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English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

Reviewed on: 15th September 2025

Next Review due: Autumn 2027

Signed by:  Chair of Governors

Signed by:  Acting Headteacher

Introduction

The term EAL is used when referring to pupils where the language spoken at home is not English. This policy sets out the school's aims, objectives, and strategies with regard to meeting the needs and celebrating the skills of EAL pupils.

The Government defines EAL learners as:

'A first language, where it is other than English, is recorded where a child was exposed to the language during early development and continues to be exposed to this language in the home or in the community.' (DfE School Census Guide 2016-2017, 2016 p.63)

In our school the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes, and well-being of all our children are valued. We encourage and support all our children to achieve the highest possible standards. We do this through taking account of each child's life experiences and needs. Children who are learning English as an additional language have skills and knowledge about language similar to monolingual English-speaking children.

As a school, we are learning to recognise and understand the difference between communication skills and language proficiency for all children. For example, a child's ability to participate in the full curriculum may be in advance of their ability to communicate in English.

Mission Statement

Bilingualism is viewed as a positive and life enriching asset.

The school structure, pastoral care, and overall ethos help EAL students integrate into the school whilst valuing diversity.

Although learners may acquire fluency in conversational English quite quickly, it takes much longer (7 years or more) to acquire the level of proficiency in academic English which is required to succeed within the school curriculum.

We encourage the celebration of the linguistic, cultural, and religious background of all students and hold celebrations to educate the whole school about the diverse languages and cultures represented within our community through assemblies and events.

Although being a speaker of more than one language can be a constraint to educational achievement, multilingualism is celebrated and shared as a feature of our diverse school community.

Ranelagh Primary School recognises the importance of community languages in their own right and the ability of their speakers to acquire other languages.

Ranelagh Primary Context

The population at the school is 54% EAL with 23 home languages (September 2025), the most common being, Roma/Romanian, Bengali, Lithuanian and Polish.

The students come from a broad spectrum of backgrounds. Although many students have attended school and are literate in their home language on arrival, there are some who may have had very little or no previous formal education. This wide range means that responsibility of teaching these students is a challenge for everyone concerned.

Every new arrival is assessed by the EAL department. Their stages of English as specified by the DfE are then recorded.

Information is also collected on the students':

- family
- linguistic background and competence in another language/s
- previous educational experience

This informs the Inclusion team on how best to support the pupils.

Aims:

The National Curriculum secures entitlement for all children to a number of areas of learning and gives them the opportunity to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes that are necessary for their self-fulfilment and development as responsible citizens. We promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the diverse education that we provide in our school.

The aim of this policy is to help ensure that we meet the full range of needs of those children who are learning English as an additional language. This is in line with the requirements of the Race Relations Act 1976 and Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2001.

- To promote equality of opportunity for all learners for whom English is an additional language.
- To deliver a broad, balanced curriculum which reflects the needs of children for whom English is an additional language.
- To ensure pupils with EAL reach their full potential.

Teaching and Learning

Ranelagh Primary School teachers take action to help children who are learning English as an additional language by various means.

Developing their spoken and written English by:

- ensuring that vocabulary work covers the technical as well as the everyday meaning of key words, metaphors and idioms;
- displaying key vocabulary;
- explaining how speaking and writing in English are structured for different purposes across a range of subjects;
- providing a range of reading materials that highlight the different ways in which English is used;

- ensuring that there are effective opportunities for talking, and that talking is used to support writing;
- encouraging children to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another;
- building on children's experiences of language at home and in the wider community, so that their developing uses of English and other languages support one another.

We strive hard to meet the needs of all pupils learning English as an additional language and ensuring access to the curriculum and to assessment by:

- using accessible texts and materials that suit children's ages and levels of learning;
- providing support through ICT, video or audio materials, dictionaries and translators, readers and amanuenses;
- using the home or first language where appropriate;
- setting targets in English for targeted children
- using translation
- providing additional adult support, if necessary
- using peer support where appropriate;
- using a buddy system; where we pair up a new to English speaker with a native or fluent English speaker.
- using family group support where appropriate: Parent Ambassadors
- working one-to-one
- ensuring all staff receive appropriate training
- developing an inclusive environment where children feel safe and secure in their learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage:

In the Foundation Stage we plan opportunities for children to develop their English, and we provide support to help them take part in activities.

The Foundation Stage helps children learning English as an additional language by:

- Immersing them in an enabling environment inside and outside. Adults support children in their play and use strategies such as questioning and modelling language to help develop their spoken vocabulary and their understanding.

- We also support children through using visual prompts and when children are ready, small intervention groups that help develop key language concepts.

- building on children's experiences of language at home and in the wider community, so that their developing use of English and of other languages support one another;
- providing a range of opportunities for children to engage in speaking and listening activities in English with peers and adults;
- utilise adults in school who can converse in children's home languages at times e.g. to help us fully assess a child;

- Foundation stage staff support their EAL children according to the Early Years Foundation Stage Development Matters and assess at the end of the Foundation Stage using the Early Learning Goals. Where possible children are assessed in their home language and/English in PSED, PD, MD, UW, EA&D. C&L and Literacy must be assessed in English only.
- staff help to develop and enhance language through continuous provision, interventions and focus group time.

Special Educational Needs

Learning an additional language may present challenges to the curriculum but this does not signify that the student has a special education need.

However, pupils with English as an Additional Language may also have Special Education Needs and these need to be assessed accordingly.

Please see the SEND policy.

Curriculum Access

As a school, we recognise that EAL learners and their families make a valuable contribution to both the school and the community. English is best learnt through the curriculum and students should be encouraged to play as full a part as possible in class activities from the start.

All children at Ranelagh Primary School follow the curricular requirements of the Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum. Children with English as an additional language do not produce separate work, unless within a focused target intervention group.

Resources and support should be available where necessary for them to access the curriculum.

Pupils general and language knowledge must be considered when placing them in learning groups, setting targets in different areas of the curriculum and planning teaching and learning.

EAL learners make the best progress within a whole school context, where pupils are educated with their peers.

We do withdraw children from lessons to receive EAL support in order to support those children who are targeted and in need of additional small group work, in addition to those children who are new to English. The aim of these sessions is to provide tailored support for children in order for them to access the National Curriculum as soon as possible.

Assessment

We use the Bell Foundation's EAL Assessment Framework for Schools recommended by the Suffolk County Council, to measure English language competence for New to English children. These children are targeted on a termly basis.

We carry out ongoing recording of attainment and progress in line with agreed school procedures for EAL children not New to English, monitoring the progress made termly, then highlighting children in need of targeting for focus support.

The statutory assessment arrangements of the National Curriculum allow us to make special arrangements for children who are learning English as an additional language.

For the written mathematics test at Key Stage 2, we can provide verbal translations of words or phrases in the test papers which we think are likely to prove difficult for children in their first years in the English school system.

Parents/Carers

We welcome and encourage the contribution our parents make to their children's education.

Our staff strive to encourage parental and community involvement by:

- Providing key information translated into the main community languages.
- Using translators and interpreters where appropriate/available and to ensure good spoken and written communication.
- Identifying linguistic, cultural and religious background of pupils and establishing contact with wider community where possible.
- Celebrating and acknowledging the achievements of EAL pupils in the wider community emphasising that all languages are valued.
- Helping parents understand how they can support their children at home with their language development.
- Encouraging our parents to become involved in our 'Language of the Month' each month and other events which celebrate our cultural diversity.

Key responsibilities and staff development

SLT will ensure that:

- All involved in teaching EAL learners liaise regularly
- Parents and staff are aware of the school's policy on pupils with EAL
- Relevant information on pupils with EAL reaches all staff
- Training in planning, teaching and assessing EAL learners is available to staff

- Progress is monitored and identify learning difficulties that may be masked by EAL and liaise with the SENCO.

Class teacher will:

- Be knowledgeable about pupils' abilities and needs in English and other subjects
- Use this knowledge effectively in curriculum planning, classroom teaching, use of resources and pupil grouping

EAL co-ordinator:

The EAL co-ordinator brings particular expertise to the mainstream classroom. This will include an awareness of the role of language in learning, experience of the language development of students, and knowledge of the students in the classroom.

- The main knowledge and skills of an EAL teacher can be seen in the following categories:
- Second language teaching – subject knowledge.
- Second language learning in the curriculum.
- Classroom practice.
- Assessment and recording of EAL students' progress.
- Equality of opportunity.

An EAL co-ordinator will support pupils in some or all of the following ways:

- Analyse the language demands of the task or unit of work.
- Support pupils access to the curriculum in the classroom.
- Develop differentiated materials for early stage pupils as classroom or homework activities.
- Ensure that pupils prior knowledge and skills are activated through the use of dictionaries, glossaries, visual cues etc.
- Suggest strategies for teaching and learning which enhance opportunities for the language development.
- Use linguistic and cultural knowledge to support pupils learning
- Model good practice.

Monitoring, review and evaluation of policy

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

