English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

Effective from: August 2025
Last reviewed: August 2026
Next review due: August 2027

KING'S COLLEGE SCHOOL
PANAMA

1. Purpose and Context

King's College School Panama is a British international school and part of Inspired Education Group. We educate pupils from Early Years to IBDP within a linguistically diverse community in which many pupils speak Spanish or another language at home.

This policy sets out how the School identifies, supports, monitors and evaluates provision for pupils learning English as an Additional Language.

The School aims to ensure that pupils:

- have full and equitable access to the curriculum;
- develop the academic language required for success at IGCSE and IBDP;
- achieve outcomes in line with their wider academic profile;
- participate fully in the wider life of the School; and
- experience an inclusive environment that values multilingualism.

Multilingualism is regarded as a strength. EAL is not viewed as a deficit, but as an aspect of language development that may require structured, ambitious and time-limited support.

This policy should be read alongside the Inclusion Policy, Admissions Policy, Assessment Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

2. Definitions and Principles

English as an Additional Language (EAL) refers to pupils who use or have significant exposure to a language other than English in their home or prior educational experience.

Not all pupils identified as EAL require additional support.

EAL support is provided where a pupil's current proficiency in English limits independent access to the curriculum and additional provision is required.

English proficiency is considered across:

- social and conversational fluency;
- academic vocabulary and language;
- reading and writing;
- subject-specific language; and
- confidence and participation.

EAL provision at King's is underpinned by the following principles:

- every teacher contributes to language development;

- curriculum access is non-negotiable;
- academic language development is explicit and planned;
- EAL is distinct from SEND;
- high expectations are maintained;
- support should increase independence over time; and
- impact is evaluated through progress, attainment, participation and independence.

3. Universal and Additional Provision

High-quality adaptive teaching is the foundation of EAL provision.

Teachers may use:

- explicit vocabulary instruction;
- structured talk;
- sentence stems;
- visual scaffolds;
- dual coding;
- modelled academic writing;
- pre-teaching of key vocabulary;
- adapted resources; and
- explicit teaching of subject-specific and examination language.

Where pupils require additional support, provision may include:

- targeted in-class support;
- guided reading;
- writing support;
- small-group intervention;
- additional language practice; or
- intensive specialist language intervention.

Additional provision will be:

- clearly defined;
- proportionate to need;
- reviewed regularly;
- focused on measurable outcomes; and
- reduced as the pupil develops greater independence.

4. Identification and Admission Assessment

EAL identification begins during admission and continues through ongoing monitoring.

Indicators may include:

- information provided on the application form;
- significant use of a language other than English at home;
- prior schooling in a non-English medium;
- school reports indicating language-related barriers;
- teacher observation;
- pupil performance; and
- standardised assessment data.

No single measure is used in isolation to determine EAL provision.

Where English proficiency is unclear, the School may undertake further assessment.

This may include:

Primary

- language screening;
- oral-language assessment;
- reading and decoding check;
- writing sample; and
- parent consultation.

Secondary

- language screening;
- structured conversation;
- writing sample; and
- review of prior attainment and school reports.

CAT4 and other standardised data may inform this process but will not be used in isolation to determine EAL provision.

Pupils requiring support are assessed using the School's approved English-proficiency framework and assigned an appropriate proficiency level.

5. Early Years

In Early Years, language development is monitored through observational assessment and age-appropriate communication milestones.

Staff are expected to distinguish between:

- normal bilingual or multilingual development;
- temporary language-acquisition differences; and
- possible speech, language or communication needs requiring further assessment.

Where concerns arise, assessment is reviewed collaboratively, parents are consulted and appropriate referral pathways are followed where necessary.

Multilingual development in Early Years will not be prematurely pathologised.

6. Placement and Charging

Pupils requiring EAL support are placed on the EAL register and assigned an appropriate proficiency level.

Support will reflect:

- proficiency;
- age and phase;
- curriculum demands;
- progress;
- individual need; and
- available provision.

The School is committed to ensuring access to the core curriculum for all pupils.

Reasonable classroom adaptations and universal EAL support are included within standard tuition.

Where a pupil requires specialist, additional or intensive EAL provision beyond the School's standard universal offer, any additional support arrangements and associated fees will be discussed transparently with parents in advance and applied in accordance with the School's Admissions Policy, enrolment terms and applicable Inspired Education requirements.

Provision will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains necessary, proportionate and focused on increasing independence.

7. Curriculum and Assessment Access

EAL pupils follow the full British curriculum across Early Years, Primary, Key Stage 3, IGCSE and IBDP.

In IGCSE and IBDP, support will increasingly focus on subject-specific academic language, essay structure, analytical writing and examination requirements.

EAL staff should work collaboratively with subject teachers to ensure that language support improves access without lowering academic expectations.

Where permitted by awarding bodies, EAL pupils may receive assessment access arrangements where there is appropriate evidence and the arrangement reflects their normal way of working.

Possible arrangements may include:

- bilingual word-for-word dictionaries;
- additional time where permitted and justified;
- separate-room provision; or
- other approved arrangements.

A pupil's EAL status alone does not automatically create an entitlement to an access arrangement.

All arrangements must:

- comply with relevant examination-board or IB requirements;
- be evidence-based;
- be proportionate; and
- avoid conferring an unfair academic advantage.

8. Monitoring and Exit

EAL provision is monitored through evidence including:

- proficiency progress;
- academic progress and attainment;
- curriculum access;
- increasing independence;
- pupil participation and confidence;
- pupil voice; and
- external examination outcomes where relevant.

The School expects EAL pupils to make progress commensurate with their wider academic profile and to develop increasing independence in accessing the curriculum.

Pupils may exit specialist or intensive EAL provision when they demonstrate:

- secure functional and academic English;
- sustained curriculum access;
- increasing independence; and
- progress appropriate to their wider profile.

Pupils may continue to be monitored for an appropriate period after exit to ensure that progress is sustained.

9. Safeguarding and SEND Interface

Language acquisition must not mask safeguarding, wellbeing or learning concerns.

Language barriers must not prevent a pupil from reporting a concern or being understood.

Where necessary, the School will use appropriate communication or translation support to enable a pupil to express concerns safely.

Staff must not rely on another pupil or child to interpret sensitive safeguarding information where this would be inappropriate.

The EAL team works closely with the Head of Inclusion, teaching staff, Heads of Phase, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and relevant external professionals.

Where underachievement persists despite appropriate EAL provision, further assessment may be considered.

No pupil will be identified as having SEND solely because of their stage of English-language acquisition.

Where a safeguarding concern arises, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy takes precedence.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

Head of School

The Head of School provides strategic oversight and ensures EAL provision is reviewed through appropriate School governance structures.

Head of Inclusion and EAL Lead

The Head of Inclusion and EAL Lead:

- leads EAL strategy and provision;
- oversees assessment and proficiency tracking;
- coordinates targeted and intensive EAL support;
- monitors impact and pupil outcomes;
- supports staff with EAL and inclusive classroom practice;
- liaises with parents and relevant external professionals;
- contributes to admissions assessment;
- ensures alignment between EAL, SEND and wider Inclusion provision; and
- reports to senior leaders on provision, progress and emerging needs.

Heads of Section and Heads of Phase

Heads of Section and Heads of Phase support consistent implementation, monitor academic progress, participation and wellbeing, and ensure concerns are escalated appropriately.

Class and Subject Teachers

Teachers:

- plan explicitly for language development;
- maintain high academic expectations;
- use appropriate adaptive teaching;
- monitor progress;
- implement agreed strategies; and
- escalate concerns appropriately.

Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians are encouraged to:

- support language development at home;
- maintain the child's home language where appropriate;
- engage with review meetings;
- share relevant educational history; and
- maintain open communication with the School.

11. Professional Development

Staff receive appropriate professional development in:

- academic-language teaching;
- adaptive teaching for EAL learners;
- multilingual development;
- avoiding misidentification of SEND;
- interpreting assessment information;
- supporting classroom participation; and
- safeguarding pupils where language barriers exist.

Training priorities will reflect the needs of the School and current pupil population.

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where required by:

- changes in BSO standards;
- changes in IB or examination requirements;
- changes in Panamanian legislation or guidance;
- changes in Inspired Education requirements;
- changes in School provision; or
- evidence arising from pupil outcomes and quality assurance.