

# ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) POLICY

**Policy Statement:**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Differentiation, the Admissions, Learning Skills & SEND and the More Able Policies.

**Purpose:**

This policy describes the way in which the School meets the needs of children with English as an Additional Language (EAL). Pupils with EAL needs will have access to the whole school curriculum and will be fully integrated into the School.

The School wishes to support all of its pupils who have EAL needs to become effective, independent learners and thereby to achieve their maximum potential. The policy takes account of the SEN Code of Practice 2014 which recognises that pupils with EAL needs often have a linguistic rather than a learning or cognitive difficulty. At the same time, when pupils who have EAL needs do not make the expected progress, it should not be assumed that their language status is the only reason and they may be referred to the Learning Skills Department for assessment in accordance with the SEND policy.

**Downe House in Context**

Downe House is an independent boarding school for girls from 11-18 years. Downe House welcomes pupils from diverse cultural backgrounds and among the School's population there is a proportion of pupils with EAL needs.

Downe House is committed to providing teaching and learning resources to facilitate pupils with EAL needs becoming confident and capable in the use of English.

The School has a Learning Skills (LS) Department consisting of a full time Head of Academic Support, a Co-ordinator of EAL and specialist teachers for pupils with EAL needs.

**Aims**

The School and specifically the Learning Skills Department aim to:

- Meet the needs of any pupil in the School, including those who have EAL needs, within the mainstream curriculum, using English as the language of instruction.
- Offer full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education to pupils with EAL needs.
- Ensure that no pupil is discriminated against, in any area of school life, on the basis of her cultural/language needs.
- Work collaboratively with academic and pastoral staff to support the English needs of a pupil as effectively as possible, in order to narrow the attainment gap between EAL pupils and their peers.
- Regularly monitor a pupil's or pupils' progress to ensure that difficulties in achieving their potential are detected as soon as possible.

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- Recognise and value the importance of the pupil's first language and the additional experience and perspective that this brings to the School.
- Involve parents in any key decisions relating to their daughter's EAL programme. Pupils should also play an active part in this process.
- Prepare pupils for IELTS examinations, as required for university entrance and visa conditions.
- Support pupils to develop confidence and self-belief through encouragement and guidance.

## **Guidance**

### **Admission Arrangements**

The School admits pupils with EAL needs who fulfil the admission requirements (refer to the Admissions Policy). EAL lessons may be offered as a condition of entry. Parents are urged to discuss with the Registrar any reasonable adjustments that need to be put in place in advance of an application for a place in the School. Once the School's admission procedures are met, any information regarding the history of an EAL pupil's English language learning should be passed on to Head of Academic Support and disseminated. This information has a direct impact on exam access arrangements, in accordance with exam body regulations.

All new pupils whose first Language is not English have their English assessed using the online Oxford Placement Test. Those students who are identified as needing EAL support are then individually diagnostically screened by specialist teachers for pupils with EAL needs to ascertain their level of listening, reading, writing and speaking skills. The level descriptors are in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for languages.

### **Procedures and Support**

- All staff are familiar with the EAL Policy and their role in implementing it.
- The Head of Academic Support will work closely with the Registrar, Head of Section and EAL Coordinator in order to plan a programme of individual EAL lessons, as required.
- The school will make use of baseline data (for example MIDYIS and ALIS) and internal examination results for screening, diagnostic purposes and for shaping pupils' individual programmes.
- The Learning Skills department will ensure that EAL information and targets are accessible via Schoolbase.
- The Learning Skills Department provide whole-staff training on supporting EAL pupils when required. Guidance (including via SchoolBase) is also offered to staff on effective differentiation and flexible teaching to help cater for the learning styles and English language level of an individual pupil as outlined in the Differentiation Policy.
- Specialist EAL teaching is provided based on a programme of individual lessons which build on the core language skills as well as being relevant to the School's curriculum.
- EAL lessons may follow an appropriate external examinations course to support university entry, e.g. IELTS. These may be group or one to one lessons depending on the need.
- The Head of Academic Support will liaise closely with the Exams Office on issues concerning access arrangements (for example the use of a bi-lingual dictionary) for external and internal examinations.
- The Learning Skills department is able to help House Staff to support pupils experiencing cultural changes and differences.
- There is ongoing support for pupils when a programme of EAL lessons has ceased.
- All EAL students have their progress monitored if they have not achieved C1 Advanced level on entry in all four key skills.

## Charging

- The School charges all pupils who receive EAL lessons. These charges are reviewed on an annual basis.
- External examinations are chargeable and will be recharged to parents.
- Charges are made clear to parents before any assessment or support lessons are agreed.
- A half-term's notice is required for the termination of lessons, but this step should first be agreed by the Head of Academic Support.

## Evaluation

Downe House adheres to the principle of Quality First Teaching. This means that high quality inclusive teaching, ensures that planning and implementation meets the needs of ALL pupils, and builds in high expectations for all pupils, including those with EAL Needs. Teachers carefully consider and adapt their teaching to promote the progress and development of all pupils, in addition to support by specialist staff.

Intervention programmes are adjusted on a termly basis, in the light of the progress the pupils are making, drawing on a rich variety of assessment data available within the school context, and responding appropriately to the 'pupil voice'.

This policy refers to the following School policies, copies of which can be located on SchoolBase in the 'Documents' section:

Admissions (Reviewer: HM)

Differentiation (Reviewer: DH(A))

## Revision History:

| Revision | Date           | Description of changes            | Requested By       |
|----------|----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
|          | September 2014 | Reviewed                          | Areti Bizior       |
|          | September 2015 | Reviewed                          | Areti Bizior       |
|          | September 2016 | Reviewed                          | Areti Bizior       |
|          | 26.10.16       | Amended                           | Eloise Bartholomew |
|          | September 2017 | Reviewed                          | Areti Bizior       |
|          | September 2018 | Reviewed                          | Areti Bizior       |
|          | September 2019 | Reviewed                          | Areti Bizior       |
|          | September 2020 | Reviewed (amendments highlighted) | Philippa Toogood   |
|          | September 2021 | Reviewed                          | CJ/ NSK            |
|          | September 2022 | Reviewed                          | CJ/NSK             |
|          | September 2023 | Reviewed                          | CJ/NSK             |
|          | September 2024 | Reviewed (amendments highlighted) | SLAW/NSK           |
|          | September 2025 | Reviewed                          | SLAW/NSK           |

Review Leader: Deputy Head (Operations & CCA)

Reviewed: September 2025

Next Review: September 2026

Review Date: September 2026 - DHO