

POLICY ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	Owner	Head of Thrive
	ID (Version)	DU/4.3.4. (v3)
	Published	31 August 2026
	Valid Until	31 August 2028

POLICY STATEMENT

As a vibrant international school, the Arbor School (“Arbor”, “we”, “the school”) appreciates the linguistic diversity of its community. Through continual review, we will build upon a language-rich curriculum providing practical and visual references to support language development.

At Arbor, all students are taught alongside each other in the mainstream classroom, regardless of their level of English, and are immersed in a predominantly English-based language environment. In

The school aims to:

- Give all pupils the opportunity to overcome any language barriers to learning and assessment;
- Welcome and value the cultural, linguistic and educational experiences that pupils who have learned English as an additional language (“EAL”) and English language learners (“ELL”) bring to the school;
- Implement school-wide strategies to ensure that EAL / ELL pupils are supported in taking part in all activities; and
- Help EAL / ELL pupils to become confident and fluent in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in English in order to be able to fulfil their academic potential.

APPLICATION

1. IDENTIFICATION

1.1. ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (“EAL”)

EAL is identified when a student’s mother tongue is not English, and they have learned English alongside or instead of their mother tongue from birth or a young age. These students are considered bilingual. Students who are able to converse in English and demonstrate some reading and writing skills within average age bands (including low average) are considered to be EAL. EAL students may speak English fluently despite speaking an alternative language at home. EAL students are able to access the main classroom curriculum with some minimal language support strategies (e.g. picture dictionaries).

1.2. ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER (“ELL”)

ELL refers to EAL students who are still considered to be in the earlier stages of learning English and need a greater level of support and modification in their lessons. Some ELL students speak little to no English even when their parents speak English fluently in addition to a mother tongue.

2. ASSESSMENT

2.1. ADMISSION

Students identified as EAL will access the same admission assessment route as native English speakers. Assessors may flag up language difficulties observed during the assessment and refer a student for an ELL assessment.

Students identified as ELL prior or during the admission process will have access to a translator to support a cognitive and academic-based assessment.

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2.2. TRACKING LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT OF EAL LEARNERS

The Northern Association of Support Services for Equity and Achievement (“NASSEA”) is used to track the speaking and listening, reading and writing progress of ELL students and is updated half-termly by class teachers and support staff. GL language assessments will be conducted to develop baseline data.

2.3. EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

Access arrangements for ELL students are implemented as per the requirements of each individual exam board. The Head of Inclusion and secondary SENDCo are responsible for completing access request applications.

3. SUPPORT

As part of Arbor’s core services, EAL students are supported by mainstream class teachers who differentiate planning and the class environment to support the needs of their class. Class teachers are responsible for acting as English language models and for developing programmes of work so that all EAL students achieve the same success as native English speakers.

ELL students are supported through a graduated support system which combines a mix of mainstream lessons, small group work, and in some cases targeted 1-to-1 sessions. A small minority of students may require a 1-to-1 support contract to access an age-appropriate curriculum whilst learning the basics of English. Support contracts are funded by parents and are only implemented from Year 1 upwards for ELL students requiring five or more hours of language support per week.

Language support for both EAL and ELL in the early years phase is managed and supported by class teachers and mainstream support staff through a mix of targeted language groups, buddy systems, and the development of roleplay areas.

4. RESOURCES

The Head of Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students have access to resources to support their learning experience. These may include:

- Bilingual story books
- Word banks
- Picture dictionaries
- Universal symbols
- Bilingual staff
- Translated instructions
- Audio books in dual language
- Tablet apps and translation websites

5. PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

The school’s Parent Relations, Marketing and Operations teams will work alongside the Head of Inclusion to ensure that key information is shared effectively with parents through the use of translation services where parents cannot access spoken or written English.

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Parents may nominate a family member or friend to attend school meetings or communicate on their behalf if they have difficulties communicating in English through signing a permission letter.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Document Title	ID / Reference No.
Admissions and Enrolment Policy	DU/3.2.1.
Teaching and Learning Policy	DU/4.1.2.
Inclusion Policy	DU/4.3.1.

ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

Abbreviation / Term	Description / Definition
EAL	English as an Additional Language
ELL	English Language Learner