

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy



1) Mission, Vision and Catholic Ethos

We believe each child is made in the image of God; we welcome every pupil and family as a gift to our community, celebrating linguistic diversity and cultural identity as expressions of human dignity and the common good. Our aim is to ensure pupils who use English as an Additional Language (EAL) fully access a broad, ambitious curriculum while growing academically, socially, and spiritually. This approach is consistent with the Equality Act 2010 duties (eliminating discrimination, advancing equality, fostering good relations) which apply to maintained schools and academies.

2) Scope

This policy applies to all pupils identified by the DfE definition of EAL— children exposed to a language other than English in the home—and to all staff and volunteers working with them across the curriculum, in worship, and in wider school life.

3) Legal and Policy Framework

- DfE statutory guidance collection for schools (curriculum, attendance, behaviour, admissions) sets the core duties all schools must meet; this policy helps us meet those duties inclusively for EAL learners.
- Teachers' Standards (Part 1, Standard 5) require teachers to adapt teaching to pupils' strengths and needs, explicitly including those with EAL.
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and State-funded Schools Inspection Toolkit (from November 2025) strengthen expectations for inclusion and for how schools support learners at the early stages of English acquisition; inspectors consider the accuracy of English proficiency assessment and curriculum access.
- DfE Reading Framework (EYFS–Y9, updated 2023) and DfE Writing Framework (2025) provide evidence-informed guidance on systematic phonics, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary and writing—highly relevant to multilingual learners and to strengthening discipline literacy across subjects.
- Equality Act 2010—Advice for Schools: leaders must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty and make reasonable

adjustments; policy decisions regarding EAL, curriculum access, uniform communication and admissions should reflect this.

4) Evidence Base (EEF and related research)

- The EEF summarises the research on EAL and attainment; recent IPD meta-analysis (2011–2024) finds broadly positive effects from EEF-funded trials for pupils with EAL—especially in literacy and for recent arrivals—reinforcing the importance of targeted, high-quality approaches.
- EAL in the Mainstream Classroom (2024, EEF-funded evaluation) highlights effective whole-class strategies (structured talk, explicit vocabulary, scaffolding) embedded in Quality First Teaching.
- EEF Key Stage 2 Literacy Guidance (Second Edition) emphasises oracy, explicit vocabulary, reading comprehension strategies, fluent decoding where needed, taught writing processes, and precise assessment to target support—principles we adopt for EAL learners across the curriculum.
- The Bell Foundation/Oxford research underlines that English proficiency is the strongest predictor of attainment for EAL learners and that time of arrival matters—supporting our focus on accurate baseline and ongoing proficiency assessment.

5) Aims

1. Early, accurate identification of EAL learners and their English proficiency to inform teaching and support.
2. Ensure Quality First Teaching (QFT) with appropriate scaffolds so EAL pupils access the full curriculum while accelerating English acquisition.
3. Develop oracy and vocabulary systematically (including subject-specific/academic language) and secure reading and writing through evidence-based practice.
4. Partner with parents/carers, valuing home language use and offering practical ways to support learning at home.
5. Monitor outcomes (progress, attendance, wellbeing) for EAL cohorts and by proficiency stage; evaluate provision and reduce gaps.

6) Roles and Responsibilities

- Governing Body: approves the policy; receives termly reports on EAL outcomes and provision in line with inclusion duties and Catholic mission.
- Headteacher: ensures implementation, resourcing, staff deployment/CPD, and a culture of high expectations; assures compliance with Ofsted EIF expectations.
- EAL Lead: coordinates induction, proficiency assessment, staff development, resources, and monitoring; reports to SLT and governors.
- Class Teachers: meet Teachers' Standards by adapting teaching, assessing regularly, and planning structured talk and vocabulary; liaise with EAL Lead/SENCO.
- SENDCO: ensures needs due to language acquisition are distinguished from SEND; coordinates dual-status (EAL+SEND) support plans.
- Teaching Assistants: deliver planned, high-quality, time-limited support that builds independence and links to class learning.

7) Identification and Admission

- The school follows DfE definitions for EAL and gathers information on languages, prior schooling, literacy in first language, and pastoral needs at admission. Interpreters are used where necessary.
- A welcome/induction process includes a tour, buddying, a visual timetable, translated key information, and a first-week settling plan. This supports wellbeing and early engagement with routines.

8) Assessment, Tracking and English Proficiency

- Within the first 2–3 weeks we conduct a baseline English proficiency assessment across listening, speaking, reading and writing and repeat this at least termly; this aligns with Ofsted's expectation to assess proficiency accurately and regularly.
- We use a structured proficiency framework (e.g., The Bell Foundation EAL Assessment Framework and digital tracker) to set short, specific targets; teachers use outcomes to plan scaffolds, vocabulary sequences, and groupings.

- Tracking distinguishes cohorts by proficiency stage and time since arrival; evidence shows proficiency and time of arrival strongly predict attainment, so these data guide provision and evaluation.

9) Teaching and Curriculum Access (Quality First Teaching)

We commit to high-quality, inclusive teaching so multilingual learners thrive in mainstream lessons:

a) Oracy and Structured Talk

- Plan purposeful talk (partner/group dialogue, teacher–pupil dialogic exchanges), modelling and rehearsal before writing; use sentence stems and graphic organisers to scaffold complex ideas.

b) Vocabulary

- Teach high-utility and subject-specific vocabulary explicitly; build morphology/etymology knowledge; provide multiple exposures in meaningful contexts (reading, talk, writing).

c) Reading

- Where decoding is insecure, provide systematic synthetic phonics (with fidelity), fluency practice, and explicit comprehension strategy instruction to access the full curriculum.

d) Writing

- Teach composition strategies (plan–draft–revise), modelled/shared writing, sentence-combining, and transcription/spelling practice; align with the DfE Writing Framework (2025).

e) Scaffolds and Access

- Use visuals/dual-coding, bilingual glossaries where helpful, chunked tasks, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, adapted success criteria, and frequent checks for understanding to maintain high challenge without narrowing the curriculum.

f) Early Years

- In EYFS, staff model rich English in meaningful contexts and recognise that some pupils experience a silent period up to ~6 months; maintaining home language is beneficial and should be encouraged.

10) Targeted Support and Interventions

- Where needed, provide time-limited, high-quality interventions (e.g., oral language, vocabulary, fluency, reading comprehension, writing) that are closely aligned to classroom learning and evaluated for impact.
- Implementation follows EEF guidance—clear goals, staff training, progress monitoring, and rapid adjustment if impact is limited.

11) Valuing Home Languages, Culture and Catholic Life

- We affirm bilingualism as an asset. Families are encouraged to use the dominant home language to develop knowledge, faith practice and cultural identity; this supports later English attainment and wellbeing.
- School worship, RE and the wider curriculum include opportunities to celebrate languages and cultures, fostering unity in diversity within our Catholic ethos and fulfilling equality duties.

12) Working with Parents and Carers

- We provide translated information where practical and use interpreters for key meetings. Communications are clear and jargon-free.
- In line with EEF guidance on parental engagement, we offer practical strategies for supporting reading, vocabulary, and talk at home; we tailor communications to promote positive dialogue about learning and provide more intensive support where needed.

13) Safeguarding, Attendance and Pastoral Support

- EAL pupils receive the same safeguarding standards as all pupils; we use culturally sensitive practice and reliable interpretation to ensure pupil voice and parental understanding. Inspectors focus on inclusion and leaders' impact on removing barriers to learning and wellbeing.
- We track attendance and follow up swiftly to remove barriers (e.g., transport, health, settlement issues), coordinating support with external services as appropriate.

14) Staff Development

- All teachers meet Teachers' Standards; our CPD plan equips staff with EAL-informed pedagogy (oracy, vocabulary, reading/writing, assessment, scaffolding) and coaching/peer observation to embed practice.

- Leaders align CPD with Ofsted EIF expectations and evaluate impact on classroom practice and pupil outcomes.

15) Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- **Termly:** EAL cohort progress (and by proficiency stage), attendance and wellbeing reported to SLT/governors; actions agreed.
- **Quality assurance:** learning walks, work sampling, planning scrutiny and pupil voice focused on curriculum access, talk, vocabulary, and writing.
- **Annual review:** policy reviewed with governors and updated in light of guidance changes and local needs.

16) Complaints

Concerns about EAL provision follow the school's complaints procedure. Where relevant, equality implications are considered under the Equality Act.

Key References

- EEF – EAL evidence & reviews: overview of evidence and links to studies.
- EEF – IPD meta-analysis on EAL (2011–2024): overall impacts for EAL learners.
- EEF – EAL in the Mainstream Classroom (2024): evaluation findings.
- EEF – Improving Literacy in KS2 (2nd ed.): practical recommendations.
- EEF – Working with Parents: four recommendations for parental engagement.
- DfE – Reading Framework (2023 update) & Writing Framework (2025): reading/writing guidance.
- Ofsted EIF & Schools Inspection Toolkit (from Nov 2025): inspection expectations for inclusion/EAL.
- Teachers' Standards (2011, updated 2021): adaptive teaching including EAL.
- Equality Act 2010 – Advice for Schools (DfE): legal duties and reasonable adjustments.

- Bell Foundation – EAL Assessment Framework: proficiency assessment tools.
- Bell Foundation/Oxford (2025): later arrival & proficiency strongly predict attainment.