



## English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

Applies to Prep, Pre-Prep and EYFS

Reviewed and approved:	Head of EAL May 2025
Next review due:	May 2026

The Dragon School is committed to the welfare and education of all its children, including those who speak English as an additional language (EAL). The School recognises the additional linguistic and cultural challenges faced by these children, many of whom are overseas boarders. The School is committed to enabling these children to access the curriculum and flourish as healthy, happy, successful individuals. Cross-cultural understanding, respect and empathy are promoted across the school and through the boarding houses, which regularly organise cross-cultural activities. The School has an active EAL department, who run an 'International Day' each year to celebrate cultural diversity at the school, as well as a fortnightly 'Culture Club' aimed to celebrate different cultural events in the calendar and encourage use of pupils' home languages.

The EAL department aims to ensure that all children who speak English as an additional language are able to:

- Use English confidently and competently.
- Use English as the language for learning across all subjects of the curriculum.

### CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

The Dragon School provides for a variety of children including:

- Children who fluently speak two languages or more where English is spoken at home
- Children who fluently speak two languages or more where English is not spoken at home
- Children who join the school with little or no English language skills (Pre-prep only)

### INFORMATION GATHERING

Before joining the School, information is gathered about the child, including their proficiency in English. Where this information indicates that the child may need support with language acquisition, an EAL assessment is carried out to ensure the correct support is in place for the child at the start of their studies with us.

### KEY PRINCIPLES FOR LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

- Language is best developed in meaningful contexts across the curriculum.
- Teachers have a crucial role in modelling and developing language in each curriculum area.
- Progress in the curriculum is linked to progress in language acquisition.
- Competent levels of language and literacy in a child's first language (L1) enhance subsequent learning in English.
- A distinction is made between EAL and Special Educational Needs (SEN). A proportion of children who speak English as an additional language will also have SEN, but care must be taken to allow time for the English language to develop and cultural adjustments to be made before an SEN investigation is made.



## STRATEGIES

Staff use the following strategies to ensure children's access to lessons:

- **Planning:** include a section in the lesson plan for key vocabulary and language objectives. Pre-teach if necessary.
- **Seating plan:** sit the EAL children near the front where they can see your whole face. Try pairing the EAL children with someone strong in your subject and do plenty of pair work. This will enable them to practise the language being used and gain confidence. Alternatively, EAL children could be paired up with speakers of the same L1.
- **Allow for translation:** As a process of language learning, it is important for EAL children to be allowed to communicate in their L1 to help better understand the lesson content as long as this does not impede others' learning.
- **Use visual aids:** maps, pictures, objects, writing frames, body language and gestures.
- **Modelling:** what to do, how to do it, what to say and write in order to do it. I/we/they sequence could be implemented here.
- **Practice:** provide opportunities for children to practise language needed for the lesson and/or prep, allowing time for children to plan and rehearse answers.
- **Activating Prior Knowledge:** this makes the lesson relevant and also provides a step to the next level of learning. It can be knowledge from the child's own experience or culture, or even something from the previous lesson.

### Making Lessons Comprehensible to EAL Children

- Speak clearly.
- Task before text – give instructions before distributing handouts to ensure the children's attention is not divided.
- Re-phrase rather than repeat. Use synonyms.
- Monitor language used, for example be careful of idioms.
- Check comprehension by asking children to say in their own words what they have understood.
- Allow use of bi-lingual dictionaries; electronic dictionaries allow for quick access to translations during the lesson.
- Teach children how to ask for help.

### Key Principles in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

- For children joining EYFS, the child will be given time to settle into the new setting and where needed, appropriate support will be given.
- The child will be monitored to assess whether the child may also have additional needs; children in EYFS are constantly assessed.
- We understand that EAL children may find integration more challenging in relation to their peers and so appreciate the importance of providing for their additional needs.
- While encouraging the use of English, staff appreciate the importance of the home language and the need to enable the child to express themselves through this.
- For children whose home language is not English, The School takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to use their home language in play and learning.



- Where a child's grasp of English is not strong, staff will explore the child's skill in the home language to establish whether there is a cause for concern over language delay.
- All staff will be aware that children will understand considerably more language than they can use.
- Staff will take into consideration the language skills needed to access an activity and ensure that all children can access the activities.

### **Key Strategies for EAL Children in EYFS**

- A natural part of the day in EYFS is the provision of lots of opportunities to take part in speaking and listening activities.
- We embed into school life the recognition that a variety of languages and cultures is to be celebrated.
- We use visual prompts alongside written language around the School; this helps all children develop their language.
- We ensure that we know key words in the child's home language to help the child settle. These include yes, no, please, thank you, help, drink, eat, toilet.

### **Key Strategies for EAL Children in Years 1, 2 & 3**

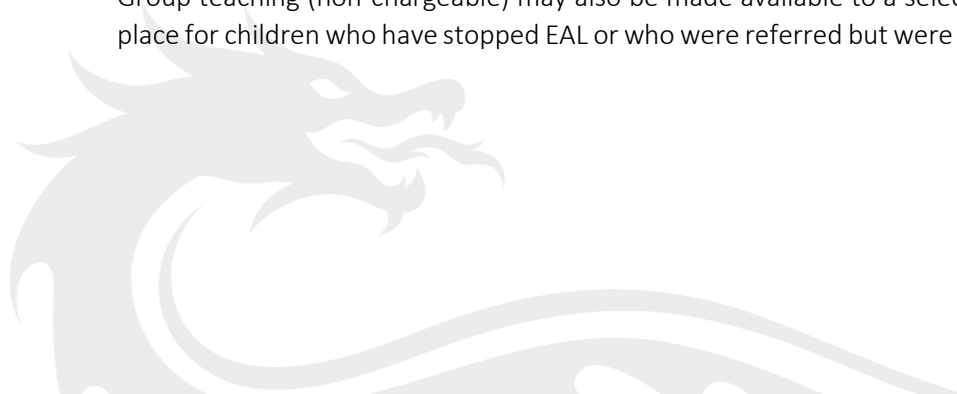
- The principles, strategies and procedures applied to early years as set out above continue to apply.
- Any children who speak English as an additional language will be monitored by teaching staff as they move through the School.
- Should it become apparent that additional support is required at any stage as they move through the Pre-Prep, with the agreement of parents, they will be assessed by a member of the EAL department.
- Following this a learning plan will be drawn up and where support is deemed necessary, this will be provided either by the EAL department or the Pre-Prep Learning Support department as appropriate.

### **WHOLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM TEACHING**

- Teaching staff will be aware of which children speak English as an additional language and all teachers have appropriate access to children's background information on iSAMS (the school's internal database).
- All teaching staff are advised on the linguistic and welfare needs of EAL children.
- Teachers will plan for and differentiate according to the EAL child's individual needs.

### **EAL PROVISION AT THE PREP SCHOOL**

If, following the EAL assessment, it is determined that EAL support is needed, this is provided on a one-to-one basis, at a cost to parents. The EAL department also aim to observe each child in a subject lesson and monitor their progress, offering in-class support if it is deemed necessary by the subject teacher. Group teaching (non-chargeable) may also be made available to a selection of pupils. Monitoring is in place for children who have stopped EAL or who were referred but were found not to need EAL support.





## Referral

If an EAL child is not making the progress expected of them after time has been taken for cultural adjustments, he or she may also be referred by his or her tutor to the EAL department for an EAL assessment. He or she may be referred if difficulties in the following areas are noticed:

- Listening – especially difficulty following instructions or hearing detailed information.
- Speaking – difficulty asking questions or giving opinions in class (whilst recognising and accounting for cultural reasons for this); difficulty in extended speaking or explaining complicated ideas; poor communication and projection.
- Writing – weak spelling, especially with irregular English spelling patterns; incorrect use of tenses; problems with sentence word order, punctuation, structuring and organising writing; lack of detail and varied vocabulary.
- Reading – inability to understand instructions; poor comprehension due to lack of vocabulary or complex grammar.
- Cultural knowledge – often indicated by poor comprehension, especially of cultural historical context; difficulties with inference; difficulties with imagery and figurative language. This can be most noticeable in subjects such as English, History and Geography.
- Concentration – if a child is operating in two or more languages, the process can be slow and tiring and it may appear as if the child is lacking in effort or concentration.

If after a time of adjustment and EAL intervention additional Special Educational Needs are suspected, a child may be referred to the Learning Support department for Learning Support assessments.

