



**THE
WHITE
HOUSE
SCHOOL**

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

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1. Context

The White House School is an Independent Specialist school. We are part of an ethical and progressive organisation that believes it can achieve real change for pupils and their families.

The White House School is situated within BCP local authority and offers a specialist learning provision which emphasises the development of core academic understanding, encourages creativity, celebrates outdoor learning and promotes the growth of essential life skills. We aim to establish a safe, creative and vibrant environment where children feel challenged and supported in their learning, achieving high levels of wellbeing and academic success. We aim to nurture and develop mutual respect, tolerance, teamwork, perseverance, kindness and good manners.

We adhere to the values of ARC:

- Ambition
- Resilience
- Community

The White House School operates within the SPELL framework. SPELL is The National Autistic Society's framework for understanding and responding to the needs of children and adults on the autism spectrum. It focuses on five principles that have been identified as vital elements of best practice in autism and emphasises ways to change the environment and our approaches to meet the specific needs of each person.

SPELL stands for Structure, Positive approaches and expectations, Empathy, Low arousal and Links:

Structure	Structure makes the world a more predictable, accessible and safer place. We can support people on the autism spectrum in creating structured environments using visual information.
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Positive (approaches and expectations)	We must seek to establish and reinforce self-confidence and self-esteem by building on natural strengths, interest and abilities.
Empathy	We must try to see the world from the standpoint of the autistic child or adult, knowing what it is that motivates or interests them but importantly what may also frighten, preoccupy or otherwise distress them.
Low arousal	Approaches and the environment need to be calm and ordered in such a way so as to reduce anxiety and aid concentration.
Links	Autistic people, their parents or advocates should be seen as partners. Open links and communication will reduce the risk of misunderstanding, confusion or the adoption of fragmented, piecemeal approaches.

2. Introduction and Aims

To ensure that we provide a high standard of education for children with English as an Additional Language and adopt practices that enable them to pick up the English Language.

Responsible Persons: Senior Leadership and the Staff Team

Definition

EAL is defined as: *'a child whose first language is not English'* encompassing children who are fully bilingual and all those at different stages of learning English.

EAL children may be:

- Newly arrived from a foreign country and school
- Newly arrived from a foreign country, but an English-speaking school
- Born abroad, but moved to the UK at some point before starting school
- Born in the UK, but in a family where the main language is not English
- Seeking Asylum or have refugee status

EAL children will need varying levels of provision so that they can access all aspects of the curriculum.

We are prepared to welcome increasing numbers of children with EAL and all have their own, individual experiences and backgrounds. For the purpose of this document, we use EAL as an umbrella term that encompasses all levels of bilingualism and any child learning and using English as an additional language. We understand that children will start at the school with differing levels of bilingualism and fluency in English. Partnership with parents is vitally important to a child's progress and we promote how valuable it is to continue speaking their first language.

Statement of Intent

Children will not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because their home language is different from that in which they are taught. We may recommend that some children, whose first language at home

is not English, receive support in English as an additional language. For older children with limited command of English, whose parents apply for a place at the school, we may recommend a short intensive tuition programme prior to starting.

All children should have equal access to a broad, balanced curriculum and be given the opportunity to communicate in any first language, as it has a continuing and significant role in identity, learning and acquisition of further language development.

We promote equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices; differences are celebrated and any resulting needs are addressed (see Admissions and Equal Opportunities Policies)

Aims and Objectives

- To welcome the cultural and linguistic experiences of every child with EAL and ensure we meet their full range of needs.
- To maintain a child's self-esteem by acknowledging and celebrating their individual culture and skill in their first language.
- To implement strategies and monitor children's progress to ensure they are supported to access the complete curriculum.
- To support children with EAL in becoming confident and fluent in English.

We believe that:

- EAL children learn to speak, read and write in English through immersion in a broad, rich curriculum.
- The school environment promotes language development through the rich use of language, IT and visual prompts.
- EAL learners make the best progress within a whole school context, where children are educated with their peers.
- The school structure, pastoral care and overall ethos help EAL children integrate into the school whilst valuing diversity.
- Bilingualism is viewed as a positive and life-enriching asset.
- Parents and prospective parents will be provided with the particulars of our EAL provision via our parent information leaflet. This will be available in different languages, as required.

3. Implementation

To support the above aims, staff members adhere to the following procedures:

- Gather and share information about the child's background (including the language/s the child speaks, religion, cultural customs and traditions and any dietary requirements).

- Let the parents know that we welcome and celebrate different languages and cultures.
- Establish consistent, simple, daily routines, checking that the child understands what to do and if necessary repeating explanations and directions on a one-to-one basis, adding visual prompts where needed.
- Use lots of visual support, gestures, pictures and objects to aid understanding and language development.
- Acknowledge children's attempts to communicate; children will often switch between languages and will often understand more than they can verbalise.
- Ensure that all staff model appropriate, correct language and grammar, using lots of repetition and positive interactions.
- Identify opportunities to teach and embed targeted vocabulary and key language structures and use these to plan for activities/interactions in the child's individual and class planning.
- Plan for the consistent inclusion of children with EAL in small group activities which enable frequent meaningful episodes of interaction with peers, in activities which promote communication.
- Ensure an awareness that children with EAL often go through a 'silent period' or 'quiet period' before they are confident to speak English, or they may not want to use their home language for a variety of reasons. Providing a running commentary/talking through actions will model the use of language.
- Where a child with EAL speaks a home language which is also spoken by a member of staff, enable a good liaison between the two to provide support and manage linguistic challenges.
- Build on and interpret non-verbal responses as effective turns in conversation and provide an English translation. One-word and short phrase responses are paraphrased and extended to longer sentences.

We recognise the important role of parents and we strive to maintain quality partnerships with parents and carers to ensure every possible support is provided.

We recognise that the English language skills of a child with EAL will also develop as a result of their interactions with their friends and classmates. Staff aim to cultivate this opportunity in, for example, providing new children with EAL with a mentor or buddy and, where practical, linking a new child with EAL with a classmate prior to starting, with a view to organising holiday playdates.

On entry to the school we gather information via our 'language mapping' form and other initial parent forms (such as a personalised list of high frequency words in the child's home language/s to be used during transition). This helps to further inform us about the children's abilities in their home language/s and how best to support them.

Ongoing monitoring and support are set in place as needed on an individual basis, incorporating, where needed, the support of the parents.

Teacher lesson plans include details of differentiation for EAL. This can take many forms including:

- Access to dual language texts, posters and displays.
- Access to word banks.
- Opportunity for visual literacy techniques such as reading pictures and drama.
- Provide opportunity for higher order thinking.
- Opportunity for discussion and cooperative learning.
- Opportunities to communicate in their first/home language with teachers and learning support assistants.
- Display artefacts and materials which reflect the children's home background.
- Encourage children to write their own dual texts, when appropriate.
- Participate in Black History Month, Refugee Week and Traveller History Month.
- Plan learning opportunities in lessons which reflect ethnic minority backgrounds.

4. Assessment

Assessment is undertaken as a partnership between the class teacher, Literacy Lead (Head of our Key Skills department), SLT, support staff, parents/guardians and pupil. Termly assessment of level of language acquisition will be carried out to ensure that challenging bespoke targets to accelerate progress are in place. Interventions are personalised, time limited and monitored to ensure accelerated progress. In assessment of EAL children, competence in English is categorised on a five-point scale using the Department for Education's EAL classification codes:

A: New to English: May use first language for learning and other purposes. May remain completely silent in the classroom. May be copying/repeating some words or phrases. May understand some everyday expressions in English but may have minimal or no literacy in English. Needs a considerable amount of EAL support.

B: Early acquisition: May follow day-to-day social communication in English and participate in learning activities with support. Beginning to use spoken English for social purposes. May understand simple instructions and can follow narrative/accounts with visual support. May have developed some skills in reading and writing. May have become familiar with some subject specific vocabulary. Still needs a significant amount of EAL support to access the curriculum.

C: Developing competence: May participate in learning activities with increasing independence. Able to express self orally in English, but structural inaccuracies are still apparent. Literacy will require ongoing support, particularly for understanding text and writing. May be able to follow abstract concepts and more complex written English. Requires ongoing EAL support to access the curriculum fully.

D: Competent: Oral English will be developing well, enabling successful engagement in activities across the curriculum. Can read and understand a wide variety of texts. Written English may lack complexity and contain occasional evidence of errors in structure. Needs some support to access subtle nuances of

meaning, to refine English usage, and to develop abstract vocabulary. Needs some/occasional EAL support to access complex curriculum material and tasks.

E: Fluent: Can operate across the curriculum to a level of competence equivalent to that of a pupil who uses English as his/her first language. Operates without EAL support across the curriculum.

N: Not Yet Assessed is also available for use where the school has not yet had time to assess proficiency.

Assessment of the EAL 'pupil group' also takes place termly by the SLT as part of our whole school attainment analysis in the core subjects.

5. Monitoring arrangements

This policy and information report will be reviewed every two years by the Headteacher. It will also be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year.

At every review, it will be sent to the School Board for approval.

6. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following documents:

- Accessibility Plan
- Admissions Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Monitoring Pupil Attainment Policy
- SEN Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Appendix 1
EAL Register (template)

Pupil Name:	Mother Tongue:	Level of English-Speaking Ability:	Support Provision in Place:

School/class ethos

- Classrooms are socially and intellectually inclusive, valuing cultural differences and fostering a range of individual identities
- Recognise the child’s mother tongue; boost the child’s self-esteem. Remember, he/she has the potential to become a bi-lingual adult
- Identify the pupil’s strengths and encouraging them to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another
- Recognise that pupils with English as an additional language will need more time to process and answer both orally and in written format.

Extra time and support in tests will be awarded if appropriate

Providing and targeting appropriate reading materials that highlight different ways in which English may be used

- Give newly arrived young children time to absorb English (there is a recognised ‘silent period’ when children understand more English than they use – this will pass if their self-confidence is maintained)
- Group children to ensure that EAL pupils hear good models of English
- Use collaborative learning techniques
- Ensure that vocabulary work covers the technical as well as the everyday meaning of key words, metaphors and idioms

- Explain how speaking and writing in English are structured for different purposes across a range of subjects
- Ensure that there are effective opportunities for talking, and that talking is used to support writing

Access and support

- All pupils will follow the full school curriculum. The school will provide texts and resources that suit the pupils' ages and levels of learning
- Where appropriate, EAL pupils will be supported by a Learning Support Assistant in the classroom to enable the pupil to complete tasks with understanding.
- Where necessary, for older children or for those who are functioning at one or more levels behind that which could be expected for their age and time in school, withdrawal support will take place for a set period of time to address specific language or learning focus.