

# English as an additional language (EAL) policy



## Document History

| VERSION    | COMMENTS/AMENDMENTS/REVIEW        | NAME                    | DATE                 |
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| <b>1.0</b> | <b><i>Date of first issue</i></b> | <b><i>D Cassidy</i></b> | <b><i>Feb 26</i></b> |
| <b>2.0</b> | <b><i>Review</i></b>              | <b><i>S Thomas</i></b>  | <b><i>Oct 26</i></b> |
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## 1. Definitions

### 1.1

English as an Additional Language (EAL) is defined as “a pupil whose first language is known or believed to be other than English” and includes pupils who are “exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English.” EAL is not a measure of English language proficiency and is not a proxy for recent immigration (Department for Education, 2020).

### 1.2

The Department for Education defines first language as “the language to which a child was initially exposed during early development and continues to be exposed to this language in the home or in the community.”

### 1.3

Pupils with EAL may include those who are:

- Newly arrived from another country and school system.
- Newly arrived from another country but previously educated in an English-speaking school.
- Born abroad and moved to the UK before starting school.
- Born in the UK within a family where the main language spoken is not English.
- Seeking asylum or with refugee status.
- From multilingual families where more than one language is regularly used.
- Pupils whose language background is complex or who have experienced disrupted education.

### 1.4

EAL is a broad category. Pupils will have varying levels of English proficiency and will require different levels and types of support to access learning, communication and the wider life of the school.

### **1.5**

A pupil is not regarded as having SEND solely because their home language differs from the language of instruction at school.

### **1.6**

Within a specialist SEMH setting, pupils with EAL may also have additional needs, including Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC), speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), learning difficulties, sensory processing differences or SEMH needs. These needs must be considered separately from the pupil's level of English proficiency.

## **2. Purpose**

This policy outlines how the school identifies and supports pupils with EAL so that they can:

- Access the curriculum.
- Develop their academic and social English.
- Communicate their needs effectively.
- Develop positive relationships with staff and peers.
- Participate fully in school life.
- Feel safe, respected and included.
- Maintain and value their home language, culture and identity.
- Make appropriate academic, social and emotional progress.

The policy recognises that pupils attending a specialist SEMH setting may have experienced trauma, disrupted education, adverse childhood experiences, family separation, migration or other significant life events. Staff will therefore use a trauma-informed, relational and inclusive approach to supporting pupils with EAL.

## **3. Identification of Pupils with EAL**

Pupils may be identified through:

- Admission information from parents/carers.
- Home language information.
- Discussions with pupils and families.
- Information from previous schools.
- Information from social care or other professionals, where appropriate.
- Baseline assessments.
- English language assessments.

- Observation of communication and classroom participation.

Identification will focus on **language background and language use**, rather than nationality, ethnicity or country of birth.

Where appropriate, the school will establish:

- The pupil's first/home language(s).
- The languages spoken with different family members.
- The pupil's level of spoken and written English.
- Previous experience of education.
- Previous experience of learning English.
- Literacy skills in the home language, where known.
- Any interruptions to education.
- Any previous experience of trauma, migration or displacement that may affect learning.

Information will be handled sensitively and in accordance with the school's safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection procedures.

#### 4. EAL, SEND and SEMH Needs

##### 4.1

The school recognises that EAL and SEND can coexist. Having EAL does not mean that a pupil has SEND, and having SEND does not mean that a pupil's difficulties are caused by EAL.

##### 4.2

Staff must avoid making assumptions that difficulties with communication, literacy, behaviour or learning are solely the result of a pupil learning English.

Equally, staff must avoid interpreting normal second-language acquisition as evidence of SEND.

##### 4.3

Where concerns arise, staff should consider:

- The pupil's level of English proficiency.
- Their ability to communicate in their home language, where information is available.
- Whether difficulties occur across languages or primarily in English.
- The pupil's previous educational experience.
- Their cognitive and academic strengths.

- Their communication profile.
- Their sensory and processing needs.
- Their emotional state and regulation.
- Their ASC profile, where applicable.
- The impact of trauma, disrupted education or adverse experiences.
- The environmental demands being placed upon them.

#### 4.4

Where a pupil has both EAL and SEND, support should be coordinated rather than delivered in isolation. The EAL Coordinator, SENCO, pastoral staff, teaching staff and other relevant professionals should work together where appropriate.

#### 4.5

The school will use a **strengths-based approach**, recognising the pupil's home language and multilingualism as assets rather than deficits.

### 5. Principles

The school is committed to the following principles:

- All pupils are entitled to full and equitable access to education.
- High expectations will be maintained for pupils with EAL.
- Home languages and cultural identities will be respected and valued.
- Multilingualism will be recognised as a strength.
- EAL pupils will not be disadvantaged because of their language background.
- Language development is the responsibility of all staff.
- Communication needs must be considered alongside SEMH, ASC and other SEND needs.
- Reasonable adjustments will be made where required.
- Pupils will be supported to communicate their needs, feelings and experiences.
- Staff will use relational and trauma-informed approaches.
- Behaviour will be understood in context and will not automatically be interpreted as a language deficit or lack of engagement.

- Parents and carers will be included as partners in supporting the pupil.

## **6. Provision and Support**

High-quality inclusive teaching is the primary form of support for pupils with EAL.

Strategies may include:

### **Communication and language**

- Clear, concise and appropriately paced language.
- Visual supports and symbols.
- Modelling and repetition.
- Checking understanding without putting pupils under unnecessary pressure.
- Pre-teaching and revisiting key vocabulary.
- Explicit teaching of subject-specific language.
- Sentence starters and scaffolding.
- Opportunities for pupils to rehearse responses.
- Alternative ways of demonstrating understanding.
- Use of gesture, objects, visuals and concrete examples.
- Allowing additional processing time.

### **Curriculum access**

- Adapted language without unnecessarily reducing the cognitive demand of the task.
- Breaking complex instructions into manageable steps.
- Visual timetables and task sequences.
- Dual coding and graphic organisers.
- Key vocabulary displayed and revisited.
- Opportunities to connect new learning with prior knowledge.
- Appropriate use of technology and translation tools.
- Where appropriate, bilingual resources or dictionaries.

**SEMH and regulation**

For pupils with SEMH needs, language demands can affect emotional regulation. Staff should consider whether a pupil's apparent refusal, withdrawal, frustration or escalation may be linked to:

- Not understanding an instruction.
- Being unable to express a need.
- Difficulty understanding unfamiliar language.
- Fear of making mistakes.
- Difficulty processing verbal information.
- Sensory overload.
- Anxiety associated with unfamiliar situations.
- Previous trauma or disrupted education.

Staff should use familiar, predictable and consistent language wherever possible.

**ASC and communication needs**

For pupils with ASC, staff should consider how EAL interacts with:

- Literal interpretation of language.
- Understanding of figurative language.
- Social communication.
- Flexible thinking.
- Processing speed.
- Sensory needs.
- Changes to routine.
- Anxiety around unfamiliar people or situations.

Communication strategies should be individualised. A pupil should not be expected to rely solely on spoken English where an alternative communication method is more effective.

**7. Use of the Home Language**

The school recognises the importance of maintaining pupils' home languages.

Where appropriate, pupils may be encouraged to:

- Use their home language to support understanding.
- Make links between English and their home language.

- Use bilingual dictionaries or resources.
- Discuss concepts in their strongest language before responding in English.
- Share aspects of their language and culture with others.
- Continue developing literacy in their home language.

The use of a home language should not be viewed as a barrier to learning English.

### **8. Assessment and Monitoring**

Assessment of pupils with EAL should distinguish between:

- English language proficiency.
- Subject knowledge.
- Literacy.
- Communication skills.
- SEND-related needs.
- SEMH and emotional regulation.
- Previous educational experience.

Assessment should consider progress over time rather than relying solely on a pupil's current attainment in English.

Where possible, staff should use multiple sources of evidence, including:

- Classroom observation.
- Work scrutiny.
- Assessment data.
- Pupil voice.
- Parent/carer information.
- Previous school information.
- Professional assessments.
- Information from external agencies.

The school will avoid using standardised assessments without considering whether language proficiency may affect the validity of the result.

## **9. Safeguarding and EAL**

The school recognises that some pupils with EAL may be particularly vulnerable because of factors such as:

- Refugee or asylum-seeking status.
- Family separation.
- Previous trauma.
- Disrupted education.
- Social isolation.
- Limited English proficiency.
- Dependency on adults to communicate.
- Cultural or language barriers.

All safeguarding concerns must be followed through the school's safeguarding procedures.

A pupil's limited English must never prevent them from being listened to or from accessing safeguarding support.

Where necessary, the school will use appropriately qualified interpreters or translation services rather than relying on children to interpret sensitive information.

## **10. Working with Parents and Carers**

The school recognises parents and carers as important partners in supporting pupils with EAL.

The school will:

- Provide important information in an accessible format wherever reasonably possible.
- Use interpretation or translation support where required.
- Encourage parents and carers to continue using their home language.
- Seek information about the pupil's language development and educational history.
- Recognise cultural differences in communication and engagement.
- Ensure that language barriers do not prevent parents and carers from contributing to meetings about their child.

Children should not routinely be used as interpreters for sensitive or significant school communications.

## **11. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **All staff**

All staff are responsible for:

- Recognising and valuing multilingualism.
- Adapting teaching and communication appropriately.
- Providing access to the curriculum.
- Monitoring progress.
- Identifying barriers to communication and learning.
- Considering whether behaviour may be linked to communication difficulties.
- Following safeguarding procedures.
- Working collaboratively with colleagues and families.

### **Deputy Headteacher Curriculum**

The Deputy Headteacher will:

- Maintain an accurate and regularly updated list of pupils identified as having EAL.
- Oversee identification, assessment and monitoring.
- Support staff in understanding EAL needs.
- Provide guidance on effective classroom strategies.
- Coordinate EAL-related staff training.
- Support the development and review of EAL provision.
- Liaise with families and external agencies where appropriate.
- Work collaboratively with the SENCO and pastoral teams.
- Monitor the progress and inclusion of pupils with EAL.

### **SENCO**

The SENCO will:

- Work collaboratively with the Deputy Headteacher where EAL and SEND needs overlap.
- Ensure that EAL is appropriately considered when assessing SEND.
- Support staff to distinguish language acquisition from potential SEND.
- Coordinate SEND provision where a pupil has additional identified needs.

- Ensure that EAL pupils with SEND receive appropriate reasonable adjustments and support.

### **Senior Leaders**

Senior leaders will:

- Ensure that appropriate systems, resources and training are available.
- Monitor the effectiveness of EAL provision.
- Ensure that EAL is incorporated into the school's wider inclusion strategy.
- Promote high expectations and equitable outcomes.

## **12. Staff Training**

The school will provide appropriate professional development to help staff understand:

- What strategies we need to use for EAL learners
- The stages of second-language acquisition.
- Strategies for supporting language development.
- The relationship between language, communication and behaviour.
- EAL alongside ASC and other SEND.
- Trauma-informed approaches to supporting pupils with EAL.
- Inclusive assessment.
- Cultural awareness.
- Effective use of interpreters and translation tools.

## **13. Curriculum and Teaching Expectations**

The Teachers' Standards (2012) require teachers to “adapt their teaching to the strengths and needs of all pupils.”

Teachers should therefore plan for language development as part of everyday teaching.

Staff should not routinely reduce the complexity of curriculum content for pupils with EAL solely because their English is developing. Instead, appropriate scaffolding should be used to enable pupils to access ambitious curriculum content.

Teachers should identify the language demands of lessons and consider:

- What vocabulary pupils need to understand.
- What language pupils need to produce.

- Which instructions may require additional support.
- How pupils can demonstrate their understanding.
- What visual or practical support will assist comprehension.

#### **14. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

The school values the linguistic and cultural diversity of its community.

Pupils will not be treated less favourably because of:

- Their home language.
- Their nationality.
- Their ethnicity.
- Their accent.
- Their cultural background.
- Their level of English proficiency.

The school will actively promote respect for different languages, cultures and identities.

#### **15. Monitoring and Review**

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through:

- Pupil progress data.
- EAL registers and records.
- Lesson observations.
- Work scrutiny.
- Pupil voice.
- Parent/carer feedback.
- Staff feedback.
- Review of reasonable adjustments.
- Monitoring of attendance, engagement and inclusion.
- Review of outcomes for pupils with EAL and SEND.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance or school provision.

## 16. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- SEND Policy.
- Inclusion Policy.
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Rational and Inclusive behaviour Policy
- Attendance Policy.
- Accessibility Plan.
- Curriculum Policy.
- Admissions Policy.



Outcomes  
First Group