

EAL Policy

Stretton Shires School



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EAL Policy

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1. Policy Statement

Stretton Shires School is committed to ensuring that all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language (EAL), have full and equitable access to a high-quality education that enables them to develop communication, learning, independence and life skills. The school recognises that a pupil's first language, home language and cultural identity are important aspects of their identity and should be valued and respected.

The school recognises that pupils who use English as an additional language may have a range of abilities, experiences and levels of English proficiency. EAL is not, in itself, a special educational need or disability. Particular care is therefore taken to distinguish between barriers associated with acquiring English and underlying special educational needs, communication difficulties or other learning needs.

This is particularly important at Stretton Shires School because all pupils have identified SEND,

including autism, learning difficulties and communication and interaction needs. The school therefore considers EAL alongside each pupil's individual communication, cognitive, sensory, emotional and educational profile.

The school is committed to removing barriers to learning and ensuring that EAL pupils are able to participate fully in the life of the school and make progress from their individual starting points.

2. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy should be read alongside the school's other relevant policies and procedures and is informed by:

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Children and Families Act 2014;
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) inspection framework;
- Department for Education guidance relating to independent schools and EAL;
- The school's Curriculum Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy;
- Accessibility Plan;
- Assessment Policy;
- Admissions Policy;
- Safeguarding Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;

The Independent School Standards require the curriculum to take account of the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including pupils with EHC plans, and to provide opportunities for pupils to acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills.

The SEND Code of Practice makes clear that lack of competence in English should not be equated with learning difficulties and that schools should consider a pupil's language, cultural and educational background when identifying and assessing needs.

3. Definition of EAL

A pupil is considered to have English as an Additional Language where: English is not their first or preferred language and/or where they have been exposed to another language or languages within their home, family or community.

EAL may apply to pupils who:

- have recently arrived in England;
- are bilingual or multilingual;
- speak another language at home;
- have parents or carers who primarily communicate in another language;
- have developed English as an additional language from early childhood;
- use English alongside one or more other languages.

EAL is **not an indication of ability, intelligence or SEND**.

A pupil may have EAL and SEND. Where this is the case, the school will ensure that both areas

of need are considered appropriately.

4. Aims

The school's EAL provision aims to:

1. ensure that EAL pupils have equitable access to the curriculum;
2. enable pupils to develop functional English language and communication skills;
3. support pupils to communicate their needs, choices, thoughts and feelings;
4. promote participation, belonging and inclusion;
5. value pupils' home languages, cultures and identities;
6. identify and remove barriers to learning caused by language;
7. ensure EAL is considered when assessing attainment and progress;
8. distinguish appropriately between EAL needs and SEND;
9. support pupils to develop independence and confidence in using English;
10. enable pupils to access social, educational, vocational and community opportunities;
11. work collaboratively with parents, carers and professionals;
12. ensure that reasonable adjustments and appropriate support are provided where required.

5. Principles

Stretton Shires School adopts the following principles:

5.1 Every pupil can learn and make progress

EAL pupils are entitled to high expectations and appropriately ambitious learning opportunities.

5.2 EAL is not a SEND diagnosis

Limited English proficiency should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of a learning difficulty. Where a pupil has EAL alongside their SEND, the school will consider both factors carefully.

5.3 Language is central to learning

Language development is the responsibility of all staff and is not solely the responsibility of the class teacher or designated EAL lead.

5.4 Home languages are valued

The use and maintenance of a pupil's home language may support identity, family relationships, communication and learning.

5.5 Communication must be accessible

The school recognises that EAL pupils will also have communication and interaction needs associated to their SEND. Teaching and communication strategies will therefore be adapted to individual need.

5.6 Inclusion is central

EAL pupils should participate fully in lessons, enrichment, recreation, trips, careers education and wider school life.

6. Identification of EAL Pupils

EAL needs will be identified as early as possible.

Information may be gathered through:

- admissions information;
- parent/carer discussions;
- pupil discussions;
- previous school records;
- EHCP documentation;
- professional reports;
- language assessments;
- observations;
- assessment of reading, writing, speaking and listening;
- information about the languages used at home;
- information regarding the pupil's previous educational experience.

The school will seek to establish:

- the pupil's first/preferred language;
- languages spoken at home;
- the pupil's level of English;
- previous exposure to English;
- previous educational experience;
- literacy skills in English;
- literacy skills in other languages where known;
- preferred communication methods;
- communication and interaction needs;
- cultural and family considerations;
- any additional SEND.

7. Assessment

EAL pupils will be assessed from their individual starting points.

Assessment will consider both:

English language development

and

wider educational attainment and progress.

Where appropriate, staff will consider:

- listening and understanding;
- speaking and interaction;
- vocabulary;
- sentence construction;
- reading;
- writing;
- comprehension;
- functional communication;
- ability to follow instructions;
- ability to communicate needs and choices;

- use of English across different contexts.

Assessment will take account of the pupil's prior educational experiences and opportunities to learn English.

Where a pupil is making limited progress, staff will consider whether this relates to:

- developing English proficiency;
- gaps in previous education;
- SEND;
- communication and interaction needs;
- cognitive or learning needs;
- sensory needs;
- emotional or social factors;
- attendance;
- other barriers to learning.

The school will not assume that concerns with pupil progress is caused solely by EAL.

8. EAL and SEND

Stretton Shires School recognises that EAL and SEND can coexist.

Where concerns arise regarding a pupil's progress, staff will carefully consider the distinction between:

language acquisition difficulties

and

special educational needs or disabilities.

The school will consider evidence across different contexts, including where possible the pupil's performance in their home language.

Where appropriate, advice may be sought from:

- parents/carers;
- previous educational settings;
- the SENCO;
- speech and language professionals;
- educational psychologists;
- specialist teachers;
- local authority services;
- interpreters or translation services;
- other relevant professionals.

This approach reflects the SEND Code of Practice requirement that particular care is taken when identifying and assessing SEND in pupils whose first language is not English.

9. Teaching and Learning

EAL provision will be integrated into everyday teaching rather than being regarded solely as an additional intervention.

Teachers and support staff will use appropriate strategies, which may include:

- clear and concise language;
- modelling;
- repetition and reinforcement;
- visual supports;
- photographs and symbols;
- demonstrations;
- gesture;
- structured questioning;
- pre-teaching vocabulary;
- repetition of key terminology;
- word banks;
- sentence starters;
- differentiated texts;
- dual-language resources where appropriate;
- visual timetables;
- concrete resources;
- practical learning;
- opportunities for structured conversation;
- paired and small-group activities;
- checking understanding;
- additional processing time;
- explicit teaching of subject-specific vocabulary.

These approaches will be adapted to the pupil's individual SEND profile.

For pupils with autism or communication needs, staff will consider whether spoken language, visual communication, symbols, AAC or other communication systems are most appropriate.

10. Curriculum Access

The school will ensure that EAL pupils have meaningful access to the full curriculum.

Curriculum planning will consider:

- language demands;
- vocabulary;
- reading requirements;
- written communication;
- opportunities for speaking and listening;
- cultural representation;
- accessibility of resources;
- opportunities for practical learning.

EAL pupils will not routinely be removed from curriculum subjects simply because they are developing English.

Where additional intervention is required, the school will consider the impact on the pupil's access to the wider curriculum.

The curriculum will provide opportunities for pupils to develop communication, literacy and functional English skills alongside their wider educational, therapeutic and vocational development.

The Independent School Standards require schools to provide opportunities for pupils to

develop speaking, listening and literacy skills and to enable pupils to learn and make progress according to their ability.

11. Communication and Language Development

At Stretton Shires School, communication is a fundamental element of the curriculum.

For EAL pupils, communication development may include:

- understanding everyday instructions;
- expressing needs and preferences;
- developing functional vocabulary;
- developing conversational skills;
- developing social communication;
- communicating emotions;
- developing independence;
- developing literacy;
- communicating safely in the community;
- preparing for adulthood.

The school will use the pupil's preferred and most effective communication methods wherever appropriate.

12. Use of Home Languages

The school recognises the educational and personal value of pupils maintaining their home languages.

Where appropriate, pupils may use their home language to:

- support understanding;
- communicate with family members;
- support identity and cultural connection;
- clarify meaning;
- support learning;
- develop concepts before expressing them in English.

Where appropriate, the school may provide or signpost bilingual or translated resources. The school will seek to work positively with parents and carers to understand the pupil's linguistic background.

13. Parents and Carers

The school recognises the importance of effective communication with parents and carers.

Where language presents a barrier to communication, the school will consider reasonable and proportionate measures such as:

- translated key information;
- simplified written communication;
- visual information;
- face-to-face meetings with interpretation;
- use of appropriate translation technology where suitable.

Important safeguarding, educational, medical and statutory information will be communicated in a way that enables parents/carers to understand the information and participate

appropriately in decision-making.

The school will seek to establish parents' views about:

- the pupil's home language;
- communication preferences;
- the pupil's strengths;
- previous education;
- cultural background;
- language development;
- support required.

14. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Stretton Shires School is committed to ensuring that no pupil is disadvantaged because of language, race, nationality, ethnic origin or cultural background.

The school promotes respect for different languages, cultures and backgrounds. EAL provision will support the school's wider commitment to equality, inclusion and respect for others.

Staff will challenge discriminatory, prejudicial or stereotypical language and behaviour in accordance with the school's Behaviour and Equality policies.

The Independent School Standards require the curriculum to encourage respect for others, with particular regard to the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010.

15. Staff Responsibilities

Proprietor / Governing Body

The proprietor/governing body will:

- ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for EAL pupils;
- monitor compliance with the Independent School Standards;
- ensure the school meets its equality responsibilities;
- receive appropriate information regarding EAL provision and impact.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- ensure implementation of this policy;
- ensure EAL is incorporated into whole-school improvement;
- ensure staff have appropriate guidance and training;
- monitor the effectiveness of provision;
- ensure EAL pupils are included in the school's evaluation of curriculum and pupil outcomes.

SENCO / EAL Lead

The SENCO/EAL Lead will:

- maintain an overview of EAL pupils;
- support identification and assessment;
- advise staff on appropriate strategies;
- monitor the impact of additional support;
- liaise with parents/carers and external professionals where required;
- support staff to distinguish EAL from SEND;
- contribute to curriculum planning and staff development;



- maintain appropriate records.

Teachers

Teachers will:

- identify language barriers;
- plan appropriate support;
- provide accessible teaching;
- monitor progress;
- use appropriate language-development strategies;
- ensure EAL pupils have equitable access to learning;
- communicate concerns promptly.

Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants will:

- support pupils to access learning;
- reinforce language and vocabulary;
- use agreed communication strategies;
- encourage independence rather than over-reliance on adult support;
- provide feedback to teachers regarding progress and barriers.

All Staff

All staff have a responsibility for:

- valuing linguistic diversity;
- promoting inclusion;
- modelling appropriate language;
- identifying barriers;
- supporting communication;
- challenging discrimination;
- maintaining high expectations.

16. Monitoring and Evaluation

The school will monitor the effectiveness of EAL provision through:

- assessment information;
- pupil progress;
- curriculum monitoring;
- lesson observations;
- work scrutiny;
- pupil voice;
- parent/carer feedback;
- staff feedback;
- EHCP review information where applicable;
- intervention records;
- analysis of participation and engagement;
- review of individual support strategies.

The school will evaluate whether additional support is resulting in improved:

- communication;
- curriculum access;
- participation;
- confidence;
- independence;

- literacy;
- English language development;
- educational progress.

ISI inspection may consider how schools identify pupils with EAL, what support is provided and how leaders evaluate its impact.

17. Records

The school will maintain appropriate records relating to EAL pupils.
These may include:

- EAL identification information;
- Language/communication profile;
- assessment information;
- support strategies;
- intervention records;
- progress information;
- relevant parent/carer information;
- professional advice;
- review records.

Records will be maintained in accordance with the school's data protection and information-sharing procedures.

18. Transition

Particular consideration will be given to EAL during transitions.
This may include:

- admission to Stretton Shires School;
- transition from previous educational settings;
- movement between classes;
- key stage transitions;
- transition into post-16 provision;
- preparation for adulthood;
- transition into employment, further education or community settings.

Relevant information regarding language, communication and cultural needs will be shared appropriately with receiving staff and, where appropriate, future settings.

19. Safeguarding

EAL must not create a barrier to safeguarding.

The school will ensure that pupils can communicate concerns, wishes and feelings using their most effective communication method.

Where interpretation is required for safeguarding purposes, appropriate professional interpretation will be considered.

Staff will remain alert to the possibility that communication difficulties may affect a pupil's ability to disclose concerns.

EAL will not be used as an explanation for communication or behavioural changes without

appropriate consideration of other possible factors.

Safeguarding concerns will always be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and current statutory guidance.

20. Staff Training

The school will provide appropriate information, guidance and training to staff.

Training may include:

- understanding EAL;
- language acquisition;
- effective classroom strategies;
- culturally responsive practice;
- distinguishing EAL from SEND;
- communication strategies;
- use of visual supports;
- working with interpreters;
- supporting parents and carers;
- equality and diversity;
- safeguarding pupils with communication barriers.

Training needs will be identified through:

- staff induction;
- supervision;
- professional development;
- pupil needs;
- monitoring and evaluation;
- school improvement planning.

21. Admission of EAL Pupils

EAL will not, in itself, be a barrier to admission.

The school will consider the pupil's individual needs, including:

- SEND;
- communication;
- language;
- educational history;
- ability to access the school's curriculum and provision;
- staffing and specialist support requirements.

Information gathered during admission will be used to plan an appropriate transition and initial provision.

22. Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments

Where appropriate, the school will consider reasonable adjustments and accessible communication arrangements for pupils and families.

This may include:

- visual information;
- simplified language;



- translated information;
- interpretation;
- alternative communication methods;
- adapted resources;
- additional processing time;
- assistive technology.

Any adjustments will be based on individual need and reviewed for effectiveness.

23. EAL and Preparing for Adulthood

For older pupils, EAL provision will support preparation for adulthood.

This may include developing English language skills required for:

- employment;
- further education;
- independent living;
- community participation;
- travel;
- accessing services;
- financial independence;
- health and wellbeing;
- relationships;
- self-advocacy.

Where appropriate, language development will be embedded within vocational, functional and community-based learning.

24. Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where there are:

- changes to legislation;
- changes to the Independent School Standards;
- changes to ISI inspection requirements;
- significant changes to the school's EAL population;
- identified areas for improvement;
- changes to school curriculum or provision.

The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated through the school's self-evaluation and quality assurance processes.



Outcomes
First Group