl is Spanish and is here for one term. She has joined Form II:

- Sonsoles Corbi has good knowledge of English and is following a First Certificate course.

Bethan Harrison

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