



Barnard Castle School

ESTD 1883

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

This is a Senior School Policy

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Action	Responsibility	Date
Reviewed	Deputy Head (Academic) (NOC)	January 2026
Approved	Headmaster (DJC)	January 2026
Next Review	Deputy Head (Academic) (NOC)	April 2026

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Academic Support and SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) policy and the Learning and Teaching policy.

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1. Policy Statement and Aims

Barnard Castle School is committed to providing an inclusive, ambitious, and supportive educational environment in which all pupils, including those for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL), are able to flourish academically, socially, and personally. The school seeks to integrate EAL pupils fully into all aspects of school life and to ensure they are supported to make strong progress from their individual starting points.

The aim of EAL provision is to enable pupils to develop the linguistic competence, confidence, and independence required to access the curriculum fully, participate actively in school life, and achieve their academic potential.

2. Definition of EAL

A pupil is identified as having English as an Additional Language if English is not their first language and they require additional support to access learning and communicate effectively. This includes pupils at all stages of English language acquisition, from beginners to those approaching fluency.

EAL is recognised as a language acquisition need and is distinct from special educational needs, although pupils may have overlapping needs.

3. Curriculum Intent for EAL

The curriculum intent for EAL supports the school's wider academic ambition by ensuring that pupils whose first language is not English are equipped with the language skills required to succeed across the curriculum, participate fully in school life, and engage confidently with the values and expectations of the school community, including fundamental British values.

EAL provision is designed to:

- Support rapid and sustained progress in English language acquisition
- Enable pupils to access mainstream subjects and wider school life
- Prepare pupils for external qualifications and future study or employment
- Promote confidence, independence, and effective communication

Integration into the mainstream curriculum is a central aim of EAL provision, ensuring pupils are able to maximise their academic and personal potential.

4. Identification and Admission of EAL

Pupils who may require EAL support are identified during the admissions process and referred to the EAL teacher. Where necessary, pupils may be required to demonstrate a minimum level of English proficiency to meet visa requirements.

All pupils identified as potentially requiring EAL support are assessed on entry in all year groups, to establish their level of linguistic competence. This ensures that provision is appropriately targeted and responsive to individual need.

The **Oxford English Placement Test**, aligned to the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)**, is used to assess pupils' English language proficiency.

5. Assessment, Monitoring and Progress

EAL pupils are assessed on entry and at regular points throughout the academic year using internal assessments aligned to the CEFR framework. These assessments are used to:

- Establish starting points
- Monitor progress over time
- Inform teaching provision and support decisions
- Evaluate readiness for transition into mainstream English or external examinations

Progress is reviewed regularly by the EAL teacher in conjunction with tutors and senior staff.

6. Learning and Teaching Strategies (Implementation)

EAL teaching provision is informed by initial assessment and varies according to pupils' current level of English. Typically, one of the following arrangements is made:

- Pupils with sufficient proficiency are placed in a **mainstream English set** alongside first-language English speakers.
- Pupils requiring more targeted support join a **dedicated EAL English set**, taught four lessons per week by the specialist EAL teacher. These lessons run in parallel with the mainstream English timetable and represent the most common provision for overseas pupils.
- Some pupils, particularly in the Sixth Form, receive **small-group EAL support** (1–3 lessons per week), often alongside preparation for specific qualifications. Grouping is based on language proficiency wherever possible.

EAL lessons focus on developing all areas of language—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—and are designed to accelerate language acquisition and support full integration into curricular, co-curricular, and social aspects of school life.

7. Targeted EAL Support and Intervention

Targeted EAL support is provided through timetabled lessons and small-group interventions. The aim is to enable pupils to transition into mainstream English and wider curriculum provision when appropriate.

For long-term pupils, progression may include:

- Integration into mainstream English lessons
- Preparation for and entry into recognised external EAL qualifications
- Achievement of language proficiency suitable for university entry

Provision is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains appropriate and effective.

8. Inclusion and Access to the Curriculum

EAL pupils are fully included in the life of the school. All overseas pupils are members of the boarding community, providing opportunities for language immersion in a natural, English-speaking environment.

The school is committed to ensuring that EAL pupils have equitable access to:

- The full academic curriculum
- Co-curricular activities
- Pastoral support and enrichment opportunities

Teaching staff are supported to adapt classroom practice to ensure EAL pupils can engage meaningfully with learning.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Deputy Head (Academic):** Strategic oversight of EAL provision and alignment with whole-school academic ambition
- **EAL Teacher:** Delivery of EAL teaching, assessment, monitoring progress, and advising staff
- **Tutors:** Monitoring pupils' academic progress and wellbeing, and liaising with parents
- **Subject Teachers:** Supporting EAL pupils through adaptive teaching strategies

10. Training and Professional Development

The school is committed to developing staff understanding of EAL strategies. Staff are supported to:

- Understand language acquisition needs
- Adapt teaching to support EAL learners
- Promote inclusive classroom practice

11. Partnership with Parents and Pupils

The school works closely with parents to support pupils' progress in English. Communication focuses on:

- Progress and attainment
- Next steps and support strategies
- Examination pathways and qualifications

Pupils are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for their language development.

12. Wellbeing, Personal Development and Pastoral Support

EAL provision supports pupils' confidence, identity, and sense of belonging. Developing spoken fluency is recognised as central to pupils' social integration and wellbeing.

Pastoral systems ensure that EAL pupils are supported academically and emotionally as they settle into school life.

13. Safeguarding Considerations

The school ensures that EAL pupils understand safeguarding procedures and know how to seek help. Information is communicated clearly and, where necessary, reinforced through additional explanation or support.

14. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review (Impact)

The impact of EAL provision is evaluated through:

- Language assessment outcomes
- Academic progress across subjects
- Successful integration into mainstream English and curriculum provision
- Pupil voice and wellbeing indicators
- Outcomes in external examinations

This policy is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective, inclusive, and aligned with the school's academic ambition.