



ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) POLICY

Reviewed by: D Taboada

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1. Mission Statement

It is the aim of Adcote School's EAL department that pupils for whom English is an additional language are helped not only to become fluent in speaking, reading and writing English, but also to cope with the academic demands other subjects and ultimately to improve their English to a standard which can enable them to gain entry to higher education in the UK. In line with the school's *CLEAR* programme, instruction will be also focused on developing students' confidence, leadership, engagement, achievement and resilience.

2. Context

2.1. School

Adcote School is a non-selective day and boarding school for girls aged 7-18 years. It is located in the village of Little Ness, 5 miles (8.0 km) northwest of Shrewsbury, Shropshire, England.

2.2. Students

The average EAL student comes from abroad, with a low-intermediate level of English (CEFR B1) and limited experience in English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI). She will have typically had formal education according to her age and come to the United Kingdom to improve her English language skills. This could be for either a short period of time (1-2 years) to improve her language skills or for long-term study, with the objective to pursue higher education in the UK. Students generally experience significant differences culturally and academically, especially during the first year at school.

3. Introduction

3.1. Who are *our* EAL students?

We consider EAL students all of those pupils who have limited skills in the use of general and academic English language due to limited exposure either at home or in their country of origin. These pupils come from cultural backgrounds and communities with different understandings and expectations of education, language and learning. They may not be aware of language, social and cultural conventions and have different needs both as an individual and as part of a group.

3.2. Language and Identity

Adcote School promotes multilingualism. We acknowledge that a first language plays a central role in a learner's sense of identity and [research](#) that demonstrates its support to both access the curriculum and to develop proficiency in English.

3.3. Use of the students' own language(s)

Being English is the language of instruction in most academic subjects, and improving it one of the main motivators for students' families to study in the UK, pupils are expected to use it to communicate in classes with teachers and students alike. English is also expected to be used in common areas when speakers of other languages are present. EAL students' own language can be used in classes if it is the only alternative due to a pupil's low level of English. In accordance with article 30 from UNICEF's [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), children will not be denied the right, in community with other members of their group, to use their own language.

3.4. Provision for pupils developing EAL

All EAL students will integrate into mainstream lessons, where they will receive support within the timetable. If deemed necessary, they can have additional EAL lessons or targeted interventions. This will be proposed by the EAL department and approved by the Director of Studies.

3.5. Access to the curriculum

Adcote takes a whole school approach, including ethos, curriculum and education to stimulate and engage EAL learners across the curriculum, providing an adequate environment for accelerated progress.

3.6. Diversity, equality and inclusion

All pupils need to feel safe, accepted and valued in order to learn effectively and become successful members of our community. For pupils, who are learning English as an additional language, this includes recognising and valuing their home language and background. As a school, we are aware that bilingualism/multilingualism can be a useful learning tool and that all EAL pupils can make a valuable contribution to their school community.

Adcote School is aware, under the [Equality Act \(2010\)](#) of its statutory obligations to promote equality of opportunity for pupils whatever their race, religion or belief as well as other protected characteristics.

4. The EAL Department

4.1. Values

A. Equality

To be proactive in removing barriers that stand in the way of our EAL pupils' learning and success.

B. Differentiation

To meet our responsibilities to EAL pupils by ensuring bespoke support, both in EAL and subject lessons, to access the curriculum and the achievement of their educational potential by [adapting teaching to the strengths and needs of pupils](#).

C. Belonging and Cohesion

To provide our EAL pupils with a safe, welcoming, nurturing environment where they are accepted, valued and encouraged to participate.

D. Integration

To help EAL pupils integrate in mainstream lessons and school life with the aim to develop culturally-proficient individuals who can collaborate and integrate in diverse environments.

4.2. Commitment

Adcote School for girls is committed to providing EAL students with specialised instruction to improve their English-language skills, metacognitive strategies for learning and general subject-related language support that is appropriate to a child's age, ability, aptitudes and any special educational needs they may have.

4.3. Aims

- To assist all EAL pupils to become competent English users so that they can reach their full potential in mainstream education in the shortest time they are capable of doing so. This includes support in the development of their academic and general English language skills (Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing).

- To support subject teachers by providing relevant information about each student's level of English and background, in-class support when required, developing bespoke materials and programmes and targeted off-class interventions, .
- To develop staff expertise to understand students' cultural and academic backgrounds, provide appropriate support according to each student's needs, meet the linguistic demands of their curriculum and ensure that provision for *all* EAL learners is not separate but integrated into all subject areas.
- To help students attain levels of achievement appropriate to their intellectual abilities.
- To develop rigorous monitoring, evaluating and review systems.

4.4. Objectives

- To advise on the language level of international pupils applying to the school when asked to do so;
- To promptly assess EAL students' initial language level through a placement test (Coursebook/IELTS) and decide which type of support will be more effective, if any;
- To communicate relevant information to academic and pastoral staff through EAL Individual Educational Plans (EAL IEPs) to inform teaching and promote effective learning practices;
- To track Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of students' progress measured by their Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) language level and/or their approximate grade in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS);
- To provide in-class support for years 8-9 or completion of the Cambridge Assessment's First Certificate test programme;
- To prepare pupils for the Cambridge IGCSE® (9–1) English as a Second Language Test 0991 in years 10 and 11 or channel more able students to mainstream GCSE English Language and Literature lessons.
- To track and monitor EAL students' progress in their general English reading skills through the use of the Accelerated Reader (AR) programme;
- To prepare Year 12 and 13 EAL students for the IELTS test for UCAS or visa purposes;
- To assist Sixth Form students with English for Academic Purposes (EAP) lessons;
- To support EAL pupils in specific subjects whenever they have language-related issues that prevent their progress;
- To support EAL pupils with general English and social skills;
- To raise staff awareness of EAL development and issues as appropriate;
- To contact the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) whenever there is some evidence a student's learning difficulties can be the source of poor performance in subjects.

4.5. Strategy

The EAL Departmental strategy around mainstream subject support is based on four principles:

- Expectations: establishing high expectations for all EAL pupils and setting challenging targets for them to achieve;
- Progression: ensuring progression in EAL students learning through in-class support, development of learning materials/programmes for specific subjects or delivering targeted interventions;

- Engagement: promoting approaches to teaching and learning that engage and motivate pupils and demand their active participation;
- Development: strengthening teaching and learning through a programme of professional development and practical support.

4.6. The Role of Subject Teachers

Success for pupils learning EAL depends on close monitoring of their academic and personal targets. Meeting their needs is an integral part of each subject's departmental development plan. There are three core roles for subject teachers in securing the progress of pupils:

A. Judging standards, including:

- analysing and interpreting data on pupils' attainment;
- reviewing/adapting assessments of progress for classes with EAL pupils;
- regularly sampling pupils' work;
- discussing work, progress and attitudes with EAL pupils;
- liaising with the EAL department on the strategies to use to improve their performance on their subject (in-class support, targeted interventions).

B. Evaluating teaching and learning:

- evaluating schemes of work to ensure they focus on effective teaching and learning;
- making subject-specific language skills and conventions explicit and demonstrated by the teacher (e.g. of particular forms of writing);
- observing teaching and giving/receiving feedback to/from colleagues;
- reviewing own planning taking into account EAL students' needs.

C. Leading sustainable improvements:

- leading departmental discussions about priorities for the subject;
- agreeing targets for raising pupils' attainment;
- leading the improvement of teaching quality;
- leading the review, construction and resourcing of the curriculum.

It is important to ensure that there is an effective learning environment across each department – one which promotes an ethos where pupils learning EAL can feel secure and know that their contributions are valued.

4.7. Staff

Adcote School for Girls has an EAL department with staff trained to teach English to international learners. It currently has a head of department and additional EAL teachers will be added if/when needed. The head of EAL is responsible for the implementation and results of all the aforementioned aims and objectives.

4.8. EAL Provision

4.8.1. Initial Assessment upon Arrival

EAL students complete an initial assessment test prior upon entry. Years 3-9 will be tested on their English through a written assignment and years 10-12 will present a school-marked IELTS test. Housemistresses, tutors and members of staff also liaise with the EAL Department regarding any concerns about the language ability of pupils in order to ensure that all EAL pupils receive early language support as soon as needed.

4.8.2. Weekly Provision

- Junior School (Years 3-6)

Prep School pupils who need EAL lessons will have one period of EAL teaching per week. The aim, in these lessons, is to consolidate the basics of the language and to help pupils with the difficulties they encounter in other subjects. One-to-one additional lessons can also be arranged.

- Senior School (Years 7-11)

Years 7-9 will receive in-lesson support during English Language and Literature lessons. Senior school pupils in years 10 and 11 who need EAL lessons will have four sessions per week instead of joining the GCSE English Language and Literature lessons. The CIE English as a Second Language IGCSE course will be followed instead. One-to-one additional lessons can also be arranged.

- Sixth Form (Years 12-13)

Sixth form pupils will have two weekly sessions focused on preparation for the IELTS test and academic writing. One-to-one sessions can be arranged, if required.

4.9. Monitoring and Evaluation for EAL

4.10. Benchmark tests

The following tests are used to assess students' language proficiency:

- Cambridge B1 Preliminary (practice tests adapted for school use)
- Cambridge B2 First (practice tests adapted for school use)
- CIE IGCSE ENGLISH as a Second Language (Past Tests)
- IELTS Exam (Practice Tests)

Results will be communicated to teachers as CEFR levels and IELTS grades.

4.11. Tracking & Record Keeping

Students will be assessed for progress at least once in a term using a different version of the benchmark tests. Results will inform target-setting (curricular and linguistic). All results are accessible on the [EAL KPIs](#) document in the online shared area.

4.12. Resources

The department has a wide range of resources. These include reference materials – dictionaries, grammar and vocabulary books, besides specific academic course books such as CIE IGCSE, British Council IELTS, EAP Oxford & Cambridge First Certificate Programme. In addition, we also have a wide range of materials for different activities, listening materials, exam practice materials and a number of professional books and study guides.

4.13. Students' Own resources

Students are encouraged to bring a laptop and electronic dictionaries they can use in lessons.

4.14. Contact with Parents/Carers/Guardians

The school welcomes and encourages regular meetings with parents, guardians or carers. They are presented termly reports, predicted grades and parents' evenings where specifics of their child's education can be communicated and discussed. Due to living abroad and/or not being able to speak English, some parents may not be involved fully. However, regular contact with guardians is kept to keep them informed.

4.15. Staff development

The EAL department will provide regular training for subject teachers on how to support them in their lessons. EAL staff will attend workshops and courses throughout the year.

5. Subject Support: Access to Curriculum & Engagement

Acquisition of the academic language to succeed in lessons can take considerably longer to develop than social language. This advanced level of proficiency in the language for learning is crucial to the attainment of pupils for whom English is an additional language in all subjects of the curriculum. There is considerable evidence that once proficiency in English is achieved, the progress for pupils with EAL across the curriculum is rapid and their attainment [on a par with or higher than that of their monolingual peers](#).

5.1. EAL Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Gifted and Talented (G&T) Pupils

5.2. Special Educational Needs (SEN)

[Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.](#)

Pupils with EAL often make evident progress over a key stage, even if they begin with little English. It should not be assumed that an EAL learner has SEN unless their progress is notably slower or markedly different than for similar pupils once there has been a reasonable period of time for them to settle down and get used to the school's timetable, boarding provision and academic culture.

High-quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. Accurate identification of need and early intervention will support high-quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. This should include the use of evidence-based interventions and approaches.

Speaking English as an Additional Language (EAL) is not a Special Educational Need (SEN), but learners with EAL may themselves have additional educational needs, just like learners who use English as their First Language. These needs can be more difficult to identify if the learner is not fluent in English.

5.2.1. Common Factors Affecting a Learner's Progress

There are numerous factors to consider before deciding if a learner has additional educational needs:

- Age of the pupil on arrival to the UK: those arriving later in their academic career have a wider gap to close
- Previous experience of education: Students having gaps in their knowledge is not the same as an additional need.
- First language: rather than being an indicator of an additional need, the presence of errors in a student's use of spoken or written English might be a sign that they are making progress learning English, but need to continue learning it and may require further EAL support until they become competent or fluent.
- Proficiency in first language; a learner's literacy skills in their first language will support their acquisition of an additional language. A learner who is not a proficient reader or writer in their first language is likely to find learning English particularly demanding.

While these factors might hinder a learner's progress, care must be taken to ensure they do not mask an underlying additional need.

5.2.2. Identification and Assessment of SEN EAL learners

Identifying additional needs is vital so that the appropriate support strategies can be put in place. Low scores, even over a period of 1-2 years, in conventional standardised tests

(cognitive/academic ability), are not a reliable indicator of an additional learning need for learners using EAL. Since even the instructions are in English, consideration must be given to the linguistic demands of the tests; learners may not have acquired sufficient English to demonstrate their true cognitive abilities. Persistently low scores in non-verbal tests might, however, suggest an additional need.

5.2.2.1. Pre-referral, Referral & Diagnosis

Specialist EAL teachers, academic staff and the SENCo have an important collaborative role to play in the diagnosis of any special needs. The task of assessment requires a highly sensitive and sympathetic understanding of a child's community, culture, family life and individual characteristics.

5.2.2.1.1. The Pre-referral Process

The Pre-referral Process is an extended period in which all departments will work together to identify the reasons any particular EAL student may exhibit academic or behavioral problems. This process can typically be divided into five distinct stages:

- Stage 1: Initial concern regarding a student's progress

It is initiated when someone—a teacher, parent, guardian or member of the school staff—starts to have concerns about a student's academic or behavioral performance. This concern may be expressed either informally or formally; however, once the pre-referral process has been initiated the EAL department will proceed to the next stage.

Stage 2: Information gathering

The EAL department will gather information to present to the rest of the team. This includes, but is not limited to instructional methods, teaching strategies, materials that have been previously tried or used, the student's skill level, the student's background knowledge and experiences, school and home expectations for behavior and academic performance and/or classroom behavior management techniques. Besides this, a variety of sources will be used to collect information, for example:

- Family members
- Other classroom teachers
- Student portfolios or work samples
- Classroom observations
- Cumulative school records
- Attendance records
- Formal assessments

Stage 3: Information sharing and team discussion of possible strategies (Academic + EAL + SENCo)

In this stage, the team will meet to begin its review of the information collected to date and to start discussing ideas and interventions—including type and intensity—that may help the student.

All involved will share their perspectives, which will include:

- Specific concerns that prompted the referral,
- Student's strengths, talents, and interests,
- Student's skills compared to those of his or her classroom peers,

- Setting or situation in which the concern developed,
- Previously attempted strategies or interventions,
- Best times to observe the student to see the behavior of concern.

In addition to considering factors about the student, the team should reflect on any external issues that might be influencing the student's performance or behaviour. For example, the team might try to ascertain whether or not the concern is due to:

- Insufficient/Inappropriate instruction and practice,
- A mismatch between the student's language/subject skill level and the classroom curriculum,
- Differences in background knowledge and experiences between the student and the dominant classroom culture,
- Differences in academic or behaviour expectations between home and school,
- Inadequate classroom management techniques.

Afterwards, the members will meet to brainstorm strategies that they believe are most likely to meet the needs of the student. One or more strategies may be selected for each area of concern.

The team must specify the duration of any strategy or intervention agreed and its success criteria.

Along with interventions, the pre-referral team may identify appropriate accommodations to address the specific needs of the student in the mainstream education classroom. Such accommodations might entail recommendations for the:

- Classroom environment (e.g., changing seating positions, making the classroom more accessible);
- Classroom management system (e.g., increasing positive reinforcement, providing individual student contracts);
- Instructional procedures (e.g., providing additional instruction, presenting content in a different format, grouping students);
- Task demands (e.g., assigning only the odd-numbered maths problems)

Stage 4: Implementation and monitoring of strategies

During this stage, the plan is implemented and the student's progress is monitored. Implementation and monitoring will often be the responsibility of a classroom teacher, although the team may serve as support. Data is collected during this stage and will be used to help the team determine the effectiveness of the intervention.

Stage 5: Evaluation and decision making

During the final stage, the pre-referral team reconvenes to review the collected data and to determine whether the student has made progress. If yes, the team will decide whether the teacher needs to continue the intervention. If no, the team will determine whether the strategy should be continued or modified, whether a new strategy should be tried, whether the issue is just due to language/cultural skills, or whether the student should be referred for special education.

Regardless of the pre-referral stage, it is always important for the team to include the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) in the process. Though their consent is not required to hold these meetings, the team should encourage parents' participation and keep them informed and involved, as their observations and perspectives can offer valuable insights about a student and allow the team to gauge her progress across environments. Senior management will be informed of progress during all stages.

5.2.2.1.2. Referral

If the team decides it is appropriate to request that a girl be referred to other specialist support, parental permission will be required. This can be obtained directly from the parents/carers or through the student's guardian. If testing cannot be performed in the UK, parents/carers will be asked to find a specialist in their home country that can assess the pupil either in person or remotely.

Once this can take place, the Adcote's standard SEN school policy will apply.

5.3. Gifted and Talented (G&T) Students

Frequently, there are G&T EAL learners in every year group at school. Gifted and talented pupils are those children who are achieving, or who have the potential to achieve, at a level substantially beyond the rest of their peer group. It is important to consider that G&T girls can be of high ability in one particular area but have poor skills in others, sometimes presenting learning difficulties as well. Similarly, they may present behavioural problems or not be fully integrated in school. EAL students are particularly at risk of being overlooked in subjects in which language is an important component but not explicitly taught.

5.3.1. Identification and Assessment of G&T Students

G&T pupils are identified by making a judgement based on a variety of sources of information. This makes use of formal and informal assessments which may include:

- CEM data
- data from multiple subject assessments,
- teacher nominations based on classroom performance and observation,
- work scrutiny,
- discussions with students,
- general observations by others – school staff, peripatetic teachers, parents and peers

This information is collated by the G&T Co-ordinator. The EAL department will provide specific input on language when needed.

(Also see G&T Policy)

6. Sources

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

<https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs>

Distinguishing the Difference SEN OR EAL?

https://www.patoss-dyslexia.org/write/MediaUploads/Resources/EAL_Resource.pdf

UNICEF - Convention on the Rights of the Child

<https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text>

National curriculum in England: framework for key stages 1 to 4

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4/the-national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4>

The Bell Academy

<https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/>

Managing Support for the Attainment of Pupils from Minority Ethnic Groups

<https://lemosandcrane.co.uk/resources/Ofsted%20-%20Managing%20support%20for%20the%20attainment%20of%20pupils%20from%20minority%20ethnic%20groups.pdf>

Model EAL Policy for Schools

<http://www.betterbilingual.co.uk/2017/09/30/model-eal-policy-for-schools/>

NALDIC (National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum)

<https://naldic.org.uk/>

SEN Support

<https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/preref/cresource/q2/p03/#content>

Special Educational Needs - Code of Practice

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/273877/special_educational_needs_code_of_practice.pdf

Teacher's Standards - Department for Education

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/665522/Teachers_standard_information.pdf

Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/667690/Social_Mobility_Action_Plan_-_for_printing.pdf

Updated September 2022 by Delfino Taboada (Head of EAL)

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