



EAL Policy

English as an Additional Language

This strategy applies to Steephill School, including the EYFS setting.

Policy Author: Mrs Helen Millward - Headteacher
Next review due: December 2026

1. Introduction

Steephill School welcomes pupils from a wide range of linguistic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Many children within our community speak more than one language and bring valuable cultural and linguistic strengths to our school. We recognise that pupils who are learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) may require additional support to access the curriculum and to achieve their full potential.

This policy outlines how Steephill School identifies, supports and monitors pupils with EAL, in alignment with guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI), and the Independent Schools Association (ISA). It demonstrates our commitment to inclusion, equal access to learning, and respect for linguistic diversity.

2. Aims

Steephill School aims to:

- Ensure that all EAL pupils can access a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum.
- Provide effective, targeted support to accelerate the development of English language proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing.
- Celebrate multilingualism and encourage pupils to value their home languages and cultural identity.
- Monitor progress and adapt provision to ensure high attainment and rapid language acquisition.
- Promote inclusive teaching strategies that support EAL learners throughout the school.
- Ensure compliance with ISI, ISA and DfE expectations for EAL and inclusion.

- **3. Definition of EAL**

A pupil is considered to have English as an Additional Language if they:

- Speak a language other than English at home,
- Have previously spoken a language other than English, or
- Are exposed to more than one language.

EAL is not considered a learning difficulty. EAL learners may be at any stage of English language acquisition, from beginner to fluent.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy is written with reference to:

- Equality Act 2010
- DfE: School Admissions Code
- DfE: English Proficiency Codes
- ISI Framework (2023) – with specific reference to equality, access to curriculum and pupil outcomes
- ISA best practice guidance for inclusion and additional needs
- DfE National Curriculum (statutory requirements) – ensuring access for all learners
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) – in relation to safeguarding EAL pupils who may be vulnerable due to language barriers.

5. Identification and Assessment

5.1 Initial Identification

During admission or induction, the following information is collected:

- Home languages
- Countries of birth / cultural background
- Languages spoken by parents
- Prior schooling
- English language proficiency
- Any previous support or interventions

This information is documented on the pupil's profile and shared with relevant staff.

5.2 Baseline Assessment

Within the first four weeks of joining the school, pupils will receive:

- An informal English language assessment
- Teacher observations
- Assessment of vocabulary, phonics and reading
- A review of writing samples
- Where appropriate, use of the DfE Proficiency in English Scale (A–E)

5.3 Ongoing Assessment

EAL pupils are monitored termly through:

- Formative assessment in class
- CUSP curriculum outcomes
- Reading age or phonics assessments
- Teacher feedback and observation
- Pupil progress meetings
- EAL intervention progress tracking

6. Provision and Support for EAL Pupils

6.1 Inclusive Classroom Teaching

Class teachers are responsible for ensuring that EAL pupils can access the curriculum. Strategies include:

- Pre-teaching key vocabulary (aligned with CUSP vocabulary instruction)
- Visual supports, practical demonstrations and modelling
- Scaffolded tasks and differentiated resources
- Sentence stems and writing frames

- Use of translations and bilingual resources where appropriate
- Targeted questioning
- Mixed-ability grouping to support language modelling
- Frequent opportunities for speaking and listening

6.2 Targeted Support

Where required, pupils may receive:

- Small-group language support
- Focused interventions on grammar, vocabulary or comprehension
- Phonics support for early learners
- Reading buddies or peer language modelling
- Supported tasks during English or writing lessons

Interventions are time-limited and monitored for impact.

6.3 Support for Newly Arrived Pupils

New arrivals may receive:

- A personalised transition plan
- Additional emotional and social support
- Bilingual resources or translation when needed
- A buddy to support playtime and social integration
- Additional check-ins with staff during the first half term

6.4 Use of Home Languages

Steephill School values multilingualism as an asset. We encourage:

- Continued development of home languages
- Use of home language in early thinking tasks

- Multilingual texts and books in reading areas
- Sharing of cultural traditions and celebrations
- Parents to speak and read in their home language at home

7. Curriculum Access

Steephill uses the **CUSP curriculum**, which prioritises:

- High-quality rich texts
- Explicit vocabulary instruction
- Structured oracy development
- Knowledge-rich content
- Scaffolding that benefits all learners, including EAL pupils

The **Twinkl RE curriculum** also supports EAL pupils through:

- Clear visual supports
- Strong cultural links
- Story-based learning
- Opportunities to make meaningful connections to personal experiences

All subjects are adapted to ensure equality of access, especially subjects with high language demands such as English, Science and Humanities.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 Headteacher

- Ensures the effective implementation of the EAL policy.
- Allocates resources for staff training and intervention.
- Oversees compliance with ISI, ISA and DfE expectations.

8.2 EAL Lead / SENCO

- Coordinates identification, assessment and provision for EAL pupils.
- Monitors progress and evaluates provision.
- Provides training and support for staff.
- Ensures accurate record keeping.
- Liaises with external specialists if required.

8.3 Class Teachers

- Deliver inclusive teaching and adapt lessons to meet EAL needs.
- Provide vocabulary-rich and scaffolded instruction.
- Monitor progress and inform the EAL Lead of concerns.
- Use assessment information to plan effectively.

8.4 Support Staff

- Assist pupils with targeted interventions.
- Provide language modelling and pastoral support.
- Feedback to teachers and the EAL Lead.

8.5 Parents and Families

- Share information about home languages and cultural background.
- Continue using home language to support cognitive development.
- Work in partnership with the school to support language development.

9. Safeguarding and Welfare

EAL pupils may be at higher risk of misunderstanding safeguarding messages. Therefore:

- Safeguarding information may be translated or explained with additional support.
- Staff remain vigilant for signs of misunderstanding, isolation or communication barriers.
- Pastoral check-ins are frequent, particularly for new arrivals.
- Attendance, wellbeing and communication are closely monitored.

Safeguarding procedures follow KCSIE and the Steephill Child Protection Policy.

10. Admissions

In line with the DfE Admissions Code and ISI expectations:

- Pupils with EAL are welcomed and not discriminated against.
- Admission decisions are not based on English language proficiency.
- Reasonable adjustments are made to support transition and early integration.
- Parents are offered additional meetings or translated materials where appropriate.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of EAL provision is monitored through:

- Termly pupil progress reviews
- Lesson observations and learning walks
- Work scrutiny
- Standardised assessment where appropriate
- Pupil voice
- Analysis of attainment and progress across subjects
- Evaluation of interventions

Findings are reported to SLT and governors as part of the school's quality assurance cycle.

12. Staff Training and Professional Development

Staff at Steephill receive ongoing CPD in:

- Inclusive teaching strategies
- Supporting early language acquisition
- Vocabulary instruction (aligned to CUSP)
- Scaffolding and differentiation
- Cultural competency and unconscious bias

Training ensures that provision remains compliant with ISI, DfE and ISA expectations.

13. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Headteacher, EAL Lead and governing body to ensure:

- Compliance with updated ISI or DfE requirements
- Alignment with school priorities
- Continued effectiveness and impact

14. Conclusion

Steephill School is committed to providing an inclusive, equitable and supportive learning environment for all EAL pupils. We recognise the linguistic and cultural richness they bring to our community and strive to ensure that every child develops the English language skills needed to succeed academically, socially and personally.

Our approach reflects high expectations, respect for diversity and a belief that language should never be a barrier to opportunity.