



TAUNTON
— SCHOOL —

Philosophy and Aims of the EAL Department

Policy Lead	Deputy Head Academic
Committee	
Adopted by Governors	Autumn 2023
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Last Review	September 2023
Review schedule	Annual

Introduction

The EAL department exists as part of Taunton School to deliver some key English language curricula, as well as offer help and support to all students for whom English is not their first language. We cater for all international students in the senior school.

Our main aims are:

- to support and foster a spirit of internationalism and respect for different cultures;
- to instil a lifelong love of language learning;
- to teach all aspects of the English language;
- to provide subject-specific support in all areas, as needed;
- to help students to achieve any English qualifications necessary for their continued academic progress.

Admission of EAL Pupils

All EAL students (i.e. all those from non-majority English speaking countries) are required to sit a profile of assessments, including:

- An online English language assessment (the Oxford Placement Test)
- An online educational aptitude test (Atom Assessments)
- A face-to-face interview with either the Deputy Head Academic, Assistant Head (Academic) or Assistant Head (IB).

The Admissions team are aware of the 'language benchmarks' issued for each year group, and the details of online assessments (as well as the pupil's EAL status) are entered into the student's record by Admissions.

Support for EAL Pupils

The department hopes to be able to give EAL students a secure base in the school, so that they feel supported and able to ask for assistance when necessary. Even the most integrated and confident of students will occasionally need more specific help than can be given in the mainstream classroom and we try to be ready to cope with any of the problems they present to us. If these students are to gain from the English education system, we must provide them with the fullest possible backing in all areas of school life, understanding the impact their respective cultures will have on their learning and their relationships. The department also acts as a link between students and subject staff, working across all subject areas as needed, in order to help with communication and to resolve any learning difficulties. This includes sometimes working in collaboration with the EP department in cases where students have overlapping EP/EAL needs.

In Years 9, 10 and 11, some international students may choose timetabled EAL lessons in place of an option subject. These classes are all exam-based curriculum courses (Cambridge B2 First For Schools and IGCSE ESL). They are designed to support and reinforce as much as possible the work being done by the students in their mainstream English classes as well as generate an internationally valid and respected certificate. All these classes have a prep requirement, which fills the time allotted to an option for the other students and which is set in accordance with school policy. Various 1-1 or small-group sessions are held outside of the normal scheduled timetable to provide support for students with the challenges of literacy across their curriculum. We work hard to ensure that we track all the international students whose first language is not English by liaising regularly with HODs, subject teachers, tutors and other parts of the school

where the students may have been prior to TS. There is also an EAL Register in which is compiled all the relevant data (mainly in relation to language assessments) for students at the school. This will be shared with staff via Microsoft Teams.

In the sixth form, those EAL A level students who have not achieved a grade 5 in (I)GCSE First language English will attend regular IELTS classes leading to an exam at the end of Y12 in order to gain a valid IELTS certificate. This will enable them to apply for UK and other international universities which require an English language qualification. We offer the opportunity to sit the IELTS exam on campus and also offer resit classes for those who need to retake in Year 13. IB students generally do not need to take IELTS but by studying English as one of their diploma subjects also gain a valid English language qualification.

Outside this timetabled time, staff are always available - providing there is room on their timetables - to see students individually or in small groups, either for the entire year or on a 'needs-based' basis (as and when needed). We have the facility to offer some degree of support in the subject classroom in a variety of areas, either on a short- or long-term basis; however, for a variety of valid reasons, this approach is generally avoided in this context. Any in-class support is delivered primarily by the EP team.

The whole school aims to nurture and inspire our EAL students, encouraging them to raise their proficiency in English by becoming fully involved in the school life both within and beyond the classroom. The co-curricular programme is particularly important in furthering this aim, as is the pastoral care offered by house staff.