English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

ACTIVE

Policy owner / lead	Assistant Heads with Curriculum responsibility
Approved by	Heads of School
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Applicability / scope	EYFS, Primary and Secondary
Policy family	Student Wellbeing, Behaviour and Pastoral
Status	Active

1. Introduction

The ABC International School recognises the fundamental role of language in shaping identity, fostering inclusion, and ensuring access to education. While many of our students are EAL learners, most are competent or fluent in English within our all-English-speaking environment. In this policy, specific support strategies focus on students newer to English.

Our English-speaking environment fosters a sense of belonging by providing a shared language for learning, collaboration, and social interaction. While we celebrate diverse linguistic backgrounds, English serves as the bridge that connects students and ensures full participation in school life.

We are committed to supporting all students in developing the English proficiency needed to engage with the curriculum. Targeted support and effective EAL strategies are embedded across classrooms to ensure continuous language development.

Definition of EAL Learners:
According to the Department for Education (DfE, 2020):
"A pupil is recorded to have English as an additional language if they are exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English. This measure is not a measure of English language proficiency or a good proxy for recent immigration."

2. Statement of Aims and Commitment

The school aims to:

- Provide high-quality EAL support to enable all learners to access the curriculum.
- Foster an environment where students are supported in developing their English proficiency.
- Ensure that all teachers use effective EAL strategies to support language acquisition.
- Recognise that fluency in English does not always equate to full academic proficiency and provide ongoing support as needed.

3. Admissions

Students are admitted to The ABC International School following entrance assessments and an interview with a member of the Senior Management Team. The interview evaluates the student's educational ability, aptitude, level of English, and experience across various curriculum areas. Admission may be declined if the school cannot adequately support the student's EAL needs, particularly if the gap between the student's proficiency and chronological age-related expectations in English is too wide. EAL students who are new to English or in the early stages of acquisition are considered on a case-by-case basis. Where students require intervention, such as the EIP programme, this will be explained to parents during the interview to ensure they are fully informed of the additional support their child will receive. A candidate will be accepted if the interviewer determines they can fully engage with the curriculum and thrive both academically and socially.

4. Stages of Proficiency

The ABC International School refers to the UK's Department for Education (DfE) 2016 five-point scale to assess the English language proficiency of pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL):

- **New to English:** Requires highly scaffolded support, focusing on basic communication and early engagement with written texts.
- **Early Acquisition:** Developing verbal responses and beginning to produce simple written texts but still require significant EAL support.
- **Developing Competence:** Increasing independence but needing support to engage with curriculum content and expand accuracy and range of language use.
- **Competent:** Able to function across most contexts but benefiting from strategies promoting sophisticated language use.
- **Fluent:** Uses English effectively but may require occasional support with complex academic language.

5. EAL Teaching and Learning

Practical classroom strategies include:

- Scaffolding learning using visuals, modelling, sentence frames, and structured activities to support comprehension and language production.
- Promoting collaborative learning through peer discussions and structured group work.
- Explicitly teaching academic vocabulary and grammar structures through direct instruction, contextualised practice, and subject-specific word banks.
- Embedding structured opportunities for speaking and listening through think-pair-share, role-playing, and guided discussions.
- Differentiating materials and tasks based on EAL proficiency, ensuring accessible yet appropriately challenging content.

These strategies ensure that EAL learners develop language skills in a supportive, engaging, and academically rigorous environment. Teachers plan for and implement these approaches consistently, using professional judgement and ongoing reflection to meet the needs of EAL learners effectively.

6. Special Educational Needs (SEN) and EAL

The ABC International School recognises that English as an Additional Language (EAL) is not a special educational need. Students are not placed on the SEN register solely due to language acquisition needs. However, EAL learners who present with additional learning difficulties receive targeted support

that considers both language development and SEN requirements. Further guidance on identifying and supporting students can be found in the Support for Learning Policy.

7. EAL Provision Across Key Stages

EYFS & Primary

A structured approach ensures students develop the English proficiency necessary to fully access the curriculum. By the end of Key Stage 2, students are well-prepared for the demands of secondary education.

Early Years and Key Stage 1
Language development in Early Years and Key Stage 1 is embedded within an English-rich environment. Many children enter this stage, either new to English or at the early acquisition phase. The curriculum provides extensive exposure to English through explicit teaching and targeted support. Key elements include:

- Daily phonics sessions to develop decoding skills, letter-sound recognition, and spelling foundations. Groups are regularly assessed and tracked.
- Daily writing lessons to build sentence formation, spelling, punctuation, handwriting and vocabulary.
- Three guided reading lessons per week to enhance fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary.
- Weekly library sessions to encourage reading for pleasure and explore different text types.
- Targeted group interventions for students requiring additional support.

Key Stage 2: English Immersion Programme (EIP)

The English Immersion Programme (EIP) supports students who are new to English or are at the Early Acquisition phase. It is designed for motivated students with academic potential who require intensive English support. Students are expected to engage in additional English activities outside of school hours to reinforce their learning. EIP typically lasts for one year, with termly reviews. Parents are informed when a student's status changes.

Key Features of EIP:

- Daily English and reading lessons, with phonics where necessary, in a small-group setting by a specialist teacher.
- Mainstream integration for other subjects, ensuring exposure to grade-level content and peer interaction.
- Regular assessments to monitor progress and readiness for mainstream transition.
- Separate tracking of English proficiency to measure language development accurately.
- Post-EIP intervention and booster support to consolidate language skills.

Additional English Support in Key Stage 2:

- Accelerated phonics catch-up for students who are not yet phonics-secure, including those transitioning from Key Stage 1.
- English booster sessions for students below age-related expectations in writing, reading, spelling, or handwriting.
- Weekly streamed grammar lessons tailored to each student's stage of English development.
- Daily Writing and Guided Reading lessons, plus two spelling and handwriting lessons per week.
- Weekly library sessions to encourage reading for pleasure and explore different text types.

Secondary

Key Stages 3-5

All secondary students are expected to have a proficiency in English that allows them to access all stages of the curriculum fully and to perform well in their examinations in Key Stages Four and Five.

Identification and assessment in Secondary

- All new students to Secondary take an NGRT and a battery of CAT tests. This is used to identify any potential EAL needs.
- All students at KS3 are given literacy tests to monitor progress and identify need annually.
- Teachers can raise concerns with curriculum leads, who can refer students to the EAL support team for further investigation and action.

English proficiency data points such as reading ages, CAT scores and NRGT data must be included in staff planning and monitoring documentation.

Directed EAL support in Secondary

Our EAL support team will assess students who have been identified as requiring more tailored support. If appropriate, they will be given scheduled structured EAL support classes outside of their normal timetabled hours. Parents will be informed of both the need and nature of this support. This is reviewed termly and removed when sufficient progress has been made.

8. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective, up-to-date, and aligned with best practices in EAL provision. Adjustments will be made as necessary to reflect changes in curriculum standards, student needs, and emerging research in language acquisition.

Document control and version history

Version	Date	Owner / reviewer	Summary of changes
1.0	October 2026		Applied the ABCIS controlled-policy template; policy wording unchanged.