SHS A04: English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

Policy Statement

St Hugh's ("The School") is committed to the welfare and education of all its children, including those who speak English as an additional language (EAL). Ofsted defines a child who is learning EAL as a 'learner whose first language is not English'. The Government definition of EAL learners is wider and states that: 'A pupil is recorded to have English as an Additional Language if she\he is exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English.'

EAL learners are an extremely varied group. They may speak a language other than English at home (a first or home language) or have varying degrees of exposure to another language either at home or in their community. This being the case, EAL learners may join the school entirely new to English, or they may already speak English and be in the process of learning academic language. Other children may speak English to a similar level to that of a native English speaker. Children learning EAL therefore have varying needs for language support and this is recognised by the school. The School recognises the additional linguistic and cultural challenges faced by these pupils. We are committed to enabling these children to access the curriculum and flourish as healthy, happy, successful individuals.

All staff are responsible for implementing the EAL policy (including those in the EYFS).

1. Aims and objectives

- To ensure that all EAL pupils feel welcome, happy and valued within St Hugh's.
- To promote an inclusive environment which values multilingualism, cultural diversity and linguistic heritage as strengths within the school community.
- To ensure pupils are protected from discrimination, harassment and victimisation in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- To give all pupils the opportunity to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes necessary to access all areas of the curriculum and for their self-fulfilment.
- To provide EAL pupils the opportunity to access all lessons/ activities and opportunities and overcome any barriers to learning and assessment.

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- To support and develop pupils' abilities to communicate effectively both in speech and writing across all subjects.
- To develop pupils' appreciation and knowledge of British values and culture, whilst celebrating all cultures and promoting understanding, respect and empathy across the school.
- To develop a pupil's fluency in, knowledge and appreciation of the English language.
- To provide appropriate in-class or additional support to pupils with EAL, as required.
- To enable all staff to take responsibility for recognising and addressing the individual needs of pupils with EAL ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010.
- To help and train staff to be aware of, and be able to meet the needs of, pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL).
- To plan whole school strategies to ensure that EAL pupils are supported in taking part in all activities.
- To work with parents to ensure a strong home-school partnership and to enable parents to make an active contribution towards the education of their child.
- To maintain an up-to-date register of pupils with EAL (iSAMS and Insight)

2. Admissions and monitoring arrangements

The School aims to assess a child's EAL needs prior to entry, through parent disclosure, so that there are no barriers in the admissions process. Where this information indicates that the child may need support, an initial, informal assessment is made by the EAL teacher and the Head of Learning Success. This will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place when the child joins the school.

This will follow a graduated, needs-based approach:

1. Reasonable additional input or support as needed, monitor for any subject-specific difficulties
2. Requires ongoing monitoring by staff and Head of Learning Success. Additional classroom input/ differentiation and some adjustments/ ad hoc sessions needed
3. Requires additional language support. The level of support will be recommended to pupils and parents following consultation with staff and an assessment of pupil needs.

When the pupil has arrives at the School, they will receive an induction programme which will include being allocated a Form Buddy. They will be provided with plenty of opportunities to build friendships and develop their confidence. Once settled, there will be a more in-depth assessment, to evaluate possible support needs and specific areas of focus. The Head of Learning Success will maintain an EAL Register (an online secure electronic system). This ensures that the correct strategies and support can be put in place. The Head of Learning Success will work with the pupils, parents and teachers to draw up a Learning Success Plan (LSP) which will be distributed to relevant staff. The pupil will then be monitored throughout the year, through staff feedback, observations, academic attainment and standardised tests.

3. Pastoral care

The school has a special interest in the pastoral care of all EAL pupils and aim to help them achieve their potential within the school context. Children are monitored pastorally by their form tutors, the Heads of Year and the Head of Learning Success.

4. Key Principles for Language Acquisition

The following points outline some of the key principles of language acquisition:

- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum.
- Effective use of language and visual cues are crucial to the teaching and learning in any subject.
- Access to learning requires attention to words and meanings embodied in each curriculum area.
- Meanings and understandings cannot always be assumed but must be explored
- All staff are crucial role-models in language usage.
- Language is central to our identity. Staff must therefore be aware of the importance of pupil's home languages and build on pupil's existing knowledge and skills.
- Staff will recognise that conversational fluency does not necessarily indicate proficiency in academic English and will therefore, provide support accordingly to pupils.
- Many concepts and skills depend on and benefit from a pupil having a well-developed first language. Literacy in their home language enhances subsequent EAL proficiency.
- Learners of EAL make the best progress within a whole-school context where pupils are educated with their peers.

5. Provision

Provision for those with EAL is dependent on the language level of the individual. Reasonable provision will be made in collaboration with class/subject teachers and Head of Learning Success. This may take the form of differentiated work and activities, booster groups and individual 1:1 sessions (details of costs for additional language support can be obtained on request).

All children in our school follow the curricular requirements of the school.

We ensure access to the curriculum by:

- Ensuring routines are established, with visual prompts and timetables used where applicable;
- Providing and utilising support through ICT, video or audio materials and dictionaries or translation facilities. Visual aids are also used to support understanding of key concepts and vocabulary;
- Ensuring that staff use a range of useful resources and strategies to help support pupils with EAL, such as; positioning the pupil at the front of the class with an individual with good language skills, practise new vocabulary visually and orally, paired activities or small group work and use appropriate scaffolding and differentiation within the lesson;
- Providing constructive feedback and appropriate, SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound) targets;
- Using a buddy/ mentor system to provide peer support if appropriate
- 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 to develop their English skills;
- Promoting and encouraging an inclusive multicultural learning environment.

6. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We recognise that there is a clear distinction between pupils with EAL and those who have Special Educational Needs. Whilst most pupils with EAL will not have SEND, there may be some who do and therefore staff need to remain vigilant to this possibility. We endeavour to ensure that any specific difficulties are recognised as early as possible, and the pupil is given the appropriate support as required. Please see the separate Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) policy for further details.

7. Staff Development

The School recognises that staff may need to undertake professional development to ensure that the provision for EAL pupils is continually being appropriately met and addressed. In-house CPD is provided annually by the Head of Learning Success and additional, external training may be provided where required.

8. Key Resources

- Department for Education (2025) Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework: Setting the Standards for Learning, Development and Care for Children from Birth to Five.
- Department for Education and Skills (2007) Excellence and Enjoyment: Learning and Teaching for Bilingual Children in the Primary Years.
- Department for Education and Skills (2005) Aiming High: Meeting the Needs of Newly Arrived Learners of English as an Additional Language.
- Ofsted (2025) State-funded School Inspection Toolkit.
- Department for Education & Department of Health (2015) Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0–25 Years.
- The Bell Foundation (2026) EAL Assessment Framework for Schools and EAL Assessment Tracker.
- The Bell Foundation (2026) EAL in Early Years Settings: Guidance and Strategies.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026).