Part of the Branches Education Group

EAL - English as an Additional Language POLICY

Approved By	Rebecca Warhurst	Head Teacher	Aug 2026
Amendments Made			
Linked Policies			
Signed	R Warhurst	Head Teacher	Aug 2026
	L De Hayes	Governance Chair	Aug 2026
Date Next Review	Aug 2027		

Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION 3
2.0 AIMS 3
3.0 POTENTIAL BARRIERS 3
3.1 Identifying Language Difficulties 3
3.2 Supporting pupils with complex communication needs and EAL 3
3.3 Daily Support 4
3.4 Supporting Families 4
4.0 DATA GATHERING 4
5.0 RESPECTING DIVERSITY 4
6.0 RECRUITMENT 5
7.0 TRANSLATION 5
8.0 SAFEGUARDING

1.0 Introduction

Some pupils and their families may have English as an Additional Language (EAL). As is reflected in schools nationally, the proportion of pupils and families with EAL continues to increase, and the range of home languages spoken by pupils and their families is becoming increasingly diverse.

Our school values and celebrates this diversity, recognising that multilingualism is a strength which enriches the school community, promotes cultural understanding, and broadens opportunities for learning and personal development.

We are committed to ensuring that pupils and families with EAL are fully included in all aspects of school life. We recognise that some pupils and families may require additional support to access information, communicate effectively with the school, understand safeguarding processes, and engage fully with learning. Where required, reasonable and appropriate support will be provided to remove barriers and promote equality of access.

2.0 Aims

We believe that:

• All pupils are entitled to equal access to education, the curriculum, enrichment opportunities, and wider school life, regardless of their first language or linguistic background.

• Strong and effective partnerships with parents, carers, and families are fundamental to pupil progress, wellbeing, safeguarding, and personal development.

• Speaking, learning, and maintaining more than one language is an asset that enriches both the individual and the wider school community.

• The development and maintenance of a pupil's home language supports cognitive development, identity, wellbeing, and the acquisition of additional languages.

• Pupils with EAL should be given appropriate support to develop their English language skills whilst continuing to value and celebrate their home language and culture.

• Information relating to education, safeguarding, welfare, attendance, and school procedures should, wherever reasonably practicable, be communicated in a way that is accessible and understandable to pupils and their families.

• The school will work proactively with families and external agencies, where appropriate, to remove language barriers and ensure that pupils receive the support they need to thrive.

3.0 Potential Barriers

Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) may experience additional barriers to learning, communication, social interaction, and access to services. Within our specialist SEND provision, these potential barriers may exist alongside identified special educational needs and disabilities, including

communication and interaction needs, cognition and learning difficulties, social, emotional and mental health needs, and sensory and/or physical needs.

The school is committed to identifying and addressing language-related barriers whilst ensuring that pupils with EAL have equitable access to education, safeguarding support, pastoral care, and wider school life.

3.1 Identifying Language Difficulties

The school recognises the importance of distinguishing between communication differences arising from learning English as an additional language and communication difficulties associated with special educational needs and disabilities.

Many pupils at the school experience speech, language and communication needs as part of their identified SEND profile. Assessment and monitoring of a pupil's receptive and expressive language skills will therefore take account of their EAL status, cultural background, educational history, and individual learning needs.

Staff will seek advice from appropriate professionals where necessary to ensure that language acquisition needs are not confused with SEND, and that SEND is not overlooked because a pupil is learning English as an additional language.

3.2 Supporting Pupils with Complex Communication Needs and EAL

Support may include:

• Helping pupils to understand and use the language of learning, social interaction, and everyday communication.

• Supporting pupils to express their wishes, feelings, needs, opinions, and choices effectively.

• Recognising that pupils with EAL may require additional support to understand instructions, classroom discussions, educational materials, safeguarding information, and social communication.

• Recognising that pupils with autism spectrum condition and other communication difficulties may experience additional challenges when learning and using English as an additional language.

• Using a range of communication approaches, including visual supports, symbols, objects of reference, signing systems, assistive technology, and structured language strategies where appropriate.

• Building upon each pupil's strengths, cultural background, and existing language skills to support learning and communication.

Many of the communication strategies used throughout the school to support pupils with SEND will also benefit pupils with EAL.

3.3 Daily Support

The school uses evidence-informed approaches to support pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Teaching and support staff will plan and deliver learning activities that enable pupils to access the curriculum whilst continuing to develop their English language skills.

Strategies may include:

• The use of visual supports, gestures, modelling, demonstrations, symbols, pictures, and real objects.

• Providing clear, concise and accessible instructions.

• Pre-teaching and reinforcing key vocabulary.

• Modelling social communication and classroom routines.

• Ensuring pupils understand the roles and responsibilities of school staff and know who they can approach for support.

• Differentiating learning activities according to a pupil's language proficiency and individual learning needs.

• Encouraging participation, confidence, and engagement in classroom and wider school activities.

3.4 Supporting Families

The school recognises that effective partnerships with parents and carers are essential to pupil progress, wellbeing, and safeguarding.

We acknowledge that some families may have received outdated advice suggesting that they should avoid using their home language. Current evidence indicates that maintaining and developing a child's home language supports communication, identity, wellbeing, and language development.

The school will therefore:

• Encourage families to continue speaking and developing the language in which they are most fluent.

• Establish and maintain positive relationships with families regardless of language differences.

• Take reasonable steps to overcome language barriers and ensure families can access important information.

• Ensure safeguarding, welfare, attendance, behaviour, medical, and educational information is communicated in a manner that families can understand wherever reasonably practicable.

• Work collaboratively with parents, carers, interpreters, translators, and external professionals where appropriate.

• Promote meaningful parental involvement in their child's education and wider school life.

4.0 Data Gathering

As part of the admissions process, parents and carers will be asked to provide information regarding their child's ethnicity, home language, first language, nationality (where appropriate), and any communication needs within the family that may affect communication with the school.

This information helps the school to:

• Identify pupils who may require EAL support.

• Ensure effective communication with parents and carers.

• Plan appropriate educational, pastoral, and safeguarding support.

• Monitor equality of access and inclusion.

• Fulfil statutory duties relating to safeguarding, SEND, and equality.

All information will be collected, stored, and processed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018.

5.0 RESPECTING DIVERSITY

Silver Birch School values and celebrates the linguistic, cultural, religious and ethnic diversity of its pupils, families, staff and wider community. We recognise that every pupil has a unique identity and background, and we are committed to fostering a culture of inclusion, respect, belonging and equality for all.

We aim to work in partnership with pupils and their families to understand and respect their individual cultural, religious and linguistic needs, whilst promoting mutual respect and understanding across the school community.

The school promotes awareness and appreciation of different cultures, languages and traditions through a range of activities, including:

• Cultural awareness days, theme weeks and celebration events.

• Assemblies that promote diversity, equality, inclusion and respect.

• Educational visits to places of cultural and religious significance, where appropriate.

• Working closely with parents and carers to understand cultural perspectives and individual needs, including views relating to SEND and disability.

• Providing opportunities for pupils to share and celebrate their own languages, cultures and experiences.

• Displaying pupils' work that reflects a range of cultures, languages and backgrounds.

• Ensuring teaching materials, books, displays and learning resources positively represent diverse communities and experiences.

• Promoting understanding of protected characteristics in an age-appropriate manner, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

The school will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, prejudice or stereotyping on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or belief, culture, language, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership.

6.0 RECRUITMENT

Silver Birch School is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in recruitment and employment practices.

Recruitment decisions will be based on a candidate's suitability, qualifications, experience, skills and ability to fulfil the requirements of the role. The school welcomes applications from suitably qualified candidates from all backgrounds and communities.

Staff are not required to disclose their home language. However, where appropriate, applicants will be expected to demonstrate a level of spoken and written English sufficient to carry out their duties effectively and safely and to communicate appropriately with pupils, colleagues, parents and external professionals.

Where members of staff have additional language skills, these may be utilised, with their agreement, to support communication with pupils and families who use English as an Additional Language. Such skills can provide valuable support in building relationships, improving communication and promoting inclusion.

Staff who speak more than one language may also act as positive role models for pupils, demonstrating the value of multilingualism and helping pupils feel confident and proud of their linguistic identity.

All recruitment processes will be conducted in accordance with the school's Safer Recruitment Policy and the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.

7.0 TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION SERVICES

Silver Birch School is committed to ensuring that language barriers do not prevent pupils or their parents/carers from accessing information, participating in school life or communicating effectively with the school.

Where appropriate and reasonably practicable, the school will seek to provide access to translation or interpretation support for pupils and families who require assistance in understanding or communicating information.

Translation and interpretation support may be accessed through community contacts, external agencies, local services or other appropriate sources.

Parents and carers are also welcome to arrange the support of a trusted interpreter for meetings and school events where this would assist communication. This may include professional interpreters, family members or friends, where appropriate.

The school recognises that there may be circumstances where the use of an independent interpreter is preferable, particularly when discussing sensitive information, safeguarding matters, educational provision, SEND arrangements, complaints or other confidential issues.

Translation or interpretation support may be utilised during:

- Admissions meetings
- Annual reviews and EHCP meetings
- Parents' evenings
- Multi-agency meetings
- Safeguarding discussions, where appropriate
- School events and information sessions
- Meetings relating to attendance, behaviour, or pupil welfare

The school will take reasonable steps to ensure that all parents and carers can understand important information relating to their child's education, wellbeing and safety.

8.0 Safeguarding

"The school recognises that language barriers should not prevent pupils or parents/carers from raising safeguarding concerns or accessing support. Where necessary, appropriate translation or interpretation arrangements will be made to ensure effective communication regarding safeguarding, welfare and child protection matters in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and KCSIE 2026."