

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

Headteacher	Anita Spires
Chair of Governors	Katherine Russell
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1. Introduction

Beechwood School is committed to ensuring that all students, including those with English as an Additional Language (EAL), achieve their full potential within a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment. Our core philosophy is that language development is a collective responsibility. We utilise adaptive teaching as our primary vehicle for inclusion, ensuring EAL learners are integrated into mainstream classrooms to access a high-quality, broad, and balanced curriculum.

2. Definition of EAL

The term “EAL” describes a diverse group of learners who have been ‘exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English’ (DfE, 2019). This includes:

- New arrivals: Students with little or no prior exposure to English.
- Fluent bilinguals: Students who are proficient in English but use other languages.
- UK-born students: Those who use another language at home and may still require linguistic support.

3. Key Principles

- Mainstream Excellence: EAL learners are best supported within the mainstream classroom alongside their peers.
- Adaptive Teaching: Lessons are designed to be flexible, using scaffolding to remove barriers to the curriculum without lowering expectations.
- Cognitive Ability vs. Proficiency: A lack of English proficiency is not an indicator of low intelligence or SEND.
- Cultural Capital: Multilingualism is recognised and celebrated as a cognitive and cultural strength.

4. Aims

- To develop fluency in English (speaking, reading, writing, and listening).
- To ensure full curriculum access through evidence-based adaptive teaching.
- To raise achievement and close attainment gaps between EAL learners and their peers.
- To value and promote students’ home languages and cultural identities.

5. Ofsted Expectations (2025 Framework)

In line with current inspection requirements, Beechwood School ensures:

- Intent: EAL provision is embedded within the curriculum design.
- Implementation: Teachers use explicit vocabulary instruction, pre-teaching, modelling, and structured “talk for learning.”
- Impact: Accurate assessment of English proficiency (Bell Foundation) is used to track progress and ensure the attainment gap is closing.
- SEND Distinction: Clear pathways exist to distinguish between language acquisition needs and underlying learning difficulties.

6. Leadership and Governance

Senior Leadership

- Ensures EAL provision is part of the School Development Plan.

Head of EAL

- Provides strategic leadership for EAL across the school.
- Develops and evaluates the EAL policy and whole-school provision.
- Ensures consistency and quality of adaptive teaching for EAL learners.
- Works with senior leaders and governors to monitor outcomes and close attainment gaps.
- Oversees assessment systems, including the Bell Foundation framework.
- Leads staff training and whole-school professional development on EAL.

EAL Lead / Coordinator

- Leads day-to-day EAL provision.
- Oversees the EAL register and baseline assessments.
- Supports staff with strategies, assessment, and classroom practice.
- Monitors student progress and provision.

Governing Body

- A designated EAL Governor:- Monitors progress and attainment of EAL learners.
- Reviews provision and ensures accountability.
- Supports and challenges school leaders.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

EAL Coordinator

- Supports adaptive teaching and assessment.
- Monitors progress and provision.
- Advises staff on strategies and differentiation.
- Liaises with parents.

All Teaching Staff

- Maintain high expectations for all EAL learners.
- Use adaptive teaching strategies (visuals, graphic organisers, modelling).
- Incorporate explicit academic language instruction in every lesson.
- Use appropriate scaffolding.
- Identify students at risk of underachievement and notify the EAL Team.

8. Teaching and Learning: The Adaptive Approach

Staff are expected to move away from "differentiation by outcome" and toward adaptive scaffolding:

- Visual Supports: Graphic organisers, dual-coding, and Tier 2/3 vocabulary mats.
- Explicit Instruction: Pre-teaching key concepts and subject-specific vocabulary.
- Structured Oracy: Sentence starters and substitution tables to support verbal participation.

- First Language (L1): Encouraging use of home language for cognitive processing before translating into English.

9. Provision and Resources

The school maintains a dedicated EAL Room designed to provide a focused environment for language acquisition.

- Technology: The room is equipped with desktop computers, laptops, and tablets to enable the EAL teacher to assign personalised work tailored to each student's proficiency level.
- In-Class Support: Where possible, EAL in-class support is available to assist students in accessing the mainstream curriculum.

10. Identification, Assessment and Pathways

Students are identified via induction meetings, previous school records, and parental consultation. All new arrivals undergo a baseline language assessment.

EAL Register: Bell Foundation/DfE Stages

- Band A (New to English): Students undergo a 6-week intensive EAL induction programme. Following this, they gradually transition into mainstream classes while continuing to attend scheduled EAL interventions.
- Band B (Early Acquisition): To provide necessary linguistic support, Band B students may be withdrawn from MFL (Modern Foreign Languages) to attend dedicated EAL sessions.
- Band C (Developing Competence): Increasing independence; support needed for academic language and literacy.
- Band D (Competent): Occasional support to refine language.
- Band E (Fluent): Monitoring only.
- N – Not Yet Assessed

11. Inclusion and SEND

Careful monitoring ensures that language barriers are not misidentified as learning difficulties. If an EAL student makes slow progress despite high-quality adaptive teaching and intensive intervention, they will be assessed for SEND in their first language where possible.

12. Community Languages Examinations

The school supports students in gaining GCSE or A-Level qualifications in their home languages.

- Guidance, speaking exam preparation, and access arrangements (in line with JCQ regulations) are provided.
- The school provides past papers, specifications, handles exam entries, and facilitates speaking exams.
- Students must study independently and sign a consent form.
- Criteria for Entry: High-level proficiency across Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing.

- Accountability: Students who miss exams without a valid medical reason must reimburse the school for entry fees.

13. Community and Parent Engagement

We strive to remove barriers for EAL families by:

- Providing translation or interpretation services for parents' evenings, reports, and key documents.
- Encouraging parents to maintain the home language to support linguistic development.

14. Success Criteria & Review

The success of this policy is measured by:

- Evidence of effective adaptive teaching in lesson observations.
- Narrowing the attainment gap between EAL and non-EAL students.
- EAL students making progress in line with or exceeding national averages.
- Progression through Bell Foundation stages (e.g., from Band A/B to C/D).
- Full access to the curriculum.