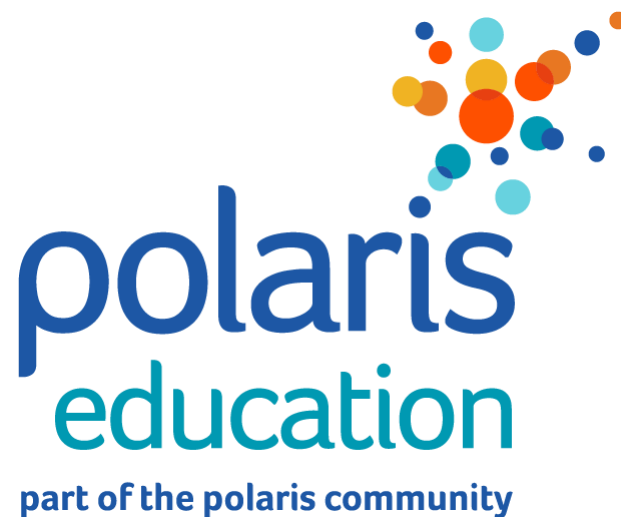




# English as an Additional Language (EAL) Guidance

|                              |                                                                                         |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Procedure Owner:</b>      | Polaris Education                                                                       |
| <b>Approved by:</b>          | Managing Director                                                                       |
| <b>Date approved:</b>        | September 2026                                                                          |
| <b>Next review date:</b>     | September 2027                                                                          |
| <b>Version No:</b>           | 01                                                                                      |
| <b>Associated Documents:</b> | SEND Policy, Equality Policy, Admissions Policy, Curriculum Policy, Safeguarding Policy |

## 1.Introduction

**A standalone EAL Policy is not a mandatory policy for independent schools.**

However, all Polaris schools should be able to demonstrate how they identify, assess and support pupils with English as an Additional Language where relevant. This is best achieved through supporting guidance rather than a mandatory policy.

Our schools are regulated primarily through the **Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISS)** rather than the maintained-school framework.

As evidenced within our SEND Policy, Polaris already aligns policies to the Independent School Standards and demonstrates how additional needs are identified and supported.

EAL is specifically recognised as a factor that may affect attainment and progress, although it is not SEND in itself.

The regulatory expectation is not that schools have an EAL policy, but that:

- Teaching takes account of pupils' ages, aptitudes and needs.
- Schools promote equality and avoid discrimination.
- Pupils can access the curriculum and make progress.
- Staff adapt teaching for learners whose first language is not English.

For Polaris, where the majority of pupils are placed due to SEND needs and many arrive with EHCPs, EAL is typically a supplementary educational consideration rather than a core specialist provision. The existing SEND policy already references EAL appropriately.

## 2. Purpose

This guidance outlines how Polaris Education schools support pupils who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL).

The guidance promotes inclusive practice and supports compliance with:

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Polaris SEND Policy
- Polaris Equality Policy

## 3. Definition

A pupil is considered to have English as an Additional Language (EAL) where exposure to a language other than English forms part of their home or community life.

EAL is not a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND), although some pupils may have both EAL needs and SEND.

## 4. Principles

Polaris schools will:

- Value and respect linguistic and cultural diversity.
- Ensure EAL pupils have equitable access to learning.
- Distinguish between language acquisition needs and special educational needs wherever possible.
- Maintain high expectations for all pupils.
- Work collaboratively with families, carers and professionals.
- Recognise the strengths associated with bilingualism and multilingualism.

## 5. Identification

Information regarding language background will normally be gathered:

- During admissions and referral processes.
- Through discussion with parents, carers, social workers or placing authorities.
- Through review of educational records and reports.
- Through ongoing assessment of communication and learning needs.

Where uncertainty exists, staff will consider whether difficulties arise from:

- Learning English as an additional language
- Underlying SEND
- Interrupted education
- Trauma, attachment needs or adverse childhood experiences or
- A combination of factors

## 6. Assessment and Monitoring

Schools will:

- Assess pupils' English language proficiency as appropriate.
- Monitor progress across the curriculum.
- Consider prior educational experiences.
- Review whether barriers to learning are linked to language acquisition or wider learning needs.
- Use information gathered through EHCP reviews, support plans and pupil progress meetings.

## 7. Curriculum and Classroom Support

Staff may use strategies such as:

- Visual prompts and modelling.
- Simplified and scaffolded language.
- Pre-teaching of key vocabulary.
- Practical and experiential learning opportunities.
- Structured peer support.
- Adapted resources.

- Opportunities for speaking and listening before written tasks.
- Additional processing time.

Adaptations should support access to learning while maintaining ambitious expectations.

## 8. EAL and SEND

Many Polaris pupils have complex SEND profiles.

Staff should avoid assuming that difficulties are solely attributable to EAL. Where concerns remain despite language support, existing SEND assessment and review processes should be followed in line with the SEND Policy.

## 9. Partnership with Parents and Carers

Schools will seek to:

- Communicate in a clear and accessible manner.
- Use translation or interpretation support where reasonably practicable.
- Encourage families to continue using their home language.
- Involve parents, carers and key adults in planning support.

## 10. Safeguarding

Staff should remain aware that language barriers may affect a pupil's ability to:

- Report concerns
- Understand safeguarding information
- Access support services

Reasonable steps should be taken to ensure safeguarding arrangements remain accessible to EAL pupils.

## 11. Roles and Responsibilities

### **Headteacher**

Responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of this guidance and promoting an inclusive learning environment.

### **SENDCo**

Supports staff in distinguishing between EAL needs and SEND, coordinates specialist advice where appropriate, and oversees provision for pupils with additional needs.

### **Teachers**

Responsible for delivering high-quality teaching, adapting provision to meet individual needs, and monitoring pupils' progress.

### **All Staff**

Promote an inclusive environment that values linguistic and cultural diversity and works to remove barriers to participation, learning, and achievement.

## 12. Monitoring and Review Dates

This guidance should be reviewed alongside the SEND Policy and Equality Policy and updated where regulatory requirements or best practice change.

| Date | Version | Summary of Changes Made |
|------|---------|-------------------------|
|      |         |                         |