

English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Elm Park School is a diverse and multicultural school with children and families from all over the world and from different ethnicities. We access funding for our students who do not have English as their first language from the Ministry of Education. This money provides in class and small group literacy support for these students, including resources.

Our ESOL programmes are tailored to suit individual needs and provide students the opportunity to practice English skills in a small supportive environment.

ESOL classes are held during the school day for students who need extra help with the three Language Domains. Students are withdrawn from their home classrooms for approximately 1 ½ hours per week in small groups.

The Three Language Domains: Oral Language, Written Language and Visual Language

Oral Language (Speaking and Listening)

Oral Language skills (Listening and Speaking) provide the foundation for the development of other language skills. Most students understand more English than they are able to read or write and they need to be able to hear good models of spoken English. Talk is vital for exploring new ideas as this helps students to make sense of what they are learning.

Written Language (Reading and Writing)

Students need to be able to read a range of texts in English that are based on ideas, experiences and language that is unfamiliar to an ESOL student. Students will learn decoding and comprehension skills, together with the teacher and peers support they will build their understanding of unknown vocabulary, structures, figurative language and cultural references.

Within each learning area there is specialised vocabulary and language structures. There are differences between spoken and written language. ESOL students are taught specific vocabulary, language features and writing structures that are reflective of written texts in different curriculum areas.

Visual Language (Viewing and Presenting)

Viewing and presenting visual information and ideas provides valuable learning support for ESOL students. Pictures and videos help them to understand concepts and to link known concepts to new ideas. By providing visual material for ESOL students that relates to their first language is another way to encourage the development of appropriate language for talking about visual texts.

Acquiring a second language is a long and complex process. It takes from five to seven years for most children to become proficient in a second language. A child's competence in their first language significantly affects the amount of time it takes for them to become proficient in their second language. Children who arrive at school with a strong command of their first language and a developed range of concepts in that language are in a very good position to learn English.