



WESTMINSTER
SCHOOL

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE POLICY

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Date: September 2026
Review Date: September 2028



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INTRODUCTION

The School actively welcomes pupils of different backgrounds the diversity and linguistic multiplicity that strengthen our community is celebrated. The cognitive benefits conferred by speaking two or more languages fluently are also recognised.

This policy seeks to promote the formulation of strategies that ensure English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupils are fully supported in acquiring the requisite English language skills they require in order to access the curriculum, thereby fulfilling their academic potential.

The proficiency of pupils' spoken and written English is assessed on entry to the School in order to ensure that all pupils thrive and enjoy the high-paced selective learning environment. Upon entry to the School, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, EAL pupils who are developing proficiency in English have support in order to access the full curriculum.

DEFINITION

Pupils are defined as having English as an Additional Language who either speaks another language at home, and / or in whose home environment another language is primarily spoken. EAL pupils, therefore, present with varying levels of English, including those who can access the curriculum fully without any additional support.

ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT

Admissions

The School seeks to ensure during the selection process that a pupil's English is of sufficient proficiency such that they can thrive academically and be happy at the School. For this reason, the following assessments take place at the point of admissions:

13+ Entry

Parents are asked to declare other languages spoken at home on the School's application form. English proficiency is tested through computerised pre-tests, an in-house English assessment and a general interview.

16+ Entry

All candidates who have English as an additional language and have been taught in an English-speaking school for less than three years, are required to sit a UKiset or an IELTS assessment. A CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, Learning, Teaching and Assessment) fluency level of B2 / C1 is required. Pupils are further assessed through a variety of methods including written subject tests and interviews.

EAL Pupil Survey

Pupils are asked to complete an electronic survey in which they record languages spoken at home as well as languages they themselves speak. Levels of fluency of languages spoken are also requested using the CEFR definitions of basic, independent and proficient.

Information gathered from both the admissions process and the survey are compiled to produce an EAL database. The database provides a point of reference to pre-empt any linguistic difficulties which may arise as the academic workload increases.

EAL TEACHING AND PROVISION

Wave One: in-class support

Westminster is a high-achieving, academic environment in which teachers use a variety of pedagogical approaches to ensure that pupils develop an excellent standard of both written and spoken English. Wave One support for those pupils who need it is therefore provided by the classroom teacher.

Wave Two: 1:1 EAL screening and support

Under the following circumstances, a pupil with English as an additional language may benefit from further support to access the School's curriculum and may be referred for screening:

- 1) The pupil has been at an English-speaking school and has had an immersive education in English for three years or less, but, despite classroom intervention, is not making expected progress.
- 2) Performance at interview or in the entrance examinations suggests that, although the pupil is of an academic standard and sufficiently proficient in English to enjoy learning at Westminster, they may need further support with certain skills in English such as speaking, writing, or listening in order to fulfil their potential.
- 3) A pupil who has been educated in the UK but has another language spoken to them at home, or they themselves speak another language, is not making expected progress.

Pupils are screened using tests which attribute a CEFR level of fluency. The following may be put in place:

- An EAL pupil profile.
- A programme of language support.
- 1:1 sessions within the EAL department for targeted support.

THE EAL LEAD

The EAL Lead is a member of the Learning Development department. They:

- Report to the Head of Learning Development.
- Ensure that the EAL database is current, liaising regularly with admissions, teachers and IT.
- Provide opportunities for staff professional development.
- Ensure that there is a bank of resources and teaching strategies available on the School's internal learning platforms.
- Are available to discuss EAL teaching strategies with members of staff.
- Devise specific programmes of study for pupils who have been referred and teach pupils on a 1:1 basis.
- Liaise with the SENCo if an EAL pupil presents with additional barriers to learning.

MONITORING PROGRESS

It is the responsibility of all teachers to promote high standards of literacy, articulacy, and the correct use of Standard English within their subject, and to monitor those with EAL needs. The EAL Lead offers targeted support to the English Department through INSET, as well as regular supporting reading materials. Heads of Department have a responsibility to maintain an overview of EAL pupils within their departments.

It is the responsibility of the EAL Lead to maintain an overview of all EAL pupils who need additional Wave Two support by offering workshops and 1:1 sessions, where appropriate.

EDUCATIONAL AND WELFARE PROVISION

The School recognises that having English as an Additional Language is not, in itself, a special educational need. The School will identify and respond appropriately to the individual language needs of pupils with EAL, enabling them to access the curriculum, pastoral provision and wider life of the School. Teachers will take account of pupils' developing proficiency in English when planning teaching, undertaking assessment and providing support. Where there are concerns about a pupil with EAL, the School will distinguish, as far as possible, between needs arising from developing English proficiency and those arising from a possible special educational need or disability.

As in the case of SEND, responsibility for meeting these pupils' educational and welfare needs is shared by all relevant members of staff, with specialist advice and support provided by the Learning Development Department and other colleagues as appropriate.