

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

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Note	This policy must not be amended without prior approval of the Education Director		

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1. Supporting Documents

- This policy connects to the SEND policy (EDU.POL.022), the Curriculum, SMSC and Fundamental British Values policy (EDU.POL.008), the Admissions policy (EDU.POL.002) and the Safeguarding Children in Education policy (EDE.POL.002).

Related policies are held within RADAR in the School's policy folder.

2. Introduction

At Sunny Hill School, we welcome pupils whose first language is not English and we are committed to helping them take a full and active part in school life. Learning English and learning across the curriculum happen together, and we make sure that having English as an additional language is never treated as a barrier to ambition or wrongly confused with a special educational need. This policy sets out how we identify, support and monitor pupils with EAL, and the standards we hold ourselves to.

3. Aim & Scope

Keys

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, parents and carers at Sunny Hill School. It aims to:

- identify and assess each pupil's proficiency in English separately from any assessment of special educational needs
- help pupils with EAL access the full curriculum and make good progress
- welcome and induct new arrivals well
- work in partnership with families, including where English is an additional language at home
- we act promptly where progress indicates that additional language support may be required.

4. Abbreviations and Definitions

- English as an additional language (EAL). A pupil whose first language is not English. Having EAL is not a special educational need.
- Proficiency in English. A pupil's stage of fluency in English, which the school assesses to plan the right support.
- New arrival. A pupil who has recently joined the school or the country and is at an early stage of learning English.

5. Policy Content

5.1 Principles and Approach

EAL is not SEN. We assess language need and special educational need separately. High expectations. We hold the same ambition for pupils with EAL as for every other pupil. Access, not separation. We help pupils access the mainstream curriculum rather than removing them from it. Partnership. We work with families and value the languages and cultures pupils bring. The pupil at the centre. We listen to pupils and build support around their strengths and needs.

5.2 EAL Provision in Practice

Identifying and assessing language need

When a pupil joins, we find out their first language and languages spoken at home, and we assess their proficiency in English. We keep this assessment separate from any assessment of SEND so that a pupil is not wrongly identified as having a special educational need because they are still learning English.

Supporting access to the curriculum

We support pupils with EAL to access the full curriculum through clear and adapted language, visual support, modelling, pre-teaching of key vocabulary and, where helpful, the use of the pupil's first language and bilingual resources. The aim is always access to learning alongside peers.

New arrivals

Keys

We welcome and induct new arrivals carefully, pairing them with peers where appropriate, explaining routines clearly, and giving them time to settle while they build confidence in English.

Where a pupil has both EAL and SEND

Some pupils have both EAL and a special educational need. In these cases we plan for each separately and together, working with the SENCo, and we read this policy alongside the SEND policy (EDU.POL.022).

Monitoring progress

We monitor the progress of pupils with EAL in English and across the curriculum, and we act promptly where progress is not strong enough.

5.3 Recording, Monitoring and Reporting

Pupils' first language, proficiency in English and progress are recorded on Arbor and kept up to date. Leaders monitor the progress of pupils with EAL alongside other groups and report to the Proprietor and Governors at least termly.

5.4 Equality and Inclusion

At Sunny Hill School this policy is applied fairly and without discrimination, in line with the Equality Act 2010. We monitor the impact of this policy on pupils with protected characteristics and adapt our practice to remove disadvantage. Any concern that this policy disadvantages a pupil or group should be raised with the headteacher.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Pupils

Pupils are supported to take part fully and to use both their first language and English as they learn.

6.2 Staff

Staff plan and adapt their teaching so pupils with EAL can access the curriculum, and they monitor and support each pupil's progress in English.

6.3 Leadership

Leadership at Sunny Hill School makes sure this policy is implemented, that staff are trained, and that provision for pupils with EAL is monitored and improved.

6.4 Governance

The Proprietor and Governors provide oversight of provision for pupils with EAL and assurance that outcomes for pupils with EAL are monitored, evaluated and reviewed alongside those of all other pupil groups.

6.5 Parents and carers

Parents and carers share information about their child's languages and needs and are supported to take part, with interpretation or translation where needed.

6.6 Named leads

The lead for EAL at Sunny Hill School is Jessica Hocknull Head Teacher

7. Training Requirements

Supporting pupils with EAL is covered in staff induction at Sunny Hill School and refreshed as needed, including practical strategies for adapting teaching.

8. Equality Impact Statement

All policies will be developed and implemented in a manner that promotes equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring fair and equitable treatment for all individuals. Policies must align with relevant equality legislation and reflect the expectations and standards set by our regulatory bodies. They will demonstrate a commitment to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering an inclusive environment that respects and values the diverse needs, backgrounds, and experiences of those we support, as well as our workforce.

9. Sources of Information / References

There is no single piece of legislation dedicated to EAL. This policy reflects the duties and guidance that apply, including:

- The Equality Act 2010, including the duty not to discriminate and to make education accessible to all
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which require a curriculum that gives all pupils experience in the required areas and the chance to acquire skills and fulfil their potential
- The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015), which is clear that difficulties related to learning English as an additional language are not in themselves a special educational need
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, on the safeguarding of all pupils, including those new to English and to the country. Where language barriers exist, the school will ensure safeguarding information, complaints procedures and key communications are accessible through translation, interpretation or other support.

10. Version Control

This document can also be found in the following locations and should be amended in the following (ie. Circle, Nourish, Radar):

This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation or statutory guidance changes. The next review date and version history are recorded in the control table above. The named owner for review at Sunny Hill School is the headteacher.

Appendix A: School-Specific Arrangements for EAL

1. School Context

Sunny Hill School is an independent specialist school for pupils aged 5-18 years with a range of complex learning needs, including:

- Autism
- Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
- Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
- Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
- Complex medical and sensory needs

The school recognises that some pupils may have English as an Additional Language (**EAL**) alongside identified SEND. Staff ensure that language acquisition needs and SEND needs are assessed and supported separately.

2. EAL Lead

Role	Named Person
EAL Lead	Jessica Hocknull, Head Teacher
SEND Lead	Rebekkah Weaver, SENCO
Safeguarding Lead	Jessica Hocknull, DSL
Assessment Lead	Head Teacher and SENCO

3. Identification and Assessment

Upon admission, the school will:

- Record the pupil's first language and any additional languages spoken.
- Establish the language used within the home environment.
- Gather information from parents, carers, previous schools and local authorities.
- Assess the pupil's level of English proficiency.
- Consider cultural, communication and educational background.
- Ensure language acquisition needs are not incorrectly identified as learning difficulties.

Assessment information will be recorded on:

- Arbor
- Admission documentation
- EHCP records (where applicable)
- Individual Communication Profiles

3.1 Assessment of English Proficiency

Sunny Hill School assesses pupils' English language proficiency on admission and reviews this regularly through ongoing assessment, EHCP reviews and curriculum monitoring.

The school may use:

- Information gathered from parents, carers and previous settings.
- Classroom observations and communication assessments.
- Assessment of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills where appropriate.
- Information from Speech and Language Therapists and other professionals.
- The DfE EAL Proficiency Scale, where appropriate to the pupil's age, ability and SEND profile.

For pupils with complex SEND, English proficiency assessments are considered alongside communication development and are never used in isolation to determine ability or educational need.

Assessment outcomes inform teaching strategies, communication approaches, intervention planning and curriculum access arrangements.

4. Communication and Total Communication Approach

Sunny Hill School operates a Total Communication Approach.

Depending on individual needs, pupils may access communication through:

- Spoken English
- Visual supports
- Objects of reference
- Photographs
- Symbol systems
- Communication books
- Choice boards
- Makaton signing
- Assistive technology

Keys

- AAC devices
- Intensive Interaction

Where appropriate, staff will encourage the use of a pupil's home language alongside English to support understanding, belonging and communication.

5. Curriculum Access

Pupils with EAL will access the school's curriculum pathways according to their assessed needs.

My Learning Pathway

For pupils accessing a semi-formal and formal curriculum.

My Life Pathway

For pupils accessing sensory, engagement and functional learning approaches.

Support may include:

- Visual timetables
 - Symbol-supported resources
 - Simplified language
 - Pre-teaching of vocabulary
 - Modelling and repetition
 - Additional processing time
 - Peer support
 - Structured routines
 - Communication aids
-

6. Monitoring and Quality Assurance

The progress of pupils with EAL is monitored through Sunny Hill School's **SHINE Monitoring Framework**.

SHINE Element	EAL Focus
S - Strengths	Identifying pupil language strengths and cultural assets
H - Holistic	Considering home language, communication and SEND needs
I - Impact	Measuring curriculum access and language development

N - Next Steps	Identifying appropriate interventions and support
E - Evidence	Reviewing assessment data, observations and pupil outcomes

Monitoring activities may include:

- Learning walks
- Work scrutiny
- Communication profile reviews
- Assessment reviews
- EHCP outcome monitoring
- Parent feedback
- Pupil voice, where appropriate

7. Partnership with Families

Sunny Hill School values the cultural and linguistic diversity of families and recognises the importance of effective communication between home and school.

Where required, the school will:

- Access interpretation services for admissions meetings, annual reviews and other key meetings.
- Provide translated documentation where reasonably practicable.
- Use visual communication tools and accessible formats.
- Support parents and carers to understand school procedures, safeguarding information and complaints processes.
- Work with local authority services and approved providers to secure interpretation and translation support when required.

The need for interpretation or translation support is identified during the admissions process and reviewed regularly.

Parents and carers are encouraged to maintain and celebrate their child's first language.

7.1 Community Languages and Specialist Support

Sunny Hill School serves families from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Community languages represented within the school are monitored through admissions information and pupil records and may vary over time.

To support pupils and families, the school may access:

Keys

- Local Authority EAL Services
- Educational Psychology Services
- Speech and Language Therapy Services
- Interpreter and translation services
- Community and family support organisations
- Specialist SEND services and professionals
- Cultural and linguistic support agencies involved in a pupil's wider support network

The school values bilingualism and multilingualism and actively promotes respect for all languages and cultures represented within the school community.

8. Staff Training

Staff receive training through:

- Staff induction processes
 - Total Communication training
 - Makaton training, where appropriate
 - SEND-specific communication approaches
 - Safeguarding training relating to vulnerable pupils and families
 - Ongoing CPD linked to communication, inclusion and language development
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9. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Sunny Hill School promotes:

- Respect for all languages and cultures
- Equality of opportunity
- Inclusive practice
- Individualised support
- High aspirations for every learner

No pupil will be disadvantaged because English is not their first language.

Sunny Hill School Values Link

This appendix reflects Sunny Hill School's commitment to:

- **B**elonging
- **R**espect
- **I**nclusion
- **T**eamwork
- **E**mpowerment

SHINE

- **S**trengths
- **H**olistic
- **I**mpact
- **N**ext Steps
- **E**vidence

These frameworks help ensure every pupil's language, communication, identity and future are recognised, valued and supported.