



UNICORN SCHOOL

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE POLICY (INCLUDING EYFS)

Parents may read this policy on the public section of the website.

RESPONSIBILITY

Staff Member:
Governors' Committee:

Headteacher
Education & Staffing

Last Updated:
Approved by Committee:
Noted by Governors:

March 2025
June 2025
June 2025

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Aims

The aim of this policy is to help ensure that we meet the full range of needs of those children for whom English is an additional language (EAL). This is in line with the requirements of the Race Relations Act 1976.

Definition of 'EAL'

An EAL child is one whose first language is not English. This includes children who are fully bilingual as well as those at different stages of learning English. They may be:

- Pupils arriving from other countries and whose first language is not English.
- Pupils who have lived in the UK for a long time and may appear to be fluent, but who also speak another language at home. These pupils are often not entirely fluent in terms of their literacy levels.
- Pupils who have been born in the UK, but for whom the home language is not English.

Admissions Policy

Unicorn School is an independent, non-selective, co-educational, preparatory school. EAL applicants are submit to the same admissions procedures as other applicants. (Refer to Admissions Policy).

Identification

In our 'Getting to Know You' form parents are asked to describe their child as:

- Being a native English speaker
- Having English as an additional language
- Being bilingual

Those children who have English as an additional language or who are bilingual will be put on our academic tracking software SonarThis information will also be added to Progress Meeting forms to maintain awareness.

Key Principles for Additional Language Acquisition

- Working with the whole family is key to a child becoming comfortable and confident in learning and speaking English.
- Language is central to our identity. Therefore, the home languages of all pupils and staff should be recognised and valued and pupils should be encouraged to maintain their home language.
- All teachers have a responsibility for teaching English as well as specific subject content.
- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts, across the curriculum.
- Access to learning requires attention to words and meanings embodied in each curriculum area.
- Meanings and understanding cannot be assumed and must be made explicit.
- Teaching and support staff play a crucial role in modelling the correct use of language.

- Knowledge and skills developed in learning the first language aid the acquisition of additional languages.
- All languages, dialects, accents and cultures are valued, however we aim to teach standard English.
- Teachers should be aware that an EAL pupils' social language (normally acquired in around 2 years) may be much more advanced than their academic language which can take 7-10 years to reach the level of a native speaker.
- A clear distinction should be made between children with EAL and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Teaching and Learning

- Reasonable steps are made to provide children with the opportunities to use their home language within school to support their language development at home. For example, encouraging children with EAL in the Early Years to play in their home language.
- For children who are very new to English there will be use of pictures and prompts to help them communicate basic needs
- Class Planning is shared with support staff and where appropriate include differentiated activities and task matched to individual EAL pupils' needs.
- Lessons have clear learning objectives and appropriate support and resources ensure that all pupils are able to participate in lessons.
- Teachers review groupings and pairings regularly to ensure that EAL pupils have access to strong English language models. Teaching staff are also responsible for modelling correct English.
- Key language features for specific curriculum area or topic are identified and discussed to ensure understanding.
- Children have regular opportunities to be involved in speaking and listening tasks within lessons.
- Additional visual support such as posters and pictures may be provided to aid understanding.
- Additional verbal support may be provided such as repetition, modelling and partner work.
- Scaffolded questioning is used to encourage EAL pupils to answer questions verbally.

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

- When planning the curriculum, staff take account of the linguistic, cultural and religious background of families.
- The class teachers and specialist teachers are aware of the AL pupils they teach and plan appropriately.
- Children with EAL are identified in termly progress meetings and their progress is discussed.
- If there are concerns raised about the progress an EAL child is making in relation to their English language development (impacting on their progress in all subject areas), further observations and discussions with relevant teachers and parents will take place.

Special Educational Needs and Gifted and Talented Pupils

- Most EAL pupils who need additional support do not have a special educational need (SEN) or disability.

- Should a SEN be identified, EAL pupils have equal access to the school's SEN provision, as outlined in the SEND policy.
- If EAL pupils are identified as Gifted and Talented, they have equal access to the school provision, as outlined in the Gifted and Talented policy.

Parental / Community Involvement

We provide a welcoming admissions process for the induction of new pupils and their families/carers/ We respect the linguistic, cultural and religious background of our parents/carers and help them understand how they can support their child at home, especially by continuing the development of their first language. When appropriate we will work closely with members of the wider community to support our EAL pupils.

Staff will be able to undertake professional development to ensure that provision for EAL pupils is appropriately delivered.

Concerns / Complaints / Further Advice

Any concerns regarding the EAL Policy or the provision made for children with EAL should be addressed in the first instance to the class teacher. If the response is not satisfactory then parents are welcome to follow the Complaints policy and escalate their concerns.

Updated March 2025 - PF

Updated June 2023 – PF