

EAL Policy Senior School and Sixth Form	2 i
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Responsible for Initiating Review of Policy	Assistant Head - Academic
Committee to Review	SLT
Last Review Date	August 2025
Review Period	Three yearly
Approved by (Committee and Date)	SLT
Approved by Board of Governors	November 2025
Effective Date of Policy	September 2025
Next Review Date	August 2028
Related Policies	2a Curriculum Policy Statement – Senior School and Sixth Form 2b Curriculum Synopsis – Senior School and Sixth Form Policy Statement on Admissions EAL Process and Charges from senior staff handbook Further documents that relate to the implementation of the policy can be found in the senior staff handbook.

Introduction

Burgess Hill Girls is proud to welcome applicants for both boarding and day places for whom English is an additional language. Students generally join the school on the understanding that they will follow the full school curriculum appropriate to their age and English Language ability. Burgess Hill Girls admits pupils at national average and above and the school's curriculum is assessed via the English language. It is therefore important that pupils demonstrate a level of proficiency in oral and written English which will enable them to thrive here and integrate with their English-speaking peers.

Those for whom English is an Additional Language are offered appropriate support for their language development by the EAL department. These classes are usually carried out in small groups, or on a one-to-one basis by arrangement with parents.

Many of those with EAL are boarders but increasingly our day girl population includes girls from families located in the local area who have settled in the UK. All students with English as an additional language bring a richness of experience to the school and are warmly welcomed. They often sit at the top of their year cohorts and more are winning scholarships.

Overall aims

- To welcome and celebrate the cultural, linguistic and educational diversity that EAL pupils bring to Burgess Hill Girls and encourage a sense of pride in each girl's own culture.
- To foster an interest in life in Britain and British culture.
- To support individual EAL girls throughout the school with academic English language so that they are able to access the curriculum, participate fully in lessons and achieve their academic potential in their school career and public examinations.
- To provide opportunities to develop the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening in English, as well as support to develop confident use of more complex grammar and vocabulary suitable for the school's academic context.
- To provide general English language support so that girls are able to participate in school life at all levels, socially and academically.
- To foster a familiarity with the English language so that EAL girls feel at ease with its use, being prepared to take linguistic risks and extend their linguistic capabilities within a safe and supportive learning environment that encourages a 'have a go' attitude.
- To provide linguistic support and development in order for each girl to gain access to the higher education institutions by taking English IGCSE qualifications in English

Language and Literature. Only in exceptional circumstances do students forego this and take qualifications with the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

- EAL lessons aim to foster self-expression and personal development through the study of English language.

Objectives

- To identify, through a combination of entrance testing and diagnostic testing at the start of each academic year and liaison with teaching staff, the language learning needs of EAL girls to ensure that each girl is following an appropriate course of language study.
- To develop language skills required in mainstream subjects so that girls develop the skills to move from the production of general English to the active use of academic English in both receptive skills (reading and listening) and productive skills (speaking and writing). To recognise that this transition is exceptionally challenging and provide support where necessary both for the girls and mainstream subject teachers, as required, so that EAL learners' language can develop across the curriculum in conjunction with their subject specific knowledge.
- To ensure that teaching staff have access to appropriate information regarding the language learning needs of EAL girls.
- To foster independent learning by encouraging target setting and subsequent review of these.
- To use a range of teaching resources, taking into account the groups' learning preferences and interests.
- To practise differentiated learning to stretch linguistically able girls and scaffold tasks for those less able.
- To regularly assess and evaluate students' progress and give feedback to students and parents as necessary.
- As necessary, provide occasional, informal feedback to parents and guardians via email or face-to-face meetings in order to help develop a positive relationship between the school and overseas parents.
- To identify girls who qualify for access arrangements in public examinations and ensure, in collaboration with the Exams Officer, that appropriate access facilities are provided.

Implementation of the policy

Identification of EAL needs

On application to the school:

- All EAL applicants from Years 7 to 12 sit an EAL paper which assesses their range and accuracy of grammar and vocabulary and their ability to produce an extended piece of writing.
- After these results are in, if a student has the opportunity to visit the school, the EAL teacher endeavours also to have an informal chat with them to establish their level of spoken English, otherwise an online interview is conducted before an offer is considered.
- For sixth form applicants, the interview is conducted by the Head of Sixth Form and/or the Assistant Head Academic / Assistant Head Pastoral & Boarding, and a Head of Department in one of the A Level subjects the applicant wishes to study.
- From this evidence, those students whose tests indicate a need for extra English support are made an offer of admission on this basis and are allocated group lessons each week. A charge is made for these timetabled group lessons. Occasionally, a place is only offered to a girl on the understanding that she makes a required level of progress with English. Students entering the senior school need to have a level of proficiency in English Language equivalent to B1 on the CEFR scale in order to access the curriculum effectively. For entry into the Sixth Form the required level is IELTS 6, which equates to a B2 on the CEFR scale.

On entry to the school and at the start of each academic year:

- All new EAL students sit age-appropriate baseline screening / diagnostic tests during the first week of school to identify the extent to which they require support. These assessments provide standardised information relating to reading accuracy and reading comprehension speed.
- The EAL department shares information about each student's reading comprehension and reading accuracy with all teachers via the EAL Information Sheets on SharePoint.
- Where a student's reading comprehension speed is below average, a further in-depth assessment is advised to ascertain whether the issue is related to English being an additional language or a possible underlying specific learning difficulty.

Year 7 and 8 entrants: New girls into these years are met by the EAL teacher and their level of English is assessed. Where necessary, students receive three weekly lessons of small group tuition in place of French on their timetable. If there is a requirement for it and capacity allows, there may be additional 1:1 teaching provided.

Year 9 entrants: All new EAL students into Year 9 follow the mainstream curriculum and in Year 11 take IGCSEs in English Language and English Literature. In exceptional circumstances e.g. where a student joins in Year 11 and follows a reduced programme of GCSEs, they may follow a

course of EAL study which culminates in the Academic IELTS test in Year 12 (accepted by all British universities and valid for two years). This decision is made in agreement with the student concerned, their parents, the Assistant Head Academic and the EAL Department.

Year 12 entrants: If a student entering Year 12 has already achieved an IELTS band score 7, it is assumed that they are capable of coping with A levels in English and they are not required to attend additional EAL support lessons. Otherwise, EAL students entering the school new into Year 12 sit a diagnostic test which aims to assess their likely score in the Academic IELTS test. They then follow a short course of study which culminates in the Academic IELTS test in the spring or summer term of Year 12. If they are not satisfied with their score, they are free to continue with IELTS preparation lessons into Year 13. A key factor to consider throughout is what the Academic IELTS requirements are of the student's chosen university. It is each student's individual responsibility to contact the admissions departments of their chosen universities to clarify their IELTS entry requirements.

NB. It is important to note that if EAL girls at Burgess Hill Girls currently hold a Tier 4 (Child) visa, then they are considered exempt from the 'Academic IELTS for UKVI' if their university is the sponsoring agent for their visa. All girls will sit the 'Academic IELTS'. If they have any doubt on this, they are responsible for contacting their chosen universities themselves to clarify this.

Provision of Teaching

EAL tuition for girls at Burgess Hill School for Girls is most commonly provided in small groups in place of a language. An additional charge is made for these group lessons (see EAL Process and Charges) and the EAL department and relevant Assistant Head (Senior School) liaises closely with each student, parents and their teachers in order to provide a personalised programme appropriate to the student's needs and the charges for this programme. A teaching plan outlining the focus and content of lessons, is shared with parents and guardians. Changes to the EAL provision for a student are decided in close discussion between the Assistant Head Academic, the EAL department, the Assistant Head Pastoral and Boarding, Assistant Head, Head of Sixth Form, the form tutor or subject teachers, with the student themselves and their parents.

- Years 7 and 8: three weekly EAL lessons happen in place of French.
- Year 9 - 11: four weekly EAL lessons happen in place of one subject option, usually but not always a language. Students whose standard of English warrants less weekly input than four lessons and who wish to follow a full programme of subjects (often including a language) may have additional EAL support weekly after school.
- Years 12 and 13: EAL girls new to the school receive two periods of IELTS preparation a week.

Individual lessons can be arranged if recommended by the school and agreed by parents. These are charged at an additional cost and added to the girl's school bill.

Monitoring

Monitoring of all EAL students takes place throughout the academic year through department meetings, HoD meetings, pastoral briefings and liaison with Boarding where appropriate. The Assistant Head Academic and EAL department meet regularly and there is regular liaison with both the Assistant Head Pastoral and Boarding and the wider boarding team. The EAL department monitors the progress of EAL students with their language acquisition, reading comprehension, accuracy and writing.

All EAL students are encouraged to improve their written language skills by immersing themselves in the life of the school; they are encouraged and guided in their reading during term time and in the holidays.

Access Arrangements for Exams

The Assistant Head and EAL department, working closely with the Exams Officer, will discuss with students the use of a bilingual dictionary in exams where English is not being assessed. Students are encouraged to use these in class tests so that they become used to this way of working. They may use electronic translators in lessons and for homework for ease of working. Students are issued with an exam-approved bilingual dictionary as per their needs.

First Language Qualifications

Where appropriate, EAL students in the sixth form may be entered for public examinations in their first language, usually Chinese A Level in Year 12. Chinese A Level predominates although other language qualifications are also taken such as Spanish and Arabic. Occasionally, students take a language qualification in Year 10. (N.B. The school does not offer Chinese GCSE). The Assistant Head Academic oversees this process and liaises with the appointed teacher. Tuition in other languages may be procured if required and parents liaise directly with the provider. Specialist tuition provided by the school is chargeable on the termly bill. Parents are contacted to advise of the programme and cost of specialist preparation for examinations in their first language and are asked to give written permission for the tuition and exam entry fees.