EAL POLICY

Reviewed by: Caroline Harrison	Date: 8th October 2026	Next review: Sept 2027
Approved by:		

Adcote School EAL Policy

1. Mission Statement & Context

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 of other subjects. Ultimately, our goal is to improve their English to a standard that enables them to gain entry to higher education in the UK. In line with the school's CLEAR programme, instruction focuses on developing students' confidence, leadership, engagement, achievement, and resilience.

Students

Our EAL students typically arrive with a low-intermediate level of English (CEFR B1) and limited experience with English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI). They come to the UK either for short-term study (1–2 years) or long-term academic routes aimed at UK higher education. Students encounter significant cultural and academic transitions, particularly during their first year.

Definition of EAL Pupils

EAL pupils are pupils who have been exposed to or regularly use a language other than English and who may require support to access the curriculum through English. EAL is not, in itself, an indicator of low academic ability or a special educational need. Pupils identified as EAL may have widely differing levels of English proficiency. EAL support is available to UK-national pupils whose first language is not English, including pupils from multilingual families, recently arrived families, refugees/asylum-seeking backgrounds where applicable, and pupils returning to the UK after education overseas.

Language, Identity & Multilingualism

Adcote School actively promotes multilingualism. We recognise that a pupil's first language plays a central role in their identity and that strong home-language skills support both curriculum access and English acquisition.

Use of Home Languages

English is the principal language of teaching and learning and is encouraged as the shared language of communication across the school. Pupils are encouraged to use English in group situations where doing so enables everyone present to participate and feel included. The school values pupils' home languages and does not prohibit their appropriate use socially or as a learning resource. Home languages may also be used strategically to support understanding, vocabulary development and curriculum access. However, home languages may be used as a temporary scaffolding tool in lessons when necessary due to lower proficiency levels. In accordance with Article 30 of UNICEF's Convention on the Rights of the Child, pupils will not be denied the right to use their own language.

2. Values & Strategic Commitment

Core Values

- **Equality:** Proactively removing learning barriers so all EAL pupils can succeed.
- **Differentiation:** Providing bespoke support in EAL and subject lessons by adapting teaching to individual strengths and needs.
- **Belonging & Cohesion:** Maintaining a safe, nurturing environment where EAL pupils feel valued and accepted.
- **Integration:** Promoting active integration across academic lessons, boarding houses, and co-curricular activities. The school actively discourages social isolation or nationality-based segregation, utilizing peer buddies, mixed tutor groups, and leadership roles.

Strategic Aims & Objectives

- Assist all EAL pupils to achieve competence in academic and general English (Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing).
- Assess initial language levels promptly using standard placement tools and communicate clear EAL Individual Educational Plans (IEALPs) to academic and pastoral staff.
- Track Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) through regular CEFR benchmark testing, IELTS practice scores, and CEM testing.
- Prepare pupils for relevant qualifications, including Cambridge Assessment programs, Cambridge IGCSE® English as a Second Language (0991), and Sixth Form IELTS/EAP modules.
- Provide continuous professional development (CPD) for subject teachers to embed language-aware strategies across all academic departments.

3. Safeguarding, Student Voice & Pastoral Care

Communication Access

Adcote recognises that EAL pupils, particularly those with lower English language proficiency, may face significant barriers in reporting safeguarding concerns, distress, or bullying. To ensure robust safeguarding and maintain confidentiality, students must never be used as translators or interpreters during discussions with peers who lack English understanding. Where language barriers arise, staff must utilise approved, professional translation tools or accredited adult interpreters.

Reporting Channels

To ensure equal access to pastoral and safeguarding support, accessible reporting options are provided, including:

- Age-appropriate multilingual safeguarding information and reporting guidance is made available where required.
- Pupils have access to trusted adults, including boarding staff, matrons, medical staff, form tutors, guardians and the Head of EAL. Appropriate peer-support or buddy systems may also be used to support integration, but pupils must not be used as interpreters in safeguarding matters.
- Where language presents a barrier to communicating a concern, appropriate visual, translated or non-verbal communication tools may be used alongside approved translation or interpreting support.

Staff Awareness

Staff receive regular updates regarding key students and are provided with guidance on knowing their pupils well to recognize signs of distress, withdrawal, or behavioral changes that may indicate a safeguarding or

well-being concern in EAL pupils. All concerns must be promptly recorded and reported in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and established reporting procedures.

Emotional Well-Being

Adcote School acknowledges the profound psychological and emotional impact that total language immersion, separation from family, and homesickness can have on international and EAL students.

- **Transition Support:** Pastoral support structures are established to help students navigate culture shock and integrate comfortably into school life, ensuring their emotional health is closely monitored during their initial transition period.
- **Pedagogical Adaptation:** Staff understand that students arriving from different educational systems may be accustomed to contrasting learning environments. Teachers actively support EAL pupils through this academic transition, by modelling classroom expectations, scaffolding tasks, and explicitly teaching critical thinking and discussion skills.
- Academic support is overseen by the Head of EAL, who collaborates closely with teachers and pupils through classroom observations, in-lesson assistance, and targeted individual or small-group intervention. Learning materials and support are personalised to meet each student's specific academic needs.

Boarding & Pastoral

- **House Staff & Pastoral Care:** Matrons and boarding staff actively support EAL pupils by fostering informal language acquisition, monitoring emotional well-being, and communicating regularly with the EAL department regarding progress or concerns.
- **Prep & Study Support:** Boarding houses provide targeted evening/weekend prep support for EAL pupils where necessary, including access to EAL resources, approved translation tools, bilingual dictionaries, and peer tutoring.
- **Social Integration & Housing:** Room allocations take account of pupils' individual pastoral needs and, where appropriate, opportunities for social and linguistic integration. Boarding staff actively encourage pupils to develop friendships and participate socially beyond their immediate language or nationality group.
- **Culture & Academic Induction:** All new EAL pupils complete a formal induction covering UK school and boarding culture. This encompasses:
    - **Academic:** Classroom etiquette (asking for help, respectful debate), independent learning, prep expectations, library usage, and academic integrity (referencing and avoiding plagiarism).
    - **Social & Pastoral:** Communication with house staff, friendship conventions, personal boundaries, digital safety, British school terminology, and cultural nuance (humour, sarcasm, and idioms).

4. Admissions, Child Student Visa & UKVI Support

All international applicants who require a visa to study in the United Kingdom must complete the school’s required Maths and English assessments prior to any visa application being progressed.

International pupils requiring immigration permission to study in the UK are admitted and sponsored in accordance with the school's Admissions Policy and current UKVI requirements. Visa sponsorship and the

issuing of a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS), where applicable, are managed by authorised school staff in accordance with the school's sponsor duties.

5. Whole-School Framework & Curriculum Access

Curriculum Access & Inclusion

All EAL students integrate into mainstream lessons with targeted timetable support. Additional EAL lessons or interventions are proposed by the EAL Department and approved by the Head of Teaching and Learning and SENCo. Under the Equality Act (2010), Adcote School ensures statutory compliance in promoting equal opportunity regardless of race, religion, belief, or protected characteristics.

All newly appointed teaching, boarding, and residential staff must complete a dedicated English as an Additional Language (EAL) briefing within their first two weeks of employment, led by the EAL Coordinator.

Staff are granted immediate access to the school's EAL Register and individual Student's EAL profile and support plan. These are known as Individual English and Additional Language Plan (IEALPs).

Staff with regular teaching or pastoral responsibility for an EAL pupil are expected to familiarise themselves with the pupil's current English proficiency, relevant targets and recommended support strategies.

Staff must provide supportive communication techniques outside the classroom, fostering an inclusive environment that helps students practice, consolidate and improve their everyday English Skills.

Whole-School Scaffolding and Differentiated Pedagogy

Subject staff across all academic departments are expected to embed the following non-negotiable EAL strategies into lesson planning, resource creation, and classroom delivery:

- **Pre-teaching Key Vocabulary:** Teachers identify and explicitly teach essential subject-specific and academic vocabulary, providing glossaries, key-term banks or other vocabulary support where appropriate.
- **Visual & Structural Supports:** Lessons and independent tasks must utilize dual-coding approaches, including graphic organisers (e.g., Venn diagrams, flowcharts, concept maps), labelled diagrams or writing frames.
- **Accessible Instruction & Language Precision:** Teachers use clear, precise language when giving important instructions and explain unfamiliar idioms, colloquialisms or culturally specific references where these may create barriers to understanding.
- **Check for Understanding:** Staff must ensure targeted checking techniques, such as concept-checking questions or requesting students to paraphrase instructions in their own words.

Role of Subject Teachers

Subject teachers hold a direct responsibility for the academic progress of EAL learners. Their role encompasses:

- **Judging Standards:** Interpreting attainment data, adapting subject assessments, sampling work, and liaising regularly with the EAL Department regarding interventions.

- **Evaluating Teaching & Learning:** Explicitly teaching subject-specific vocabulary, modelling writing conventions, and adapting lesson planning to account for language needs.
- **Leading Sustainable Improvements:** Agreeing targets for EAL attainment, reviewing subject resources, and maintaining an inclusive classroom environment where all contributions are valued.

6. EAL Provision & Curriculum Structure

Initial Assessment

Pupils complete an initial assessment upon entry. Years 3–9 complete a written English task, while Years 10–12 are evaluated via internal placement testing or marked IELTS papers. Housemistresses, tutors, and subject staff liaise directly with the EAL Department to flag any immediate language needs.

Weekly Provision Structure

Key Stage / Year Group	Academic Provision & Timetabling	Primary Focus
Prep School (Years 3–6)	1 period of EAL per week (plus additional 1-to-1 if required)	Consolidating language fundamentals & subject support
Senior School (Years 7–9)	In-class support during lessons if required or dedicated EAL if required	Curriculum access & Cambridge First Certificate skills
Key Stage 4 (Years 10–11)	Mainstream GCSE English with in-class support or dedicated EAL if required	IGCSE English as a Second Language (0991) or GCSE English
Sixth Form (Years 12–13)	2 weekly sessions (plus optional 1-to-1)	IELTS examination preparation & English for Academic Purposes

Age-Appropriate and Individualised Provision for Ages 7–18

As the needs of international pupils from Year 3 to Year 13 can vary significantly according to their age, stage of education, prior learning and level of English proficiency, the school provides age-appropriate and tailored support.

Provision is adapted to the individual needs of each pupil and informed by initial and ongoing assessment. Depending on the outcomes of these assessments, pupils may receive additional support in areas such as English language development, vocabulary, reading, writing or subject-specific language. Where appropriate, additional support may also be provided in subjects such as Mathematics to address gaps in prior learning or curriculum knowledge.

The level and nature of support are reviewed regularly to ensure that provision remains responsive to each pupil's progress, strengths and areas for development. This enables pupils to develop their English language skills while accessing the wider curriculum and making appropriate academic progress.

Initial provision:

- **Years 3–6:** oral language, phonological awareness, reading, vocabulary, confidence and play-based social language.
- **Years 7–9:** academic vocabulary, reading comprehension, writing structures, classroom discussion and transition to secondary expectations.
- **Years 10–11:** examination language, subject-specific literacy and qualification pathway.
- **Years 12–13:** academic writing, seminar discussion, independent research, university applications and IELTS where required.

7. Monitoring, Assessment, Exam Access & Resources

Benchmark Testing & Tracking

Progress is formally assessed at least once per term using standardized benchmark tools (Cambridge B1/B2 tests, CIE IGCSE ESL past papers, and IELTS practice papers). Results are reported to staff as CEFR levels and IELTS band scores, and recorded centrally on the EAL tracking system.

Exam Access Arrangements (EAAs) / JCQ / Exam Board Access Arrangements

- **Assessment & Eligibility:** Candidates are assessed in line with exam board regulations. In exceptional circumstances, extra time may be considered where formal assessment and evidence demonstrate a significant linguistic need.
- The school follows current JCQ and awarding-body regulations concerning access arrangements. Where this policy and current examination regulations differ, the current examination regulations take precedence.
- **Bilingual Dictionaries:** Allowed dictionaries are simple, word-for-word translation texts only where they are free of definitions, notes, annotations, or electronic functions. All exam dictionaries are kept in a locked office until required for exams and are inspected by the Examinations Officer before exams.
- **Normal Way of Working:** Where required by current regulations, access arrangements must reflect the candidate's established normal way of working, supported by appropriate evidence maintained by the school.

- **Compliance & Deadlines:** The EAL Department and Examinations Officer co-ordinate to complete all assessments, applications, and record archiving prior to published board deadlines.

Departmental Resources

The department maintains libraries, academic course books, digital listening assets, and exam materials. EAL pupils are encouraged to purchase translator pens, utilize laptops (where appropriate) and use bilingual dictionaries in lessons to assist their learning.

Parental & Guardian Communication

Termly academic reports, predicted grades, and parents' evenings are used to keep families informed. Where international parents face language or time-zone barriers, the school maintains close, structured contact with UK guardians.

8. EAL, Special Educational Needs (SEN), and High Attainers

Differentiating EAL from SEN

EAL is not a Special Educational Need. Language acquisition requires time, and slow progress during initial transition periods should not automatically be interpreted as a learning difficulty. SEN is only considered if progress remains markedly slower than expected after a reasonable period of settling into the school and boarding environment.

The Learning Support Department, overseen by the Head of Learning Support, leads on SEN assessments and diagnoses while maintaining a close working partnership with the EAL team, teaching staff, and residential staff. Through ongoing observations and regular reviews with the Head of EAL, the department acts as a liaison between students and teachers to ensure learning is accessible and support strategies are consistently delivered.

Pre-Referral & Assessment Stages

When concerns arise, the EAL Department, SENCo, and subject teachers follow a 5-stage pre-referral process:

1. **Stage 1 (Initial Concern):** Issue raised informally or formally by a teacher, parent, guardian, or staff member.
2. **Stage 2 (Information Gathering):** Collecting data across instructional methods, portfolios, classroom observations, attendance, and home background.
3. **Stage 3 (Team Discussion & Strategy):** Collaborative meeting (Academic + EAL + SENCo) to evaluate external factors, agree on classroom accommodations, and set clear trial timeframes.
4. **Stage 4 (Implementation & Monitoring):** Strategy execution with active data collection.
5. **Stage 5 (Evaluation):** Reviewing outcome data to determine whether to retain strategies, adapt support, or proceed to formal external SEN referral (requiring parental/guardian consent).

High-Attaining / Gifted & Talented (G&T) EAL Pupils

EAL pupils may possess high cognitive ability or specific talents that are masked by developing English proficiency. Identification relies on multi-layered assessments (CEM data, subject assessments, work scrutiny,

and teacher nominations) coordinated alongside the G&T Lead to ensure linguistic barriers do not limit academic extension.

9. Policy Review and Governance

This policy is reviewed by the Headteacher, Head of EAL, and the Head of Teaching and Learning, and is formally approved by the Senior Leadership Team and the Board of Advisers. It is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure ongoing regulatory compliance and best pra