English as an Additional Language Policy

Related documents: Diversity & Equality Policy, Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, SEND Policy, Examinations Policy

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OUR VISION

Our vision is to provide pupils with the confidence, skills and ambition to achieve a successful and productive life. We aim to ensure they leave the school with a 'new day, new opportunity' ethos and are capable of becoming positive members of their communities. To do this, we have 3 principles that underpin our policies, practices and everything we do:

Everyone can learn, achieve and has the potential to be successful

Positive relationships are key to success and are underpinned by mutual trust, respect and caring for one another

We have high expectations in everything we do.

Policy owner	WhiteTrees School	**Last review**	September 2026
Date Created	October 2021	**Next review**	September 2027

Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy has been drawn up with regard to:

- The Equality Act 2010, under which race, ethnicity and national origin are protected characteristics; the school will not discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil because English is an additional language for them.
- Section 20(4) of the Children and Families Act 2014, which provides that a child or young person does not have a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language in which they are, or will be, taught is different from a language spoken at home.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015, paragraph 6.24, which states that difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not special educational needs, and that identifying and assessing SEN for pupils whose first language is not English requires particular care.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, in particular its expectations around communicating with pupils and families where there is a language barrier.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Diversity & Equality Policy, Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, and SEND Policy.

Introduction

Aims

- The school wishes to support all of its pupils to become effective learners who are able to achieve their maximum potential.
- The Assistant SENCOs and Deputies oversee and monitor the provision and teaching of EAL pupils under the SENCO.
- This policy should be read in conjunction with the Diversity & Equality Policy.
- WhiteTrees aims to meet the needs of any pupil in the school, including those who have EAL needs.
- Pupils with EAL needs will be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education which will be inclusive and appropriate to their experience with English.
- Pupils will be assisted to become more proficient in English and, as their progress develops, to reach their academic potential.

EAL support is offered to all pupils for whom English is not a first language. Pupils will be assessed on arrival by staff and, if they are considered to need English language tuition, it will be a requirement that they follow an appropriate course.

If the pupil, teachers and parents or carers agree that one or no additional foreign language courses are appropriate, this lesson time will be used for additional tuition.

EAL and Special Educational Needs: Understanding the Distinction

English as an additional language is not, in itself, a special educational need. A pupil learning English may show slower progress, limited vocabulary, or reluctance to speak in class for reasons that are entirely explained by where they are in acquiring a new language, and these should not, on their own, be treated as evidence of a learning difficulty or disability.

This distinction requires particular care at WhiteTrees, given that all of our pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. A pupil who is both learning EAL and managing SEMH needs may present with behaviours, such as withdrawal, anxiety, reluctance to engage, or apparent lack of progress, that could plausibly be explained by either factor, or by both together. Staff will therefore:

- Consider the pupil's stage of English acquisition, prior education, and exposure to English before attributing a difficulty to SEN;
- Gather information from parents or carers about how the pupil communicates and functions in their first language, wherever possible;
- Liaise between the EAL lead and the SENCO where a pupil's presentation is unclear, rather than assuming either explanation by default;
- Record and review evidence over time, since limitations in English typically resolve with support and exposure in a way that SEND-related difficulties do not.

Where a genuine special educational need is identified alongside EAL, the pupil's support will be planned jointly between the EAL lead and the SENCO, and reflected in their EHCP and support plans as appropriate.

Examinations

Various examinations are offered, depending on ability and requirements. All pupils will take Functional Skills papers in English and, if deemed appropriate, GCSE English Language.

The SENCO will liaise with the Examinations Officer on issues concerning access arrangements for external and internal examinations, in line with current Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulations, as appropriate.

Teaching

All staff are familiar with the EAL Policy and are aware of their role in implementing it. Teaching pupils with EAL needs is a whole school responsibility, requiring a whole school response. Lessons can generally be divided into three areas:

1. Those that concentrate on learning and revising grammar.
2. Those that concentrate on one or more of the four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking.
3. Those that support the wider curriculum.

All available resources are used, including the internet, the school library, newspapers, EAL books, listening materials and course books. Textbooks are reviewed regularly. Pupils are taught according to their ability and requirements. The schemes of work are followed at the appropriate level.

All four skills are practised, with emphasis on those which are the weakest. Some lessons are devoted to supporting work in other subjects. The amount of time spent on these lessons varies considerably and is decided upon after discussion with each pupil and subject teacher.

Monitoring

- Feedback on progress will be recorded at staff meetings.
- Use is made of all baseline school data and internal examination results for screening, diagnostic purposes, and for shaping pupils' individual programmes.
- Examination and test results will be analysed.

- Reviews with pupils and parents or guardians will be arranged and recorded, as required.
- The school pastoral system incorporates strategies to support pupils for whom English is an additional language, and a structured programme of induction and support is in place.

Supporting Pupils to Integrate into the WhiteTrees Community

Relevant staff all make an input into the induction programme for pupils with EAL who join the school. In addition, Deputy Heads and individual teachers or tutors provide ongoing welfare and pastoral support for EAL pupils. Counselling and peer and staff mentoring are available to all pupils at the school to ensure that good personal and social progress underpins their academic performance. There is collaborative working between all staff to support the needs of EAL pupils as effectively as possible.

Communicating with Pupils and Families

Where a pupil or their parent or carer is more comfortable communicating in a language other than English, particularly for meetings, consent discussions, or any conversation touching on welfare or safeguarding, the school will arrange a professional interpreter. Family members, siblings, or other pupils will not be used to interpret in these circumstances, so that the pupil and their family can communicate fully and privately, and so that no child is placed in the position of interpreting sensitive information on a parent's or sibling's behalf.

Staff Training

Guidance is offered on effective in-class differentiation and flexible teaching to help cater for the learning styles and English language level of individual pupils. Staff receive guidance on the distinction between EAL and SEND set out above, so that referrals to the SENCO are made appropriately and pupils are not wrongly identified either way.

This policy is monitored by the senior leadership team (SLT) and is evaluated and reviewed annually.

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