

English as an Additional Language (EAL) and New to English (NTE) Policy

October 2023

‘Because Children Deserve Better’

Reviewed By: Kellie Taylor, Strategic Lead for Quality Education
Approved By: Lorraine Bowman, Director of Education
Responsible Person: Lorraine Bowman, Director of Education
Policy Number: 1:8 V1
Date: October 2023
Next Review Date: September 2025

Contents

1. Legislation and Guidance
2. Purpose and Ethos
3. Definitions
4. Identifying EAL Learners
5. The Importance of the First Language
6. Supporting Learners in the Classroom
7. Partnership with Parents
8. Linked Policies

1. Legislation and Guidance

This policy refers to the DfE's statutory guidance of:

- National Curriculum in England: Primary Curriculum 2015
- National Curriculum in England: Secondary Curriculum 2014
- SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 Years 2020
- English Proficiency of Pupils with English as an Additional Language 2020
- The Independent School Standards Guidance for independent schools 2019

It also considers the Independent School Inspectorate (ISI) Framework for the Inspection of Association of Independent Schools (2023).

2. Purpose and Ethos

This policy outlines what the Pivot Schools will do to meet the needs of learners with English as an Additional Language (EAL) and who are New to English (NTE). We are committed to providing equal opportunities to all groups of learners. We treat each child as an individual, considering their life experiences and individual needs. We are aware that we may need to adapt our provision for different groups of learners. Some of our learners have learning requirements which are linked to their progress in learning English as an Additional Language (EAL).

At Pivot, we have high expectations and aspirations of all learners. Learners who have EAL are as able as any other groups of learners; they are not a homogenous group. Learners with EAL may need support from other agencies and the curriculum adapting to meet their needs, in the same way as other learners do.

The process of language learning, social interaction and cultural understanding are closely linked. Some of our learners face the challenge of learning both the language and the culture of our schools, in addition to have additional SEND (Special Educational Needs and/or Disability) needs. Focusing our resources on strategies that support learners to feel socially and emotionally secure, building strong partnerships with parents and developing learners' independent learning skills are crucial to developing strong foundations for future learning. Our practitioners constantly reflect on their practice to meet the needs of our learners, as no single strategy always works well.

3. Definitions

An EAL learner might be:

- a pupil born in the UK with schooling here from Nursery onwards who speaks a language other than English at home and in parts of their community
- a student recently arrived from a country with little formal education and no experience of English
- or a pupil with full educational background educated in a language other than English

Differences in educational, social and linguistic experience will mean that EAL learners of the same age and same length of time in the UK might be at very different stages of EAL development in the various areas of language.

(Nassea, 2017)

Pupils learning English as an additional language (EAL) share many common characteristics with pupils whose first language is English. However, their learning experience differs because they are learning in and through another language, and because they may come from cultural backgrounds and communities that have different understandings and expectations of education, language and learning.

(DfE, 2020)

4. Identifying EAL Learners

There can be many broad definitions of how to recognise an EAL learner, at Pivot to recognise EAL learners we ask ourselves:

Was the learner exposed to any other language during early development and/or continues to be exposed to and speaks any language other than English in the home or their immediate community?

This is irrespective of their proficiency in English now, as an EAL learner could be a child who is a complete beginner or a child who is fluent. In our first meeting with parents, we encourage the language that is used at home to be the Mother Tongue.

Below is a broad definition of how we can categorise an EAL learner. A learner may be described as an EAL learner when...

- Their first language is not English.
- They arrive from other countries and their first language is not English
- They 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).
- They have been born in the UK, but for whom their home language is not English (e.g. Bengali children who are born in the UK but arrive at school with very little English due to having spoken only Bengali at home and within the community).
- They have a parent who speaks a language other than English and the learner communicates with in that language (ie. bi-lingual children).

It is important therefore to recognise that:

- Children who have British citizenship can still be EAL.
- If parents write on their young person's admission form that the learner speaks English as a first language, when one or both parents is a speaker of another language, the learner is very likely in fact to be EAL, and it will be necessary to check this.

At each census, the DFE will collect the EAL Proficiency in English data for all children reception upwards, the following code descriptions are used -

A New to English - May use first language for learning and other purposes. May remain completely silent in the classroom. May be copying/repeating some words or phrases. May understand some everyday expressions in English but may have minimal or no literacy in English. Needs a considerable amount of EAL support.

B Early acquisition - May follow day to day social communication in English and participate in learning activities with support. Beginning to use spoken English for social purposes. May understand simple instructions and can follow narrative/accounts with visual support. May have developed some skills in reading and writing. May have become familiar with some subject specific vocabulary. Still needs a significant amount of EAL support to access the curriculum.

C Developing competence - May participate in learning activities with increasing independence. Able to express self orally in English, but structural inaccuracies are still apparent. Literacy will require ongoing support, particularly for understanding text and writing. May be able to follow abstract concepts and more complex written English. Requires ongoing EAL support to access the curriculum fully.

D Competent - Oral English will be developing well, enabling successful engagement in activities across the curriculum. Can read and understand a wide variety of texts. Written English may lack complexity and contain occasional evidence of errors in structure. Needs some support to access subtle nuances of meaning, to refine English usage, and to develop abstract vocabulary. Needs some/occasional EAL support to access complex curriculum material and tasks

E Fluent - Can operate across the curriculum to a level of competence equivalent to that of a pupil who uses English as his/her first language. Operates without EAL support across the curriculum.

Most bilingual learners at our Pivot Schools are fluent in English when they join us. However, due our bespoke curriculum and close tracking of individual targets, we can adapt our provision to meet the needs of individuals who join us. Where EAL interventions take place, they have a clear focus, and the trajectory is for children to re-access mainstream whole class learning with their peers and their teacher. Interventions are based on regular withdrawal slots with a clear focus on teaching basic skills and vocabulary. Pre-teaching sessions support children being introduced to skill/topic related vocabulary before lessons to support EAL children in being able to access whole class lessons.

5. The Importance of the First Language

'It is important to remember that the language of the home is the language of love, belonging and the community. Nobody wants to be cut off from that, or to have it ignored, belittled or hidden away. Young people need to talk to their parents in the language their parents use best A halting, incomplete or irregular model of English at home will not support a child's English development. A home rich in full and fluent conversation is something teachers and parents want for every child. Sometimes those conversations may not be in English. Some parents really benefit from hearing that message from their child's teachers'

(NASSEA 2017).

6. Partnership with Parents

Pivot values partnership with parents for all our learners; we strive to keep parents informed of EAL interventions, strategies, targets and process. We provide resources that learners can use at home; however, we do place a high value on learners continuing to develop their first language, their Mother Tongue, at home. It is important that parents have as much information and understanding of their young person's experience at our school and at the request of parents, we work with partner agencies to provide translators to support at meetings and with written communications.

7. Linked Policies

- Assessment Policy
- RSE Policy
- SEND Policy