



St Paul's Catholic School

EAL Policy

Approved by:

Governing Body

Date: September 2025

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Next review due by:

August 2026

Introduction

All pupils need to feel safe, accepted and valued in order to learn. For students who are learning English as an additional language, this includes recognising and valuing their home language and background. In keeping with our school's Mission Statement, we live out our mottos of Jesus' words: "Let your light shine before others" We believe that our light is the unique gifts and talents given to us by God, and we are called to let that light shine through our actions, learning and service, to others. We celebrate education through diversity and strive to fulfil our potential as disciples who grow in holiness, knowledge and dignity.

The government's definition of an EAL learner is:

'A child with English as an additional language is one who was exposed to a language other than English during their early years and continues to be exposed to this language in the home or in the community.'

Aims

St Paul's Catholic School is committed to the needs of all students who are learning English as an additional language. This policy will enable us to provide a consistent approach in working with EAL learners.

As a school, we will work together to:

- Promote equality of opportunity for all EAL learners
- Ensure access to the curriculum through high quality teaching
- Help students to speak, understand, read and write English
- Support the continued use of students' home languages
- Assess and monitor learning which informs teaching
- Be proactive in removing barriers that stand in the way of our EAL learners fulfilling their potential
- Make sure EAL learners are not inappropriately labelled or grouped as SEND or low ability
- Acknowledge individual strengths and celebrate cultural identities
- Provide an environment which celebrates diversity and supports English language learning
- Work with parents of EAL learners and ensure language is not a barrier to effective partnership
- Provide EAL learners with a safe and welcoming environment where they are valued and encouraged to participate
- Create partnerships beyond the school to improve provision and support for our EAL learners

School Context

St Paul's is situated in a suburban area in the east of Leicester city. It is a Catholic Secondary Voluntary Academy and part of the St Thomas Aquinas MAT, with a large catchment area from the inner city to rural areas of the county. Our students are from diverse socio-economic backgrounds.

Currently 54% of the students at St Paul's are EAL learners. The predominant languages spoken are (in order): Gujarati, Malayalam, Portuguese, Polish, Punjabi, Shona, Yoruba, Tagalog, Igbo. In total there are 72 different languages spoken across the school. We are extremely proud of the diverse community that our school serves.

Currently:

The new year 7 (63%), 12 and 8 (both at 62%) have the highest percentage of EAL students in the school.

2 students are currently New to English or Early Acquisition.

11% of EAL learners are also Pupil Premium.

Summer 2025 year 11 GCSE examination results show that in the Attainment 8 all subjects cohort, and the Attainment 8 English Language Element, EAL students scored higher than all students and higher than non-EAL students.

Responsibility for EAL is held by an HLTA employed as the EAL Co-ordinator, line managed by the head of the MFL faculty.

Proficiency in English

Although no longer a statutory requirement, St Paul's continues to assess all EAL students against the DfE proficiency in English codes.

The codes are;

A – New to English

B – Early Acquisition

C – Developing Competence

D – Competent

E – Fluent

These levels of language proficiency help track the EAL context of the school.

Key Principles of additional language acquisition

'EAL pupils have a right to access the National Curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is best achieved within a whole school context. Pupils learn more quickly when socialising and interacting with their peers who speak English fluently and can provide good language and learning role models.' **Ofsted**

- The home languages of all students and staff should be recognised and valued. Pupils should be encouraged to maintain their home language and, where appropriate, be able to use it in the school environment.
- Although many students acquire the ability to communicate on a day-to-day basis in English quite quickly, the level of language needed for academic study is much deeper and more detailed, and can require continuing support for up to ten years.
- There are three main EAL groups, which include:

Beginner Learners – Students who are in their first two years of learning English.

Intermediate Learners – Students who have been learning English for between two and five years.

Advanced Learners – Students who have had most or all of their school education in the U.K. although these students are not necessarily high achievers.

- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum.
- The language demands of learning tasks need to be identified and included in planning.
- Teaching and support staff play a crucial role in modelling uses of language.
- Knowledge and skills developed in learning the first language aid the acquisition of additional language.

- A clear distinction should be made between English as an additional language (EAL) and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Assessment

All EAL students are entitled to assessments as required. This includes an initial assessment within the first weeks of arrival in school for new to English and mid-term arrivals. Progress in the acquisition of English will be regularly assessed and monitored on a student by student basis.

Initial assessment will be undertaken by the EAL coordinator, and all staff will be informed of assessment outcomes.

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

- Planning for EAL students incorporates curriculum objectives, which consider whether the student is a beginner, intermediate or advanced EAL learner.
- Staff regularly observe, assess and record information about pupils' developing use of language.
- When planning the curriculum, staff consider the linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds of learners.

Teaching Strategies

Classroom activities should have clear learning objectives and use appropriate strategies to support EAL learners to participate in lessons and access the mainstream curriculum. Suggestions will be included in the initial EAL report. Faculties should ensure:

- Key language features of each curriculum area, e.g. key vocabulary, language functions and forms of text are identified.
- Opportunities are provided for speaking and listening, including both process and presentational talk. This is alongside collaborative activities that involve purposeful talk and encourage and support active participation.
- The classroom is organised so that pupils have access to effective staff and peer models of spoken language. This includes placing EAL learners in appropriate seating plans.
- Additional visual support is provided, e.g. posters, pictures, photographs, objects, diagrams and graphic organisers.
- Additional verbal support is provided, e.g. repetition, modelling and opportunities for oral rehearsal.
- Scaffolding is provided for language and learning, e.g. talk frames, writing frames, models and graphic organisers.

The aim is to keep students in mainstream lessons, so the EAL coordinator is available to help with teaching strategies and to provide extra and / or differentiated materials for EAL students. These can be provided by working in liaison with classroom teachers.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Highly Able students

- Most EAL pupils needing additional support do not have SEND.
- Should SEND be identified, EAL pupils have equal access to school's SEND provision.
- If EAL pupils are identified as Highly Able, they have equal access to the school's Highly able provision.

New Arrivals

Prior to admission (once all the relevant forms have been completed) the Chaplaincy will meet with parents to discuss and share relevant information and provide a tour of the school.

On arrival, the student will be assessed by the EAL Co-ordinator using the Bell Foundation's EAL Assessment Framework for Schools. Staff will be provided with an initial EAL report along with strategies to use in the classroom to aid the student's language acquisition.

New Arrivals at KS4

For new arrivals at Key Stage 4, the Chaplaincy, in collaboration with the EAL coordinator, will develop a student timetable including suitable option choices and intervention classes.

Decisions regarding GCSE entry will be made by the SLT link for EAL in collaboration with the subject teacher(s), parents/ carers and the EAL Coordinator.

Parental/Community Involvement

Staff strive to encourage parental and community involvement by:

- Providing a welcoming induction process for newly arrived pupils and their families / carers.
- Using plain English and translators and interpreters, where appropriate and available, to ensure good spoken and written communications.
- Identifying linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds of students and their families.
- Recognising and encouraging the use of first language.
- Helping parents understand how they can support their children at home.

Roles and Responsibilities

Collective responsibility is held by all staff to identify and remove barriers that stand in the way of our EAL students' achievement and inclusion.

The EAL coordinator oversees the development and day-to-day organisations of EAL provision. In addition, the EAL coordinator will:

- Understand what constitutes excellent EAL provision and provide advice on EAL teaching
- Maintain the EAL register and carry out an annual audit of EAL across the school to share with all staff
- Keep abreast of educational guidance and EAL issues
- Assess all new arrivals with EAL
- Maximise opportunities for staff CPD
- Promote a school environment that celebrates diversity
- Promote positive relationships with EAL parents
- Liaise with and support the school leadership team on matters relating to EAL

This policy is monitored by the EAL coordinator and reviewed annually.

Updated September 2025