

Charitable Objects of St. Catherine's School

The Objects for which the Company is established are to promote and provide for the advancement of education by providing, conducting, governing, carrying on and maintaining in the United Kingdom, or elsewhere, a boarding or day school or schools for girls in which the teaching shall be in accordance with the principles of the Church of England.



SENIOR SCHOOL ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) POLICY

This policy was first written in 1998, reviewed regularly, and expanded in 2009 and merged with the Overseas Boarding Pupils – Admission and Integration Policy, subsequently reviewed in 2014 and 2016. In 2019 it has been reinstated as a stand-alone policy and will be reviewed in line with the Schools Policy Review Schedule which ensures that all policies are kept up to date.

The Senior School refers to all staff and students in the St. Catherine's Senior School which includes Years U3-U6 (National Curriculum Years 6 – 13)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Senior School Assessment Policy, and, for parents with girls in both schools, the Prep. School English as an Additional Language Policy.

The Policy

St. Catherine's Senior School is proud to welcome applicants for whom English is not their first language. Increasingly our Day Girl population includes girls from many families located in the Guildford area to facilitate parents' work commitments in London or locally as part of overseas postings or those who have settled in the UK. Our boarding community has welcomed overseas applicants since the 1970s. All our girls with English as a second or third language bring a richness of experience to the school of everyone and are warmly welcome. They often sit at the top of their year cohorts and several hold scholarships at entrance or Sixth Form level.

St. Catherine's is an academically selective School where the curriculum is successfully accessed via the English Language. It is therefore important that all those sitting the Entrance Examination demonstrate a high level of proficiency in oral and written English which will enable them to thrive here and integrate with their English-speaking peers.

All girls who are new to the school at any stage are assessed prior to admission to ascertain whether they will be able to manage the demands of the curriculum. The Entrance Examination in English necessitates a high level of competence in written English. Oral proficiency in English is checked by an interview procedure at 13+ and above. This takes place either during a visit to the School or via Skype/Facetime. For Sixth Form applicants, the interview will be conducted by the Director of Studies and a Head of Department in one of the A Level subjects the applicant wishes to study. It is therefore anticipated that students who have English as an additional language (EAL) will be able to manage the curriculum without additional EAL support.

In addition to the entrance examination procedures, all new girls undertake a baseline screening that is age-appropriate upon entry to the school. These assessments provide standardised information relating to reading accuracy and reading comprehension speed. Where the reading comprehension and or reading accuracy of a student is deemed to be in the low average range, the teachers of that student are informed so that they can monitor the progress of the student in the first week weeks of term. Where a student's reading comprehension speed is below average, a further in-depth assessment is advised to ascertain whether the issue is related to English being an additional language or a possible underlying specific learning difficulty.

If further assessment suggests that the issue is related to English being an additional language, additional support is provided by a member of the Modern Languages Department who is trained as an EAL teacher. This takes the form of one to one lessons, which usually take place once a week for a set number of sessions. The teacher liaises closely with student, parents and teachers in the delivery of these lessons. A Study Skills teaching plan, outlining the focus and content of lessons, is emailed to parents in the same way that it is for students having study skills lessons. The length for the course of lessons in English or any other language will be decided in close discussion between the Head of Boarding, Director of Studies, School Tutor or subject teachers, with the girl and her parents.

The Head of Academic Mentoring is aware of the profiles of all the overseas students admitted to the school and liaises with the boarding, teaching and pastoral staff as appropriate to monitor how well they settle in and offer advice or guidance where necessary.

Monitoring of all students takes place throughout the academic year, through department meetings, staff meetings and pastoral meetings. If there are concerns about girls lower down the school, a referral is made in close liaison with teachers and for boarders, the Head of Boarding and the Boarding Housemistress.

Those students with EAL joining at 11+ or 13+ are encouraged to improve their written language skills by immersing themselves in the life of the school; they are encouraged and guided in their reading during term time and in the holidays.

For those joining from overseas, a member of the English Department is assigned to monitor by correspondence course some advised reading in English during the Summer holiday prior to their joining the School. In addition, audio books and films are recommended.

Where a student has been taught in English for fewer than two years, the Access Arrangements Officer, will meet the student to discuss use of a bilingual dictionary in exams where English is not being assessed. The girls are encouraged to use these in lessons and when completing preps so that they become used to this way of working.

Where appropriate, girls may be entered for public examinations in their first language. A Modern Foreign Languages Head of Department oversees this process and liaises with appointed tutors in Mandarin or Russian. Tuition in other languages can be procured if required.

In the case of EAL lessons or tuition in a native language, this specialist tuition is chargeable as an extra on the girl's end-of-term bill, as stated in our Prospectus Annual Information Booklet. Parents are contacted to advise them of the School's recommendation of the need for extra tuition in English or for preparation for examinations in their first language and will be asked to give written permission for the tuition and any exam entry fees.

Alice Phillips
Headmistress/Acting Head of Boarding
September 2019

THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED IN 2019/20 AND ANNUALLY THEREAFTER.

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Mrs Alice Phillips
Headmistress

Date