



Aysgarth School

EAL Policy

Reviewed: September 2024 and to be reviewed October 2025
Responsible Member of Staff: Ed Canning

Aysgarth School EAL policy

Introduction

Aysgarth School aims to excel in providing an enjoyable, inspiring and relevant education. For this to happen, all pupils need to feel safe, accepted and valued in order to learn. For those children in our care who are learning English as an additional language (EAL) this includes recognising and valuing their home language and background and as a school, we are aware that bilingualism is a strength. Aysgarth appreciates that our pupils come from a variety of backgrounds and a wide range of experiences. We believe that diversity enriches our school and community and we recognise that all pupils, including our EAL pupils, enhance all aspects of school life.

Aims of Policy

This policy aims to clarify the school's responsibilities and support the staff's work in providing an enjoyable, inspiring and relevant education to EAL pupils.

At Aysgarth, EAL pupils come from a variety of backgrounds. The majority join us for a fixed period of time from one term to a year and tend to be European nationals with a working English knowledge.

- Our EAL pupils are familiar with the English language, though for a few the culture of this country is, and their English language level is assessed prior to being offered a place through interview and test.
 - We recognise the value of bilingualism and so consider carefully the offer of a place to a child who may be an isolated learner, being the only speaker of their language in the school.
 - Our EAL pupils have all attended school and are literate in their home language on arrival.
 - At present, there are three foreign languages spoken within the school and in 2024/25 ten pupils are learning English as an additional language. These pupils may fall into two categories.
1. Those pupils whose education will continue indefinitely in the UK in English.
 2. Those who are here for a shorter period (1-3 terms) and who will return to their home countries to continue being educated in their mother tongue.

- The following information is gathered before their arrival:-
 - pupils' linguistic background and competence in other language/s
 - pupils' previous educational experience
 - pupils' family and biographical background
- A member of the boarding staff has responsibility for the pastoral care of EAL pupils. The progress and well-being of EAL pupils are monitored in weekly boarding meetings. Online access overseas is set up for all EAL pupils as part of their pastoral care.
- A member of staff is nominated to have responsibility for EAL.
- The school's Statement of Purpose is made available to EAL pupils in their home language.

Key principles of additional language acquisition

- All EAL pupils are entitled to the broad curriculum taught at Aysgarth and the establishment of learning skills and, for Category 1 pupils, that will endure through Public School and life beyond.
- All staff have a responsibility for the teaching of English as well as their subject content. In order for learning to take place, staff ensure that attention is given to the meaning and understanding of language.
- The first language of EAL pupils is recognised and valued, not only in support of learning but also in its role in the well-being of the pupil. Knowledge and skills developed in learning the first language aid the acquisition of additional languages. We encourage the maintenance of their first language and use within the school environment wherever possible.
- The school understands that although EAL pupils may acquire the ability to communicate in English fairly rapidly, the level of language needed for academic learning is more detailed and may require support for many years.
- The modelling of clear and correct language by all staff when interacting with EAL pupils is vital, as is strong language modelling by peers.
- Aysgarth makes a clear distinction between EAL and Special Educational Needs
- Where necessary, specialist EAL teaching is provided to help develop English skills.

Assessment

- As part of the school's rolling assessment program, staff regularly have time to discuss pupil progress.
- Consideration is given to the appropriateness of testing EAL pupils at the earlier stages of their English learning.
- Most EAL pupils needing additional support do not have SEN.
- Should SEN be identified, EAL pupils have equal access to the school's SEN provision.
- If EAL pupils are identified as Gifted and Talented, they have equal access to the school's provision.

Private 1:1 lessons

Private lessons are available that are tailored to meet the specific needs of the pupils to support vocabulary, grammar, listening, speaking and writing. The lessons deconstruct the English language in a way to help a non-native speaker focus on, and understand the details of the English language in an environment away from other native speakers. Pupils are referred for extra tuition by teachers or parents. The cost of tuition is met by the parent.

The number of lessons offered a week varies for each individual depending on their need and would continue until they had sufficient command of English to be able to access the content and pace of the classroom. Parents will be kept informed on the progress of their child through the reporting system.

Teaching Strategies

At Aysgarth, it is recognised that good practice for EAL pupils is good practice for all pupils. To support language acquisition and full access to Aysgarth's curriculum by our EAL pupils, the following strategies are drawn upon by staff.

- Classroom activities have clear learning objectives, clarified with EAL pupils, and use appropriate materials and support to enable pupils to participate in lessons.
- Key language features of each curriculum area, e.g. key vocabulary, uses of language and forms of text, are identified and explicitly shared.
- Extra opportunities are provided for speaking and listening for EAL pupils and, where appropriate, drama and role-play are encouraged.

- Staff ensure that EAL pupils are exposed to effective modelling of language including that of peers.
- Additional visual support is provided to support understanding and learning, e.g. posters, pictures, photographs, objects, demonstration and use of gestures.
- Additional verbal support is provided, eg repetition, modelling and peer support.
- Collaborative activities that involve purposeful talk and encourage active participation are promoted.
- Where possible, learning progression moves from the concrete to the abstract.
- Discussion is provided before, during and after reading and writing activities.
- Scaffolding is provided for language and learning, eg writing frames
- Planning for EAL pupils incorporates both curriculum and EAL specific objectives.