



ST JAMES

Senior Boys' School

EAL Policy

2025-26

Version Control

Date of adoption of this policy	24.3.2025
Date of last review of this policy	31.12.2025
Date for next annual review of this policy	31 st August 2026
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Policy owner (Proprietor)	Board of Trustees
 <p>Signed: Dominic Prendergast Date: 01.01.2026</p> <p>Authorised by the Chair of Governors, Ashford</p>	

Contents

- 1 Aims
- 2 Introduction
- 3 Defining English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- 4 Key Principles of Additional Language Acquisition
- 5 Assessment
- 6 Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
- 7 Teaching Strategies
- 8 Materials
- 9 Special Educational Needs and Academic Enrichment
- 10 Parental/Community Involvement
- 11 Interventions Outside the Classroom
- 12 Communication Process

1. Aims

This policy aims to raise awareness of the school's obligations and to support the planning, organisation, teaching and assessment procedures, and the use of resources and strategies to meet the needs of pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) and so to raise pupils' achievement.

2. Introduction

St. James is committed to providing access to the full curriculum for all pupils accepted into the school whose first language is not English.

The aim is to enable EAL pupils to become fully fluent in their use of written and spoken English so that future opportunities are not restricted. It is also the aim that fluent capacity in the English language be achieved as quickly as possible, so that the pupil does not feel alienated from what takes place both in class and socially.

All pupils need to feel safe, accepted and valued in order to learn. 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 is a strength and that EAL pupils have a valuable contribution to make. We take a whole school approach, including ethos, curriculum, education against racism and promoting language awareness. (Refer to school Equal Opportunity Policy and Inclusion and Special Educational Needs Policy).

3. Defining English as an Additional Language (EAL)

An EAL pupil is a pupil whose first language is not English. The term EAL is used in this policy as synonymous with alternative terms such as ESL (English as a Second Language) and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages). This encompasses pupils who are fully bilingual and all those at different stages of learning English. EAL pupils may be:

- Newly arrived from a foreign country/school where English is not the first language;
- Newly arrived from a foreign country where English is not the first language but from an English-speaking school.
- Born abroad but moved to the UK at some point earlier in childhood.
- Born in the UK, but in a family where the main language is not English.

EAL pupils will need varying types of provision. For the purpose of planning appropriate provision and communication between staff, EAL pupils' competence in English can be categorised as described below:

- Level 1: silent period / beginner learner
- Level 2: basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS)
- Level 3: socially competent and starting to communicate more efficiently in an academic setting

- Level 4: satisfactory levels of English but language may still be a barrier to achievement in some areas of the curriculum
- Level 5: cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) - level of English no barrier to achievement.

4. Key Principles of Additional Language Acquisition

- EAL pupils are entitled to the full Academic Curriculum programmes of study and all their teachers have a responsibility for teaching English literacy skills alongside other subject content.
- Access to learning requires attention to words and meanings embodied in each curriculum area. Meanings and understanding cannot be assumed but must be made explicit.
- Language is central to our identity. Therefore, the home languages of all pupils and staff should be recognised and valued.
- Although many pupils acquire the ability to communicate on a day-to-day basis in English quite quickly, the level of language needed for academic study is much deeper and more detailed and can require continuing support for a number of years.
- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum.
- The language demands of learning tasks need to be identified and included in planning.
- Teaching and support staff play a crucial role in modelling uses of language.
- Knowledge and skills acquired in learning and developing the first language aid the acquisition of additional languages.
- A clear distinction should be made between EAL and Special Educational Needs.

5. Assessment

- EAL pupils are entitled to language assessments as required.
- Head of Learning Support staff has regular liaison time with Heads of Year to discuss pupils' progress, needs and targets.
- Deputy Head meets with Heads of Year to monitor academic progress of all pupils on a fortnightly basis.
- Progress in the acquisition of English is regularly assessed and monitored through the reporting system, through teaching staff registering concern if pupils fail to meet academic targets as established by MidYIS scores.
- Consideration and sensitivity is given to the appropriateness of testing EAL pupils at the earlier stages of English acquisition, especially in relation to the entrance exam.

6. Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

- Targets for EAL pupils are appropriate, challenging and reviewed on a regular basis.
- Planning for EAL pupils incorporates both curriculum and EAL specific objectives.
- Staff speak to subject teachers informally about pupils' developing use of language.
- When planning the curriculum, staff should take account of the linguistic background of families.

7. Teaching Strategies

- Classroom activities have clear learning objectives and use appropriate materials and support to enable pupils to participate in lessons.
- Key language features of each curriculum area, e.g. key vocabulary, uses of language, forms of text, are identified.
- Enhanced opportunities are provided for speaking and listening, including both process and presentational talk, and use made of drama techniques and role play. Pupils have access to effective staff and peer models of spoken language.
- Additional visual support is provided, e.g. posters, pictures, photographs, objects, demonstration and use of gesture.
- Additional verbal support is provided, e.g. repetition, modelling, peer support.
- Use is made of collaborative activities that involve purposeful talk and encourage and support active participation.
- Discussion is provided before, during and after reading and writing activities.
- Scaffolding is provided for language and learning, e.g. talk frames, writing frames.
- Lexia, the online literacy scheme available to all Y7 and 8 pupils is a useful resource for building reading comprehension, spelling and grammar skills.

8. Materials

At St James we try to provide or recommend appropriate materials such as dictionaries, electronic translators and key word lists (if needed). Videos, maps, I.C.T. and story props also give crucial support. Where simplified texts are available, these should be provided to support class text.

9. Special Educational Needs and Academic Enrichment

- Most EAL pupils needing additional support do not have SEN.
- Should SEN be identified, EAL pupils have equal access to the school's SEN provision.
- If EAL pupils are identified as those needing academic enrichment, they have equal access to school's provision.

10. Parental/Community Involvement

Staff strive to encourage parental and community involvement by:

- Providing a welcoming induction process for newly arrived pupils and their families/carers.
- Using plain English and translators and interpreters, where appropriate and available, to ensure good spoken and written communications.
- Identifying linguistic, cultural and religious background of pupils.
- Acknowledging the achievements of EAL pupils.

11. Interventions outside the classroom

If EAL pupils are under-achieving in spite of appropriate classroom measures, the following interventions may be offered, on a small group or individual basis.

- Reading groups during period 0 (30 mins); an opportunity to read texts at an appropriate level, to develop vocabulary and comprehension skills;
- English Language skills, as required; reading, spelling, written expression; 1:1 /small group;
- If school interventions are unsuccessful, a private specialist ESOL tutor, out of school, could be recommended.

12. Admissions / Entry to the School

Information is gathered about:

- pupils' linguistic background and competence in other language/s
- pupils' previous educational experience
- pupils' family and biographical background

A member of staff is nominated to have responsibility for EAL. Currently this is Sarah Jane Hipshon

13. Communication Process:

Responsible:

- 1) Form Teacher
- 2) English Teacher
- 3) EAL Co-coordinator in SEN department