

English as an Additional Language

The school is happy to recognise and welcome its obligation, in accordance with its Equal Opportunities and Individual Needs policies, to eliminate disadvantage in its admissions procedures, to overcome potential barriers to learning and to set suitable learning challenges for children for whom English is an Additional Language.

Definition

At St John's, children are defined as having 'English as an Additional Language' if they spoke a language other than English (or in addition to English) during the first years of their life.

Admissions

The school will admit children for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) if it deems them able, with appropriate support, to benefit in due course from the mainstream curriculum. Until such a time, individual tuition in English is provided by a specialist teacher in place of mainstream lessons as appropriate. It is a condition of admission that the cost of such tuition should be borne by the parents.

All prospective parents are asked to complete the school's Equal Opportunities Form prior to admission into any age group, and to indicate whether English is the main and/or only language spoken at home. Where this is not the case, arrangements will be made to ensure that any assessment procedure is adjusted as appropriate to accommodate a child's need for support and to ensure that a child's potential is fully understood.

In the course of the admissions procedure, information is gathered about:

- the child's linguistic background and competence in other languages
- the child's previous educational and schooling experience
- the child's family and biographical background

The school's Individual Needs department is responsible for the assessment of any child's need for learning support, irrespective of underlying ability. Where a child is admitted with EAL, an initial assessment in speaking and listening, reading and writing will be made, by a specialist teacher, of any need for support within or beyond the mainstream, with the aim of integrating a child fully into the curriculum.

The school recognises that pupils with EAL needing additional support with learning English do not have learning difficulties. However, should such difficulties be identified during assessment, pupils with EAL will have equal access to the school's Individual Needs provision. Similarly, the school recognises that there may well be pupils with EAL who are gifted or talented even though they may not be fully fluent in English.

Provision

Depending on a child's age and specific circumstances, support may range from in-class provision of learning assistance to withdrawal from mainstream lessons for one-to-one tuition of an intensive and extended nature.

We aim to ensure that any child with EAL can:

- Use English confidently and competently
- Use English fully as a means of learning across the curriculum

Where there is a need for differentiation, teaching will be planned to provide differentiated opportunities matched to individual children's EAL needs. As appropriate, key features of language which are necessary for effective participation will be identified. These might be key words, certain patterns of grammar, uses of language or forms of text.

As necessary, any of the following **support strategies** may be used to ensure curriculum access:

- Collaborative group work
- Enhanced opportunities for speaking and listening
- Effective role models of speaking, reading and writing
- Additional verbal support-repetition, alternative phrasing, peer support
- Additional visual support, e.g. posters, objects, non-verbal clues, pictures, demonstration, use of gesture, etc.
- Bilingual resources, e.g. dictionaries, on-line support, bilingual staff/pupils, texts, key word lists.
- Opportunities for role play

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children will be supported to use their home language through play. For example, multi-lingual labels are displayed around the classroom and dual language books are in the book corners and shared with the children. Children are actively encouraged to share their languages with each other.

Resources on which reading and writing activities may be based are checked for grammatical, lexical and cultural accessibility. A range of resources is used to support pupils' linguistic development, e.g. games, visual materials, differentiated worksheets, key word lists, bilingual dictionaries, taped materials, computer software, etc.

Staff will regularly observe, assess and record information about a child with EAL's developing use of language. Whilst account is taken of EAL development, the school aims to set appropriate and challenging targets for individual children.

If appropriate a child with EAL will sit the external Preliminary English Tests as set by the Cambridge University Examinations Syndicate, having been prepared within school in the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. These tests are internationally recognised.