



ST JOHN'S SCHOOL
SIDMOUTH, UNITED KINGDOM

EAL Policy

Policy owner: Head of School

Approved by: Directors

Applies to: Whole school, including EYFS, Junior School, Senior School, boarding, day pupils, international pupils and pupils attending short-term or immersion programmes

Reviewed: June 2026

Next review due: June 2027

Purpose

St John's School welcomes pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school values the languages, cultures, heritage and experiences that pupils bring to the school community.

The purpose of this policy is to set out how the school supports pupils with English as an additional language so that they can access the curriculum, participate fully in school life, develop confidence and make good progress.

This policy should be read alongside the Curriculum Policy, Admissions Policy, SEND Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Boarding Admissions Policy, Boarding policies, Behaviour Management Policy and Assessment, Recording and Reporting arrangements.

Aims

The school aims to:

- Value pupils' home languages, cultures and identities
- Promote equality of opportunity for pupils with EAL
- Support pupils to develop confidence and proficiency in English
- Enable pupils with EAL to access a broad and balanced curriculum
- Help pupils participate fully in lessons, activities, boarding life and the wider school community
- Support staff in meeting the needs of pupils with EAL
- Work constructively with parents, carers and educational guardians where relevant
- Monitor pupils' progress and adapt support where needed

EAL and individual needs

Having English as an additional language is not, in itself, a special educational need.

Some pupils with EAL may also have SEND, disability, neurodivergence, medical needs, pastoral needs or other additional needs. Where this is the case, the EAL Head of Department will liaise with the SENDCo, pastoral staff, boarding staff, parents or carers and other relevant colleagues so that support is coordinated appropriately.

The school will consider each pupil's needs individually, taking account of their English proficiency, previous educational experience, age, stage of development, curriculum access, wellbeing and social confidence.

Admission and induction

Information about a pupil's language background, previous education, English proficiency, cultural background, pastoral needs and any relevant support needs should be gathered as part of the admissions and induction process.

Where appropriate, the school may use:

- Information from parents, carers or educational guardians
- Previous school reports
- Baseline English language assessment
- Teacher observation
- Pastoral information
- Information from boarding staff, where relevant

A clear induction process will be followed for new pupils with EAL. This may include an initial meeting with parents, carers or educational guardians where possible, baseline assessment, orientation around the school, introduction to key staff and support with routines and expectations.

Teaching and learning

Pupils with EAL will have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

Support may include:

- High quality classroom teaching
- Visual support and modelling
- Pre-teaching or reinforcement of key vocabulary
- Differentiated resources
- Focused EAL lessons
- Small group support
- Support for examination preparation
- Use of bilingual dictionaries or appropriate bilingual resources
- Opportunities to practise speaking, listening, reading and writing
- Support for curriculum access in specific subjects

Teachers should plan lessons so that pupils with EAL can understand key concepts, participate meaningfully and develop subject-specific language.

Staff should use appropriate strategies, which may include:

- Clear instructions
- Visual prompts, diagrams, charts, maps, pictures and real objects
- Modelling spoken and written responses
- Sentence starters and writing frames
- Key vocabulary lists
- Structured talk activities
- Paired or group discussion
- Checking understanding carefully
- Allowing thinking time
- Encouraging pupils to draw on prior knowledge and home language where useful
- Providing examples before expecting independent work
- Supporting pupils to organise, redraft and improve written work

Pupils should not be withdrawn from lessons unnecessarily where this would limit access to the curriculum. Any additional EAL support should be balanced with the pupil's wider educational, social and pastoral needs.

EYFS and younger pupils

For pupils in Nursery, Reception and the Junior School, EAL support will be age-appropriate and linked to the pupil's stage of development.

In EYFS, staff will support communication and language through interaction, stories, songs, routines, play, modelling, repetition, visual support and practical activities.

Staff will work with parents or carers to understand the child's home language, previous experiences, routines and communication needs.

Boarding and international pupils

The school recognises that EAL support may be particularly important for boarders and international pupils.

Boarding staff will support pupils with routines, communication, social integration, contact with home, wellbeing and access to help outside the normal school day.

Where relevant, the EAL Head of Department, Head of Boarding, pastoral team and educational guardians will work together to support pupils' adjustment to school and boarding life.

First language and cultural identity

The school values pupils' first languages and cultural identities.

Pupils will be encouraged to maintain and develop their home language where appropriate. The school recognises that a strong first language can support learning, confidence and wider language development.

Where appropriate, pupils may be offered the opportunity to sit an external examination in their first language when this is suitable and practical.

Parents, carers and educational guardians

The school will seek to communicate clearly with parents, carers and educational guardians.

Where needed and reasonably practicable, the school may use translation or interpretation support to help parents, carers or educational guardians understand important information about their child's education, welfare, boarding arrangements, attendance, behaviour or progress.

Parents, carers and educational guardians are encouraged to share relevant information about the pupil's language background, previous education, cultural context and any concerns.

Safeguarding and welfare

The school recognises that pupils with EAL may sometimes face additional communication barriers when asking for help, understanding expectations or expressing worries.

Staff should be alert to these barriers and should make reasonable efforts to ensure that pupils with EAL know who they can speak to if they need help.

Any safeguarding or welfare concern must be reported in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Assessment, monitoring and records

The school will monitor the progress of pupils with EAL through appropriate assessment, teacher feedback, classroom observation and pastoral information.

Assessment may consider:

- Speaking and listening
- Reading and writing
- Subject access
- Vocabulary development
- Confidence and participation
- Social integration
- Progress across the curriculum

Relevant EAL information, support arrangements, assessment outcomes, progress information and parent communication will be recorded on iSAMS or another appropriate school system.

Safeguarding, child protection, pastoral or welfare concerns will be recorded on CPOMS in accordance with school procedures.

Roles and responsibilities

The Head of School has overall responsibility for this policy.

The EAL Head of Department is responsible for coordinating EAL provision, supporting staff, monitoring pupil progress and advising on appropriate strategies.

The Head of Senior School, Head of Junior School and Head of EYFS are responsible for ensuring that EAL provision is implemented appropriately in their areas.

The Head of Boarding is responsible for supporting the needs of boarders with EAL and for liaising with the EAL Head of Department and pastoral staff where appropriate.

The SENDCo will advise where a pupil with EAL may also have SEND, disability, neurodivergence or additional needs.

Teachers are responsible for supporting pupils with EAL in lessons through appropriate planning, teaching, resources, feedback and assessment.

All staff are expected to value pupils' languages and cultures and to support inclusion across the school.

Training and support for staff

The school will provide guidance, resources and training to help staff support pupils with EAL.

The EAL Head of Department may work with departments, year groups, boarding staff or individual staff to share strategies and improve practice.

Monitoring and review

The school will review the effectiveness of EAL provision through pupil progress information, teacher feedback, pupil feedback, lesson observation, work scrutiny, assessment information and pastoral review.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are significant changes in pupil need, school provision, law or guidance.

Before September 2026, the school will check this policy against final KCSIE 2026, EYFS and ISI guidance.