

Colmers Farm Primary School's

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy



[Rights Respecting Schools' Article/s](#)

A2: The convention applies to every child whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, abilities, whatever they think or say, no matter what type of family they come from.

A29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

A30: Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.

Policy Statement

At Colmers Farm Primary School, we recognise multilingualism as a strength and an asset. We are committed to ensuring that pupils who use English as an additional language are welcomed, valued and supported to participate fully in school life and to achieve highly.

We have high expectations of every pupil. EAL is not a measure of intelligence or ability, and a pupil learning English should not be assumed to have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

Equally, EAL status must not prevent the timely identification of SEND where evidence indicates that additional needs are present.

Our approach is rooted in inclusion, equity, high-quality teaching and strong partnerships with families. We aim to remove barriers to learning while valuing pupils' home languages, identities, cultures and prior experiences.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy should be read alongside our school's wider policies and procedures and has regard to:

- Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty;
- Department for Education guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010;
- the current statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework;
- the National Curriculum;
- Teachers' Standards;
- current Department for Education school census guidance relating to first language and EAL;
- the SEND Code of Practice (where relevant to identifying and supporting additional needs);
- the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- Birmingham City Council and Birmingham Inclusion House guidance and resources relating to EAL.

Where local resources are used, Colmers Farm will check that they remain current and appropriate. Birmingham's EAL Toolkit and associated assessment materials may be used to support practice alongside current national and local guidance.

Our School Values

At Colmers Farm Primary School, the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of all children are valued. We support every child to achieve highly by taking account of their individual strengths, experiences and needs.

- Be respectful
- Be ready
- Be safe

Aims

Through this policy, we aim to:

- ensure that pupils with EAL have equitable access to a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum;
- maintain high expectations for academic achievement, language development, participation and independence;
- recognise and build upon pupils' home languages, cultural knowledge and prior learning;
- identify each pupil's English language proficiency and use this information to inform teaching and support;
- ensure that barriers to communication do not prevent families from engaging meaningfully with school;
- develop staff confidence and expertise in high-quality teaching for multilingual learners;

- monitor the progress, attainment, participation and well-being of pupils with EAL and respond where improvement is needed.

What is EAL?

For the purposes of this policy, a pupil is considered to have English as an Additional Language (EAL) where they are exposed to a language other than English during early development and continue to be exposed to that language at home or in the community.

EAL describes a pupil's language background; it does not describe their level of English proficiency. Pupils with EAL may range from being newly arrived and new to English to being fully fluent and highly literate in English.

Our school will therefore avoid making assumptions based solely on EAL status, ethnicity, nationality, country of birth or length of time in the United Kingdom.

Principles Underpinning Our Approach

- Multilingualism is an asset. Home languages should be respected, maintained and used as a foundation for learning.
- The best place for most EAL pupils is within high-quality, inclusive classroom teaching alongside their peers.
- Language development is the responsibility of all staff and takes place across the whole curriculum.
- Pupils need access to rich subject knowledge and should not be given a reduced curriculum simply because they are learning English.
- Teaching should distinguish between language acquisition and conceptual understanding.
- Assessment should consider a pupil's English proficiency, prior educational experience and curriculum knowledge.
- Newly arrived pupils may need time to settle, develop trust and become familiar with school routines.
- Pupils should be encouraged to take increasing ownership of their learning and develop independence.

Induction of Pupils New to English or New to our School

Colmers Farm Primary School will provide a warm, structured and personalised induction for pupils with EAL, particularly those who are newly arrived or new to English. Our school will use relevant Birmingham guidance and induction materials where appropriate.

The induction process will normally include:

- a meeting with parents/carers to gather information about languages used, previous schooling, literacy, strengths, interests, medical or safeguarding information and previous exposure to English;
- the collection of previous school reports or examples of work where available;
- clear communication about school routines, attendance, safeguarding, behaviour, curriculum, uniform, meals and how families can contact school;
- a school tour and, where needed, appropriate language support for the family;
- the identification of a named key adult and a peer buddy;
- sharing relevant information with staff who teach or support the pupil, while maintaining appropriate confidentiality;
- an initial assessment of English language proficiency after the pupil has had an appropriate opportunity to settle;
- ongoing observation of the pupil's participation, well-being and access to learning.

Our school will take care not to confuse a limited ability to communicate in English with a limited ability to think, reason or learn. Information about literacy and learning in the pupil's home language will be considered wherever possible.

Teaching and Learning

High-quality, adaptive classroom teaching is the first response for pupils with EAL. Teachers will plan both for the curriculum knowledge pupils need to learn and for the language required to access, discuss and demonstrate that learning.

Developing language across the curriculum

At Colmers Farm Primary School we will:

- explicitly teach and revisit high-value vocabulary, including technical and subject-specific language;
- make links between everyday language and the more formal or academic language required in school;
- model accurate spoken and written language without discouraging pupils from taking risks and contributing;
- use clear explanations, worked examples and opportunities for repetition and rehearsal;
- provide structured opportunities for purposeful talk before reading and writing;
- teach the language structures needed for different subjects, genres and purposes;
- use sentence stems, word banks and other temporary scaffolds where they support independence;
- provide carefully chosen reading materials that support both curriculum learning and language development;
- recognise and build upon pupils' knowledge of other languages.

Making learning accessible

- use visuals, objects, demonstrations, gestures, models and practical experiences to support understanding;
- break complex instructions into manageable steps and check understanding in meaningful ways;
- pre-teach or revisit essential vocabulary and concepts when this will improve access;
- allow sufficient thinking and processing time;
- use collaborative learning and carefully structured peer interaction;
- make appropriate use of bilingual dictionaries, dual-language texts and technology;
- use home-language support strategically where it helps pupils understand concepts and participate in learning;
- avoid unnecessary simplification that removes important curriculum content.

Teachers should adapt support as pupils become more confident, gradually removing scaffolds so that pupils develop independence. Translation should support understanding rather than replace high-quality teaching and opportunities to learn English.

Curriculum Access and Additional Support

All pupils follow the relevant requirements of the EYFS and National Curriculum. Pupils with EAL will, wherever possible, be supported within the classroom alongside their peers. Additional short-term support may be used where there is a clear purpose and evidence of need. This may include pre-teaching, post-teaching, targeted language development or small-group work. Any intervention should:

- be clearly linked to identified language or curriculum needs;

- complement, rather than replace, high-quality classroom teaching;
- have clear intended outcomes;
- be monitored and reviewed for impact;
- avoid unnecessary withdrawal from the wider curriculum.

EAL and SEND

EAL and SEND are not mutually exclusive. A pupil may have EAL and also have SEND. However, limited English proficiency must not be treated as evidence of SEND. Where concerns arise, our school will consider a broad range of evidence, including progress over time, attainment, classroom observation, family information, previous education and, where possible, skills in the home language. We will work with the SENDCo and relevant professionals where appropriate.

EYFS

In EYFS, practitioners will provide language-rich, play-based experiences and will build upon children's communication, knowledge and experiences in both English and their home language(s).

- value and use children's names and home languages;
- create frequent opportunities for meaningful interaction with adults and peers;
- model and extend language through high-quality adult-child interactions;
- use songs, stories, rhyme, visuals, repetition and practical experiences;
- support parents to continue rich talk, storytelling, reading and play in the language in which they are most confident;
- avoid discouraging the use of a child's home language.

Working with Parents, Carers and the Community

Parents and carers are essential partners in their child's education. Our school will communicate in ways that are as clear, accessible and accurate as reasonably possible.

Where language support is needed, we may use:

- professional interpreters or approved interpretation services;
- translated written information or accessible digital translation tools for routine communication;
- bilingual staff or trusted adults where appropriate and where confidentiality, accuracy and safeguarding can be maintained.

Pupils should not be used as interpreters for meetings or communications involving confidential, safeguarding, SEND, behaviour, attendance, health or other sensitive matters.

Families will be encouraged to continue speaking, reading, storytelling and learning together in the language(s) they know best. A strong foundation in a home language can support identity, communication, family relationships and the development of additional languages.

Assessment, Tracking and Progress

Assessment of pupils with EAL will be fair, proportionate and informed by an understanding of their English language proficiency and previous educational experience.

We will:

- establish an initial picture of the pupil's English proficiency and prior learning following an appropriate settling period;
- use relevant Birmingham EAL assessment materials and our school's assessment systems where appropriate;
- make best-fit judgements based on a range of evidence rather than a single task;
- assess progress in spoken language, listening, reading and writing in English, where relevant;
- consider curriculum attainment alongside language development;

- review progress at least termly for pupils whose English proficiency is still developing, with frequency adjusted according to need;
- identify where progress is slower than expected and investigate the reasons rather than assuming that EAL is the cause.

Assessment information will be used to inform teaching, identify effective support and monitor whether pupils are making appropriate progress. EAL data will be considered alongside other relevant information, including disadvantage and SEND, while avoiding simplistic comparisons between pupils with EAL and pupils without EAL.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff

- promote an inclusive environment in which multilingualism is valued;
- use respectful, clear and accurate language;
- provide opportunities for pupils to develop spoken language and participate fully;
- avoid making assumptions about pupils' abilities based on English proficiency;
- share relevant concerns promptly with the class teacher and/or EAL Coordinator.

Class teachers

- are responsible for the progress and attainment of pupils with EAL in their class;
- use assessment information to plan appropriate language and curriculum support;
- plan for the language demands of learning as well as the curriculum content;
- ensure that adaptations support access without unnecessarily lowering expectations;
- monitor progress and communicate appropriately with parents/carers and relevant staff.

Teaching assistants and other adults

- support pupils in line with the teacher's planning and our school's agreed approaches;
- model and extend language while encouraging pupil independence;
- use targeted questioning and purposeful talk rather than becoming a constant intermediary between pupil and teacher;
- share observations about language development, participation and barriers to learning.

EAL Coordinator

- maintains an overview of the needs, progress and attainment of pupils with EAL;
- supports staff with assessment, planning, resources and effective practice;
- coordinates induction arrangements for pupils who are newly arrived or new to English;
- monitors the quality and impact of provision;
- identifies professional development needs;
- liaises, where appropriate, with Birmingham services and other external professionals;
- works with senior leaders to identify patterns, barriers and priorities for improvement;
- reviews this policy and associated procedures.

Senior leaders and governors

- ensure that we meet its duties under equality legislation;
- promote an inclusive culture and high expectations for all pupils;
- ensure that EAL provision is appropriately monitored and evaluated;
- consider the needs of pupils with EAL within wider school improvement and equality objectives.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through a range of evidence, which may include pupil progress and attainment, English proficiency information, classroom practice, pupil and family voice, attendance, participation, intervention impact and staff feedback. Feedback will be used to identify strengths, address barriers and improve practice. Where appropriate, our school will seek advice from Birmingham services and use current local resources to support continued development.

Related Policies

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion / Equalities Policy
- SEND and Inclusion Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Attendance Policy

Policy Information

Policy created/revised: September 2026

Review date: September 2029 (sooner if legislation, statutory guidance or local arrangements change).