

English as Additional Language / New to English Policy



RENAISSANCE EDUCATION
Specialist Therapeutic Schools



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1. Introduction / Mission Statement

At Maple House School, we recognise that language is central to identity, belonging and access to learning. As an independent SEMH provision, we are committed to ensuring that pupils who use English as an Additional Language (EAL) receive equitable access to the full curriculum while maintaining high ambition. Pupils using EAL may include newly arrived learners, UK-born bilingual pupils, or pupils who have attended English-medium education abroad.

Language and Identity

We value multilingualism as an asset. Pupils' home languages are recognised as strengths that support cognitive development, cultural identity and wellbeing. We encourage pride in linguistic heritage.

Use of Pupils' Own Language(s)

We:

- Encourage appropriate use of home language for clarification and understanding
- Recognise the role of first language in emotional regulation and identity
- Avoid policies that prohibit first language use

Provision for Pupils Developing EAL

EAL is treated as a **learning need, not a SEND in itself**

We ensure:

- Clear baseline assessment on entry
- Language-specific targets alongside EHCP outcomes
- In-class scaffolding as the default
- Targeted and specialist intervention only where necessary
- Pupils using EAL are exposed to high-quality spoken English across a range of meaningful contexts, recognising that language acquisition is strengthened when communication has purpose and emotional safety.

Access to the Curriculum

We adapt **how English is taught, not what pupils are entitled to learn.**

All pupils access the full Maple House curriculum with language scaffolds.

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion

We actively promote:

- Social inclusion
- High expectations with appropriate support
- Integrated focus on content and language
- Effective and holistic assessment

Whole-School Approach

EAL is everyone's responsibility. Universal Language Access is delivered in every classroom, every day

2. Statement of Aims and Commitment

Maple House aims to:

- Ensure pupils using EAL achieve academic success alongside SEMH development
- Disentangle language acquisition needs from cognitive or SEND needs
- Maintain high expectations without lowering curriculum ambition
- Provide structured, trauma-informed language learning opportunities
- Use evidence-based assessment to monitor progression

Language is both:

- A tool for learning
- A tool for regulation and emotional expression

This policy provides guidance for all staff and should be read alongside:

- SEND Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy
- EHCP procedures

3. Context

National Definition

The DfE defines EAL learners as:

"A pupil is recorded to have English as an additional language if they are exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English. This measure is not a measure of English language proficiency or a good proxy for recent immigration." (DfE Schools, Pupils and their Characteristics, July 2020)

Local Authority Context

Maple House operates within Birmingham, one of the most linguistically diverse local authorities in the UK. A wide range of community languages are represented locally, including but not limited to Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Arabic, Somali and Eastern European languages.

Maple House Context

Maple House is an independent SEMH provision. All pupils have EHCPs.

- Number of languages spoken:
- % New to English (Band A): ____
- % Early Acquisition (Band B): 1 student
- % Developing Competence (Band C): ____
- % Competent/Fluent (Bands D–E): ____
- % EAL pupils eligible for Pupil Premium: ____

Proficiency is assessed using the **Bell Foundation Levels of Proficiency in English (A–E)** .

4. Key Principles for Second Language Acquisition

Our EAL provision is underpinned by the following principles

1. EAL is not SEND

Language acquisition must not be mistaken for cognitive delay.

2. Disentangling Need

Careful assessment ensures we distinguish between:

- Language learning needs
- SEMH needs
- Cognitive or communication needs

3. Ongoing Assessment

English proficiency is assessed termly using Bell Foundation descriptors.

4. Multilingualism as an Asset

Home language strengthens learning and identity.

5. Inclusive Curriculum

We maintain high ambition and curriculum entitlement.

6. Trauma-Informed Language Learning

Aligned with SEMH practice:

- Reduced cognitive overload
- Clear modelling
- Structured talk opportunities
- Predictable routines
- Safe opportunities for rehearsal

5. EAL Teaching and Learning

Universal Language Access (Quality First Teaching – default position)

Delivered in every classroom:

- Explicit modelling of vocabulary and sentence structures
- Visual supports and dual coding
- Word banks and sentence frames
- Pre-teaching of key vocabulary
- Structured oracy opportunities
- Clear routines and predictable language
- Reduced cognitive load
- Emotionally safe speaking environments

Targeted Language Development

Time-limited small group intervention where universal provision is insufficient:

- Vocabulary development
- Sentence construction
- Listening and speaking confidence
- Early reading and writing support
- Pre- and post-teaching linked to curriculum

Specialist Language Intervention

For pupils at Band A or early Band B, or where progress is limited

- 1:1 or very small group support
- Functional language for learning and regulation
- Oral language before literacy
- Alignment with EHCP outcomes
- Trauma-informed pacing

Teacher Expectations

Staff:

- Maintain high expectations
- Avoid lowering cognitive demand
- Scaffold language, not content

Planning for Language

Planning includes:

- Vocabulary identification
- Sentence structures required
- Opportunities for talk
- Anticipation of language barriers

6. Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation for EAL

We operate a **dual-track monitoring cycle**

EAL Monitoring

- Initial baseline within first 2–4 weeks
- Termly Bell Foundation band review
- Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing checklists
- Scaffold notes and access tracking

SEND / SEMH Monitoring

- EHCP outcomes
- Regulation and behaviour measures
- Communication & interaction outcomes

Triangulation informs:

- Intervention decisions
- Exam access arrangements
- Annual reviews

Progression checkpoints follow the A–E movement descriptors

7. Special Educational Needs and Gifted & Talented

- EAL and SEND are not the same.
- Pupils using EAL have equal access to SEND and wider provision.
- Language acquisition must not result in inappropriate SEND identification.
- High-attaining EAL learners are supported and challenged appropriately.

Representation on registers is reviewed termly.

8. Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment methods are reviewed to minimise cultural or linguistic bias that may inaccurately reflect attainment.

Initial Assessment

Within 2–4 weeks of entry

- Language history
- Literacy background
- Bell Foundation baseline
- SEND review

Ongoing Assessment

- Termly proficiency review
- Classroom observation
- First language information (where available)
- Appropriacy of formal testing considered carefully

Records include:

- Initial Screening Form
- Progression Checklists
- Termly Review Document
- Transition Records

9. Resources

We provide:

Staffing

- EAL Lead
- Class Teachers
- Intervention Staff
- SENDCo collaboration
- Speech and Language Therapist (where involved)

Materials

- Dual-language resources
- Visual supports

- Vocabulary displays
- Structured intervention materials

Peer Support

- Language buddy system

Funding

Pupil Premium funding (if provided from the Local Authority) may support:

- Targeted interventions
- Resources
- Additional staffing

10. Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

We:

- Use language questionnaires on entry
- Encourage home language maintenance
- Provide clear communication
- Offer interpreters where required
- Share termly language progress

Parents are partners in supporting language development.

11. Key Responsibilities and Staff Development

EAL Lead

- Oversees assessment and banding
- Designs intervention
- Monitors progression
- Supports staff CPD

SENDCo

- Ensures alignment with EHCP outcomes
- Prevents misidentification

Class Teachers

- Deliver Universal Language Access
- Maintain high expectations
- Monitor progress

Teaching Assistants

- Deliver structured interventions
- Provide scaffolded support

Senior Leadership Team

- Quality assurance
- Monitor impact
- Ensure curriculum ambition

Professional Development

Staff receive training on

- Bell Foundation proficiency bands
- Differentiating EAL from SEND
- Embedding scaffolds in SEMH contexts
- Collaborative planning

12. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation of the Policy

This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually
- Monitored termly through EAL data
- Evaluated by the EAL Lead, SENDCo and SLT
- Reported to Governors/Proprietor

Impact will be measured through:

- Movement between proficiency bands
- Curriculum access
- EHCP review evidence
- Pupil confidence and independence
- Inspection readiness

Appendix A



EAL PROVISION PATHWAY

Why choose the Bell Foundation Approach?

A clear, evidence-based progression pathway
The Bell Foundation Levels of Proficiency in English (A–E):

- Are nationally recognised
- Are observable and assessable
- Cover listening, speaking, reading and writing
- Support consistent decision-making

For Maple House School, this means:

- Clear starting points for pupils joining mid-year
- Transparent progression over time
- Objective evidence alongside SEMH measures
- A shared language across staff

Supports precision intervention, not blanket withdrawal
The Bell Foundation does not promote:

- Removing pupils from curriculum unnecessarily
- Isolating EAL learners
- Over-intervention

Instead, it supports:

- In-class scaffolding as the default
- Targeted intervention only where needed
- Regular review and exit criteria

Integrates naturally with EHCP processes

- The framework supports:
- Clear baselining on entry
- Language-specific outcomes alongside EHCP targets
- Evidence-based review at annual review points
- Accurate reporting to parents and professionals

Separates language need from SEND needs.
Our pupils already arrive with identified needs through an EHCP. The Bell Foundation's framework is one of the few nationally recognised models that:

- Makes it clear that EAL is not a SEND
- Prevents language acquisition being mistaken for cognitive delay
- Supports staff to disentangle:
 - What is difficulty because a pupil is learning English
 - What is difficulty because of SEMH, cognition, or communication need

Trauma-informed model
The Bell Foundation promotes:

- Language learning through meaningful interaction
- Oracy, modelling, repetition and contextualised vocabulary
- Reduced cognitive overload
- High-quality scaffolding without lowering expectations

These principles align strongly with Maple House School practice because they:

- Reduce anxiety and threat
- Support emotional regulation
- Build trust and confidence
- Avoid public failure
- Enable success through structure and predictability

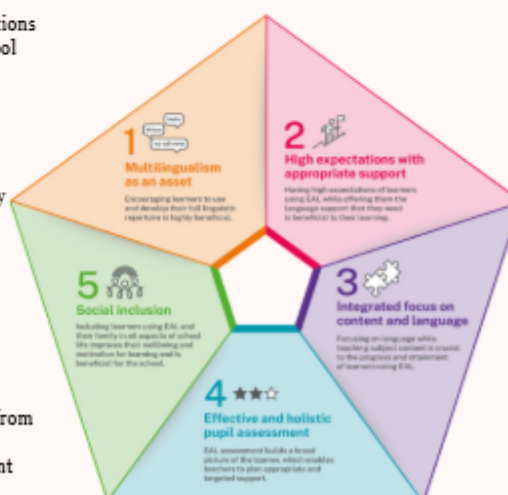
Supports high ambition without reducing the curriculum
SEMH schools are often challenged to evidence that:

- Curriculum ambition is maintained
- Pupils are not restricted by their needs

The Bell Foundation framework:

- Keeps pupils accessing the full curriculum
- Focuses on language for learning, not withdrawal from learning
- Supports curriculum access rather than replacement curricula

This allows us to confidently say:
"We adapt how English is taught, not what pupils are entitled to learn."



1 
Multilingualism as an asset
Encouraging learners to use and develop their full linguistic repertoire to English benefits.

2 
High expectations with appropriate support
Having high expectations of learners using EAL, while offering them the language support that they need to be successful in their learning.

3 
Integrated focus on content and language
Focusing on language while teaching subject content is central to the progress and attainment of learners using EAL.

4 
Effective and holistic pupil assessment
EAL assessment builds a broad picture of the learner, which enables teachers to plan appropriate and targeted support.

5 
Social inclusion
Including learners using EAL and their family in all aspects of school life improves their motivation and participation for learning and is beneficial for the school.



1

Multilingualism as an asset

Encouraging learners to use and develop their full linguistic repertoire is highly beneficial.

Learners' multilingualism – their ability to listen, speak, read and write, and/or write in one or more languages and/or scripts beyond English – is a valuable resource. Maintaining and further developing learners' home languages and other languages they know results in greater cognitive flexibility and stronger academic performance.

Teachers and support staff should, where possible, display pedagogies which include the use of different languages. Learners using EAL should be encouraged to code-switch and translate between any languages they know to support their subject content learning and the acquisition of academic English.



2

High expectations with appropriate support

Having high expectations of learners using EAL while offering them the language support that they need is beneficial to their learning.

Learners using EAL, like all learners, benefit from high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge them. Teachers and support staff should set goals that stretch and challenge learners of all backgrounds, abilities, and levels of proficiency in English, provide them with appropriate scaffolding, and expect their active engagement and concentration. Unlike first language English learners, those using EAL have a double task ahead of them – simultaneously learning the English language and learning content through English. This means that teaching and support staff should set high expectations while offering the right level of language support and scaffolding for learners to access the curriculum and demonstrate their knowledge/skill.



3

Integrated focus on content and language

Focusing on language while teaching subject content is crucial to the progress and attainment of learners using EAL.

Cognitive and academic abilities of learners for whom English is an additional language are separate from their English language abilities. Although multilingual learners may be fully capable of the cognitive and academic demands of curricula in their home languages, they may be unable to access fully a similar curriculum in English due to the English language barrier. Unfortunately, the curriculum does not wait.

The curriculum should be designed in such a way that all learners' needs can be met in the classroom, and any additional support required should be provided in the classroom.

English language development should be integrated and embedded into the curriculum within language-rich mainstream classes. Any withdrawal of learners using EAL from a mainstream class should be for a specific purpose, time limited and linked to the work of the mainstream class.



4

Effective and holistic pupil assessment

EAL assessment builds a broad picture of the learner which enables teachers to plan appropriate and targeted support.

Effective assessment provides teachers with the information needed to adapt teaching for learners using EAL. Initial diagnostic assessment should gather linguistic and educational information, such as information about learners' language and literacy practices, prior education, assessment of learners' proficiency in English should include assessment of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and writing.

Conducting a first language assessment provides useful information. Formal standardised tests designed to assess the reading, writing, spelling, and reading comprehension of first-language English learners are not always suitable for assessing learners using EAL.

When assessment is used to evaluate conceptual understanding, it helps to reduce the linguistic demands of the instructions. Continuous formative assessment should include both assessment of English language development using an EAL-related assessment framework, and teacher assessment of learning in different subjects.



5

Social inclusion

Including learners using EAL and their family in all aspects of school life improves their wellbeing and inclusion for learning and is beneficial for the school.

In order to have opportunities for success in school, learners using EAL need to feel safe and secure from day one and need not be excluded from any aspect of school life. Schools should foster an inclusive culture in which learners using EAL are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities and to join mixed-language friendship groups.

Social inclusion is successful where schools create respectful relationships with learners' families and the wider communities, striving to understand families' backgrounds, cultures, and prior experiences. Some parents of children who use EAL, especially those who are new to English and to the English school system themselves, face additional challenges to parental participation. Therefore, schools should have accessible communication and expectations for all staff, schools should build reciprocal relationships which actively promote family involvement and mutual understanding.

EAL PROVISION PATHWAY

Pathway Structure

Core Principles

These principles underpin the EAL provision and practice at Maple House School:

1. EAL is a learning need, not a SEND in itself — EAL learners require targeted language support alongside access to curriculum learning, especially if they also have SEND.
2. Language learning and cognitive need must be disentangled — careful assessment and monitoring are essential to avoid misdiagnosis.
3. Ongoing assessment of English proficiency is vital to tailor support and track progress.
4. Collaboration between EAL and SEMH/SEND specialists (teachers, SENDCo, EAL Lead) is key to integrated provision.
5. Quality-first teaching with scaffolded support and targeted intervention should be delivered in tandem.

Initial Identification & Baseline Assessment (Within First 2–4 Weeks)

Aims:

- ✓ Confirm EAL status and primary language(s)
- ✓ Assess English proficiency
- ✓ Determine any SEND-related needs or existing EHCP targets that interact with language learning

Steps:

1. Collect background information: language history, previous education, literacy levels.
2. Baseline EAL assessment using The Bell Foundation's Levels of Proficiency in English (A–E). This is available in EfL for tracking purposes.
3. SEND review: examine existing EHCP outcomes, observations, and teacher/SENDCo professional insights.
4. Establish dual-target plan: separate language acquisition targets from SEND-related targets where needed.

English Proficiency Levels & Descriptors

Band	Typical Description	What Pupils Can do
A – New to English	Beginning acquisition	Basic listening, classroom vocabulary; very limited reading/writing.
B – Early Acquisition	Emerging use	Understands simple sentences; developing oral skills; early reading engagement.
C – Developing Competence	Communicates with support	Wider vocabulary; more fluent in oral communication; reading and writing with scaffolds.
D – Competent	Increasing independence	Can work across curriculum with some language need still present.
E – Fluent	Learner uses language independently	Proficient across school curriculum areas.

Each band includes multiple descriptors covering Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

EAL PROVISION PATHWAY

Progression Checkpoints and Readiness Criteria

Movement from Band A → B

- ✓ Understands and uses basic classroom vocabulary
- ✓ Engages in simple instructions with minimal prompts
- ✓ Begins to show confidence in listening and responding orally

Movement from Band B → C

- ✓ Uses familiar vocabulary in structured sentences
- ✓ Reads simple texts with support
- ✓ Writes short texts with scaffolded language frames

Movement from Band C → D

- ✓ Participates in more complex oral tasks with fewer prompts
- ✓ Reads age-appropriate texts with comprehension support
- ✓ Writes longer texts with increasing independence

Movement from Band D → E

- ✓ Demonstrates task-specific language use across the curriculum
- ✓ Reads and writes independently for learning purposes
- ✓ Applies academic vocabulary in different subjects

Integrated SEND & EAL Monitoring

As our learners have EHCPs and additional needs, we use a dual-track cycle to be holistic:

EAL Progress Monitoring

- ✓ Termly assessment of English proficiency bands
- ✓ Checklists of descriptors for Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing
- ✓ Notes on scaffold needs, access to curriculum

SEND Monitoring (Semh / EHCP targets)

- ✓ Behaviour, SEMH wellbeing measures
- ✓ Cognition & learning targets
- ✓ Communication & interaction outcomes

We then triangulate these to make decisions about extra support, exam access arrangements, referrals, or specialist input

Pathway Structure

● **Universal Language Access – Quality First Teaching**

Classroom scaffolds, visual supports, modelling language
Collaborative group work
Language rich environment

● **Targeted Language Development– Targeted Small Group Support**

Focused EAL literacy intervention
Vocabulary development groups
Structured oral language practice

● **Specialist Language Intervention – Intensive Individualised Support**

One-to-one EAL intervention (e.g., language buddy, specialist tutor)
Over-scaffolding for pupils with SEND impacting language processing (aligned with EHCP outcomes)

EAL PROVISION PATHWAY

Toolkits, Checklists and Documentation

For each pupil identified as EAL, the following are completed and tracked using EfL:

- **Initial EAL & SEND Screening Form**
– Language background, initial EAL band, SEND indicators
- **Progression Checklists linked to Bell Foundation descriptors**
– Detailed descriptors across language domains
- **Termly Review Document for EAL + SEND goals**
– Shared by class teacher, EAL specialist, SENDCo
- **Transition Records**
– For moving between classes or key stages
- **Parental Engagement Tools**
– Language questionnaires, home language assessment (Bell Foundation)

Professional Development

Staff training includes:

- ✓ Understanding the Bell Foundation's EAL proficiency bands
- ✓ Differentiating EAL progression from SEND indicators
- ✓ Using checklists and embedding scaffold strategies in SEMH contexts
- ✓ Collaborative planning between EAL and SEND teams

Pathway

Universal Language Access

(All pupils with EAL – default position)

What support looks like

Delivered in every classroom, every day.

Teaching & curriculum

- High-quality, language-rich teaching
- Explicit modelling of vocabulary and sentence structures
- Visual supports, word banks, dual coding
- Pre-teaching of key vocabulary where appropriate
- Opportunities for structured talk and oracy
- Clear routines and predictable language

SEMH-informed practice

- Reduced cognitive load
- Clear instructions broken into steps
- Safe opportunities to rehearse language without public exposure
- Emotionally safe environments for speaking

Assessment & monitoring

- Initial and termly assessment using Bell Foundation Levels of Proficiency (A–E)
- Ongoing teacher observation across listening, speaking, reading and writing
- Language needs noted within normal classroom assessment

Who oversees this

- Class Teacher – primary responsibility for delivery
- EAL Lead – provides guidance, resources and monitoring
- SENDCo / Pastoral Lead – ensures alignment with EHCP and SEMH strategies
- Senior Leader – quality assurance through learning walks and reviews

Targeted Language Development

(Additional support where Universal provision is not sufficient)

What support looks like

Time-limited, focused intervention alongside classroom learning.

Intervention

- Small-group language sessions (1–3 times per week)
- Focus on:
 - Vocabulary acquisition
 - Sentence construction
 - Listening and speaking confidence
 - Early reading and writing (as appropriate)

Structured programmes linked to Bell Foundation descriptors

EAL PROVISION PATHWAY

Pathway cont.

- Pre- and post-teaching linked to curriculum content

SEMH-informed practice

- Short, predictable sessions
- Relationship-led delivery by familiar adults
- Clear success criteria and frequent praise
- Support for self-esteem and confidence in communication

Assessment & monitoring

- Clear entry criteria (based on Bell Foundation descriptors)
- Review checkpoints (typically half-termly)
- Progress tracked using proficiency descriptors
- Decision made to continue, adapt or step back to Universal provision

Who oversees this

- EAL Lead – designs and monitors intervention
- Intervention Staff / TA – delivers sessions
- Class Teacher – integrates language focus into classroom teaching
- SENDCo – ensures interventions complement EHCP outcomes
- Pastoral Team – monitors impact on engagement and regulation

Specialist Language Intervention

(For pupils with significant EAL needs alongside SEMH and/or complex SEND)

What support looks like

Highly individualised support, often for pupils at Band A or early Band B or where progress is limited.

Intervention

- One-to-one or very small group support
- Focus on:
 - Functional language for learning and regulation
 - Core vocabulary for safety, routines and relationships
 - Oral language development before literacy
- Adapted resources matched to cognitive and emotional needs
- May include alternative communication strategies where appropriate

SEMH-informed practice

- Delivered by trusted adults
- Trauma-informed pacing and expectations
- Strong links to behaviour and regulation plans
- Emphasis on communication as a tool for emotional expression

Assessment & monitoring

- Frequent review against Bell Foundation descriptors
- Progress tracked in small steps
- Integrated into EHCP review cycles (where appropriate)
- Clear plan for reintegration into less intensive support when ready

Who oversees this

- EAL Lead – oversight of language progression
- SENDCo – ensures alignment with EHCP and SEND outcomes
- Speech and Language Therapist (if involved) – advisory role where relevant
- Pastoral Lead / Psychologist – supports emotional and behavioural impact
- Senior Leadership Team – monitors provision and outcomes

Review & Movement Between Pathways

Movement between pathways is:

- Needs-led
- Evidence-based
- Time-limited
- Regularly reviewed

Decisions are based on:

- ✓ Bell Foundation proficiency descriptors
- ✓ Classroom evidence
- ✓ SEMH engagement and regulation
- ✓ Pupil confidence and independence

Pupils may move up or down pathways depending on need. Placement is not permanent.