



BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

1. Policy Statement

At Berkhamstead School, we value the linguistic and cultural diversity of our pupils and families. We recognise the contribution that pupils who speak English as an additional language make to our school community.

Our aim is to ensure that every EAL pupil develops the English language skills needed to access the curriculum, participate fully in school life and achieve their potential.

This reflects our commitment to ensuring that every child is known, valued and challenged.

2. Definition

A pupil is considered to have English as an Additional Language (EAL) where they use or have been exposed to one or more languages other than English.

EAL is not an indicator of ability, intelligence or educational need. Pupils may range from being new to English to being highly proficient in both social and academic English.

EAL should be distinguished from SEND, speech and language difficulties and literacy difficulties, although these may coexist.

3. Aims

The school aims to:

- enable EAL pupils to access the full curriculum and wider school life;
- develop confidence and competence in spoken and written English;
- maintain high expectations for achievement and progress;
- value pupils' home languages and cultures;
- promote inclusion, wellbeing and positive relationships;
- identify language needs early and monitor progress;
- provide appropriate support without creating dependency;
- work in partnership with parents and carers.

4. Identification and Assessment

Information about a pupil's language background will be gathered through the admissions process and ongoing communication with parents.

Teachers will consider the pupil's:

- listening and understanding;
- speaking;
- reading;
- writing;
- vocabulary;
- understanding of classroom language;
- ability to access age-appropriate academic language.

Assessment will be proportionate to the pupil's age and needs and will inform teaching rather than simply label the pupil.

Progress will be monitored through normal classroom assessment, observation, work scrutiny and, where appropriate, targeted assessment.

5. Provision and Teaching

The primary responsibility for supporting EAL pupils lies with the class or subject teacher.

Teachers will:

- maintain high expectations;
- use clear and appropriately paced language;
- explicitly teach vocabulary;
- use visual and practical resources;
- model spoken and written English;
- provide structured opportunities for talk;
- use sentence stems, word banks and other appropriate scaffolding;
- check understanding regularly;
- provide additional time where appropriate.

EAL pupils should have full access to the curriculum, enrichment, trips, clubs, sport, music and leadership opportunities.

Targeted individual or small-group intervention may be provided where appropriate. Intervention will have clear objectives and be reviewed for impact.

6. Responsibilities

Headteacher

Has overall responsibility for ensuring effective EAL provision.

Head of Learning Support Prep / PrePrep

Will:

- oversee EAL provision and monitoring;
- advise staff on effective strategies;
- coordinate targeted support where required;
- support assessment and progress monitoring;
- provide or facilitate staff training;
- liaise with parents where appropriate.

Class and Subject Teachers

Will:

- plan accessible, language-rich lessons;
- maintain high expectations;
- monitor progress and participation;
- provide appropriate classroom support;
- identify concerns and refer them to the EAL Lead.

Teaching Assistants

Will provide targeted support under the direction of the teacher, with a focus on developing pupil independence.

Parents and Carers

Are encouraged to maintain and develop the child's home language, communicate with the school and support their child's learning and participation.

7. Home Languages and Cultural Diversity

The school recognises the educational and cultural value of maintaining a strong home language.

Parents are encouraged to speak, read and share stories with their children in the language in which they are most comfortable.

Where appropriate, pupils may use their home language to support learning, for example to discuss ideas, clarify vocabulary or make notes.

The school celebrates linguistic and cultural diversity and seeks to create an environment in which every pupil feels valued and included.

8. EAL and SEND

EAL should not automatically be regarded as a special educational need.

Where a pupil experiences difficulties despite appropriate EAL support, staff will consider whether there may be an underlying learning, communication or developmental need.

Where appropriate, the school's normal SEND identification and assessment procedures will be followed.

9. Pastoral Care and Safeguarding

EAL pupils are entitled to the same safeguarding and pastoral support as all other pupils.

Staff should be alert to potential difficulties including:

- social isolation;
- anxiety or lack of confidence;
- difficulties forming friendships;
- cultural misunderstandings;
- frustration caused by communication difficulties.

Language barriers must never prevent a pupil from reporting a concern or accessing a trusted adult.

Appropriate interpreting or translation support will be used where necessary, particularly for formal, sensitive or safeguarding matters. Children should not normally be expected to interpret for parents in such circumstances.

10. Communication with Parents

The school will use clear and accessible language when communicating with parents and will provide appropriate translation or interpretation support where necessary.

Parents will be encouraged to share information about their child's language development, previous education and any support that has been provided.

11. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of EAL provision will be monitored through:

- pupil progress;
- classroom observation;
- work scrutiny;

- pupil voice;
- parent feedback;
- staff feedback;
- review of targeted interventions.

The Head of Learning Support will review provision annually and identify priorities for development. The policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if there are significant changes to legislation, guidance or school practice.