



**BLENHEIM
SCHOOLS**

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)POLICY

**MEONCROSS SCHOOL
SEPTEMBER 2026**

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) POLICY

CONTENTS

1. Purpose.....	2
2. Definition.....	3
3. Statement of Intent.....	3
4. Aims and Objectives.....	4
5. Assessment, Monitoring And Support	5
6. Implementation in Practice	5
7. Staff Training	6
8. Roles and Responsibilities	6

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline how we support pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) to thrive both academically and socially. Our aim is to ensure that every child has access to high-quality teaching, appropriate support, and meaningful opportunities to learn English while continuing to value and build upon their first language and cultural heritage.

We believe that a rich and supportive school environment, underpinned by inclusive practices, helps children with EAL to gain confidence, develop fluency in English, and succeed across the full curriculum.

This policy should be read alongside the following policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Curriculum Policy

This policy is informed by relevant legislation and guidance, including:

- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Independent School Standards](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\)](#)
- [Send Code of Practice: 0-to-25](#)

2. Definition

At our school, the term *English as an Additional Language* (EAL) refers to pupils who are exposed to or use a language other than English at home or in their community. This broad definition includes children at every stage of bilingualism, from those newly arrived with little or no English to those who are developing fluency but continue to use another language at home.

We acknowledge that pupils' experiences of language and education before joining our school will vary widely. Some may already have a high level of English fluency, while others may be encountering English for the first time. We also recognise the importance of maintaining and valuing each pupil's first language. Continued use of the home language supports a child's sense of identity, strengthens family relationships, and contributes positively to their overall cognitive and linguistic development.

Partnership with parents is central to this process. Parents are encouraged to continue speaking and reading in their first language, as this provides a strong foundation for further language acquisition.

The school recognises that pupils with English as an additional language may have differing levels of prior education, literacy, and exposure to English. Some pupils may also have additional educational needs which require further assessment and support.

3. Statement of Intent

We are committed to ensuring that:

- Pupils are **not identified as having a learning difficulty** solely on the basis that their home language is not English.
- Additional support for English language development is provided where appropriate, tailored to the needs of individual pupils.
- Older pupils with very limited English may be recommended to undertake a short, focused programme of intensive tuition before starting school, to support their transition.
- All pupils, regardless of their language background, are given **equal access to a broad, balanced, and stimulating curriculum**.
- Pupils are encouraged to use and celebrate their first languages, recognising their role in shaping personal identity and enriching the school community.
- The school actively promotes **equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice**, celebrating differences and addressing individual needs in line with our Admissions and Equal Opportunities Policy.

We recognise that acquiring social English and academic English are distinct processes, and pupils will be supported to develop both conversational fluency and the academic language needed to access the curriculum fully.

The school recognises that pupils for whom English is an additional language may face additional barriers in communicating safeguarding concerns and will ensure appropriate support is in place so that all pupils and their parents/carers understand how to seek help and express concerns safely.

4. Aims and Objectives

Our policy aims to:

- Welcome and respect the cultural, linguistic, and personal experiences of every child with EAL.
- Protect and build upon each child's self-esteem by acknowledging and celebrating their cultural identity and home language.
- Ensure that effective strategies are in place to help pupils with EAL access the full curriculum.
- Support pupils in developing the confidence and fluency to communicate effectively in English.
- Ensure that pupils' English language development is assessed regularly and monitored systematically.
- Ensure that staff are equipped with appropriate training and strategies to effectively support pupils for whom English is an additional language.

To support these aims, staff will:

- Collect and share information about each child's background, including languages spoken, religion, cultural customs, and any personal needs.
- Communicate openly with parents, emphasising that the school values and celebrates the wide range of languages and cultures represented in our community.
- Establish clear and consistent routines, reinforced with visual aids, repetition, and one-to-one explanations as needed.
- Use a variety of strategies to aid understanding and learning, including visual prompts, gestures, pictures, and objects.
- Respond positively to all attempts at communication, recognising that children often understand more than they can yet express.
- Model appropriate, correct use of English in interactions, ensuring repetition and positive reinforcement are used consistently.
- Identify opportunities to teach and reinforce essential vocabulary and sentence structures, embedding these across lessons and activities.
- Plan for children with EAL to participate regularly in small-group activities, where they can interact meaningfully with peers and develop communication skills in a supportive environment.
- Understand and support children who may go through a "silent period" before speaking English, or who may feel reluctant to use their home language in school. During this time, staff will model language through commentary and supportive talk.
- Utilise the skills of bilingual staff, where available, to support communication and help pupils manage linguistic challenges.
- Recognise and value non-verbal responses as meaningful communication, extending them into fuller English sentences when appropriate.

Staff will also:

- Use adaptive teaching strategies and appropriate scaffolding to support curriculum access.
- Pre-teach and reinforce key vocabulary and subject-specific language.
- Check pupils' understanding regularly through formative assessment.
- Provide opportunities for structured talk and collaborative learning.
- Differentiate learning appropriately while maintaining high expectations and cognitive challenge.
- Work collaboratively with the SENDCo where concerns arise regarding possible additional learning needs

5. Assessment, Monitoring And Support

The school will assess pupils' English language proficiency on admission using age-appropriate assessment methods and information gathered from parents, previous schools, and teaching staff.

Pupils' progress in speaking, listening, reading, and writing will be monitored regularly to ensure that support is appropriate and effective.

Where necessary, targeted intervention or additional support may be provided, including small-group tuition, focused language development activities, or external specialist advice.

The school recognises the importance of distinguishing between language acquisition needs and special educational needs or disabilities. Concerns regarding possible SEND will be considered carefully and in collaboration with parents, teaching staff, and the SENDCo.

Provision and support strategies will be reviewed regularly to ensure pupils continue to make appropriate progress.

6. Implementation in Practice

We ensure that support for EAL pupils is practical, consistent, and tailored to their needs. This includes:

- Collecting detailed information during admission
- Monitoring each pupil's progress closely, adapting provision and support where necessary in partnership with parents. Reports are issued at the end of each term
- Encouraging peer-to-peer interaction as a powerful means of learning. Where possible, new pupils are paired with a "buddy" or mentor to help them settle in, and families are always encouraged to arrange informal meet-ups.

The school will also:

- Provide an appropriate induction programme for newly arrived pupils and families.
- Use translated materials or interpreting support where necessary to facilitate effective communication with parents and carers.

- Ensure that pupils understand school routines, expectations, and safeguarding procedures.
- Promote inclusion through participation in the wider life of the school, including clubs, trips, enrichment activities, and leadership opportunities.

7. Staff Training

The school is committed to providing appropriate professional development opportunities for staff to ensure effective support for pupils for whom English is an additional language.

Training may include:

- effective classroom strategies for EAL learners
- language acquisition and bilingualism
- adaptive teaching approaches
- distinguishing EAL from SEND
- cultural awareness and inclusion

8. Roles and Responsibilities

EAL Coordinator: Ensure this policy is implemented effectively, monitor its impact, and review it regularly.

Staff Team: Apply strategies consistently, monitor and record progress, and provide feedback to SLT and parents.

Parents and Carers: Work in partnership with the school, supporting their child's learning at home while maintaining and valuing their home language.

Document Name:

English As An Additional Language Policy

Document Type:

Policy

Policy Owner:

Operations Director

Version Number:

2627.1

Last Review Date:

September 2026

Next Review Date:

September 2027



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