

The Lancaster School EAL Policy



The Lancaster
SCHOOL

Approved by:	Naomi Haughton	Date: 03.09.2026
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Our Ethos

At The Lancaster School, we believe:

Every pupil has a voice. Every lesson builds opportunity. Every day is progress.

We are a nurturing infant school where language is central to learning, inclusion, and wellbeing. We recognise that pupils learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) bring rich linguistic and cultural strengths, and we are committed to ensuring these pupils thrive academically and socially.

Aims

- Provide a welcoming environment in which pupils will learn most effectively.
- Provide support to pupils with EAL needs.
- Plan and teach lessons using learning styles most appropriate to EAL learners.
- Provide an inclusive curriculum.
- Promote home languages across school and encourage and support discussion of learning (in home language) at home.
- Monitor pupils' progress against the Bell Foundation and the National Proficiency Scale.
- Assess pupils in class and set targets based on these assessments.
- Ensure pupils are making progress and are able to access the school curriculum.
- Celebrate pupils' achievements in school, and in extra-curricular activities.
- Rapidly develop English language skills
- Access the full curriculum from the earliest possible point
- Participate confidently in classroom talk and learning
- Feel safe, valued, and included
- Achieve outcomes in line with their peers over time

Definition of EAL

A pupil is identified as EAL if they are exposed to a language other than English at home.

We recognise that:

- EAL learners may range from **new to English to fully fluent**
- Social fluency may develop quickly, but **academic language takes longer**

At The Lancaster School, we aim to cater for all our pupils to whom English is an additional learning need. We are committed to providing appropriate and personalised support for all pupils with EAL. Throughout their time at school, we provide pupils with the necessary means to access the curriculum. We give children the opportunity to improve their fluency in speaking, reading, writing and understanding English.

Definitions of an EAL Learner

"First language is the language to which the child was initially exposed during early development and continues to use this language at home and community. If a child acquires English subsequent to early

development then English is not their first language no matter how proficient in it they become.” DFES Guidance 2007

Bilingual Learner

“ Bilingual here is taken to mean all pupils who use or have access to more than one language at home or at school- it does not necessarily imply fluency in both or all languages”. DFES Guidance 2007.

Advanced Bilingual Learner

“Advanced Bilingual learners are pupils who have had all or most of their school education in the UK and whose oral proficiency in English is usually indistinguishable from that of pupils with English as a first language but whose writing may still show distinctive features related to the language background.” DCFS 2009.

Teaching and Learning

EAL support is embedded in high-quality, inclusive teaching across all classrooms.

In our infant context, this means:

- Language-rich classrooms with strong visual support
- Structured opportunities for talk, play, and interaction
- Explicit modelling of vocabulary and sentence structures (stem sentences)
- Repetition and routine to support understanding
- Pre-teaching key vocabulary
- Use of visuals, gestures, and real objects
- Talk partners and oral rehearsal before writing
- Storytelling, role play, and structured talk

Assessment

At The Lancaster School, we use the principles from The Bell Foundation EAL Assessment Framework to ensure precise, consistent support.

Pupils are assessed across four strands:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

Using five stages:

- A (New to English)
- B (Early Acquisition)

- C (Developing Competence)
- D (Competent)
- E (Fluent)

Pupils are given a language profile, not a single level.

- Baseline assessment on entry (including mid-year admissions)
- Assigning a stage for each language strand
- Using “can do” descriptors to support consistency
- Regular moderation between staff

Tracking Progress

Progress is tracked termly and includes:

- Movement between stages
- Progress within stages (e.g. increased independence, accuracy, and confidence)

We recognise that:

- Progress may vary across strands
- Early gains are often seen in listening and speaking
- Writing development may take longer

Curriculum Access

At The Lancaster School:

We do not lower expectations—we remove language barriers.

We ensure pupils can:

- Understand instructions and lesson content
- Participate in learning through talk and interaction
- Demonstrate understanding in a range of ways
- Language is scaffolded

Early Language and EYFS Focus

As an infant school, we place strong emphasis on:

- Oracy development as the foundation for all learning

- Vocabulary development through play and interaction
- Structured talk opportunities in continuous provision
- Adult modelling of high-quality language

Inclusion and Wellbeing

We actively promote inclusion by:

- Valuing and celebrating home languages and cultures
- Encouraging pupils to use their first language where appropriate
- Supporting emotional wellbeing, particularly for new arrivals
- Building strong relationships with families

Monitoring and Quality Assurance

We monitor EAL provision through:

- Book looks and learning walks
- Pupil voice
- Assessment data
- Moderation meetings

This ensures consistency and continuous improvement.

Home learning support

Useful websites in a range of languages to support English language learning at home

1. <https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/> - An excellent website with activities for children and adults to learn English. Click on your home language then go to the parents tab.
2. <http://en.childrenslibrary.org/> - Online books for children in many languages. Go to The Library and click on Read Books
3. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/stories> - For younger children, lots of fun!
4. <https://littleowlsresources.com/> - For learning vocabulary. Go to Dual Language then click on the Free Download button to see the resources
5. <https://kids.wordsmyth.net/we/> - A useful dictionary. Go to dictionaries then click on WILD (illustrated)
6. **Duo Lingo**